Call to Order

Committee Chair Mr. Stumpf called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. in the Third Floor Select Board Conference Room in the Andover Town Offices building. The meeting was live cablecast and recorded.

Participants

Present were: Town Clerk & Chief Strategy Officer Austin Simko (ex-officio); Sheila Doherty (ex-officio); TGSC Committee members Gail Ralston, David Floreen, Richard Fox, Paula Colby-Clements, Paul Cavicchi, Andrew McBrien, Dara Obbard, and Jon Stumpf; Bernie Lynch and John Petrin of Community Paradigm Associates; Andrew Flanagan, Town Manager; and Patrick Lawler, Director of Administrative Services.

TGSC Committee member Sandy Stapczynski sent apologies for her absence in advance.

Introduction

Mr. Stumpf thanked Andover TV for televising the meeting, and thanked the members of the public who were in attendance for their interest.

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

Minutes of “Chair’s Forum” of December 3rd 2019: Mr. Floreen moved that these be accepted, Ms. Colby-Clements seconded. The committee voted 10 in favor of approval, none opposed, with Ms. Ralston abstaining as she was not present at the meeting in question.

Minutes of TGSC Committee Meeting of January 11th 2020: Ms. Colby-Clements moved that these be accepted, Ms. Ralston seconded. The committee voted unanimously in favor of approval.

2. Update on Town Communications Operations

Mr. Flanagan and Mr. Lawlor presented an update on the Town’s Communications strategy and operations. The slides that they used are attached as Appendix 1, and provide a detailed record of the content of their presentation. The following points are particularly noteworthy:

- The Town strategy emphasizes Town staff engaging in discussions between residents via Social Media to answer questions accurately and quickly, reduce the spread of misunderstanding and misinformation, and provide timely assistance. In this, Andover differs from many towns that believe that it is not their place to engage in this manner.
- The Town has observed that communication between Departments has improved as a side-effect of enhanced communication with residents.
- The Social Media Working Group amplifies the effect of each Social Media channel.
- Absolute levels of usage should not always be taken as either a metric or goal for Social Media. For example, easy access to budget and finance information is a core of the
communications philosophy, but only a few residents with specific interests avail themselves of this.

Mr. Stumpf thanked Mr. Flanagan and Mr. Lawlor.

3. **Review Issues Studied by Predecessor Committee in 2002**

Mr. Lynch and Mr. Petrin reviewed the report of the Town Government Review Committee of 2002 prior to this meeting, and summarized their key take-aways as follows:

- The scope and charter of the previous committee was very similar to that of the TGSC, covering Charter, Bylaws and Government Practice
- The previous committee concluded that Andover was well managed and well governed.
- The previous committee re-affirmed Andover’s choice of Select Board and Open Town Meeting as our form of government. The committee saw no evidence that Representative Town or City forms of government would be better.
- The committee noted that Andover benefits from very strong volunteers who should be given the scope to achieve what they have been asked to accomplish.
- The committee saw no evidence of political interference
- The committee did recommend a few changes to the Charter, but did not recommend that a Charter Commission be established.
- The committee finished their report with the observation that times change and that it would be prudent to re-evaluate their conclusions from time to time.

As advice to the current TGSC, Mr. Lynch and Mr. Petrin offered the following:

- The previous report is not that old, and much of it should still stand. The report should be taken as a useful source of data for the TGSC.
- The previous committee did a good job of addressing in their report the core of their Charter, specifically by building their report around the themes of the first three bullets above.

In discussion, the TGSC acknowledged the quality and value work of their predecessors, but also agreed that the TGSC have an opportunity to prepare an even better report. The previous report reports decisions as statements but does not explain the rationale or present data to support the decisions. As such, the previous report may be read as statements of opinion. The TGSC should include justifications and supporting data in our report.

