

Readfield Appointments AdHoc Committee Final Minutes

October 21, 2015

Members Present: Tom Dunham, Cliff Buuck, Val Pomeleau, Robin Lint, Rob Peale, Henry Whittemore

Members Excused Absent: Gene Carbona

Members Unexcused Absent: none

Present and Participating: Eric Dyer, Town Manager

Guests Present: Grace Keene, Deb Doten

Meeting called to order at approximately 5:00 PM.

Cliff Buuck was nominated, seconded, and unanimously elected chair.

Henry Whittemore was nominated, seconded, and unanimously elected vice-chair.

Val Pomeleau was nominated, seconded as secretary but preferred not to take the job. Her decline was unanimously accepted.

Rob Peale was nominated, seconded, and unanimously elected secretary.

Note: the term committee as used below refers broadly to all types of boards, committees, etc

Question arose whether Robin can be a voting member of the committee. Eric says she can be a voting member.

Cliff pointed out that the terms "policy" and "procedure" are used interchangeably in current documents and that we need to be more consistent.

Discussion ensued regarding the enforceability of guidelines versus policies versus procedures and how they were enacted. Robin indicated we cannot currently

accept applications for committees unless there is an opening but have not adhered to this policy(?).

We discussed what the actual directives for the committee are. Minutes show directives approved by the Select Board (SB) on June 15, 2015. Eric suggested we start with the June 15 approved directives and consider expansion after we complete dealing with those directives. Consensus was to move forward in this manner. Eric mentioned that Chebeague Island has specific ordinances for each committee.

Robin provided a list of issues that have come up regarding committee appointments during her work:

1. Exposure of personal e-mail accounts and suggest they set-up a free e-mail to use for committee business.
2. Address re-appointments in more detail.
3. Conflict of interest being on the board that they are applying for.
4. Resignations (not in writing).
5. No recommendations.
6. First come first serve rule.
7. Format questions the same for each applicant.

Tom stated that some committees are unclear about their roles. Example was the road committee unclear about whether they should be doing field inspections or rely on the road commissioner.

Val expressed the need for procedures for the selection process so SB is not seen as picking favorites. Eric suggests treating the process as if the SB was hiring an employee to provide more confidentiality for applicants, and avoid public questioning and rejection. Other ideas and opinions include:

Need to specify the expertise and qualifications needed;

Some believe state rules or labor laws require that the same questions be asked of all employment applicants but allow for varied follow-up questions;

Need to deal with controversial applicants to avoid dis-function on committees;

Want to standardize but given we are a small town not get hung up on process so flexibility is possible;

According to Eric the SB does not have to follow the laws and rules pertaining to hiring employees but it would be good practice to do so;

Specific questions could be asked in writing with the follow-up questions in the verbal interview;

Should try to avoid a long questionnaire because this may turn off some applicants although plenty of space should be provided for those who like to write;

Boards and committees and/or chairs could provide questions relevant to committee needs;

The need and appropriateness of chair recommendations was questioned and MMA recommends against this to avoid turning committees into private clubs;

The need to include current employment on the application was questioned;

Ideology is not a filter that should be used to select applicants and this could be stated in the first paragraph of the application procedures.

Tom wants to clarify that some committees are intended to serve or assist the selectboard (ex. - road committee) while other function more or less independently (ex. - planning board). Some are required or governed by state statute (ex - planning/appeals boards). This should all be clear in committee expectations and to applicants for committee positions.

We need to be consistent in how we enforce policies and procedures (ex.- how, when we accept applications).

Val stated we need clarification on how the SB will deal with multiple applicants for the same position.

Apparently the town is supposed to maintain a list of volunteers. Question was asked if committee chairs should do this.

The SB starts and finishes the application process. Executive sessions could be used for multiple applicants.

Is there a way to maintain confidentiality without using executive sessions?

Avoid executive sessions which are a lightning rod for the public and have been misused in the past.

Are committee members subject in any way to employment laws?

What is difference between town officer and town official?

Could committees do applicant interviews and make recommendation to SB? (MMA does not like chair recommendations).

Lists of needs and applicant questions from committees would be helpful.

Need to be able to deny applicants that don't fit the specific committee.

Applications go in SB packet on website. Are there things that should be redacted such as phone numbers and email addresses? Should there be a checkbox where applicants give permission for information to be public?

All members of the Ad Hoc committee should see the written information relevant to the committee provided by MMA so we all have access to the same information and can see the reasoning behind their recommendations.

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 4, at 5 PM.

Homework assignments:

The current version of the Procedures for Application for Appointment and Re-Appointment was split as follows:

Henry: 1st paragraph and section 1

Robin: Sections 2 and 4

Eric: Section 5

Rob and Cliff: Section 3

Tom and Val: Section 6

In addition all members are free to look at the whole thing.

Respectfully submitted:

Rob Peale, Secretary, Ad Hoc Committee