

## SHARON GOVERNANCE STUDY COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 30 2022

The meeting of the Sharon Governance Study Committee was called to order at 7:33 pm by Chair Paul Pietal.

### Member attendance

Arguimbau: Present	Carver: Present	Geller: Present	Goodman: Present
Keenan: Present	King: Present	Monahan: Present	Pietal: Present
Rangarajan: Present	Wluka: Present		

### Select Board candidate - Sam Liao

Mr. Liao introduced himself. Moved to Sharon over 28 years ago and has been very involved since moving to Town. He first became involved with the High School expansion project and served on the School Committee beginning in 1999 for 11 years. He was elected to the Charter Commission. His career took him away for the last twelve years. He is now back and wishes to continue to be involved.

When asked about the topics within the purview of the charge of this committee, Mr. Liao stated that he is neutral and open to hearing what the Governance Study recommends regarding the size of the Select Board. He mentioned that it may be worth hearing more broad discussions and diversity of opinion on topics. He also feels that open Town Meeting is the purest form of democracy and would prefer to preserve that if possible.

After further discussion and addressing the committee's questions, Mr. Pietal thanked Mr. Liao for taking the time to meet with the committee and discuss these issues this evening.

### Summary update to Select Board

Mr. Pietal summarized the available approved meeting minutes and put together a summary which was included in the meeting folder for review.

### Subcommittee updates

Mr. Keenan advised that the Town Meeting subcommittee met last on March 23rd. Dan Bruce, Moderator in the Town of Walpole was the guest for that meeting. Mr. Bruce explained that he has served five consecutive one-year terms as Moderator. In his role as Moderator, Mr. Bruce appoints members to the Finance Committee and Capital Budget Committee, similar to other communities. Mr. Keenan mentioned that other communities have done away with their Personnel Boards due to difficulty recruiting members. For example, Duxbury and Halifax have dissolved their boards. Walpole's Representative Town Meeting works well and has 150 voting members serving 8 precincts. Elections have become more competitive due to topics similar to what drives attendance at open Town Meeting. During COVID, Walpole had made changes and held their Town Meeting outdoors on a Saturday. Before the pandemic, Walpole's Town Meeting was generally convened for two or three nights. Most recently, it took four hours to complete Town Meeting business in a single session.

Walpole is undergoing reprecincting now which is fairly routine. Mr. Bruce also spoke about electronic voting which he explained was a very successful, time-saving experience. Walpole also had a very positive experience with color-coded voting cards and will not likely return to electronic voting.

Mr. Keenan sent a version of the revised questionnaire which incorporated changes from the last discussion. This was added to the drive in Word format. The .pdf format is cleaner but the Word document was shared for the committee to review. There was a brief discussion about possible technology options for collecting survey data and possible use of a QR code.

Mr. King mentioned that he will have an update after the Boards subcommittee's meeting next week.

## **Liaison updates**

Ms. Arguimbau mentioned that she has emailed the Planning Board chair and reminded the committee that the Planning and Zoning Boards are involved with a zoning codification bylaw. They were given questions about a month or two ago but it is possible that they may not have time to discuss until after the Town Meeting.

Mr. Wluka advised that he had a very engaging conversation with the Board of Health. He has prepared a report which has been uploaded to the drive for the committee to review.

Water Management Advisory Committee reached out and asked if they would be consulted for their opinions on the topics of the committee's charge. Considering the Town's issues with PFAS, a discussion with WMAC is likely advantageous. Mr. Pietal will reach out to that Committee.

## **Plan for public hearing/public input**

Based on the timeline previously shared with the committee, the exploratory phase should be coming to an end. There was a discussion on how best to engage with residents and collect their input. Mr. Carver mentioned that the committee's existence and mission are probably not widely known at this point and may need a campaign of some kind to get the word out.

There was a discussion about surveys and who should be surveyed and the medium for surveying. Mr. Keenan mentioned that the window for collecting survey data from Town Meeting attendees is closing quickly and preparation should be finalized soon if there is an appetite for doing so. The committee discussed who should be consulted and to what degree students should be engaged and how to reach them.

There was also a discussion on utilizing the resources provided by MAPC. Mr. Pietal explained that a letter was received from Mark Fine confirming their engagement. Mr. Wluka will liaise with Mr. Fine and discuss the possibility of their help with a survey.

## **Minutes**

**MOTION:** To approve the minutes of the March 2, 2022 meeting.  
(King - Geller)

Arguimbau: Abstain  
Keenan: AYE  
Rangarajan: AYE  
7-0-3 **PASSES**

Carver: AYE  
King : AYE  
Wluka: Abstain

Geller: Abstain  
Monahan: AYE

Goodman: AYE  
Pietal: AYE

## **Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of posting**

The next scheduled meeting will be April 13.

## **Adjourn**

Seeing no other business to come before the committee, Mr. Pietal adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.