



Town Center Committee

Meeting Minutes

**Slade Building
February 18th, 2016
7:00 PM**

Attendees: Dan Galante, Alicia Muck, Bill Hansen, Brett Duncan, Phil Churchill, Nir Cohen (Nir is not yet sworn in as a Committee member)

- 1. Meeting called to order at 7:06 PM. Minutes from 1/21/16 Meeting were discussed. Motion to approve minutes made by Phil, 2nd by Alicia. All in favor.**
- 2. Dan volunteered to take the meeting minutes. As per previous meetings, this is a rolling responsibility and will be performed by different Committee members each meeting.**
- 3. Discussion ensued regarding the recently unveiled Town Center Survey. Dan said that the last he saw there were 242 respondents earlier today. All agreed the initial response was excellent. The group thanked Alicia for putting the survey together with comments from other Committee members. Several group members have reviewed the results in limited detail.**

Phil asked if the hard copies of the survey (and drop boxes for completed) had been set out at the Slade Building, Town Offices, and Library yet. Dan would look into it. Originally it was the plan to set those out after some members went door to door on Main Street with the survey on Sunday, 2/14. But it turned out to be dangerously cold on 2/14 and that handout work was postponed to Sunday, 2/21.

Members discussed how long to keep the survey open. It was agreed that the end of February was the date to closeout the survey. This will give members time to digest the “complete” results independently prior to discussion at our March 17th meeting. At that point it was discussed whether a subgroup or committee be formed to aggregate the results in a form that will be beneficial to the Committee moving forward.

- 4. At the January meeting the Committee discussed prioritizing certain items relative to an upcoming sequence of events to make sure some focused work gets done. Those certain items included the survey and a request for \$ / warrant article to present to the SelectBoard for inclusion on the Town Meeting Warrant. All agreed that those items remain the focus at this time. Dan read the proposed warrant article to the group. It read:**

“To see if the Town will vote to authorize a transfer of available funds in the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of funding a preliminary design for the reconstruction and related improvements for the Main Street section of Route 68, Hubbardston's Town Center, or any action related thereto.

Sponsor: Town Center Committee”

Motion to approve wording made by Bill, 2nd by Alicia. All in favor.

- 5. The group again discussed the plan on involving the HCS students in Town Center Improvement ideas. All agreed this is still something that is desired but that it is still a little early on in the game for this. Several members suggested maybe late in the school year (June, 2016) might be a good idea. Bill said he thought that one of the grades might already do an end of the year project relative to park design. Dan will contact the HCS principal and ask. Bill said that maybe an art class project could be done and Brett said that HCS students could maybe make a banner design that could be incorporated into the Town Memorial Day Parade? This item will be discussed at the next meeting again.**
- 6. Alicia had asked that an agenda item relative to revenue generating discussion be added to the agenda and she discussed a few ideas. One was a “shop local” campaign to utilize local business goods and services. She referenced Westminster’s business brochure which was apparently funded by grant money. She thought maybe we could have a website as well and discussion ensued about the former Hubbardston Business Association and whether or not there was any information relative to that group that we might be able to use moving forward. Phil added that many of the businesses in town are small, cottage businesses / farms. He said that bringing back the farmer’s market at the rec field was something that had been discussed. Dan gave an overview of the MA Complete Streets program. He stated municipalities can apply for grant monies for design/construction costs for street/transportation related improvements. A municipality must take all of the steps required to be classified a Complete Streets community and an application must be filled out with a scope for the work. There is not enough time to conform/apply for this during this fiscal year but it will be discussed further in the future.**
- 7. Dan gave a brief WPI student involvement update. The Hubbardston DPW Director followed up a WPI professor in early February and received correspondence that the students had not, and would not for a little while, finish picking their projects – specifically until they had seen all of their project options. Our project is apparently called: MQP Project – Route 68 Hubbardston.**
- 8. The Committee spoke about the Westminster Plan that Brett had sent information out about. Members have reviewed some of the elements of the Plan and think that it will be very beneficial to utilize portions of the plan for ideas in the future. It was decided it is still a little early now to get into it too much but that, especially if we have funding for a schematic design and/or a WPI student on board, information from Westminster’s Plan could be very valuable.**
- 9. Other Business**

Nir Cohen was recently appointed to the Committee by the SelectBoard. Nir has accepted the appointment but has not been sworn in yet.

The Committee discussed a recent email received by some Committee members from Bonnie Cunningham, editor of the Senior News and a member of the Council on Aging. The email discussed the holiday lighting ceremony that was done in December on the Town Common and included a request for monies related to constructing a crèche on the Town Common. As it is not entirely clear whether this sort of a decision would come under the purview of this Committee, it was discussed that it might be better for Bonnie to address this with the SelectBoard.

- 10. Motion to adjourn made by Bill, 2nd by Alicia. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.**