

Town Government Study Committee

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

- ❖ Chairperson called the meeting to order
- ❖ Time/Date: **7:07pm on 15 April 2008**
- ❖ Location: **Police Station Community Room**

Roll Call

- ❖ Chairperson reviewed committee members and noted the following present:
 - ___ Dr. Jabbar A. al-Obaidi
 - _X_ Mr. Christopher Delmonte
 - _X_ Mr. Ed Ivaldi
 - _X_ Mr. James G.H. Moore
 - _X_ Ms. Anna M. Nalevanko
 - ___ Mr. Ernie Talpey
 - _X_ Ms. Sheila Whitaker

Also in attendance was Steve Lombard, interim Town Manager for Middleboro.

Approval of Minutes from last meeting

- ❖ Chairperson asked if everyone had read the minutes
 - Motion made to accept last meetings minutes as written, 2nd
 - Vote - Unanimously approved

Agenda Items

- ❖ Discussion with Steve Lombard
- ❖ Review Action Items
- ❖ Work to complete Information Requirements Document
- ❖ Prepare for May 5 Town Meeting Update
- ❖ Other Items as approved by Chairperson

Discussions

- ❖ Steve Lombard attended and discussed his town gov't experiences over the past 30 years. Some key points:
- ❖ Started out as Exec Secretary in 1976, which is the weakest Chief Admin Officer (CAO) for a town because they do not have much authority.
- ❖ In 1987, became Executive Secretary for Town of Norton which happened to be the strongest position in MA and it was By-Law driven- it was written that way. ES had appointing authority over the Council.
- ❖ Norton decided to create a charter to govern the town operations and they also moved to a Town Mgr. Continued to be a strong CAO position requiring 4/5 vote by BOS to be overturned.
- ❖ Steve's opinion: if you want to institute change and streamline gov't operations- charter is way to go. Charter provides the structure for the town employees to do their job with certainty.

- ❖ Norton has never had a budget override
- ❖ Steve next worked as the town admin for Dennis; a town without a charter. However Board gave him full authority to do his job; he had a very tight job description (there was no charter and his job was not in by-laws)
- ❖ Dennis was the best experience he had. He notes the environment was different and the demographics were different
- ❖ Steve retired after Dennis, but served as interim town admin for numerous towns including Harwich, Norton, Swansea, Hopedale, and Middleboro.
- ❖ Steve is also a selectmen in Mattapoisett and implemented their town gov't study recommendations
- ❖ Steve then provided some guidance and direction as it relates to our study:
 - Decide what we want to achieve. Define criteria that is important to the town. He sited the following: Accountability, Transparency, Efficiency, Good checks & balances
 - Develop a "Town Profile". The team will brainstorm this at a later date as part of Phase 2.
 - The trend he is seeing.....is more towns moving toward "Professional Mgmt". That is, hiring town managers / administrators that are qualified and paying them competitive compensation.
- ❖ Steve also discussed the use of "Enterprise Funds". His basic approach is to stay away from there types of arrangements, except for Water / Sewer.
- ❖ Steve also discussed his views on town positions that are appointed vs. elected. In general, his opinion is that only the town clerk should be elected, all others should be appointed.
- ❖ Steve suggested that we contact the Fairhaven, MA Town Mgr (Jeff Osuch), as someone he views as a good, strong TM.
- ❖ In terms of guidance, Steve suggested to get town dept heads involved and maintain confidence in doing so
- ❖ After Steve's departure, the Committee discussed his perspective, in particular the concept of a town charter. Given the lengthy process in creating a town charter, it may be a longer term recommendation of Committee. Certainly we should look further into it.
- ❖ Ed suggested our priorities be based on what we had learned and discussed thus far: internal structure changes; appointed vs. elected; charter vs. by-law. Committee agreed
- ❖ Committee discussed info requirements and solidified the type of info we would like to collect.
- ❖ Committee discussed the process in which we would conduct interviews with those identified in Info Requirements document.
- ❖ The team completed another walk-through of the Info Requirements Doc, and populated additional sources / owners.
- ❖ The team then briefly discussed the preparations for the May 5 Town meeting update
- ❖ Key agenda items for 4/29 Meeting:
 - Interview Process readout from Chris; begin process of scheduling
 - Town Meeting Preso review;
 - Action Item Update

Action Items

(Please note: this action items have been consolidated, closed, replaced as appropriate. Going forward Action Items will be recorded and tracked under separate cover)

OLD

- ❖ Obtain copy of report from last TGSC.
 - Status: Several attempts made and no success. Sheila to check with Roger Provost, BOS member during time study was conducted.
- ❖ Anna to provide links to the two Town reports that were shown during the meeting
 - Status: outstanding- Will work to get these provided
- ❖ Chris will place a second call MMA for further information regarding Best in Class Towns and ????? (was there something else?)
 - Status: To be completed before next meeting
- ❖ Anna to contact/interview Charlie Christello on past government study experiences review
 - Status: To be completed before next meeting
- ❖ Sheila to contact/interview Rocco Longo (TA from Marshfield) on past government study experiences
 - Status: To be completed before next meeting
- ❖ Jim is going to draft an outreach letter that we as Committee can critique
 - Status: CLOSED
 - Anna to review "Around the Common" Blog for possible inclusion of Press Release Status: ?
- ❖ Chris to coordinate TSG website with Brad D; design such that all Committee member receive the emails but the responses are issued by Chair.
 - Status: CLOSED
- ❖ Sheila to update Info Requirements Document with Committee feedback and Owners
 - Status: First Draft Complete. Revisions to be made before next meeting.
- ❖ Jim to get the MA forms of Town Government for insertion
 - Status: Work in progress
- ❖ Anna to contact Steve Lombard to see if he can come to our next meeting on 4/15
 - Status: on-going; to be updated to reflect Committee feedback/refinement as well as Owners
- ❖ Jabbar to research possible internship to help with data research
 - Status: Pending
- ❖ Jabbar to coordinate "List of Questions" for Interviews (team to send questions to Jabbar for consolidation)
 - Status: Pending
- ❖ Ed to update the Plan with comments from Committee
 - Status: on-going; to be updated to reflect status in preparation for May 5th Town Meeting

NEW

- ❖ Anna to meet with Paul Sullivan to review town org; put town org chart into PowerPoint; and obtain job descriptions
- ❖ Anna to pursue using resource to provide general MA Gov Stats
- ❖ Sheila to research Elected vs. Appointed
- ❖ Ed to follow up with Jabbar on Interview Question List...this is needed before phone interviews can begin.

- ❖ Chris to develop interview process / list of town government interviewees (to present at next meeting on 4/29)

NOTE: Refer to Information Requirements Document for additional action items coming due.

Adjournment

- ❖ Determine next Meeting date(s), time(s) and location(s)
 - Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month
 - Next Dates are: 4/29, 5/6, 5/20
 - Time 7:30pm – 9:30pm
 - Location: Police Station Community Room
 - Chris has already put us in for the rest of the year
 - Reminder: Community Room door on left from back parking lot
- ❖ **Motion** to Adjourn, 2nd
 - Discussion – none
 - Vote – Unanimously approved
 - **Meeting adjourned at 9:45pm.**

Meeting minutes written by: Sheila Whitaker

