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TOWN OF WAYLAND

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WAYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS 01778

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

LEA T. ANDERSON
MARY M. ANTES
LOUIS M. JURIST
CHERRY C. KARLSON
JOSEPH F. NOLAN

Board of Selectmen Listening Session Subcommittee
Listening Session #8
Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.
Wayland Town Building – Senior Center
41 Cochituate Road, Wayland

Attendance: Subcommittee members Lea T. Anderson, Mary M. Antes

Others in attendance: Lynne Cavanaugh (facilitator), Andrea Case, Larry Kiernan, Anette Lewis, Janot Mendler de Suarez, Arlene Petri, Gary Slep, Kathleen Steinberg, Brian Waldner

Welcome and introductions Facilitator, Lynne Cavanaugh, welcomed eight members of the community to the last of eight Listening Sessions at 1:00 p.m. in the Senior Center at the Wayland Town Building. She gave a brief statement of her background and asked the attendees to introduce themselves. She explained that Selectmen Mary Antes and Lea Anderson were there to listen and take notes for a summary report. She assured the attendees that no statements would be attributed to individuals in the report. L. Cavanaugh reviewed the ground rules.

Questions and discussion L. Cavanaugh led the group through a series of questions:

- What town services do you use most often and how well do they serve your needs? How could they be improved?
- What are three things in Wayland Town Government that are working well and you don't want to see changed? What three things would you like to see changed?
- Do you participate in town activities and town-sponsored events? Why or why not?
- What would encourage you to take advantage of these activities and services?
- Many feel that Wayland taxes are high. What services might you be willing to forego in order to add new or additional services?
- What is the best way for the town to provide you with information on a regular basis?
- Do you have skills that you would be willing to share with the town on a short-term, one-shot, or regular basis? What is keeping you from joining a board or committee?
- Do you have concerns or comments that have not already been mentioned?

Feedback Notes on comments received are attached.

Approval of minutes M. Antes moved, seconded by L. Anderson to approve the minutes to Listening Session #7 on Feb. 15, 2017. YEA: L. Anderson, M. Antes. NAY: none. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 2-0.

Adjourn The listening session ended at 2:34 p.m.

Items Distributed for Information and Use by the Listening Session attendees at Listening Session #8 on February 22, 2017

1. Handout listing Town Departments
2. Draft minutes to Listening Session #7 on Feb. 15, 2017

Items Included as Part of Agenda Packet for Discussion During the January 26, 2017 Listening Session
There were none.

Respectfully submitted: Lea T. Anderson

Listening Session #8 Notes
Wayland Town Building - Senior Center
Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2017

Facilitator, Lynne Cavanaugh
Selectmen, Mary Antes and Lea Anderson

8 attendees 7 of 8 have been to Town Meeting
 6 of 8 attend Town Meeting regularly
 4 of 8 have served on town boards or committees or commissions

Question: What town services do you use most often and how well do they serve your needs? Or not serve your needs?

DPW

- DPW is working well; new head of DPW is good; DPW is doing a spectacular job on snow removal; they are looking long term at the roads
- Sidewalks are never cleared of snow; lake of ice near the Depot after a storm
- Snow policy states that first the roads get plowed, then the sidewalks near schools get cleared, then rest of sidewalks
- DPW is great; met with BPW on plastic bag ban being proposed; wanted DPW to be enforcement arm; disappointed that they were not very proactive – split vote on article; they felt that enforcing what happens inside a building is outside their mandate – even though other towns have been able to manage with no enforcement necessary; need to think in more creative ways and move towards a zero waste future
- Transfer station is good; DPW was very helpful with rail trail

Library

- Library does a great job

Recreation

- Used recreation when kids were younger
- Love the beach and availability of boats; season should be extended; know that college kids have to go back to school, but would like to expand access

Planning Dept./Building/Zoning

- Worked very well with the rail trail project; took over ownership of rail trail; jumped in to help coordinate
- Problems in Building, Zoning, Planning; how about video to guide someone trying to get a permit?

Fire, Police, Ambulance

- Great

Schools

- Fine

Conservation

- Want to encourage more use for passive recreational space; compared to Weston, Lincoln, and Sudbury, we are lacking a network; Weston has 64 miles of connected trail easements; Wayland is a bunch of islands; Conservation holds things up on things developers have not done; Conservation more caught up in restrictions

- Departments don't talk to each other; Heard Pond/Pelham Island Rd. floods; Conservation put up road blocks to fixing the problem; govern in silos
- Tags on trees that need to be taken down stay there year after year; Conservation holds it up; one kid almost got killed this year
- Long term projects should be capitalized; need longer-term planning process
- Departments don't submit funding requests because they don't expect articles to be approved

Question: Is the problem Conservation or coordination?

