

RTM Special Committee on Governance

October 2, 2018

Attendees (districts): Tom Broadhurst III (5); Josh Brown (8); Andrew Chapin (8); Bill Collins (11); Betsey Frumin (9); Dean Goss (1); Robert May (12); Robert McKnight (4); Alexis Voulgaris (6). Absent: Kimberly Blank (7); Tom Conelias (3); Lucia Jansen (7); Wilma Nacinovich (2); Alan Small (10); Lisa Stuart (11).

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm. The minutes from the September 11th meeting were adopted by unanimous consent.

The committee continued to work through the master action list. The following action list groups were discussed:

Groups 8 and 22: Reconciliation of proposed legislation, especially as it relates to SOMRs and ordinances.

The committee would like to solicit feedback from the Moderator and the chairman of the Legislative and Rules committee on how best to balance the ability to offer amendments from the floor, while also allowing members time to properly understand the impact of proposed amendments.

Group 9. Mid-term vacancy best practices and protocols.

Develop a template to be included in the District/Committee Chair Orientation Manual that outlines best practices for conducting an interim election. Template should include how to properly post and notice a vacancy within the local community, as well as a list of organizations that should be contacted to promote the vacancy.

Group 12. Ordinances.

Bill Collins, Andy Chapin, Bob May and Tom Broadhurst have agreed to form a working group that will take a closer look at how the RTM manages ordinances.

Group 16. Communication (internal and external)

Bob May and Betsey Frumin are scheduled to meet with a representative from the Town Clerk's office to confirm what the Clerk's functional responsibilities are for the RTM. Enhanced district and committee communication guidelines will be addressed in the orientation manuals being developed by the committee.

Group 21. Committee Reports.

Josh Brown will draft and circulate a template identifying the components of a fair and balanced committee report. This template will be included in the Chair Orientation Manual.

Group 31. RTM meeting start time.

The Governance Committee believes that the full RTM meeting time should remain at 8:00 pm (and 7:00 pm for the May meeting). Standing committees are encouraged to arrange joint meetings when multiple committees (that meet on the same evening), are considering the same item. Standing committee and district chairs may, when necessary and with proper notice, amend their meeting start times to accommodate discussions that may require greater deliberation time.

Group 32. Petition standards for poor attendance.

The RTM does not have the authority to impose different petition signature requirements for members who have poor meeting attendance.

Group 35. Distribution of budget material.

As the town moves towards the electronic distribution of budget materials, this should allow for all members to access the materials in a timely way and not rely on the postal service for delivery.

Group 38. The role of the district chair in sharing information.

The "Chair Orientation Manual", will include a section on best practices for communication between chairs, members, and members of the public.

Group 39. Promoting diversity in committee assignments.

The Governance Committee has added this suggestion to the list of questions being referred to the Law Department.

Group 40. Election process for boards and commissions.

The RTM is not the nominating authority for the majority of boards and commissions. The Governance Committee recommends that as part of any new member orientation that a member of the Selectmen's Nominations Advisory Committee (SNAC) attend and provide an overview of how people are selected to serve on a town board or commission.

Group 44. Changing party affiliation to balance town agency boards.

The RTM has no authority to institute a rule prohibiting someone from changing his/her party affiliation.

"Introduction to the RTM" manual.

Betsey Frumin updated the committee on her work concerning the manual. Topics for this manual should include, but are not limited to; Congratulations and welcome to the RTM; History of the RTM, Historical highlights of the RTM; Powers of the RTM (what the RTM is responsible for/limits of the RTM); Description of "How we do things" (what the Call/Explanos are); Basic primer on Robert's Rules; Best practices for meeting conduct; Overview of the annual budget process, and Description of the December organizational meeting. A link will also be provided to "Foundational

Documents”, such as the Rules of the RTM, The Charter of the Town of Greenwich, the Code of Ordinances, and FOIA guidelines.

Andy Chapin, Bob May, and Bob McKnight have volunteered to work on the "Chair Manual": Topics for this manual include, but are not limited to; Best practices for running an organized and fair meeting; Robert’s Rule primer; Template for writing a committee report; How to conduct a fair and uniform interim election; How to conduct the December organizational meeting; Description of how the Call and Explanos are organized; FOIA guidelines

Tom Broadhurst , requested time to discuss how we can assist and support new RTM members who are interested in becoming more involved with the RTM, but might not fully understand the proper process (E.g., drafting amendments to proposed legislation). The committee agreed that the district and committee chairs, Moderator Pro Tem, and RTM Moderator are responsible for educating all RTM members about proper process as well as the duties and functions of the RTM. The committee will further explore and define how RTM leaders can be more effective teachers and mentors in the Chair Orientation Manual.

The next Governance Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 25th at 7:00 pm in the Mazza Room.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alexis Voulgaris

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