



TOWN OF GROVELAND

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Groveland

Groveland, Massachusetts
Town Hall
183 Main Street
Groveland, MA 01834

Town Government Study Committee

Meeting Minutes September 29, 2020

Present: J Osborne, M Dempsey, J D'Amore, J Christopher

1. Open meeting at 5:34 pm, motion by Christopher second by Osborne. Unanimous.
2. Motion to approve minutes from September 15, 2020 meeting as submitted by Osborne, second by Christopher. Unanimous. Chair signed paper copy to submit to town clerk by secretary, Dempsey.
3. Review of existing bylaws

D'Amore got bylaws for personnel and finance manager. He stated that additions were made to the responsibilities of the finance manager. Later votes were taken to add personnel duties to the finance manager without changing the bylaw. Christopher reported that administrators are commonly in charge of personnel. We could keep the finance manager bylaw the same and add a reference to the personnel bylaw to correct it.

4. Other municipal bylaws

Osborne looked at 21 bylaws from other towns. He thinks we should find one we like best and add what is needed. It will save us from reinventing the wheel. Christopher wants to avoid verbose bylaws and thinks we should write our own.

Osborne stated that Stowe is the one he liked best. Perhaps we should have a subcommittee look at them all and find the best one. An iterative process could be used with the rest of the committee to review additions and changes so we could come to an agreement. Dempsey agreed that writing a document by committee can be difficult.

Osborne said that Stowe, Berlin, Pepperell, and N Andover are among the best and he discussed how he came to that conclusion.

Dempsey asked how much time the finance manager duty typically takes up of the town administrator job.

Christopher said maintaining the bylaw and referencing it in the position could help decrease the time and finance could be split off.

Osborne stated that another important role is building or property management. In the past this was under the finance manager.

D'Amore asked if we were too small for a town administrator. Berlin has 2800 residents, and we have 6500 so probably not.

Dempsey added that we are one of the very few towns in the state that does not have a town administrator or manager.

Consensus was that we want a town manager or administrator and not a hybrid / finance manager.

5. Motion by Osborne to approve recommending a two-step method (bylaw then special act) to get to a town manager or administrator. Second by Christopher. Unanimous.
6. Motion by Dempsey to establish a subcommittee of Christopher and Osborne to examine the best of other town bylaws to come up with a final product. Second by D'Amore. Unanimous.
7. Review of process

Osborne said we need a basic skeleton to start with from other town bylaws that look interesting. We will all get to rewrite, add, and change things.

8. General Discussion

D'Amore said a survey is probably not necessary but a public session will help. The Selectmen will need to get on board and be the ones to sell it to the town. Dempsey asked if we should get input from department managers. Osborne thinks it is too early. Christopher suggest we get a draft bylaw together and circulate it to department managers to get input.

9. Next meeting

Next meeting will be held Tues. October 20, 2020 at 5:30 pm at the town hall.

On the agenda should be review of the first draft of the review document.

10. Motion by Osborne to adjourn at 6:42 pm, second by Christopher. Unanimous.

Submitted by M Dempsey

Approved on 10/22/2020 J D'Amore

