

## SHARON GOVERNANCE STUDY COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 11, 2022

The meeting of the Sharon Governance Study Committee was called to order at 7:35 pm by Chair Paul Pietal.

### Member attendance

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

### Subcommittee updates

Mr. Keenan provided an update on the last meetings of the Town Meeting subcommittee. The subcommittee heard from Mark Fite of Option Technologies, Inc. regarding electronic voting. Mr. Fite provided information about the services provided by OTI and fielded questions about security and cost. Most Towns that avail themselves of the technology rent the equipment as it would take more than four meetings per year to be a cost-effective purchase. In addition to equipment costs, there is a cost for software and on-site assistance.

Mr. Keenan was a guest at the Weston Town Meeting and felt it helpful to see the process firsthand. He will also attend Wayland's Town Meeting. The committee discussed anonymity in electronic voting and felt it would be interesting to see whether that impacts participation.

Mr. Carver presented the data collected from the Town Meeting survey. It was asked whether the Town-wide survey has been uploaded to the drive. Mr. King agreed to find it and share it with Mr. Pietal as he updated it after the last meeting. The discussion concluded with statements surrounding data analysis, interpretation, and utilizing the services of survey professionals. Mr. Rangarajan and Mr. Keenan spoke in defense of the data. Despite the committee not being experts in surveys, co-variant data analysis is taking place. It is understood that the Town Meeting survey data is limited. The larger town-wide survey should be more telling and if professional help can be attained quickly at a low cost, there was support for the committee to pursue those services. It was mentioned that MAPC may be able to help the committee in this area.

### Liaison updates

Mr. Pietal advised he will be meeting with the Water Management Advisory Committee on May 19.

Mr. King mentioned that he had a conversation with the Chair of the Natick Select Board who informed him that Natick is forming a governance study committee, in particular, to gauge interest in the development of a charter. He explained without a charter, it is felt that the community loses development to other communities as they cannot move quickly enough through vetting and permitting processes and a charter would help with that.

### Town meeting debrief

The committee discussed Town Meeting and the data collected from the survey. It was explained that there was a presentation at the start of Town Meeting honoring Bill Heitin's retirement from the Select Board. Mr. King expressed his frustration with the Indigenous People's Day article being abandoned at the last minute. He questioned whether due diligence was neglected to which Mr. Pietal responded. He explained he uncovered a process conflict with the Personnel bylaw shortly before Town Meeting which interfered with the legality of any Town Meeting action.

It was felt that it was a long meeting, particularly the Zoning presentation. The potential for challenges due to concerns surrounding adequate notice with the Zoning article was also discussed.

## Public forum planning

The committee discussed outreach for the public forum. A list of groups in Town was provided for the committee to review ahead of the meeting. If there are any other groups that should be contacted, committee members should add them. A draft of the letter inviting individuals to attend the forum was also provided.

Mr. Keenan mentioned that the public forum and survey were intended to happen simultaneously. Since it appears the survey is not yet ready, should the date of the public forum be adjusted? It was agreed that the proposed date of June 1 for the public forum might be too soon. The Committee discussed moving the date to June 15.

There was a discussion about holding the forum in person. Sharon TV will be consulted about hybrid options for the forum. It was also felt that holding the forum by Zoom rather than in person may increase the potential for participation. The committee also questioned whether capacity on Zoom could be an issue.

## Town website

Mr. Pietal reported that Mr. Rangarajan and Mr. Carver now have access to the GSC landing page on the Sharon website. He asked whether the committee had input or suggestions on updates to content.

## MAPC Update

Mr. Wluka explained that MAPC is putting together a contract package. They have been overloaded with work, thus the delay in engaging with Sharon until now. A more conclusive timeframe is expected after May 17.

Ms. Monahan asked whether MAPC may also be able to help with report writing. Mr. Wluka suggested that if any other questions should be asked of MAPC, please let him know before the 17th so he can bring them up.

## Minutes

**MOTION:** To approve the minutes of the April 27, 2022 meeting.  
(Geller - King)

Wluka: Abstain

Carver: AYE

Geller: AYE

Goodman: AYE

Keenan: AYE

King: AYE

Monahan: AYE

Pietal: AYE

Rangarajan: Abstain

7-0-2 **PASSES**

## Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of posting

The next meeting will take place at 7:30 pm on May 25.

Ms. Monahan explained that she received an email about ranked-choice voting by the Chair of the LMSC who asked whether the committee had considered discussing the topic. It was agreed that the subcommittee would discuss it before the report writing stage.

## Adjourn

Seeing no other business to come before the committee, Mr. Pietal adjourned the meeting at 9:22 pm.