Water Department

- Protection of water resources is very important; water bans are not clear; why is it ok for private wells when water comes from same source? Communication problem across the board; wellhead protection plan is very good, not being implemented; need longer term planning option; water could be focus for testing new ways of problem solving; a competent town manager, if given a mandate, could address these issues

Coordination

- As an outsider it is very clear that coordination is a problem; problems being addressed with band-aids; Town needs proactive approach to enforcement
- Coordination is an issue among boards and committees; Land Use department meetings have been reinstated; Town Administrator needs to be able to do her job as laid out by code; once we were better – 10 years ago; Town Administrator was obstacle; now we need to empower Town Administrator to do more coordination; we need a way to answer the question “how do I get a permit?” Could there be a video link to show someone the steps to getting a permit? Problems are in Building, Zoning, Planning
- An ombudsman might help, perhaps a volunteer
- We don't communicate well with citizens or between boards; Town websites are not updated; Website should be one and only comprehensive, understandable source of information
- Many things work well and am generally pleased; two things at play: silos and volunteers – silos make coordination hard, volunteers don't necessarily follow through; concerned about studies, we are not deploying resources to take care of problems, e.g. cow pastures not being cared for; complex issues yet have not increased staff in this building to take care of these things; reliant on property taxes to take care of all this; need longer term planning and stewardship of these resources
- Silo structure; just getting fields mowed in not enough; look forward to making best productive use of open space, recreation, planting; often it is easier to stick to the status quo; nobody wants to take responsibility for leading
- Farmer wanted to plant hay on Cow Common; Conservation owns it, so no talking about long term plan, farm vs. bird habitat

Assessors

- Things have improved; previous issue with incorrect information on record showing up, being corrected, then reappearing over and over

Business

- Shocked about lack of economic diversity; Wayland has really smart people, great ideas, leaders of business; shocked that economic base is residential property tax; durability of economy; make Wayland business friendly
- Now we have the town center; I never go there; what would you change to make town more friendly to business?
- Think that commercial costs us more money than it adds

BoS

- Warrant is up to the BoS; they control what is in it; need to vet, exercise authority so that time is not wasted at Town Meeting
- Appointees – need to truly understand people’s backgrounds and experience
- Website is poor; needs to be revamped; need on-line calendar of all town functions including schools

Finance

- Treasurer has been required to put together debt schedule in annual report; still not being done; long term benefits liability is a problem; OPEB report troubling; when we hire, need to put aside money for long term liability

Communication

What is best way to reach you?

- Town Crier; town boards take a negative hit in Crier, especially related to CVS (150 Main St.) – devastating; why couldn’t the town set up something with little shops, farm stand instead of CVS?
- Finnerty’s had been for sale for 10 years; now something is being done
- Need to sell ourselves better
- OML makes me never want to be on a board; not good for small towns
- Need a positive public relations person; look at Transition and the positive articles
- Need a better website; Town websites are not updated; Website should be one and only comprehensive, understandable source of information (repeated from above); need communication plan with website as the hub; should be interactive
- WayCAM is good, but quality is terrible, can’t hear anyone except people at table; boring meetings
- I think WayCAM is pretty good
- My family can’t agree on what to use to communicate; town needs better website; technology is evolving; look at best practices
- Should we have BoS hours? No
- Need Communications plan; combination of website and board tweets; need interactive method, comment section
- Weston has rail trail committee that sends out agendas, updates, etc
- Reverse 911 is used a little too often
- Why isn’t census on line? (Check state law)
- Allow engagement with town website
- Two kinds of communication: citizens need information and town wants to communicate with residents – can’t respond the same way to both types
- Do we have two methods? Look up and send out; could we ask for email addresses and sent out update once a month? Push and pull
- Need to use a variety of methods; website, snail mail, email (easy to use and inexpensive)

Question: What has your experience been like on a board or committee?

- Have been on 3; still on CERT; high rate of turnover; would not join another committee; refuse to go to Town Meeting in last 5 years; warrant should be better organized – all planning/zoning together, don’t mix things up
- Moderators (past and present) talk too much, scream at mic; should allow no more than 1 amendment; difficult to read handouts when the moderator is talking
- Learned a lot, met people, would do it again when have more time
- Served on two elected boards and Master Plan – good experience if you are ready to work; should not be afraid of people with different views being on committees as long as decisions based on facts, issues; usually come to consensus

Question: Are there services or places we could cut back to lower taxes?

- Schools could be cut, but not in classrooms; too much support staff; ratio is 5:4 to 1 (students to staff); unsustainable
- We are paying for teachers' kids, 72 kids adds up to about \$1.2 million a year; look at way we deliver service, extra stuff
- Make things more cost efficient; shout out to Energy Advisory Committee; are we only going to endorse longer term planning around environment? Look for efficiencies across boards if structure changes
- Is there a way to keep Wayland from being a high school factory? Need more seniors to stay; seniors are a bargain; grow number of people without kids

Anything else?

Library

- At first wanted to stay in old building, now hoping to get new library
- We need to know what are opportunities with old building; don't knock it down; place for arts, meetings, performances – need to know before vote on funding

River's Edge

- I am against ghettoized affordable housing; would like more integration around town; why are we not looking at Whole Foods plaza for affordable housing?
- Prefers cluster zoning
- River's Edge is not connected to the town center

Thank you!