

Town Government Study Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2019

7:15 pm – Town Clerk's office

Commission Members	Other
Chairman Jonathan Smith - present	David Rosenberg - resident
Secretary Anthony Turi - present	
Kristen Balash - present	
Anthony Kennedy - present	
Rob Garrity - absent	
Jeff Chalmers - absent	

Meeting convened approximately 7:27 pm. The committee did not approve any minutes as they were not yet ready.

I. Discuss and vote on proposed changes to our Town Meeting Warrant Article

Original article in warrant as is – we could not get amended version in time for publication as we had not yet voted on it due to lack of quorum at last meeting. But we are going to propose amendment from the floor. Changes included modifying *she/he* to *they* and also addresses future bylaws.

- Town counsel addressed and said acceptable to him.
- TGSC voted, passed unanimously 4-0.

II. Town Meeting Article Prep

Will be warrant article (12). Suggestion to have slide showing changes as well as handout. If passed, steps would be to edit bylaws and send to AG for approval.

Town counsel will be on stage: Dave DeLuca

Who is presenting?: Jonathan Smith if needed

Advisory Board makes primary motion to move to accept

If we need to speak, here are some of our key talking points:

- Bylaw cleanup and this is easy part of it
- Other towns are making or have made this change
- We found that this was on the docket for BoS several years back and wanted to follow up.
- Egalitarian, recognize that all roles in town are gender exclusive and should reflect that any gender could serve in a role.

Questions we may expect:

Why are we doing this (and now)?

- This is considered best practice, state laws are headed this way to recognize inclusive gender and this accommodates this, so we don't have to make this change later anyway.

How many changes will we be making?

- Anthony Turi will send official counts of times he/him/his appear, most were found in town counsel section.

Any costs?

- Not that we think would outweigh the cost of change.
- Like any rebrand, could be business cards, letterhead, would be used up and then replaced as they wear out.

Jason Talerman asked if we wanted to share any survey results at town meeting. We only received a few surveys back – most input was at in person sessions we held this year so nothing really good for a “handout”.

III. Presentation for committee reports (article 11):

- Jonathan will remind everyone of what we do: what is our charter, when we started
- Topics initially were: Recall provisions, bylaw cleanup, and structure of town gov'n't.
- Held two community meetings and volunteer fair and online survey where we heard about priorities
- We will have more meetings and opportunities for input
- Let's have copies of surveys and box for returning them at town meeting
- Note that we need more members!
- KB to bring handout with how to reach the committee

IV. Senior Center recap (Anthony K):

Feedback: reduce tax rate by attracting commercial business

Critique of town planner and water ban

How do we assess these types of feedback and think about structural changes that can address what we are hearing? How does this inform how the town can better communicate with residents about how and why things happen the way they do?

V. Recap volunteer fair (Jonathan S)

VI. Potential Future Meeting items:

Invite the new Select Board (maybe August?)

Invite the new Town Administrator Blythe Robinson (maybe July?)

Future public forums

With youth? – Let's consider how to reach – which student groups?

Need to revisit how to engage with town dept heads – ask Blythe Robinson first

Can we do a Town employee presentation followed up by survey

Check with Betsy Fijol to make sure union is ok to participate

Unanticipated Business

David Rosenberg asked that we consider idea of associate selectmen or vice-selectman who could serve if a position was vacant due to resignation or other issue until next election to preserve continuity and ability to manage the workload. Agreed to look at what other towns do to meet this goal/outcome.

Next meetings: May 22, June 18 both at 7:15 pm

[NB: Both the May and June meetings were postponed to July 8]