

PROPERTY TAX EQUITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes, July 1, 2003

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Committee Members Present: Bill Sheehan, Steve Wishner, Michael DuCros, Paul Pakos, Tara Reed, Karen Darmer, Basil Pallone, Morton Brond, Dave Levington, Arletta Cioffari, Dave Berry, Ralph Tyler, Marilyn Goodrich, Ivan Lubash, John Nikula, Dave Costello, Andy Schwarz, Beth Farrell, Joe Meeks, Mark Collins

Ex Officio Members Present: Selectmen Kirsten Roopenian and John Drobinski

1. Town Manager Maureen Valente opened meeting for public comment, of which there was none. Committee passed motion that for future committee meetings, Agenda should reflect time for public comment.
2. A motion was made by Mr. Tyler to immediately elect Committee officers. Motion failed.
3. Meeting was turned over to Meeting Facilitator Darshan Brach for discussion of the night's Agenda, including discussion and approval of the previously determined Committee Ground Rules, discussion of Committee Mission Statement and Responsibilities with the Board of Selectmen, and determination of Committee leadership
4. Committee Ground Rules Discussion and Vote
 - i. Issue re: press contact: After discussion of individual committee members feelings on talking to the press, the committee voted on and passed a motion, as follows: "Individuals may make comments as individuals, not representatives of the committee, to the press. Any official statements on behalf of PTERC will be made by a representative of the committee, acting as an official spokesperson".
 - ii. Issue re: quorum. A question of the number for a quorum as stated in PTERC draft ground rules was raised. Mr. Tyler suggested that in his opinion Massachusetts General Law only requires 12 members present for a quorum. Selectmen Drobinski opined that the appropriate section of the MGL allows for a quorum to be set by rule. After discussion it was decided that the ground rule would stand as is, with 16 PTERC members present for quorum. Town counsel will be asked to advise the committee if setting such a quorum could affect the legality of the Committee's actions..
 - iii. Committee then voted to approve the Ground Rules as developed.
5. Committee discussed Mission Statement and Responsibilities as established by the Board of Selectmen. Group discussed the broad scope of research, and decided that prioritizing research items may be helpful. Committee voted to ask Selectmen to modify Mission Statement to say "all types of existing homeowners."
6. Ms. Brach led group through a dialogue of concerns to be listed and forward to BOS, regarding the responsibilities and expectations of the committee. Thus, the following concerns were offered but not voted on or prioritized by the entire committee:
 - i. Responsibilities appear to be directed at analyzing senior needs, and there should be development of intended impact on other groups.

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- ii. Regarding: "Responsibility 1. 3rd. bullet" -- we won't change basic source of raising revenue.
 - iii. PTERC is an independent committee. It may be perceived by public that the committee is being guided by BOS. It will be counterproductive if there are "preordained" results with BOS's agenda. PTERC should not have to seek BOS's approval to amend the mission statement or responsibilities.
 - iv. Can't examine other communities without looking at those that have comparable spending percentages. i.e. high MCAS scores, but is there a high percentage of taxes going to education?
 - v. is PTERC to look at how taxes are being spent?
 - vi. PTERC doesn't want to do the role of Town Meeting.

7. Ms. Brach led Committee through a discussion of the proposed interim steering committee. Concerns were raised regarding the applicability of the Open Meeting Law in regards to how the interim steering committee would meet.
 - a. The Town Manager listed tasks that she believes the steering committee should be responsible for:
 - i. Beginning with the meeting scheduled for July 14, plan and set the agenda for future PTERC meetings.
 - ii. Work with the facilitator on Committee process and task issues.
 - iii. Serve as liaison between full Committee and Town Manager/Board of Selectmen
 - iv. Receive, respond to and prioritize requests and suggestions from PTERC members.
 - b. A motion was made to construct a 5-member interim steering committee, and was passed by majority and super-majority. The nominations were as follows: Dave Levington, Michael DuCros, Tara Reed, Morton Brond, Andy Schwarz, Steve Wishner, Joe Meeks, Beth Farrell, Paul Pakos, Mark Collins, Ralph Tyler, Dave Costello. Schwarz, Pakos, Meeks, Collins, and Tyler removed themselves from the list.
 - c. PTERC decided to have an interim steering committee of seven. The interim steering committee stands at Levington, DuCros, Reed, Wishner, Farrell, Brond, and Costello.

8. Closing Business was addressed. PTERC passed a motion stating all e-mail directed to them will be automatically forwarded to them rather than having the Town Manager or staff forward the email to them. Additionally, a PTERCarchive email address will be established. All Committee members should always send a copy of all email correspondence to this PTERCarchive@town.sudbury.ma.us in order to keep a record of all email on the Town's server. Committee approved the minutes from the June 18 meeting with minor corrections.

9. The next meeting of PTERC will feature a panel of state officials, including Rep. Susan Pope, Sen. Resor, and representatives of the Department of Revenue and Taxation Committee. The committee decided to develop a list of questions for the guests ahead of time, in addition to any others that may arise. Mr. Levington will

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assemble questions from the panel and forward to Ms. Valente to give to the panelists.

10. The interim steering committee will meet at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 10 at the Fire Station on Hudson Road.
11. The next PTERC general meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 10 at the Lower Town Hall. The public will be invited to observe that discussion but not participate in the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45

Attest: Beth Farrell

Approved by PTERC 7/14/03