

Minutes
Town Council Steering Committee Meeting
February 28, 2022
7:00 PM

Meeting Video Link:

<https://coventryct.viebit.com/player.php?hash=12OsGJ20RF0F>

1. Call To Order, Roll Call:

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Matthew Kyer at 7:02 p.m. (Hand: moves French: Seconds)

Members Present:

Matthew Kyer, John French, Johnathan Hand, John Elsesser (Town Manager), Lisa Thomas (ex officio, Council Chairwoman)

Also Present:

Nicole Archambault-Minutes Clerk-remote (Introduced by Elsesser)

2. Acceptance of Minutes: January 24, 2022

Hand: Questioned the impact bargain verbiage for revision, but did not need change

Moved: Kyer, Second: Hand -Vote: Unanimously All in Favor. Motion Carries

3. Reports:

a. Chairperson: None

b. Committee Members: None

c. Board & Commission Monthly Reports For Review:

Vacancy Report Questioned By Hand- Auditor Start and End Date

Elsesser: Bloomberg Completed Contractual Obligations, New Auditor Needed By June-3 yr. Term. Discussed School Building Committee Will Have Vacancy Soon. Chair, Thinking Of Resigning.

Kyer: Correction Needed On Report- Opening in Parks and Rec. Seat Filled by Pam Miller, list her on report. Asked If Anything Needed To Be Reviewed on Expiration and Board Member Reports

4. Resignations:

a. Planning & Zoning Commission: Mouradjian

Resignation accepted. Hand- Thanks to Arianna Mouradjian for her service and wish her the best.

5. Reappointments:

- a. Economic Development Commission: Statement Of Interest Phil Jobbagy
- b. Economic Development Commission: Statement Of Interest Darby Pollansky

Thomas: Suggested for the Land Use Committees to take time to review appointments, possible discussion with Steering Committee members.

Kyer: Ask Bill and Darby to sit with Steering Committee prior to formal appointment

French: Agrees that interviews will have benefits for new members

Kyer: Ask to have Laura Stone reach out to these members to have them at an upcoming meeting for introduction and refresher of members on these committees

Elsesser: Consensus for interviews

Agreed to have Phil Jobbagy, Darby Pollansky, & Robert Burrington (Planning & Zoning Commission) meet with Steering Committee on April 25th, 2022 at Regularly Scheduled Meeting.

6. Appointments

- a. Building Code Board of Appeals: AJ Jenuska

Have not heard from him

Kyer: No Motion to appoint, until interview held. Will reach out to rearrange meeting, to see if it needs to be continued. Will not be on next agenda.

- b. Human Rights Commission: Mike Shor

Hand: Moves for Appointment French: Seconds for Discussion

Discussed procedure for appointments and if Mike Shor needed to come in for interview prior to appointment. Land use has bigger impact on community and is regulatory. Human Rights Commission Members don't need to be fully vetted. Mike Shor will be great fit for this committee due to vision and experience.

Kyer: All in Favor for Mike Shore Appointment Recommendation To Human Rights Commission

Hand, French, Kyer: Aye-Unanimous Vote

- c. Planning and Zoning Commission: Robert Burrington

See Item 5 discussion above, Burrington being asked to attend Regularly Scheduled Steering Committee Meeting on April 25th at 7 p.m. to interview with Steering Committee Members

7. Town Council Policy For Continuation of Hybrid In-Person/Remote Meetings:

a. Report on Feasibility Of Remote Participation and Voting During Meetings

Elsesser: Thinks that both items 7 & 7A should be removed from agenda and let state law and policy govern, as it has allowed more participants to attend meetings. Kyer discussed that if the state said that this can no longer be continued, the Town would need to abide by those laws and policies. Reviewing if the Town should end it, proactively, before State implements that action. Kyer discussed benefits of meeting Quorums when people can attend from home. Elsesser discussed the downside of voting at Town Meetings, due to certified electors. Agreed to remove from the agenda and bring it back into discussion if needed. Meetings will continue will current procedures/practices, until council feels in-person meetings are necessary, or State requires it.

8. Town Council Policy For COVID Testing Under OSHA Vaccination Requirements:

Elsesser: Has revised policy, revised on February 28, 2022. Discussion ensued as the documentation was created in the thick of COVID. Town of Coventry should adhere by CDC Guidelines. Elsesser went over revisions.

1st paragraph, pg. 1-Deleted OSHA compliance, added in “and Boosted”, as original did not mention boosting. Complying with face covering requirements, they can change weekly. Other changes to testing results.

