



**Residents' Advisory Committee
October 15, 2019 – 10:00am
First Floor Meeting Room
Town Hall, 4 Boltwood Avenue**

Minutes

Members present: Ms. Keisha Dennis, Ms. Connie Kruger, Mr. Jim Pistrang

Others present: Angela Mills, Staff liaison/minutes

Members of the Public: None

Meeting called to order by Mr. Pistrang at 10:03 am

Approval of Minutes (September 17, 2019)

Ms. Kruger promised to re-read the minutes from the September 17, 2019 RAC meeting for typographical errors and submit any changes to Ms. Mills for correction.

Unanimous vote to approve RAC minutes from September 17, 2019.

Review of Recent Interviews

Mr. Pistrang sat in on the interviews for Munson Building Trustees

He admired the passion that the interviewees demonstrated for the Munson space.

He expressed his appreciation for all of the work that the Munson Building Trustees do throughout the calendar year.

Ms. Kruger attended the interviews for the Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC) and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). It was one full day of eleven back-to-back interviews. She mentioned that it might be helpful for RAC members to receive a temporary parking placard on such long (4.5 hrs.) interview days. Ms. Kruger noted that she knew several of the applicants through other Town organizations. She admitted that as a member of the Residents' Advisory Committee she has a bias towards younger people who have never applied for board/committee/commission work before.

This prompted a discussion of the entire group on whether or not the RAC members should have more input as to whether or not the pool of applicants is "ready" or "deep enough" for interviews to move forward. Should RAC re-evaluate how people are able to express their interest in different boards/committees/commissions on the Community Activity Form (CAF)? Is it time to change the wording on the CAF again? Furthermore, how does the RAC address those individuals who interview several times for different committees/boards/commissions but is not selected for any of them?

The members of RAC expressed several differing opinions on the matter. Including: allowing individuals to be responsible for their own time. We (the Town) should allow people to come and interview as often as possible. It

is up to the community member to decline the interview offer, once they have expressed an interest in the given board/committee/commission. If, during the interview, the community member expresses a genuine interest to serve the community, we should try to match them with the board/commission/committee that can best utilize their talents.

Furthermore, the RAC members suggested that Chairs of Committees/commissions/boards should not second-guess anyone's time commitments. We need to highlight for the decision makers what traits we are looking for in individuals instead of candidates feeling like we are focusing on the impediments to their upcoming service. It was noted by one of the RAC members that the Town Manager usually details for each candidate the expected time commitment and then asks, directly, if they think they can make that type of commitment.

Members of RAC also reflected on how it can be a disadvantage for applicants to be an unknown person to the interviewers. The members of RAC highlighted the need for people on the interview team to shy away from favorites based on previous experiences with the person.

Outreach/Interview Pool

Should RAC have a role in deciding whether a certain pool of candidates is robust enough to move forward with the interview process? The guiding rule as to whether or not it is time to host interviews should be when a board/committee/commission is finding it hard to meet quorum at their regularly scheduled meetings. If there are problems reaching quorum and the group cannot take action, then the vacancy must be filled as soon as possible. There was a type of consensus around the idea that the needs of committees comes first regardless of whether or not the pool is deemed 'plentiful' or 'deep enough' by RAC members.

The next expected busy time for appointments will be in May / June 2020 due to terms ending.

It was recommended that the Town publish a timeline detailing the interview and appointment process. These details should be part of the automatic reply when someone submits a CAF online. A link should take them to the timeline and detail for them the next steps (or if there will be next steps) in regards to their application.

Additionally, it was recommended that when people come to the Town Manager's office to interview, they be handed a half sheet of paper that explains the next few steps in the process towards appointment (referral to OCA, referral to the Council, appointment letter, swearing in etc.).

A brief conversation centered on whether or not the Town Manager should be a part of all interviews. There was debate about whether or not a Chair and a member of RAC could do the interview and then relay information to the Town Manager. After discussion, it was agreed that it remained important for the Town Manager to hear a myriad of voices. These interviews offer the Town Manager the unique opportunity to view individuals as they begin their volunteer service to the Town.

Outreach Communication Appointments (OCA) and the new appointment process for the Town Council

There was some conversation regarding that the Town Council's Committee on Outreach Communication and Appointment's (OCA) decision to create their own separate CAF for the four boards that the Town Council appoints (ZBA, Planning, RCV and Participatory Budgeting Commission).

Date for next RAC meeting: November 13th – location TBA time: 10:00am

The members of RAC plan to invite Town Councilor Evan Ross, Chair of the Outreach, Communication and Appointments Committee of the Council to attend and informally discuss the Council's potential changes to the appointment process.

It as noted by RAC members that having two separate CAFs (one for Town Manager appointments and a separate CAF for Town Council appointments) and two different appointment systems (TM and TC) will allow for some comparison.

Other Topics:

The question was posed by one of the RAC members, “Would it be beneficial to try and match up RAC members with boards/committees/commissions of special interest to each member for the upcoming rounds of interviews?” The response was ‘no’ that would become a scheduling conundrum. RAC will continue to lend their talents when needed to whichever interviews are going to take place.

Unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 11:00am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Mills

Executive Assistant to the Town Manager and Community Participation Officer