

approved
3/20/23

BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

NORTHBRIDGE TOWN HALL
7 MAIN STREET
WHITINSVILLE, MA 01588

February 6, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

present: Robert Banning, Russell Collins, Richard Sasseville, and Linda Zywiec

absent: Rainer Forst

1. Call to order – The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Richard Sasseville. (Chairman Collins had not yet arrived. He arrived around 6:30.)

2. Approve minutes – The minutes of the meeting of January 30, 2023, were approved as read.

3. Documents received, related to town meeting; preparing our report – At the meeting, Linda distributed several documents. We discussed these documents and the preparation of our report:

a. copy from a previous town meeting warrant – We received a page from the warrant for a recent town meeting at which voters were asked to approve amendments to the town charter. Linda suggested that we think of these articles as templates for the articles that our own committee would propose.

b. draft memorandum to board of selectmen – This was a proposed memorandum by which our committee could request that articles be placed on the warrant for the spring town meeting. The warrant closes on March 3, before the next scheduled meeting of the committee. The draft memorandum would ask the board of selectmen to place two articles on the warrant: one proposing that certain “grammatical and stylistic amendments” be approved and the other proposing that certain “substantive amendments” be approved. Both proposed articles stated that the proposed changes were the ones stated in the “final report of the Bylaw Review Committee.” Thus, the articles implied that the committee will produce such a report in time for the report to be made available to the voters with the due notice provided for by law. After brief discussion, the committee unanimously adopted a motion (Chairman Collins was in attendance) to ask Linda to forward to the board of selectmen the memorandum she had proposed, but with the recommendation that the article requesting approval for grammatical and stylistic changes be placed *before* the one requesting substantive changes, rather than after it as in the copy from the earlier town meeting warrant.

c. changes requested by Selectman Melia – Linda reminded us that during our work in 2022, Alicia Cannon, then a member of the committee, passed on to us a list of bylaw changes proposed by Selectman Melia. The changes would affect several articles in chapter 9, “Certain Conduct Regulated.” We agreed that although it may be some time before we are

ready to examine chapter 9 in order, we need to remember that Selectman Melia requested these changes to that chapter.

d. preparing our report – We believe the town meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 2. We agreed that in order for voters to have the information they need at the time they need it, our report should be completed and submitted to the town manager by March 31. We foresee that between now and then, we may not have time to review all the remaining articles of the bylaws. However, we will produce a report by March 31 reflecting the work that we did.

4. Discussion of bylaws

a. Sections reviewed - The committee continued to discuss the bylaws, section by section. We began with section 6-200, “Scenic Roads,” and reviewed all the sections from there through 7-205, “Application to remove from town.”

b. Sections to be reviewed next – Next time, we will continue our review, beginning with section 7-206, “Annual record required.”

5. Next meetings – The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 6, 6:00 p.m., and the one after that is scheduled for Monday, March 20, 6:00 p.m.

6. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Banning
clerk