

MINUTES
Town Council Steering Committee Meeting
August 22, 2022
7:00 PM
Town Hall Annex

Video Link to Meeting:
[8-22-2022 Town Council Steering Committee Meeting \(viebit.com\)](https://viebit.com)

1.Call to Order, Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Matthew Kyer at 7:02 PM

Hand: Motioned to move meeting to Town Hall Annex, due to technical difficulties in Town Hall Conference Rm. B, French seconds

Vote: Unanimously all in favor

Members Present:

Matthew Kyer, Jon Hand, John French, John Elsesser (Town Manager), Lisa Thomas (Council Chairwoman)

Also Present: Nicole Archambault (Minutes Clerk-Remote)

2.Acceptance of Minutes: June 27, 2022

Hand: Moved to accept the minutes of June 27, 2022, French seconds

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimously all in favor

3.Reports:

Chairperson: Kyer had no report.

Committee Members: No additional reports.

Review/Possible Recommendations: Board & Commission Monthly Reports: Kyer asked that Elsesser comment on anything of importance the Committee should be aware of. Elsesser explained that an email was sent earlier with a list of upcoming vacancies. This will be a priority to fill, and make sure they meet their quorum. Kyer added that in the interim these committees will need to plan for members who need to be present, are present, so that the committees meet their quorum. Thomas discussed the number of alternates for the committee in question, and it was noted that there is another alternate not looking to be reappointed.

No questions on monthly reports.

4.Resignations/Not Wishing to Be Reappointed:

CoventryVision: Gregory Butler

Discussion: Elsesser commented that the resignation was due to Butler getting a job that interfered with his ability to attend meetings. Resignation accepted by the Steering Committee.

5. Discussion/Possible Action: Municipal Flag Flying Policies:

Kyer asked Elsesser to share with the committee in regard to this policy. Elsesser explained that it is important that there is a firm policy in place moving forward. Noted we have been careful with what groups have been allowed to have their flag flown and have to be careful when making exceptions, as it could interfere with the community as a whole. The POW flag flying at Veterans' Memorial Green is safe as exception as it is cleared as a military flag, but wants there to be a clear, standard policy for other flags to be flown or not flown in town. Draft was provided via agenda attachment for the committee.

Thomas commented on the clarity of the policy, and it is the extent of what it should be. Hand thanked Elsesser for putting the draft together.

French: Moved to recommend that the Municipal Flag Flying Policy be brought forward to the full Town Council for consideration, Hand seconds.

Vote: Unanimously all in favor

6. Consideration/Possible Action: Roles And Responsibilities For RFP For Town Manager Recruiting Consulting Firms:

Elsesser discussed the timeline of wanting to know roles by November and have the work out on the streets by January, which could be complicated with the budget. He added it is best to have a little more time. Wants Steering to think of the logistics now, and where responsibilities and roles will land within the Town Council, and who will put together the RFP. Thomas clarified that this is was for an RFP to recruit a consulting firm. Elsesser explained that you want to get someone on board early so that you will know the price, have funding in place, and can get comfortable. He added that of responding firms, it will need to be narrowed down to 2 or 3. They will need to be interviewed, and someone needs to take on the role of interviewing, whether it be whole Council or just the Steering Committee. Taking care of this soon, means it will not be rushed later.

Kyer asked if Steering and Finance work hand-in-hand in other towns and commented that when he hears the word "funding" he thinks that Finance should have responsibility in the matter. Elsesser expressed that the first step is knowing how the Council wants to do this, and move forward. He added that Finance will handle the approving of funds, but it is not known how much it will cost at this point. Roles for getting ready should be discussed, and what the Town Council wants is the priority at this time. He also noted that different communities do things different ways, and discussed some variations.

Thomas expressed that at the next meeting there should be an agenda with examples of RFPs for viewing and discussion, and does not think any steps should be taken at tonight's meeting.

Kyer questioned if the Town Council could have a sub-committee for this. Thomas explained there can be more involvement during the hiring process, but this discussion is about simply putting together and RFP for a recruiting firm, and doing so should stay within the council.

Elsesser discussed that they need to address this step by step, does the Council want a professional consultant's help, etc. The committee expressed they felt having a recruiting consultant's help is important. Elsesser further explained that Steering should fine tune what they feel comfortable with, and explained the process for moving forward in a little more detail in regards to next steps. Noted that he will have more supporting information and

documents for review at next Steering meeting. Elsesser is concerned that the final timeframe will fall within the budget timeline, which could cause an issue. Also noted that the timeline needs to be kept compact and that once an offer is made to a candidate, it needs to be followed through with a minimum 2-year commitment. Other towns could be competing at the same time, and we want to avoid doing things unethically. At the point of hiring a candidate, the Town needs to move quickly and make sure that it is not a popularity contest.

Thomas commented the things Elsesser mentioned is towards the end of the hiring process and right now we need to put together the RFP.

Kyer wants to look at sample RFPs and establish a timeframe to be able to make a recommendation to full Town Council. Thomas added that the Finance Committee can look into price ranges and averages in costs for these firms on their next agenda, while Steering is doing their part. French commented that Finance should wait until Steering has more information since they only meet two weeks later.

Elsesser added a few more comments on the importance and value of having a firm as they do pre-vetting, handle a lot of the work, and think of things the Council may not think of.

7. Discussion/Possible Action: Annual Volunteer/Employee Appreciation:

Gift for volunteer/employee appreciation was reviewed and discussed. Item is Regatta Notepad with sticky notes and stylus imprinted with Town of Coventry Logo. French wanted to make sure that it was something our volunteers would use. Elsesser said it was hard to come up with something different and explained it has a great use, plus has Town of Coventry logo.

Letter to be sent with gift was discussed as well. Kyer asked for input from committee members and noted that it would be signed by current Chairwoman. Hand suggested that the first sentence in second paragraph could be toned down some. Thomas and French expressed their satisfaction with the wording. Hand will send alternate suggestions to Thomas for consideration. Elsesser commented that he thought it should be added to the letter to express how blessed we are as a Town to have these incredible volunteers step forward and contribute to make the community better.

8. Journal Inquirer, 8-11-22: Town Leaders Create Videos To Educate Residents About Budgets:

Elsesser noted that 3 towns have already gotten together to do some of these videos, and didn't know if the Steering Committee wanted to reach out to these towns to see if we could join in on the efforts. The steering committee expressed great interest in creating these types of budget videos and is excited to have this opportunity, as it would benefit the town. Elsesser noted that we would possibly be able to make edits that relate directly to Coventry. He also added that rather than start from scratch, they already have something in motion that could be tailored. Elsesser added that instead of bringing this to Town Council, it would be faster for Steering to handle on their own.

Kyer questioned if students from Coventry High School could be included. Elsesser explained that was a possibility to help with production and communications. He added we could have members from CoventryVison, or interns help too. Kyer added benefits of using CHS students would include an increase in viewers, as well as upcoming voters being more informed/ knowledgeable on the budget process. Elsesser noted that Coventry could do more of a lead in, based off of the main videos that are already being produced.

Hand commented that this idea was discussed before, but we did not have the bandwidth, so this is a great opportunity.

9. Adjournment:

Hand moves to adjourn at 7:29 PM, French seconds.

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.