Minutes
Town Council Steering Committee Meeting
August 26, 2019
Town Hall Conference Room B

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
   Present: Jonathan Hand, Joan Lewis, Julie Blanchard
   Also present: John Elsesser, Town Manager
   Absent: Matthew O’Brien (Joan Lewis seated)

2. Acceptance of Minutes:
   Julie Blanchard moved to accept the minutes of the Steering Committee meeting on July 22, 2019, seconded by Joan Lewis. The following correction was requested:
   - Page 2, item 7, first sentence: add the word “recent” after “most.”
   The motion to accept the minutes as corrected carried on unanimous vote.

3. Reports:
   Committee Chair – Jonathan Hand: Jonathan noted that new legislation has passed establishing regional tourism districts and we have to appoint somebody. It is a once-a-month meeting. Julie requested a copy of the background information. Jonathan requested that the Town Clerk add this position to the list of vacancies.

   Jonathan also said that he attended Arts on Main and it was a fabulous event. He will bring it up at the next Council meeting. The Village has pulled together and created something the whole town can be proud of. Bravo to the folks who made it happen.

4. Vacancy/expiration reports:
   Julie Blanchard asked several questions regarding the vacancy report about why “life term” is listed for certain appointments, such as John Alosky on the Local Emergency Coordinating Committee. John Elsesser noted that he is still the president. Julie also mentioned something similar for Norm Miekle as special constable. Jonathan said that Norm was the last person in the seat. John Elsesser said we have the right to have three constables but right now we have two. We could appoint one more if we have a person for it. Julie also mentioned the Youth Advisory Board – the last two people say “life term” but they are on our vacancy list. Are they serving or not? Jonathan said he thinks it is a reference to the last seat holder. Julie said it would be helpful to show a calculated end date if they resigned.

5. Resignations/Not Wishing to be Reappointed:
   A. CHS Walls Committee - Jonas. Mr. Jonas has moved out of town. John Elsesser said he would not rush to replace this member because the project may be winding down. The contractor is finding rebar during the scanning process. There is no quorum jeopardy on the committee, and they call a meeting when action is needed. Jonathan asked that a thank you letter be sent to Mr. Jonas for his service.

   B. School Building Energy Efficiency Building Committee - Tomaszewsky. Mr. Tomaszewsky has resigned due to work commitments. Jonathan asked that a thank you letter be sent to Mr. Jonas for his service.

6. Appointments:
   A. Planning & Zoning Commission – Alt. Mouradjian: Arianna Mouradjian attended the meeting to discuss her interest in serving as an alternate on the Planning and Zoning Commission.
Jonathan Hand said he reviewed her background and thanked her for applying to serve the community. He asked her to share information about herself. Arianna said she has been in Coventry a year, likes it and it is where she wants to settle. She wants to be more active in the community in this capacity. She was referred by a neighbor. She went to a PZC meeting and saw the end of the CT Water plant issue. John Elsesser said one of the things the Council typically likes to hear is your vision for the future of town and economic development. Arianna said she grew up in Providence, RI and also lived in Gloucester, MA. She appreciates the balance of preserving rural feel while encouraging businesses that fit. She is concerned with end-of-life planning for properties, having seen what happens with blight. She thinks every town needs a strong core business base to keep taxes reasonable and provide grounding. There is something to be said for buying from your neighbors. She wants to see business thrive but with a small town feel. She is aware that the Commission meets twice a month. John said sometimes there is not a lot of discretion to approve or disapprove if a proposal meets the criteria, unless it is a special permit. The general public sometimes assumes that issues are a popularity vote when it is not. Arianna said she has seen some of the Facebook chatter regarding Cumberland Farms. John replied that they met all the guidelines. There is not a lot of area for judgment, although the Commission did require an independent traffic study. Arianna said she is used to working in a heavily regulated profession as a wildlife rehabber. She has learned how to help diplomatically when decisions are difficult.

The Committee thanked Arianna for coming to the meeting to discuss her candidacy.

Jonathan Hand moved to recommend the appointment of Arianna Mouradjian as an alternate to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The motion was seconded by Joan Lewis and carried on unanimous vote.

**B. School Building Energy Efficiency Building Committee – Malon:** Julie Blanchard moved to recommend the appointment of Joe Malon from an alternate to full member of the School Building Energy Efficiency Building Committee for the duration of the project. The motion was seconded by Jonathan Hand and carried on unanimous vote.

7. **Consideration/Possible Action: Amendment to Cemetery Ordinance:** John Elsesser said that at the last meeting, we discussed that the proposed amendments would get a final review by the Cemetery Commission prior to being brought to the full Town Council for action. The Cemetery Commission accepted the amendments recommended by Steering, so it would be appropriate to move this to the full Council to call a public hearing. Jonathan Hand moved to recommend amendments to the Cemetery ordinance as presented and to call a public hearing. The motion was seconded by Julie Blanchard and carried on unanimous vote.

8. **Consideration/Possible Action: Modifications to Ordinances: Inspection/Permit, Open Burning:** John Elsesser suggested tabling this item until the November meeting, when a new Town Council term will start. The issue is complicated and he doesn’t think we’ll get it done quickly. It’s not fair to the incoming Council to make such a big change right before their term begins. Jonathan Hand moved to table consideration of modifications to ordinances for inspection/permit, open burning until the November 2019 Steering Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Joan Lewis and carried on unanimous vote.

9. **Consideration/Possible Action: Proposed Revisions to Personnel Policies and Procedures:** The Committee reviewed sections 1-8 of the document and made a variety of minor typographical adjustments. It was agreed that it would be desirable for the full Council to see these sections as they are revised by Steering, rather than waiting see the entire document for the first time at the November 4, 2019 meeting. Jonathan will review the progress made under his committee report
at the next Council meeting and a copy of the revisions to Sections 1-8 will be included on the agenda for informational purposes only, with a vote still planned for November 4th. For next month the Steering Committee will review sections 9-11.

10. **Adjournment:**
   The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM on a motion by Jonathan Hand, seconded by Joan Lewis and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone  
Town Council Clerk