

Minutes
Town Government Study Committee
February 3, 2011
Town House Room 203
7:00p.m.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:01 p.m.

Members present: Keith Elder, Jean Landis Naumann, Wendell Chamberlain, Ken Stevens, Paul Tura, Frances Botelho-Hoeg, Robert Ward, Mary O'Donnell

Members absent: Richard Dennehy

Others present: Paul Basler

On a motion by Paul Tura, seconded by Jean Landis Naumann, the minutes of January 20, 2011 were approved as written. The vote was unanimous.

APPOINTMENT WITH PAUL BASLER, STREET, TREES and PARKS:

Mr. Basler met with the Committee to discuss his department. He stated the following:

- His budget is \$1.7 million and includes roads, trees, streetlights, transfer station and a staff of 12
- 2,900 Households have stickers for the Transfer Station
- Kingston processes 5,000 tons of trash per year
- His department assists other departments when needed such as Town Clerk at election time, Selectmen, raising flags, putting signs up and taking them down, and plowing
- Other activities have included: oversight of the Elm Street Bridge project, Route 27 project, and the Senior Center move
- The budget for the Highway Department has been reduced every year
- Asphalt budget has decreased from \$170,000 to \$70,000, yet roads still need to be maintained
- The recycling initiative needs to be improved in order to reduce trash tonnage. SEMASS fee is now \$36/ton and will go up over the next five years. Money can be made with recycling
- Street light cost per year is \$35,000 to light the Town
- Maintaining trees and parks is difficult. Cannot effectively monitor sites to prevent trash drop off
- Selectmen are the Road Commissioners, however he has been able to be independent in decision making
- Rated resource allocation a 2.5 The BOS lifted the hiring freeze and he has been able to bring his staff level back to where it was in 1990. Equipment funding is still needed.
- Opposed to a DPW because of the makeup of the DPW Commissioners in the present proposal. Would like to keep the Highway department separate. Is concerned that politics could come into play with a combined department
- Rated cooperation between departments as a 4.5. Departments do share personnel when needed and do communicate. Sharing of equipment would be beneficial
- Under prior Town Administrator there were monthly meetings to discuss needs and concerns. There have been no meetings under the present Town Administrator. He does meet independently with the Sewer department to discuss future plans and needs.
- He is presently designing a new Transfer Station. Would like to include truck scales to help the Transfer Station make money
- He is developing a pavement management system for future budget management
- Would be willing to have public facilities management under his department
- When asked about regionalization of services, Mr. Basler stated that there is some sharing of equipment now, but it is minimal due to financial and personnel issues
- Researching technology that could be used to prevent abuse of transfer station stickers
- If money was no object, Mr. Basler would like to: improve the transfer station and improve the conditions of the roads.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Keith Elder shared information regarding MGL Chapter 41 Sec 23 D that allows for the creation of a data Processing Coordinator. On a motion by Paul Tura, seconded by Robert Ward, it was voted to forward this information on to the Technology Committee via a memo from the Chairman. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

The next meeting on February 17, 2011 will be with the Water Commissioners and the Water Department.

On a motion by Paul Tura, seconded by Mary O'Donnell it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.