4. **Discuss Process For Selecting Issues to be Included in Committee’s Scope of Study**

Mr. Stumpf introduced this topic. The outcome of the meeting of January 11th was a list of issues distilled from all sources of previous input, grouped as issues that most members of the committee thought might be worth study, issues that a majority thought might be worth study, and issues that a minority thought might be worth study. The task for the current meeting was to agree for each topic whether that topic definitely should be studied, definitely should not be studied, or that further consideration would be required before agreeing the disposition of that topic. Ms. Colby-Clements observed that she had gone through the list of issues in detail but felt she had got stuck in the weeds, and therefore proposed that the committee first look for issues that could be
dispositioned with little discussion. This was accepted. In addition, the committee agreed the following principles:

- Generally, issues would be studied by sub-committees, with the exception of which form of government should be recommended. The latter is the central issue of the study and should be considered by the full committee.
- In determining what to study, the committee should not filter issues that they believe will not require change. Part of the committee’s remit is to examine existing situation to determine that the current state is optimal.
- After the January 11th meeting, all issues were rephrased into the form of neutral, non-leading, questions. However, the committee should feel free to further adjust wording of any issue to better express the underlying issue to be studied.
- The process can be iterative and the disposition of any issue might be revisited at a future date.

5. Discuss Issues to be Included in Committee’s Scope of Study

The committee started to disposition issues following the process as previously agreed. However, it became apparent that many issues could become entirely moot if certain forms of government were to be adopted and different conclusions might be reached for other issues depending on the form of government. Thus, the committee agreed that the initial effort should focus entirely on reaching a preliminary decision on which form of government the committee should recommend. Thereafter, additional issues should be studied but within the context of this decision. In effect, Phase 2 shall be divided into two phases:

- Study of form of government
- Study of remaining issues

The committee agreed the following principles:

- It is important to note that this decision does not reflect the committee’s view of the importance of other issues. The form of government should be studied first because most other decisions are dependent on this.
- The study of form of government shall include the broad issue of which form to adopt (Select Board and Open Town Meeting, Select Board and Representative Town Meeting, and City form) as well as the specific study of whether and how existing Open Town Meeting should be enhanced. Indeed, both questions inform each other. Gathering further data required specifically to support the study of form of government is also in scope of this phase.
- The conclusion of this phase shall be treated as a preliminary working hypothesis. It may transpire that the decision might be revisited if study of other issues suggests that the form of government selected initially is sub-optimal.

5. Prepare for February 10th Presentation to Select Board

Mr. Stumpf will present on behalf of the TGSC. Mr. Stumpf will contact the Select Board to find out how much time is available. Mr. Stumpf’s presentation will include an update on the TGSC’s activities so far, a description of the process followed to identify issues to study, the conclusion
reached during this meeting, and the timescale for future activities. The timescale shall be presented as contingent on the scope of work that emerges as the study progresses.

**Audience Participation**

Mr. Fink of 21 Basement Drive, Andover, asked Mr. Simko how many responses had been received from the survey conducted by the Town in collaboration with the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. Mr. Simko responded that 900 to 1000 responses had been received, and data would be available in February. Mr. Fink commented it would be advisable for the TGSC to gather data from a broader constituency to ensure no resident feels disenfranchised. However, he stated that he was pleased that the committee has already included data gathering in ongoing plans.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting shall be held after the meeting with the Select Board. Mr. Simko shall circulate a poll to determine the preferred time and date.

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew McBrien, Clerk

**Attachments**

Appendix 1: Slides used by Mr. Flanagan and Mr. Lawlor
Appendix 1: Slides used by Mr. Flanagan and Mr. Lawlor
COMMUNICATIONS PHILOSOPHY

Andover’s Communication Philosophy

- **Engagement**: Connecting the community with the town, town events, public meetings, and Andover news.
- **Response**: Proactive and reactive communications, typically surrounding major events, weather, or other out of the ordinary events.
- **Interaction**: Digital and in-person dialogue between town officials and residents, business owners and stakeholders. This includes “rapid response” approach to social media posts and inquiries, public information sessions and resident meetings.
DIGITAL AND INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

SOCIAL MEDIA

@AndoverMA
3,709 likes

@AndoverMcGov
3,337 followers

Primary Users
Director of Administrative Services
Executive Assistant

Police, Fire, Public Works, Recreation, and Library all have strong pages with dedicated staff to manage.

