

**TOWN OF HOLLISTON  
Governance Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, January 5, 2023

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Remote

Attending: As indicated by roll call: Len Engel, Hayley Fetrow and Sam Tyler were present.  
Sue Nersessian was absent.

**Opening Statement**

Mr. Tyler read the state required opening statement for virtual public meetings.

**Minutes**

Mr. Engel moved, Ms. Fetrow seconded and it was voted by roll call to approve the minutes of the November 21 and December 7, 2022 meetings:

	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Mr. Engel	X			
Ms. Fetrow	X			
Ms. Nersessian			X	
Mr. Tyler	X			

**Ongoing Projects**

Mr. Tyler noted that the deadline for submitting articles for the May town meeting is March 13 and the deadline for annual reports is February 14.

Mr. Tyler said the Committee has a revised draft proposed By-Law Study Committee By-Law to have five members with staggered three year terms. Other issues for the Committee to address include Select Board size, the allocation of duties between the Select Board and the the Town Administrator, upgrading the Town Administrator position, the Moderator and Planning Board by-laws, a Scenic Road by-law, and possibly a charter. Ms. Fetrow suggested the possibility that the Planning Board sponsor or cosponsor the proposed changes in the Planning Board by-law so that there is ownership of the change on their part. Mr. Tyler suggested proposing the By-Law Study Committee By-law in May and deferring the Moderator, Planning Board and Scenic Road by-laws to the fall. Mr. Engel said he agreed that the Planning Board should sponsor the Planning Board and Scenic Road by-laws based on the recommendation of this Committee. There was a consensus to discuss this with the Planning Board.

Ms. Fetrow and Mr. Engel said they agree that the creation of a By-Law Study Committee is important for the long term maintenance of the General By-Laws. They are ready to approve the latest draft. Mr. Tyler suggested waiting to take a formal vote until all members of the

Committee are present. Ms. Fetrow volunteered to coordinate publicity on this issue through the Holliston Reporter once the draft is formally approved.

Mr. Tyler said the Committee could also resurrect the proposal for a Capital Planning Committee. Mr. Engel said this would also involve a change to the Finance Committee By-Law. Ms. Fetrow agreed to draft a problem statement for this proposal.

#### **Select Board Size**

Mr. Tyler said nine of 13 possible survey responses from former and current members of the Select Board have been received. He will reach out one last time for an additional response. He has consolidated the responses and it appears that not many of the responses advocate for a five member Select Board. He can share the responses with the other members of the Committee.

Ms. Fetrow said that three of the issues identified by the Town Administrator as being time consuming for the Select Board - approving weekly warrants, dangerous dog hearings and one day alcoholic beverage licenses - would require either by-law or special act changes. Other issues such as block party permits and acceptance of gifts would be policy changes. She will communicate again with the Town Administrator on possible draft language for these changes.

#### **Ben Sparrell**

Mr. Sparrell, Chair of the Select Board, joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Tyler said the Committee has prepared an outline of the report that was requested by the Select Board in December. Mr. Sparrell said his intent in asking for the report was to understand what work is ongoing, what recommendations are ready and what needs to be done to complete each task and who should do it. Mr. Engel said his understanding is that the report should include what we are working on, what's been done, what needs to be done, what we are thinking about proposing, what are priorities if the Committee is disbanded? Mr. Sparrell said the key for him is what needs to be done and by whom. He can't speak for the other members of the Board and their expectations. Prioritization would be helpful if it is a long list of things to be done. Mr. Sparrell left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Ms. Fetrow said the report takes precedence over any other issue before the Committee. We will see whether the Committee is going to continue once the Select Board receives the report. Until then, it doesn't make sense to spend a lot of time on other issues. Mr. Engel suggested that the Committee review Mr. Tyler's report outline and start to fill in any blanks.

#### **Public Comment**

There was none.

#### **Next Meeting**

The Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet at 6:00 p.m. on January 19.

At 7:26 p.m. Mr. Engel moved, Ms. Fetrow seconded and it was voted by roll call to adjourn the meeting:

	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Mr. Engel	X			
Ms. Fetrow	X			
Ms. Nersessian			X	
Mr. Tyler	X			

Respectfully submitted,



Paul D. LeBeau

Date Approved by the Committee: January 19, 2023