

**Minutes
Town Government Study Committee
September 16, 2010
Town House, Room 203
Kingston, Massachusetts**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Chairman

Members in attendance: Jean Landis Naumann, Keith Elder, Frances Botelho-Hoeg, Mary O'Donnell, Paul Tura, Bob Ward, Richard Dennehy

Members absent: Wendell Chamberlain, Ken Stevens

Visitors: Priscilla Palombo, Dennis Randall, Sandra MacFarlane, Mary Lou Murzyn, Carol DeCamp, Roberta Reed, Joseph Casna, Mark Beaton

On a motion by Bob Ward, seconded by Fran Hoeg, the minutes of September 2, 2010 were approved. Vote 6 yes, 1 abstention

Discussion with the Board of Selectmen:

The Chairman outlined the purpose of the discussion to focus on coordination/communication/cooperation between Boards.

Ms. MacFarlane gave an introduction and overview of Selectmen's duties. She also discussed the role of the Town Administrator in relation to the Selectmen. She stated:

- The Town Administrator is viewed as the daily coordinator
- Selectmen depend upon the Administrator to keep them updated on issues

Ms. MacFarlane also expressed the following:

- There has been increased communication between the financial departments
- Communication has increased between all departments
- Schools have increased cooperation with the community in regards to budgetary issues

She expressed that the following resources are needed:

- Better internet services
- Upgrade computers in offices

Mark Beaton's Opening comments:

- He read a copy of his memorandum on the purpose of the Town Government Study Committee.
- Town department's do a good job communicating with each other
- Town Government Study Committee discussion should focus on fiscal restraints/concerns, combining departments, consolidation of departments and territorial issues regarding consolidation
- TGSC should address small changes

Opening comments from **Dennis Randall**:

- Selectmen have been in trouble in the past when they tried to usurp the authority of other boards
- He is concerned with the financial future of the Town
- Wants to give citizens the best value for their tax dollar
- Wants to streamline the processes of various committees

Mary O'Donnell would like the TGSC to review committees and divisions that should be combined or streamlined.

Fran Hoeg suggested that the Selectmen consider conducting a "State of the Town Summit" to address

fiscal concerns

Keith Elder asked the Selectmen to comment on what they consider to be impediments to consolidation:

Mark Beaton Convincing departments to address the issue

Dennis Randall Issues need to be properly vetted with consensus prior to presentation at
Town Meeting

Bob Ward asked what the Committee could design to make departmental communication improve.

Jean Landis Naumann discussed the charge given to the Committee

Richard Dennehy discussed intervening levels of management and oversight concerns

Paul Tura commented on statutes that impact hiring and firing

Mary O'Donnell discussed what our mandate should be- how to get government to work more effectively.

Dennis Randall discussed consensus building as an essential component to effective
governance

Joe Casna discussed the issue of insight/oversight of economic development

Chairman's Report:

Next meeting will be October 7, 2010

Community Forum will be held on October 27, 2010

The Committee discussed the format for the Open Forum

On a **motion by Fran Hoeg, seconded by Paul Tura**, the following was voted:

Open Forum will be designed to ask citizens to come and share their thoughts on the effectiveness of
Town Meeting. **Motion was approved unanimously.**

The Chairman asked the Committee to review the Selectmen's minutes from their meeting on September
14, 2010.

Motion by Richard Dennehy, seconded by Mary O'Donnell to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved
unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.