

Open Government Working Group (OGWG) Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 9, 2021
Fire Station Meeting Room - 4 Bond Street, Brookline, NH

OGWG members present: Pete D'Agostino, John Cross, Timothy Del Signore, Drew Kellner, Jill Ketchen, Maria Bechis

Members of the public present: Peter Cook

7:06 pm Pete D opened the meeting, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and reviewed the rules for hybrid meetings. This meeting was not a ZOOM meeting and was not electronically recorded.

Pete D told us that **Rose** would be unable to serve as secretary. **Maria** agreed to take the minutes for this meeting.

Consent Agenda was accepted unanimously with no changes.

Public Input None, No Mail to be read, No new announcements

Approval of Minutes of 07-21-21: The minutes were not approved because minutes were not generated. The minutes were not electronically recorded because of a technology glitch.

Subcommittee Reports:

Subcommittee On Engagement with Elected Officials/Appointed Officials/ Town Staff

Report: Maria: Thus far the subcommittee has met with Patty Howard-Barnett (Town Clerk), Kristen Austin (Tax Cards, Board of Assessors, Zoning Hearing Board), Valerie Rearick (Town Planner), Drew Kellner (Chair of the Selectboard), Tad Putney (Town Administrator), Peter Cook (Chair of Board of Assessors), Judy Cook (member of Supervisors of the Checklist, Cemetery Trustee). The subcommittee uploaded to OGWG Google Drive, notes of these meetings from Patty, Kristen, Valerie. The subcommittee will upload notes from meetings with Tad, Peter and Judy. In addition to the meetings with these officials **Maria** will contact Linda Saari (Chair of the Supervisors of the Checklist) for additional input

Subcommittee On Engagement with Technology Vendors: There was a comment from **John** that not all agendas and minutes trigger emails to those who might be interested. The OGWG is a working group. The posting of the agenda does not automatically trigger an email to those who might be interested in attending OGWG meetings.

Pete D and Drew: Will be looking at new technology that allows a person who publishes working group agendas to generate emails that would go out to the public. Vendors we have looked at to provide better technology to achieve better work flow and communication with the public are Muni Code and Civic Plus. Tad attended all demos of new technology. Brookline now uses Civic Plus and there does not appear to be an added benefit to changing vendors.

Drew: Additional plug-ins and Civic Plus software would enhance meeting management. Agendas, minutes, documents for meetings would be streamlined and integrated and would be

generated at one time rather than through multiple inputs. The addition of Civic Clerk would allow for generation of 180 different types of forms and enable more Town business to be completed online. As an example, Grove Membership would be integrated with a payment platform. There would be no manual component. Payments would be processed and passes would be automatically emailed with the ability to be printed out. This could be used for building permits and burn permits and the plug-in reduces extra input from individuals. The Recreation Committee would be able to use Civic Clerk for scheduling and allocation of fields etc..

John: The software would improve work flows but he would like to see improvement in transparency and searchability of information so that everything that we have digitally is more easily available for public viewing

Pete D: Everything that the government does and the documents that it generates are owned by the taxpayer. The taxpayer has a right to view. This reflects NH Transparency laws.

Drew: Planning board documents and documents submitted to the planning board are sometimes difficult to read. The documents would be uploaded digitally for better viewing. Currently our website is **not ADA (Americans with Disabilities ACT) compliant**. New software would allow us to become ADA compliant

Maria: What would be the timeline required to install plug-ins and become operative?

Drew: There would be training and time for those using the new software to learn and adjust to the new software. Possibly a year. Additional training would cost \$100/hr..

Jill: What is the distribution strategy? What is the process for releasing information?

Peter Cook: What is the most benefit? How would this impact the Town Clerk's ability to be tied in with the state? Overseeing Town elections?

Jill: Getting info out to the public may increase attendance and engagement at Town meetings.

Maria: What does time stamping the minutes mean?

Drew: Finding specific items at specific points in the minutes

Pete D: The software would enhance Agenda, Document Packet Distribution, Minutes, and Videos/Recording of meetings, Creating Individual Accounts for residents to track communications and activity

There was ample discussion on the Civic Plus plug-ins

Motion:

Drew moved and was seconded by Pete D to discontinue evaluating Municode software and proceed with Civic Plus to obtain a quote for the two module plug-ins Meeting Manager and Civic Clerk- motion passed unanimously

Pete D and Drew: Tad was present at meetings/discussions with Vendors. We need to present the ala carte pricing for this technology to the Selectboard. We need to inform the Selectboard of the intention to bring a Warrant Article to town meeting in March 2022. Tom Rogers was not in attendance but is working on pricing

Motion:

Pete D moved and was seconded by **John** **to notice to the Selectboard that OCWG** is to put forth a Warrant Article at the MarchTown Meeting to recommend the purchase of new technology from Civic Plus- motion passed Unanimously

Subcommittee on Town Policies, Procedures, Practices

John: Will work on wording for a resolution that embodies Township's Open Working Government philosophy- captures towns public philosophy

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 28 at 7:00 pm..

Approximately 8:45 pm Jill moved to adjourn seconded by John- unanimous acceptance