

Town Government Study Committee

Minutes of the meeting of May 6, 2021. The meeting took place via Zoom. Members of the committee present were: John Brescher, Linda Williams, Rick Atherton, Curtis Barnes, and Campbell Sutton.

- 1) Chair John Brescher called the meeting to order at 10:00 am with a quorum.
- 2) Agenda: A motion was made by Curtis Barnes and duly seconded by Rick Atherton to approve the agenda as written. All voted in favor by voice vote.
- 3) Public Comment: None. Curtis Barnes noted that Hilary Hedges reached out to him asked what was going on with the Committee's discussion re: the NPEDC. Campbell Sutton asked if there was anything re: meeting in person and John Brescher noted that he had not heard anything.
- 4) Meeting Minutes from April 13, 2021 and April 21, 2021: The minutes from April 13, 2021 had not yet been drafted and Curtis wanted to be noted as present to edit on April 21, 2021. A motion was made by Curtis Barnes and duly seconded by Rick Atherton to approve the April 21, 2021 minutes as amended.
- 5) Discussion: unresolved items on topics to investigate list
 - a) List of topics discuss

Campbell noted that she did send a link to the Committee with other Town Government Study Committees. Curtis commented that he had looked at those links. John chimed in that he thought the Committee had already discussed and agreed not to pursue anything further with the revisions to the Government Study Committee.

Campbell asked if there anything else that we can do to enhance the mission of the Government Study Committee – in other words, a way to make it more efficient and more effective. It would be nice to get a better response from Town Counsel and Town Administration. There was too much of a stonewall trying to get access from Town Counsel.

Campbell further noted that part of the challenge is that although we are accountable to the legislative branch, the topics are really directed by Town Administration more than anything else. Unfortunately, that weakens our report to Town Meeting because it makes it less effective. It makes us wonder if our time invested had any real impact. Are the issues that we're concerned with the ones that Town is concerned with?

Rick added, that while he certainly didn't disagree with anything Campbell, he wasn't sure what we do to make this more robust?

Rick suggested that the Committee take further votes on some of the discussion topics so there is something more to present to Town Meeting. Thus far, the Committee has only taken an action on the audit committee and the Town Meeting warrant articles. Rick further suggested proposing the motion on the topics so the Committee can vote on if we recommend making changes to the charter or if the Committee was fine leaving things as-is. Rick also suggested seeing this as an agenda item at the Committee's next meeting.

The Committee agreed this would be a wise way to continue moving towards finalizing the report for Town Meeting.

Campbell asked about the form of Town Government and Rick suggested we focus on the results of the non-binding ballot question and recommend it be further studied.

Curtis also suggested adding the recommendation re: the parking commission and Rick agreed the licensing commission should be included as well.

John asked if the Committee thinks it is possible to review these motions and review the charter review Lauren submitted.

Linda Williams noted that she will look through the 2019 memo that the Committee prepared and will work with Rick about any potential motions. Campbell agreed to work with Tucker and John agreed to work with Curtis.

6) Other Business:

We need to have a date for the report done for distribution. We may need to meet more.

7) Date and Time of the Next Meeting:

The Committee's next meeting will be Thursday May 13, 2021, at 9:00 am 2021 via Zoom.

8) Adjournment:

A motion was made by Linda Williams and seconded by Curtis to adjourn at 10:42 am.

Respectfully Submitted,
John B. Brescher, Chair