2nd paragraph, pg 2.- added “may be” required by this policy, in regard to face coverings.

Thomas mentioned: Last paragraph mentioned that vaccinations are available at no cost. Should be removed, as that cannot be guaranteed and may not be a permanent truth. Kyer: Agrees that whole sentence should be removed. All agree to strike 1st sentence of last paragraph.

OSHA policies and self-testing items have been struck from pages 4 and 5. Added in about self-test kits, so that employees can test at home.

Quarantine and Isolation guidance, 10 full days changed to 5 days.

Discussed that Town has the right to require or not require face masks, regardless of vaccination status. Allowing flexibility with policies. Hospitalizations were also discussed, along with the policies on hiring due to vaccination status. New Hire section to be removed from the policy as they must adhere to the policies already established in the document. Not difference in requirements between new hires and existing employees in regard to vaccination and face mask policies.

Kyer: Suggested to bring cleaned up version to Town Council meeting for review, received general consensus for that action. Motion and Voting will take place at Town Council Meeting.

9. Current Process For Reporting Of Blight and Zoning Violations:

Cassidy Hill Memo, From Eric Trott reviewed. Hand questioned how it went unnoticed for so long, and thinks this committee is to oversee the process or organize the process to eliminate

future occurrences. Elsesser commented that the State changed regulations, not law. Local Government does not get notifications of changes to regulations.

Kyer: Concerned with burdens to staff

Elsesser: Thought that is a concern but does not outweigh the other burdens issues like this cause and a checklist, trigger, or new procedures need to be implemented by Planning and Zoning Commission, so that these do not go under the radar. Hand: Recommended project cover pages, or electronic systems. Elsesser: Agreed, but it needs to be not dependent on staff, to be followed through with even with staff changes due to turnover. A memo will be written to Eric. Hand: Suggested public education component to aid in complaints/reports by the public and increase feedback.

All in agreement to implement system to check deadlines for compliance and increase public feedback.

Thomas: Added that there needs to be consistency for businesses to rely on, and that the public needs consistency for the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the community. Expressed gratitude to Eric for his thorough report.

Discussion moved to Blight and Zoning Ordinance, and further review of the attached documents on the agenda to review process and discuss suggestions for revision. Thomas: Questioned why 1997 Ordinance was not adopted. Kyer: Doesn't want to overwhelm Planning and Zoning at this point. Hand: Suggests that it is continued or tabled. Elsesser: Sees urgency, but there are 2 projects currently going on with upcoming deadlines. Kyer: Asked that John Elsesser and Eric Trott to report back to fill in on the two major projects and the Zoning Ordinances. Members of Planning and Zoning, along with Eric Trott to meet with Steering Committee at a later date.

10. Review of Training Provided To Elected And Appointed Boards and Commissions In Procedure, Regulations, And Ethics:

Kyer: Had edits

Pg. 2, add new revision date for revisions made. A missing "." After November. Realized his handbook was outdated, period was taken care of.

Remove reference to channel number on page 4. Reorder Volunteer Code Of Conduct, item currently at 10, move to number 2 and move others down.

Thomas: Fires item worded inaccurately. Firearms regulation for bringing on to Town Property. Revisit adding signs to State/Local Government building on a later agenda. Suggested making the entire document gender neutral. Section C, third line-Immediate Family, changed to Immediate Family Member. Section C, Subsection 3, remove copywrite symbol to regular "c". Pg. 8 Section 1-2, change "form" to "for".

Kyer: Suggests that the codes should be worded as complete sentences.

Hand: Suggested grammatical changes to words, adding oxford commas throughout the document, and other changes to document fluidity. Agrees with the Gender Neutrality. Add "s" after standard in the second sentence in the Declaration of Policy. Questions Page 10, excerpts from the Charter, Board of Tax review and who comprises it. Suggests change from Charter

Cable to Spectrum Cable. Veterans Memorial Group, change to Veterans Memorial and Events. On page 25, add references to Town Council.

Kyer-Ad-Hoc Farmers Market is not listed

Elsesser: Questioned date listing in being a part of the handbook. Kyer: Suggests removal, and adding for current date listing visit etc....

11. Adjournment:

Motion: Hand 9:14 p.m. Second: French

Submitted by,

Nicole Archambault

Nicole Archambault

Steering Committee Minutes Clerk

PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Steering Committee at the next Steering Committee meeting. Please see the next Steering Committee meeting minutes for approval or changes to these minutes.