

General Government

Minutes for 8/15/22

1&2. Attendance:

Voting: Clrs Gus Steeves, Jackie Ryan, Jasmin Rivas; Cit Mem Denise Clemence, Martena Shea.

Others: Clrs David Adams, John Daniel, Mike Marketti, Joe Daou, Scott Lazo, Mike Montigny. TM Michael McCall, Cmty Ctr Dir Pat Haddock, Planner/Cons Agent Eric Rumsey, Assessor Rachel Carney, ConCom member Maureen Doyle, Citizen George Chenier. Others walked in near end.

3. GenGov minutes of 8/1/22: Motion to accept: Shea/Rivas. Clemence cited some items were summarized in ways she wouldn't have done it, but didn't propose changes. Accepted 4-0-1 (Ryan abstained).

4. Discuss transfer of \$5000 for TM's deferred compensation: Several people objected to this being on agenda as it was added after the 48-hr limit, saying dept heads can't keep revising agendas & changes make it confusing. Case in point was fact Chair started by working off old emailed agenda before finding current one; he admitted he'd accepted the change. Clemence asked if it was "an emergency," got no clear answer. (McCall later passed a note the chair read saying he had info from Karen Harnois about it, but the committee chose not to revisit it after Clemence asked again if it was "an emergency" and got no response.) Motion to postpone: Clemence/Shea; Approved 5-0.

6. Discuss interim evaluation service contract: Chair took this item out of order. Carney said the current contract with Vision Assoc has expired and is running on a "per diem" basis, but she's had issues with reaching them regarding extension. Bishop & Assoc did reply with quote that saves \$14,700 over 3 years; she has used them before without issues. This will be short-term to give time to seek RFQ for 5-year contract. Change will not affect Vision's website GIS-related work; that's a separate contract. Motion to recommend approval: Ryan/Clemence. Approved 5-0.

5. Wetlands bylaw: Rumsey summarized how its different from state law (see attached list), noting it gives the town power to fine for violations akin to noise & blight violations, rather than having to go to court and having the fines go to the state. Setbacks are based on other towns' bylaws; he reduced them (mostly in half) after prior concerns, and he removed prior language protecting uncertified vernal pools, added language about preventing agricultural animal waste in wetlands. Bylaw includes ability to have developer/seller set aside a bond for things not yet complete (such as landscaping & wetland replication), which Rumsey said is necessary to give new buyers clear title.

Adams requested adding language that commissioners have to have local ID and give 24-hr notice except in emergencies, also asked for an MGL reference for the right to enter private property. Doyle said they already have police-issued IDs, but state doesn't give them. Clemence found and summarized a past KP Law update regarding entering private property: only with consent, court order or in emergency. Some present raised concerns about language calling for 1.5-to-1 wetland replication, so Rumsey said he'd add wording to say the commission can change that to 1:1 if they think the circumstances fit. Chair noted, and Rumsey agreed, such replications usually don't work.

Ryan said she thought original setbacks were too restrictive and covering uncertified pools "gives too much power to the board," but generally thinks the bylaw helps because state law doesn't go far enough. Several people brought up private property concerns, noting entry can be dangerous. Clemence noted this won't apply to average homes usually, but the town often sees the same people not fulfilling their plans for years. Daniel said the Council will read this in entirety.

Rivas asked about fees and the timing of when the council can see them. Rumsey said they'll be in ConCom regulations created after the bylaw's complete and will be a sliding scale based on size and impact of project; they now use the state's fees. He said Con Com can do them by the third reading.

Committee postponed to next meeting (set for 8/30 at 6:30) to see final changes.

Respectfully submitted,

Gus Steeves, GenGov Chair