SELECT BOARD
Strategic Planning Session Minutes
Monday, June 4, 2018 at 9:00am
Shaker Hills Country Club, 146 Shaker Road, Harvard, MA

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Chair Lucy Wallace. Selectmen Ken Swanton, Kara Minar, Alice von Loesecke and Stu Sklar were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

The meeting began with discussion about the newly adopted Town Charter.

Charter topics/action items discussed:

1) Begin recruitment for appointments to previously elected committees/boards. It was suggested the most critical to appoint would be *Board of Health, Planning Board and Park & Recreation Commission* Which could be followed by the other previously elected boards and positions, such as Cemetery Commission and Tree Warden.. These appointments will require interviews with candidates in March & April. It was suggested an effort should be made to encourage volunteers to seek appointments, even if current board or committee holder has indicated a willingness to continue.

2) Integrate Master Plan Select Board action items with new role in the Charter. Topics of particular concern include housing (for seniors looking to downsize; working with Planning Board to improve cluster housing bylaw); addressing Ayer Road commercial district improvements. Reference was made to Chapter 11, Action Plan, of the 2016 Master Plan.

3) The process described in the Charter requires the Select Board to prepare the annual operating budget, with review and input from the Finance Committee. It was suggested that the process would move more smoothly and efficiently if the two boards met together when town departments, boards and committees present their budgets. Budgets will be due by December 7th and disseminated to both committees concurrently for their review. Questions on the budgets will be due the following week and will be sent to the boards, requesting answers which will be duel in early January prior to meeting with the boards. A tentative schedule would have the Select Board and Finance Committee meeting each week in January.

4) It was suggested a template (a la Mary Wilson's budget) be developed to provide direction for committees and boards in developing their budgets. In addition, a three question survey will be developed and distributed to all departments/boards/committees seeking feedback on budget process. (AvL)

5) Development of a monthly calendar with respect to the budget process to assist Select Board in meeting responsibilities. Bragan noted budget questions will be distributed to the Select Board and Finance Committee at the same time. Date for completion of Strategic Plan is August 7th.

6) Section 2-6 of the Charter sets forth the process for initiation of warrant articles. The Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator will create a form required for submission of warrant articles for town meetings. There was some confusion over whether all articles submitted to the Select Board had to be placed on the warrant or if it was mandatory to only citizens' petitions. Town Counsel's interpretation will be sought to clarify this section.

7) The Charter requires the Select Board to present a State of the Town report to the Annual Town Meeting. Alice von Loesecke offered to develop a meaningful format for the State of the Town for ATM (AvL)

Charter - Administrative Organization items

Facilities Manager:
The Select Board will move forward with creation of a full time position to accommodate description outlined in the Charter. (MS & TB)

Director of Community and Economic Development:
The Select Board will move forward with creation of a full time position to accommodate description outlined in the Charter. (MS & TB)

Communication goals for coming year

1) Uniform email addresses for all committee and board members through gmail to be posted on website. (TB, MS, JD)
2) Develop policy for disseminating information on Next Door Harvard (AvL & KM)
3) Clarify expectation to boards/committees on the Open Meeting Law. (JD & Town Clerk)
4) Foster excitement for new volunteers and facilitate mentors. Marie Sobalvarro recalled organizing a Volunteer Fair, when residents could visit with representatives of the many town boards and committees to learn about their responsibilities. It was suggested we hold a Volunteer Fair again, perhaps in conjunction with the League of Women Voters in early 2019 and prior to the Select Board advertising openings.

Capital Project goals for coming year

1) Tim Bragan distributed a draft proposal for a Standing Building Committee, the intent being instead of individual committees being created for each project there be a single committee whose members would have the appropriate skills for construction projects. It was agreed such a committee made sense. The draft proposal will be refined and considered further at the June 19 Select Board meeting. (TB)
2) Kara Minar presented an updated on proposed improvements to Ayer Rad. It was agreed to initiate the process of seeking TIP funds. (SS and KM)

Select Board Policies and Procedures goal for coming year

1) Lucy Wallace highlighted a couple of policies that do not comport with the Charter. In addition, she noted the policy prohibiting Select Board members from serving on Select Board committees as one no longer followed. A more complete review and suggested revisions will be considered at a future meeting. (LW, TB & MS)

Devens

1) Given the number of qualified and diverse candidates interviewed for this committee, it was agreed to increase membership of the Harvard – Devens Jurisdiction Committee from 7 to 9 members. Appointments will be made at the June 5th Select Board meeting.

Strategic Plan Items (LW will draft initial strategic plan)

1) Identify how to improve the town's ability to fund the new Hildreth Elementary School (HES) by a combination of redirecting reserves, containing expenditures and considering new initiatives that increase revenue including senior housing.
2) Develop a unified positive vision for the Ayer Road Commercial District
3) Create plan prioritizing anticipated Capital Projects
4) Operation under the new Town Charter.
5) Establish clear economic development goals for the town.
6) Devens
7) Implement SMART (Save money and reduce trash) Plan

Notes: Compile list of items necessary to amend in the Charter for annual town meeting.

HES build on time, on budget and on time.

Meeting date changes during FY20 budget season:

January 23rd instead of January 22nd

February 26th instead of February 19thSummer Schedule:

July 10, July 31 & August 14 *September 5th instead of 4th.*

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm