

TOWN GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
July 8, 2015
DPW Training Room

All members of TGSC were in attendance but Linda Perlmutter.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

No one spoke at Citizens' Speak. The minutes of the June 17, 2015 meeting were approved.

Debriefings of the various meetings were provided:

Library Trustees Meeting of June 29. Several questions raised by the Trustees were noted: do the Selectmen have sufficient bandwidth to handle more responsibilities resulting from a Town Manager form of government; how will a Town Manager advance the library services to the Town ?

NRC Meeting of July 6. A motion was made and voted to inform NRC and the Sustainable Energy Committee that TGSC would not support the creation of an Environmental Affairs Division.

Planning Board Meeting of July 6. There was further discussion on budget implications: would there be more staff and how would the PB budget be affected?

School Committee Meeting of June 23. There was support for the proposal that operating and capital budgets be submitted at the same time. There was interest in spending more time in examination on the timing of Town elections/the effective date for elected board members to serve.

Strategic Plan. The first meeting of the two Selectmen and two Planning Board members about the strategic plan was described. The members hope to put together an integrated plan from inception. The members will work to put together an initial visioning plan and a work plan. A request may be made at the Special Town Meeting for funds for the Strategic Plan.

A motion was made and voted that the BoS report out annually on the status of the strategic plan, perhaps in the same fashion as the Town-wide Financial Plan.

TGSC decided not to propose a vote by Town Meeting on the Strategic Plan itself.

Ms. Babson reported on the work by the Selectmen: a first draft on the job description for Town Manager and work on a memo on the search process. Both are very important documents. She also noted that Pete Hechenbleikner has been asked to put together a memo on HR issues, similar in format to the one on the budget process.

The committee then discussed several matters on which votes were taken:

A motion was made and approved by 7 in favor and 1 abstention to provide that the appointment of a department head be recommended by the Town Manager and approved by the affected board; if the board fails to approve within 15 days, the appointment will become effective.

A motion was made and approved unanimously that the Town Manager may terminate a town employee with notice to the affected board.

A motion was made and voted to amend the draft recommendation that proposed to change the method of membership on the Boards of Assessors, Health and Public Works from elected

to appointed membership. The vote was to recommend the appointment of these board members through a vote by the board members where the opening occurs and the Board of Selectmen acting as a whole. If an incumbent is seeking another term, the incumbent can not vote.

A discussion ensued and a motion was made and voted to seek the appointment by the Moderator of a committee to look into issues relating to the Board of Public Works, namely whether the Board should continue to exist, and if not, where would the functions of the department of public works be placed: with the Town Manager or the Board of Selectmen; what would happen to water and sewer decisions: would there be an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen, would the Board of Selectmen make the decisions themselves or would the utilities be spun off from the DPW and recombined with the MLP? The committee is to report to 2017ATM.

Finally, Tom Ulfelder described the excellent work by Beth Sullivan Woods on the survey of Town Meeting Members last spring with its 80% response. Committee members asked to see the results of the study . There was some discussion of how the results of the survey would be disseminated.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Babson, secretary pro tem