



TOWN OF GROVELAND

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Groveland, Massachusetts
Town Hall
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Groveland, MA 01834

Town Government Study Committee

**Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2020**

Present: J Osborne, M Dempsey, J D'Amore, J Christopher, B Gorski, A Cox

1. Open meeting at 5:34 pm, motion by Dempsey second by D'Amore. Unanimous.
2. Motion to approve minutes from August 25, 2020 meeting as submitted by Osborne, second by Christopher. Unanimous. Chair signed paper copy to submit to town clerk by secretary.
3. Reviewed relevant statutes regarding a town manager and a town administrator
Charter Commission – involved and time consuming
Special Acts – Legislative approval needed
Local bylaw – approval by Selectmen and Town Meeting

Gorski stated that in her experience a town administrator might be best

Christopher added that a bylaw approach is simplest but could be problematic or be limited, thinks that the Special Act approach may be better.

Dempsey said the Special Act approach takes time and effort to get legislative approval, it might be necessary for a town manager, but the bylaw approach could work for the town administrator.

Cox stated that we could start off with the bylaw and refine it if necessary, finally submitting it for a Special Act. This was done in Hingham.

Christopher agreed with that approach.

D'Amore stated that timing may be important, and the dual approach works well.

Osborne added that we should review all examples of other towns and remove common items and then compare them. Christopher will get more data and Osborne will start it.

4. Discussion of Town Manager vs Town Administrator

Dempsey said that the difference may be a matter of degree, how much authority the position may have.

Christopher said the name does not really differentiate the two. The text of the bylaw or act is what really makes the difference.

D'Amore stated that finance, personnel, procurement, and directing departments are the areas of responsibility, it does not really matter what the title is.

Dempsey asked how is an administrator or manager different from what we have now.

D'Amore said that things were added over time to the Finance Manager and could have been challenged.

Everyone agreed that a two-step approach to get there would work best and we need to work on the job description and responsibilities.

5. Vote for draft document to suggest either a town manager or town administrator to the selectmen

We all agreed that we would not do this because the difference lies in the text of the bylaw or act and not the title.

6. Review of Department changes

Osborne said that as far as restructuring the government functions, this should be done once the administrator or manager is hired. This committee could help with that. It fits with the two-step approach. Some governmental changes might require special legislation to put them into effect anyway. The Special Act for the administrator or manager and the governmental changes could all be done at once.

Christopher added that we may want to look closely at finance and personnel portions of our town bylaws if the Selectmen want to eliminate or change them.

D'Amore and Christopher will check on these.

7. General Discussion

D'Amore said we may want to recommend a ballot vote for next year's town election to approve a bylaw or special act submittal.

Christopher added that a bylaw could be placed on the 2021 town meeting warrant.

8. Next meeting

Next meeting will be held Tues, September 29, 2020 at 5:30 pm at the town hall

9. Motion by Osborne to adjourn at 6:57 pm, second by Gorski. Unanimous.

Submitted by M Dempsey

Approved on 9-29-2020

J D'Amore 