Andover’s Social Media Working Group is led by our Deputy Town Manager.
SOCIAL MEDIA

- Followers on just the Town of Andover main social media accounts have increased 77% since this time last year
- Subscribers to our News Flash has nearly doubled over the last year
- Routine posts reach anywhere from 1,000 – 5,000 users, while critical messaging reaches between 10,000 and 15,000 users

WHY WE ARE EMBRACING INTERACTION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- We have an extremely active social media community. Currently there are three major “Groups” with 17,000 members
- We are meeting residents in the spaces they are comfortable and where they frequent
- We are communicating with residents one on one, but with a lot of observers
Hi all, just wondering if anyone knows how (or if) I should handle complaint with the town. As in, is there someone to contact re: water main construction? Do I start with water department? A man was banging on my door last week, insisting on coming in, even though I explained it was middle of the work day and I was on a call. He was super aggressive, so I finally let him in. A few days later I went down to the basement, and found a flood of water all over the floor and all over my stuff. It's taken me a few days to clean up, and I had to throw away some of our belongings. The main water valve now needs to be replaced (he also left it with a slow drip after doing whatever else he did to flood the place). They were working on the water mains in my street at the time. Any advice? I'm so mad at myself for letting him in, plus I was so busy working all the time I never grabbed his name or company info!

Hi Erin, this is Patrick Lawler from the Town Manager's Office. First off, I'm sorry you had this experience. If you would like to email me your address and any other information, I can discuss this with the Engineering and Water Division. My email is Patrick.Lawler@AndoverMa.us. You are also always welcome to use our centralized online customer service center at www.andoverma.gov!

Hi all, thank you for your advice & just wanted to let you know that the town addressed my concerns and fixed the water valve for me. I wrote up a (crazy, lol) email and they handled it really professionally. 👍 happy thanksgiving 😊
DIGITAL AND INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS
ANDOVER NEWS NEWSLETTER

ANDOVER NEWS

- Currently there are seven different newsletters users can sign up for:
  - Special newsletters have been created for Blasting Notifications and special interests like the MBTA Monopoles
  - Users can receive email and text alerts
- Users can sign up to receive automatic notifications for agenda postings for 30 Boards and Committees
- Andover News items are linked directly to the front page of our website
DIGITAL AND INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS
WEBSITE RESOURCES

TOWN OF ANDOVER WEBSITE

- Website was re-designed and launched in 2017
- Layout based on feedback from user groups
- Refresh scheduled for Summer 2020
- Framework and organization uses municipal best practices
- Decentralized management of the resource
Community Events and Programs Page
- Self service submittal; groups and organizations submit events, approved by town staff
- Populates the only comprehensive events calendar in the Andover area
ANDOVER CENTRAL
311 – REQUEST FOR SERVICE – KNOWLEDGE BASE
Andover Central is the Town of Andover’s customer service hub that can be thought of in three segments:

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<tr>
<th>Digital Service Requests</th>
<th>Knowledge Base</th>
<th>311</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The public can submit requests for service that are geo-based, managed, and trackable</td>
<td>• An answer to any question related to town government that would not require follow-up</td>
<td>• Non-emergency customer service phone line.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ability to activate after hours or during emergencies</td>
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WWW.ANDOVERMA.GOV/311
TRADITIONAL AND IN-PERSON COMMUNICATIONS

RESIDENT MEETINGS

PROJECT MEETINGS

Town Governance Study Committee (TGSC) Minutes

Date: January 30, 2020

TRADITIONAL AND IN-PERSON COMMUNICATIONS

RESIDENT MEETINGS

PROJECT MEETINGS

Lower Shawsheen Playground

Information about the upcoming Public Meetings on December 16th

Save the Date

Lower Shawsheen Playground will be the site of the upcoming public meeting. It will be held on December 16th.

Information from the Public Meeting on November 9th

Agenda:

1. Opening
2. Discussion of the Public Meeting on November 9th
3. Question and Answer Session
4. Adjournment