DEPT/BOARD: Government Review Committee

DATE: June 4, 2018
   Monday

TIME: 6:30 pm

PLACE: Burlington Town Hall
      Main Hearing Room
      29 Center Street

Agenda

Attendance

Approve Prior Minutes

Public forum on the current Governmental Structure.

Next meeting – June 18, 2018; 6:30 pm

Adjourn
Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes of April 30, 2018 as printed was made by Gary Gianino, and seconded by Paul Sheehan.

PASSED: 7-0-0

Public Forum:

Paul Raymond, 1 Dorothy Road, stated that fixes should be made, but we shouldn’t fix anything that isn’t broke. He questioned the makeup of the committee and refers to it as “The Burlington City Committee.” He also noted one member, not present, Charlie Murphy, had publicly stated at a Burlington Master Plan Steering Committee, that Burlington should be a city and that Gary Gianino agreed. A discussion pursued refuting Paul’s claims and the member present stated that Paul was not telling the truth.

Ernie Zabolotny, 33 Paulson Drive, TMM precinct 5, supported reviewing the government performance on an ongoing to basis. Also, evaluating the quality of services against the cost of those services. And there should be accountability amongst the departments. Based on a comparative review of the costs of municipal services for a significant number of Mass. Cities and towns, there is very little opportunity for improvement of Burlington’s standing among other municipalities and there is no reason to expect any improvement as a result of government reforms.

David Miller, 19 Gloria Circle, TMM precinct 4, suggested the town government have a single point of contact to allow for residents to ask their questions without being bounced around from department to department. And there should be a town
project manager to ensure all projects pre and post construction meets the
conditions of their approvals from the various departments.

Myrna Saltman, 15 Greystone Ct., TMM precinct 2, suggested the various
departments meet on a more regular basis, and that town meeting should be more
publicized.

John Kelly, 14 Oxbow Lane, Planning Board member, noted the town administrator
is retiring soon, and recommended not changing the job description, because of the
competitive market for Town Administrators. A talented administrator may not
choose to work for Burlington, if the job is in flux. If Burlington did decide to change
the positions, perhaps we could hire a temporary administrator until a new job
description was established.

Jonathan Sachs, 12 Oxbow Lane, Master Plan Steering Committee member, noted
applicants with projects/requests that have to go through the town meeting know
that they need to defend it. This makes the town meeting process valuable.

Monte Pearson, 5 Willow Way, TMM precinct 3, Land Use Committee member, is
opposed to a Charter Committee, and supports having elected boards/committees,
and civic participation. He is concerned about consolidating power, and causing
local campaigns to be money driven.

Nicholas Priest, 18 Prouty Road, ran for a seat on the Board of Selectmen in the last
election, supported efficiency in government, and offered his opinion that he
thought Burlington was running well.

John Iler, 9 Brookside Lane, TMM Precinct 6, noted that ‘absolute power corrupts
absolutely’ and recommended avoiding the concentration of power in government.
He noted town meeting makes people not doing things casually, and it is a good
thing there are no political parties when people run. He recommended keeping as
many elected positions as possible.

Janice Cohen, 8 Wilhelmina Avenue, requested government have accountability to
residents.

Phyllis Nuefeld, 3 Meadowvale Road, offered her opinion that government works
best when you have a greater number of people involved. She requested more of an
outreach to residents.

Ed Dube, 3 Locust Street, recommended Burlington use software called Listserv to
keep residents informed.

Ed Wyner, 43 Freeport Drive, Board of Health member, recommended small
changes, and commended Burlington on the ease in which someone could get
involved.
Irene Wachsl, 24 Washington Street, recommended High School students assist the commission with their community outreach.

**Discussion**

Kelly Pappas requested members send her their availability so she can schedule an additional committee meeting.

Sally Willard noted the different mechanisms to change government:
- Charter Commission route with a ballot question
- Amend the bylaws and go before Town Meeting
- State Division of Local Services will do a comprehensive study and come back with a recommendation for free

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 18 at 6:30pm
Burlington Town Hall, Main Hearing Room

*Minutes respectfully submitted by:*
*Noelle Judd, Recording Clerk*