

RTM Special Committee on Governance

October 25, 2018

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

Chair Alexis Voulgaris opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. Bob Brady, Chair of the RTM Technology Advisory Group, reported on its progress. TAG is a loose affiliation of interested parties on the RTM. TAG will propose the RTM create a permanent Technology Committee, modeled on the LCC, with 5 to 7 but no more than 9 members with technology skills. The proposed committee will have an operational function and a budget. Its principal tasks would be to interface between RTM leadership, IT and the Clerk's office, representing the RTM's interests and needs, and to serve as website content managers. The proposed committee would need to establish the role of the Town's IT department vis a vis the RTM and whether it should serve the RTM. Mr. Brady proposed a budget of \$40-50,000 per year. The technology committee would not have items referred to it. TAG decided against recommending an ad hoc committee nor attaching technology responsibilities to an existing committee.

Bill Collins noted that the Town had relaunched a new website and suggested that TAG use the same company to improve the RTM website and give it the same look and usefulness as the Town's website with modules for agenda and minutes. Mr. Collins inquired about the cost to set up a new RTM website. Mr. Brady replied that the proposed new committee would determine those costs, which would include the need to transfer archival data, train RTM members and cover maintenance.

Next, the committee continued to work through its list of suggestions.

#13 Surveying other RTMs for website designs, best practices, ethical issues and general ways to improve our efficiency and effectiveness - We agreed that this is a good venture warranting further exploration and discussed whether our committee or a separate one should tackle this. We will ask TAG to look into other website designs. Tom Broadhurst offered to lead this effort and Lisa Stuart will assist him.

#15 Establish a dedicated Ethics Committee - The Town already has an ethics committee that opines on ethical issues and monetary conflicts of interest. We believe a number of RTM members raised this issue with regard to dealing with unruly RTM members. We clarified that state statutes mandate that only a convicted felon can be removed or suspended from elected office. We are going to discuss this further with the Town Attorney.

#25 Establish a Capital Projects Review Committee - There was general support for this idea, and we discussed the value of having a full 12-person committee with each

district represented. We want to review all suggestions for the creation of new committees before determining those which we want to recommend to the full RTM.

#26 Establish an Audit Committee – The BET has an Audit Committee and they are ex officio members of the RTM. The audit is outside of the scope of the RTM.

#27 Establish a Town Properties Committee to evaluate leases, use of buildings, etc. – These leases and buildings fall under the purview of the First Selectman. In the past, there was a special lease committee that recommended the First Selectman maintain a tickler file to alert the RTM when leases were about to expire. We will ask the Selectman about this process and whether it is working. Committee members expressed concern that the RTM was notified about leases needing renewal with inadequate time for them to be studied. We decided to recommend that the Finance Committee take on the responsibility for analyzing leases and the use of buildings. Mr. Collins noted that leaseholders need to be more diligent about having adequate insurance coverage. It was recommended that a master list of these properties be kept on a public website.

#28 Establish a Science, Technology and Engineering Committee – We believe these issues are adequately covered by our existing committees (Public Works, Land Use, Legislative and Rules, for example). When necessary, the Moderator will appoint a special committee.

#29 Do not have too many sub-committees - We are endeavoring to not let sub-committees proliferate. We will recommend that any special committees formed have a minimum of five members.

#34 Sustainability Committee – We are not in favor of such a committee because it is beyond the scope of the RTM.

#36 Appoint RTM members to cover Town Boards and Commissions and report back to the RTM - Most RTM Committees already cover Town Boards and Commissions as part of their regular committee work. In the Chairs manual, we will recommend that Committee Chairs invite their respective department's spokesperson and other stakeholders within its area of responsibility to give updates at Committee meetings.

#41 Improve Budget Sub-Committee reporting guidelines – We all agreed these need to be rewritten, and Lucia Jansen agreed to take on this responsibility.

#42 Standardize RTM rules across districts – We agreed this is an important goal, particularly with regard to the December District Organizational meetings. This uniformity will be accomplished with the Committee and District Chair Manual.

We then discussed how best to inform RTM members about the process of bringing a motion forward. We agreed that members should first consult their District Chair

or Committee Chair and then consult the Moderator Pro Temp. In both the Chair and Member manuals, we will include basic instructions regarding how to bring a motion before the RTM. We will also discuss how to conduct interim elections. It is our goal to establish a consistent set of interim election protocols to be used by all districts, that is fair and fully transparent. We then discussed whether items placed on the call should require more signatures or have a reading period to insure they are properly vetted before coming before the RTM.

The next Governance Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 6th at 7:00 pm, in the Gisborne Room. Moderator Tom Byrne will be there.

Ms. Voulgaris adjourned the meeting at 8:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa G. Stuart

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