



GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Minutes of the June 26, 2002 Meeting  
Selectmen's Office 7:30 PM

Present: Members George Bailey, David Fixler, David Hearne, Andrew Nebenzahl, Michael Schachter, Leonard Segal, and Anne Carney

Absent: Dennis Friedman, Patricia Zlotin

Also Present: Alice Cheyer, Leslie Koval

Chairman Anne Carney called the meeting to order at 7:40 PM.

The first order of business was to accept Michael Schachter's resignation from the committee. Anne thanked him for all of his work on the committee and wished him success in his college endeavors. She then introduced Andrew Nebenzahl, the new school committee representative.

Leslie Koval spoke during the open forum section of the meeting and she stated that she favored the open town meeting format but favored having more formal rules of order. She felt that limiting speeches as was done at the last meeting was a step in the right direction. She also felt that the whole procedure to register voters when there was likely to be a large turnout had to be addressed. She stated that there could be better use of technology and equipment. She said she did not favor the idea of using a lottery to discuss articles. She felt that people should know when a warrant article was likely to come up. She believes that having two scheduled town meetings was a sound idea. She also believes that the benefits of open town meeting outweigh its drawbacks and inefficiencies. She stated that she didn't want to hand over power to a small group.

Len and George then asked Ms. Koval specific questions concerning other aspects of open town meeting such as the ability to stack the meeting with special interest groups. She felt that it was okay if people wanted to vote only on their specific issues.

Andy then spoke about the fact that open town meeting does have flaws but it allows people to organize around specific issues. Dave Fixler felt that we should think about whether or not open town meeting is the way to legislate. He feels that it is a very difficult forum for discussion of complex issues. He questions whether open town meeting is a sound way to govern from a planning perspective. Dave Hearne also wanted to look at open town meeting from the perspective of governance.

On the agenda item concerning how the school committee and the finance committee relate to each other, there was a lot of discussion amongst the two finance committee members, Dave Fixler and Dave Hearne and the school member Andy Nebenzahl. There appears to be some real difficulties with how the two committees relate to each other. The line between helping the school committee during the budget process and interfering with the school budgeting process seems to be blurred. There was general discussion concerning how this problem could be handled in the future. The fact that the superintendent comes from a background of more communication with finance committees should help. This issue needs to be addressed in the committee's recommendations in one form or another.

George brought up the capital outlay committee and felt that this committee didn't really plan. He felt the capital program should be out in public so that people really understood that the Town had a long-range plan. Everyone agreed that there should be a time-line showing an implementation schedule for a 5-year plan. The idea of having a general meeting of all boards and committees at least once a year was brought up. The committee also decided to take a look at the Standing Building Committee. This will be done at a future meeting.

Agenda item 4 – meeting with the new Moderator was postponed to the next committee meeting since Paul Bouton was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Under item 5 Dave Hearne motioned that the minutes of the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting be accepted. George Bailey seconded the meeting. George, Dave Hearne, Len Segal and Anne Carney voted in the affirmative. Dave Fixler abstained. David Hearne motioned that the minutes of the May 29, 2002 meeting be accepted. Len Segal seconded the motion. George, Dave Hearne, Len Segal and Anne Carney voted in the affirmative. Dave Fixler abstained.

With no further business to discuss, Anne called for adjournment. The motion was seconded by Len Segal and voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM

amc