

Town Meeting Day Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 3, 2024, Danville Town Offices

Alison Low, Alison Despathy, Alice Kitchel, Tom Ziobrowski, Glenn Herrin, Clayton Cargill

The meeting convened at 7:02.

After reviewing the agenda, the group added the review of the letter to the voters as an agenda item.

The minutes of the December meeting, with a few corrections by Clayton and Tom were approved by consent. There was further discussion of SB2 issues, which were explored in the previous meeting with Susan Clark. Just how might a budget “blow up” under SB2? In a floor meeting, for example, the budget might get hijacked by a group of special interests, and the general electorate would not support it. However, with the AB process, there is also a risk of a budget getting voted down. There are millions of scenarios that could lead to a budget getting voted down. The risk unique to SB2 is the time lapse between the floor meeting and the ballot vote. A point of clarification: AB ballot is run by the town clerk, while floor vote is run by the moderator.

Barbara Fontaine was not able to join us to discuss the history of the charter change. Tom said that he would have a conversation with her and share his findings with the group. Alison D said that she would like to join them.

The group reviewed the letter to voters, drafted by Alison D. The group approved the letter with some minor edits.

The group discussed the sample questionnaires from Craftsbury and Peacham, and it was agreed that the Craftsbury survey was more accessible to a general audience. However, that survey didn't get at all the information we were trying to gather.

What insights did we hope to gain?

- Determine what their level and type of town engagement is.
- Can increase civic engagement beyond town meeting?
- Identify who attends TMD, who doesn't, and why
- Identify general interest in TMD
- Identify access issues, if any, to TMD
- What are the motives for participating, whether it's from the floor or by AB?

There was not enough time to draft a single survey from the sample questions, so everyone agreed to email their favorite questions to Alison L, and she should compile in time for a discussion at the next meeting.

There was a discussion about the options as presented on PowerPoint slides by Glenn. It was agreed that the slides effectively summarized the overall options for TMD, as well as the attendance boosters that can be implemented regardless of our approach. It was also agreed that hybrid Option C (public questions by AB) was not a practical option for us and should be left off the matrix. We reviewed the purpose of this document, which was to simply lay out all options under

consideration, not advocate for one at this point. The first thing we need to do is find out who is attending, who isn't, and why. That knowledge will inform our choices.

We discussed advertising TMD and the committee, noting that Tom had promoted the committee on FPF.

Do we want to do outreach in advance of TMD and educate the public on issues? Perhaps we can change the timbre for a couple of months and operate as an ad hoc committee. Our committee could be helpful during this difficult transition. Who is tabling? Does anyone need a babysitter? Alice Kitchel agreed to be the showrunner for TMD and would hand out assignments! The showrunner role would also be discussed at tomorrow's SB meeting. Alice agreed to set up a dedicated email contacts and general inquiries. (This would also be the contact on the Letter to the Voters and the contact on the flyers.)

Tom agreed to reach out to someone with graphic design experience and come up with an outreach flyer, following some of the examples that can be found in the Bethel Operator's Manual. (It was also noted that Bethel has a town meeting committee. Flyer content: What do you need to make TMD a better experience in 2024? How can we help? In addition to the flyers, we discussed getting additional Freedom & Unity handouts.

Alison made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Alice seconded. The motion carried with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Next regular meeting is February 7, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Low