

TGSC Minutes from 9/15/11. Present: Dick Dennehy, Paul Tura, Keith Elder, Jean Nauman, Ken Stevens, Wendell Chamberlain. Absent: Bob Ward, Mary O' Donnell.

Meeting commenced at 7:05 p.m. with chair Elder call to order. It was decided by the Committee to defer voting of the minutes of 8/4 and 9/1 due to the resignation of Secretary Fran Hoeg. Fran has been a valuable member and insightful presence on the Committee, whose knowledge and experience in town governance helped guide our deliberations. A thank you was extended to Ralph Calderaro on his presentation of a review of the Town's Master Plan. The Committee then voted to name Mr. Chamberlain as Secretary with his abstention noted.

A 7:15 Chair Elder introduced Town Moderator Janet Wallace as tonight's guest interviewee. Ms. Wallace gave a brief overview of the elective office, citing her growth in the position, and a wish for a 3yr. election cycle instead of the current 1yr. Areas and scope of the Moderators' powers are as follows.

The Powers of TM derive from Ma. Gen. Laws, Chap. 39, secs. 14-18. Duties and responsibilities include appointment of the finance committee, Wage and Personnel Board, Open Space and other committees. The largest challenges present to TM are the experience of the candidate pool, and the need for more citizen participation. TM believes FinCom has good participation with little turnover and a good learning curve, conservative stewardship, and runs smoothly due to the town's excellent financial position. A good TM needs to learn process of Fincom.

In the area of Town Meeting oversight and management of warrant articles and citizen contact, the TM referred our committee to the recently posted Guide to Town Meeting on the town's web site. The TM expressed some frustration in the way the form and process of warrant article presentation has devolved over the past history of Town Meeting. TM expressed concern of a loose process by BOS on timing and insertion of special warrants and bylaw changes, and late budget item inserts due to department placeholders. There needs to be tighter management on behalf of BOS to employ more organized methodology on warrant article construction, timely changes, department accountability, and the elimination of blanket placeholders for bylaw changes and Town Depts. The Town Administrator needs more experience on article construction wording, thus eliminating time with Town Council. Language can lead to confusion with voter if article is ill worded. There is a need for a 2 to 3 week leeway on closure on articles. TM needs more time to meet with Town Clerk and Planner and get information on all articles and motions to the voters in a timely fashion. Drafting of articles should start earlier, especially zoning bylaws. Monies should be allotted to facilitate a mailing of the Warrant to voters and a cable link for more info. There was a discussion between the TM and the TGSC on moving the Jan. 1 Warrant closing to Jan. 15 to insure a timely manner in which the Planner and Town Council can manage bylaw article changes and votes by the Planning Board or any other department. In a conversation with the TM about BOS efficiency on the management of article holds and rearrangement of article sequence that can affect attendance, it was suggested that a Bingo style lottery system for articles be considered. TM recommends keeping categories together, but 1st in line 1st in time, civility reigns. TM stated that Town Council was very accessible and responsive, and had unrestricted use of his advice and opinions. In the areas of communications and education the TM needs a grant to upgrade the PA system through the School Dept., likes the idea of live broadcasts for seniors (KE), and wants to implement relationships with students to

get child care for Town Meeting. TM promoted her guide to Town Meeting as a citizen's "how to" assistance on crafting articles. Other ideas of TM include coordination of Town Meeting dates with sports team dates to cultivate student participation as a teaching tool, and the use of Gavel Line (Mass. Moderator Assoc. emag.) ideas in education of political process for students. The need for a senior bus was mentioned due to the issue of length of Town meeting and late night sessions. The BOS expressed concern for late nights, but the floor gets to vote to stay. Town Meetings need to move along more efficiently perhaps with shorter debates and time limits, but fairness should rule with an alternating pro and con arguments(TM). Asked if TM votes with body, TM stated she does not, in the interest of impartiality and fair play. Statute does not preclude a TM from voting with body. Discussion of vote counters and tellers revealed that two people should count each section in a close vote to avoid a conflict. Town Meeting Time is used instead of Roberts Rules per Moderator initiative. There was a discussion of the Town Meeting reconsideration procedures, revealing that the process is an established Kingston practice, much to someone's chagrin.

Ratings 1 to 5: Coordination, Cooperation and Communication between departments and TM. Office of Treasurer: 5, Town Clerk's office: 5, praise for Shelly Loring. Planning: 4, article coordination and Tom Bott good. Finance: 5, Elaine Fiore very good on Stabilization Fund info. Good mix of people. TA-BOS: hard to rate; 3. Nancy Hewlett good, need protocol for getting things done. Application of resources available does not apply, gets \$100 stipend, membership in Mass. Moderators Assoc.

Asked by TGSC to voice a preference for Open Town Meeting or the Representative form of town meeting, TM prefers an open forum for all citizens and voters to be heard. Turnout and quorum issues persist. There is a need for more education of voters, more committee participation by citizens and an information process that works better.

New Business 8:25 pm. Chair mentioned the need to reschedule interviews with Town Clerk and Planning Board. Accepted Fran Hoeg's letter of resignation and wished her well. Committee felt that there was no need to seek new members due to the degree and depth of immersion required to get up to speed. The committee acknowledged receipt of a letter from acting TA Nancy Howlett concerning job description for TA position.

Mr. Dennehy advised the TGSC to move towards finality on town department reports. We need a work product, and we need to break up the tasks. Paul Tura expressed the need for a proper format for uniformity in reports. We must review our findings in each area and start drafting. The Chair recommended reviewing past minutes to breakdown areas to assign to each member. Next meeting will review categories for reporting, and Chair will send out PDF summaries of minutes for review. Therefore, next meeting TGSC should review minutes on Fincom, Accountant, Treas, Collector, Assessor and IT for actionable items based on objectives, findings and recommendations. It was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:50 pm.