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By Karen Wilber/Assistant Town Clerk at 9:35 am, Mar 01, 2023

Temporary Traffic Safety Committee

Meeting minutes- January 30, 2023

5:30PM- Laura Ziton's Introduction to Remote Meeting

Laura Ziton stated that this Open Meeting of the Temporary Traffic Safety Committee was being conducted remotely consistent with the July 16, 2022 Act Relative to Extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency and that all members of the Temporary Traffic Safety Committee are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely.

Laura noted that the Order allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. She added that ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law.

Laura Ziton confirmed that the following members and persons anticipated on the agenda were remotely present and could be heard.

Temporary Traffic Safety Committee

Janeen Callaghan

Christopher Deacetis

Mark McMenemy

William Pierce

Laura Ziton

Others

Scott Charpentier, DPW Director

Absent

Mitch Cohen

Jen Scalise

Any votes taken this evening will be by roll call.

Acceptance of December 20, 2022 meeting minutes

Roll Call Vote approved by Janeen Callaghan, Christopher Deacetis, Mark McMenemy, William Pierce, and Laura Ziton.

Agenda approval process

The committee voted to allow Vice Chair William Pierce to approve agendas for upcoming meetings. The committee supported this.

Review of data collected

Mr. Charpentier commented that 59 communities were surveyed. 33 communities do not have traffic safety related committees.

Mr. Pierce commented about our committee's charge- should Northborough have a permanent committee? And if so, what should it look like.

Mr. Pierce said Littleton was more willing to share information on their committee than was requested. Littleton said their committee was helpful for highways and road systems. Both Littleton and Acton were advisory committees. Acton advises the Selectmen and Littleton advises the Selectmen and the Town Administrator. He also said that Acton didn't provide any additional information.

Mr. Deacetis reviewed the towns assigned to him and commented that he had informative discussions. He highlighted West Boylston. They have trouble meeting a quorum, and the new DPW director hasn't attended a meeting yet. West Boylston has similar problems with trucks, traffic, and speed. Chelmsford's committee is made up only of staff. Informal, no agenda, respond to resident questions. No public comment, they just send a report to the Selectboard. Tewksbury and Westborough supported resident

involvement and being an advisory committee to help raise awareness about the traffic challenges from the residents who are impacted by it.

Ms. Callaghan reviewed the towns assigned to her and said she had good conversations. Their goal was to improve safety. Westborough started off specifically for pedestrians and cyclists and now, as the town grows, their committee has evolved to traffic safety versus just pedestrians and cyclists. All her towns have major highways and commented that traffic safety committees work for their towns.

Ms. Zitton commented that Mr. Charpentier will email Jen Scalise and Mitch Cohen if they wanted to email their feedback about their assigned towns and if there were any towns, they would like to include in the next phase of the committee's research.

Mr. McMenemy commented that only Hudson and Clinton had internal committees made up of staff including the police chief, fire chief, and DPW. They conduct internal meetings and focus on resident concerns and how to deal with it. He explored other towns. Bolton had a committee with 4 citizens at large and it was a biweekly podcast to talk about traffic in town and once a quarter the police chief or DPW director would join them with feedback.

Ms. Zitton commented on the towns assigned to her. She mentioned Sudbury's staff only safety committee and its challenges are they don't have budget and the Selectmen don't always take their feedback. Sudbury also said there are challenges in what can and can't be done. She mentioned Grafton's committee and the police chief loves the committee because it helps alleviate the pressure on town staff to respond to requests. Ms. Zitton then commented on Winchester. They have 11 members and have been a committee for 10 years. The Winchester committee is helpful. The other towns she reviewed were staff only committees.

Mr. McMenemy commented about many communities looking at ways to help traffic safety via their complete streets committees. He wondered if traffic safety would be redundant. Mr. Charpentier commented that we don't have a complete streets committee and that we are waiting for approval from Mass DOT for the prioritization plan. He also said that complete streets does not fund design services for projects only construction. Design work funding comes from elsewhere.

Ms. Zitton suggested choosing 7 towns from those that were researched and taking a deeper look at those committees. Mr. Deacotis suggested Grafton. Ms. Callaghan suggested Westborough. Mr. Charpentier commented that the size of the towns surveyed determines the amount of budget available, and this will make it tougher to find exactly comparable communities. Winchester and Grafton, Westborough, Bolton, Littleton, Ashland were chosen as communities for further research. Ms. Callaghan again commented about how all the communities are aware of the same concerns and topics around how to best respond to them.

Discussion of next steps

The committee reviewed follow-up questions for the second round of research. Below are the questions the committee identified.

Is there a budget? If not, how does a project get funded? If they don't have a budget, what recommendation process do they use?

Routing process for requests, how does a resident send questions, comments etc.?

Voting member make up: understand how they vote and who receives that input?

Committee make up?

Mission statement or their charge?

How long has the committee been established, how has the committee evolved?

Future meeting date

Tuesday February 28, 2023 at 5:30PM

Any other business that may legally come before the Committee

No other business came before the committee.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:15PM