

Meeting Minutes as revised on July 19, 2010

Study Committee: Organizational Structure of Permitting Boards & Departments
Meeting June 28,2010 7 pm Rm 103

Present: Alex McCurdy, Jeff Yates, Peter Casinarri, Donald MacIver, Judy Pickett, Vera Cohen Absent: Ian Gunn

Town Government Staff present: Maren Toohill, Peter Tierney, Maureen Adema, Heather Hampson Absent: Keith Bergman

The charge was read. The minutes were reviewed and accepted. No current mission statements or statements relevant to this committee's work were received from boards.

The MOU/MOA between the BoS and the BoH, and the MOU/MOA between the BoS and the ZBA were reviewed, (available on the town website) along with the history and reasons for these arrangements. Peter Casinarri stated that Chap11, Sect. 27 gives the BoH the ability to hire/fire and have oversight of any BoH staff. Mr. McCurdy will get an opinion from Town Counsel

Discussion ensued. Mr. McCurdy stated that while boards must know they are not controlled by the BoS, human resource policy must be fair and equitable across all the boards. During discussion it was brought out that disciplinary actions and reviews by an elected board are public and have resulted in lawsuits. The Personnel By-Law does not allow the Personnel Boards to overrule an appointing authority. The new personnel by-law is to level the playing field, and boards have the responsibility to act in line with a professional human resource policy; their employees are employees of the town.

Ms.Pickett informed us that when a town has a Charter, that trumps everything. It was agreed that for many reasons, none on the committee want Littleton to adopt the charter form of government.

Mr. McCurdy asked we all to contribute to the questions: what is good about boards sharing staff and what is not good about boards sharing staff ? The lengthy discussion resulted in the list he would email to all committee members, affected staff and/or department heads and affected Boards or Committee's with a request for feedback to be discussed at the next meeting.

We will continue to look at what comparable towns do. Groton has a Letter of Intent **for the project** applicant which states in some detail what the applicant wants to do. This is sent to all the permitting boards as well as the DPW, the light and water departments, and the police and fire departments. All these check the bottom of the letter to indicate either that they have no problem with the application or that the applicant must come before a given board. This informs all the boards at once and seems to be working well in that town.

It was stated that the first customer, the priority customer, of the permitting boards and departments is the town itself. Therefore the organization of these boards and departments should coordinate in the best interests of the town. Database and information sharing is extremely important to that. Littleton needs to build a system to service that interest.

At the next meeting:

Keith will present organizational structures from other towns.

Alex will have an opinion from town counsel regarding BoH autonomy.

Alex will send out his list of plusses and minuses regarding shared staffing. (he has already)

Boards are to send in their up-dated mission statement, as well as a statement relevant to this committee.

The next meeting is on Monday, July 19th at 5pm in Rm 103