

TOWN GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
JUNE 17, 2015
DPW TRAINING ROOM

Attendees: All members of TGSC in attendance except Rich Page.

Chairman Babson called the meeting to order at 6:35. There was no one who presented at Citizen Speak.

Babson reported that the ZBA approved the Land Use Division and Town Manager proposals.

Committee members then reported on the various meetings they had attended: Board of Health, Board of Assessors, Recreation Commission, Board of Public Works and Board of Selectmen. The Draft Recommendation to change the three boards (Assessors, Health and Public Works) from elected to appointed does not have the support of the three boards and some members of those boards are particularly vociferous in opposition.

There was a discussion at the Board of Public Works meeting about the possibility of considering the appointment of a committee to look at the question of the termination of the Board of Public Works and the transfer of its duties elsewhere. The Boards of Selectmen in some towns act as BPW commissioners; in others they act as water and sewer commissioners; and in other towns, there are advisory committees for the sewer and water issues; and in 7 towns across the commonwealth, there are utilities commissions (sewer, water and electricity) as Wellesley had prior to the creation of the BPW in the 1950's.

Ann Marie Gross reported on the meeting with the Advisory Committee. The Committee had been asked for their comments on the budget memo. A power point had been prepared for the meeting. Ann Marie described the possible "matching" of AC subcommittees with the major groups in TGSC: Town Manager (all but personnel and budget), Town Manager (personnel and budget), Land Use and Other (Strategic Planning and elected to appointed, etc.)

There was a discussion of the issues raised in some of meetings about whether the Board of Selectmen is interested in a "power of grab" or is it an issue of understanding the increased responsibility of the Selectmen in a Town Manager form of government. The members agreed that it was very important to be able to specify how the Selectmen's role will change under a Town Manager form of government.

There was a long discussion of a section of the Budget memo in which it had been proposed (and subsequently changed) that Boards would submit the write up of their budgets for the Advisory Committee. The immediate issue was what responsibility would be placed on the School Committee in addition to the Budget Message proposed for the School Superintendent.

Tom Ulfelder described the meeting with Beth Sullivan Woods and her work on the survey of Town Meeting. The members were very interested in learning the results of the survey and all agreed that a report to Town Meeting, in some fashion, should be made.

Members requested that the Board of Selectmen be prepared with a proposal for a search process for Town Manager by the beginning of September. The members believed that the Board should undertake this work, not the TGSC.

Babson reported on a meeting with Ray Miyares and Tom Harrington, Town Counsel, on the drafting issues for the Special Act and the bylaws.

Babson led a very short discussion on the issues relating to the appointment of the Police and Fire Chiefs, the appointment of the officers and the promotions within the departments. She had sent around a memo that had been prepared for the Board of Selectmen who will be discussing the issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Babson, Secretary Pro Tem