



Town Council Work Session

June 7, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Town Council Chambers

MINUTES

1. Roll Call

Present: Council Chair Katanna Conley, Council Vice-chair Brian Ward, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Colin White, Councilor Sonke Dornblut (arrived at 6:30 PM), Councilor Justin Glazebrook.

Staff Present: Town Manager Stephen Fournier, Finance Director William Tappan and Media Manager Tim Cremmen (arrived at 6:40 PM), and Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary

2. New Business/Correspondence

a. Town Council Communications

Chair Conley presented an agenda she had prepared for the Work Session regarding Engagement:

Goals: Operationalize our goals for engagement and select one concrete thing we can move forward with.

1) What are our engagement goals in parameters?

Discussion ensued about ways to get more people in town to run for office or apply to a town board, committee, commission. Also, in finding ways to relay and receive information to and from the general public. Town Manager Fournier said that it's challenging; "we can't force people to become involved in the community".

Town Manager Fournier said that in the past, three Councilors would go to either the MillSpace, Stone Church or Town Hall with a Department Head to discuss current town events with the public. He said that the Planning Board is working on the Master Plan update and suggested inviting Community Development Director Bart McDonough to a Town Council Work Session to update the public on that topic.

2) What has already been tried?

Former Councilor Toni Weinstein started a podcast, and completed a few sessions. Town Manager Fournier suggested the Council revisit that idea. Councilor Ward suggested involving Channel 13 to create some short videos explaining the role of a Councilor or a committee member or town department head.

3) What might engagement strategies look like?

Town Manager Fournier suggested the Council hold Work Sessions on a specific topic that some people may be interested in, and switch the topics up over several Work Sessions. One example is to invite the Town's Engineer to discuss stormwater management. They could also invite Pastor Patty to come to a Work Session and discuss the food pantry. He suggested setting up a series of meetings focused around a certain topic.

Tim Cremen entered the meeting and agreed that developing short videos on different current events or different Department Head interviews was a great idea and is easily done.

There was discussion on the current weekly newsletter and problems with the length of it; people aren't reading it because there is too much content.

4) What are some next steps we can take to move things forward?

Councilor Ward will work on creating the video series with Media Manager Tim Cremen.

Town Manager Fournier, Finance Director Tappan and Media Manager Cremen will work on narrowing down the newsletter.

Town Manager Fournier and Councilor Glazebrook will work on inviting groups to Work Session Meetings.

Councilor Dornblut will help organize groups to have conversations with the Councilors outside of a Council Meeting.

Town Manager Fournier will reach out to Community Development Director Bart McDonough regarding the Master Plan process.

3. Adjournment

Chair Conley adjourned the Work Session meeting at 6:58 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary