DEPT/BOARD: Government Review Committee

DATE: April 30, 2018
   Monday

TIME: 6:30 pm

PLACE: Burlington Town Hall
       Main Hearing Room
       29 Center Street

Agenda

Attendance

Approve Prior Minutes –

March 14, 2018

March 19, 2018

April 2, 2018

Department Head Discussions
   • Brian Curtin
   • Chris Hanafin

Discussion – Appointed v. Elected Positions

Next meeting – May 7, 2018; 6:30 pm

Adjourn
Town of Burlington Government Review Committee
Minutes of April 30, 2018

Members in attendance: Steve Marchese, Kelly Pappas, Charles Murphy, Gary Gianino, Paul Sheehan, Sally Willard, Robert Hogan

Members absent: Roger Riggs, Michael Runyan

Also present: Town Treasurer Brian Curtain, Director of Veteran Affairs and ADA Coordinator for the Disability Access Committee Chris Hanafin

Chairman Kelly Pappas called the Government Review Committee to order at 6:32 pm in the Burlington Town Hall, main hearing room.

Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes of March 14, 2018; March 19, 2018; April 2, 2018 as printed was made by Charles Murphy, and seconded by Robert Hogan.

PASSED: 7-0-0

Department Head Discussion:

- Town Treasurer

  Mr. Curtain explained that he has a staff of 10. He has two assistants: Treasurer and Tax Collector, because of the union re-organization. All staff in the Treasurers Office report to him.

  New employees work with Human Resources and his office to figure out their benefits, because his office does the payroll for the town. The treasurers office works with every department managing their financial accounts.

  Burlington is a triple A rated community, and the amount of debt is below average compared to other communities.

  Mr. Curtain noted the benefit of being elected official is that he has many of the same concerns the residents have such as funding big projects without raising taxes. He reports to the residences, not a board/committee/town manager. By not reporting to the Town Manager, it gives him an independent voice. He supports the Town Treasurer as an elected position. But if it does change to appointed, he suggested that a board/committee do the deliberations, rather than one person. He is concerned about the Town Manager appointing too many leadership roles in town.
such as Fire Chief, Police Chief, Human Services Director, etc. Mr. Curtain supports the checks and balances type of government.

The individual departments do their own money handling before giving it over to the Treasures Office for deposit.

Mr. Curtain will retire at some point, but will continue as Treasurer past his retirement till the Town of Burlington decides how to approach replacing him. He suggested offering a higher starting wage ($100k/year) to attract a qualified replacement. Mass Municipal Association did the comparison for Town Treasurer wages in other communities, but it needs to be done again.

- **Veterans Affairs**

  Mr. Hanafin explained he has one staff member: an administrative assistant. There are 1,300 veterans in Burlington. He assists veterans and individuals interested in enlisting understand their benefits and programs. The High School does not have ROTC, so he will mentor individuals looking to go into the service.

  Veteran Affairs budget is $238,000 and $110,000 of that is aid that is given out to veterans. He has to be certified every year to give out that money.

  Mr. Hanafin works closely with the Council on Aging for assisting/finding veterans, and Treasure’s Office for getting reimbursements.

- **Disability Access Committee**

  Mr. Hanafin explained that Disability Access Committee is a seven-member committee and he is a coordinator for them. The committee focuses on ADA access as it applies to the public. As coordinator he also handles complaints about private businesses that don’t meet ADA compliance.

  He works with the Building Department, and Planning Board ensure new projects meet the ADA compliance, and the Recreation Department – Therapeutic Recreation Division to reduce the cost to families of some programs by funding a portion. The funding comes from fines collected for handicap parking violations. Last year some of that funding sponsored the pour in place playground surface at Regan Park, and this year the committee has its sights on the Pine Glen playground.

**Discussion – Appointed vs. Elected Positions**

The Committee discussed the benefits and drawbacks of appointed and elected positions. Some points brought up were:

- Recreation Commission member make up is not consistent with other boards and committees
- BOS rather than Town Administrator doing appointments
- Finding positions for qualified individuals (not interested in running campaigns) on technical boards/committees.
Chairman Kelly Pappas is not prepared to offer the Board of Selectmen an opinion on whether the Town Treasurer should be elected or appointed, because it is outside the purview of this committee.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm was made by Gary Gianino, and seconded by Paul Sheehan.

PASSED: 7-0-0

Next meeting:
Monday, June 4 at 6:30pm
Burlington Town Hall, Main Hearing Room

Minutes respectfully submitted by:
Noelle Judd, Recording Clerk