

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: January 6, 2022
TIME: 11:10 AM

Structural Change Impact Group

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 2, 2021

Location – Remote Meeting on Zoom

Members present: Joe Bernard, Norma Massarotti, Matt Gasbarro, Vicki Amalfitano, Mark Paolillo, Aaron Pikilingis, Anne Helgen, Brian Antonellis, Meg Moriarty

Members absent: Travis Franck, Paul Rickter

Other attendees: none

[Meeting called to order at 8:01am by Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo]

Approval of prior meeting minutes

- **Motion** to approve the meeting minutes from November 18, 2021 *(Vote 5-0 in favor, with 3 abstentions)*
 - Moved by Matt Gasbarro, seconded by Vicki Amalfitano
 - In favor: Aaron Pikilingis, Vicki Amalfitano, Joe Bernard, Norma Massarotti, Mark Paolillo
 - Opposed: none
 - Abstain: Meg Moriarty, Anne Helgen, Brian Antonellis

Update from Working Groups on recent progress

- Discussion commenced with updates from the chairs of each Working Group, as follows:
 - Aaron Pikilingis provided a progress update for the Consolidation, Regionalization & Outsourcing Working Group, including a past meeting with Bob Reardon, Chair of the Board of Assessors, Dan Dargon, Assessing Administrator, and James MacIsaac, Police Chief
- Further discussion ensued on the topic of PILOT payments, including the following points:
 - Norma Massarotti commented that a head of Belmont Hill School stated that the Town has not approached Belmont Hill for PILOT payments
 - Brian Antonellis commented that there needs to be a better process to coordinate the services that nonprofits provide to various groups in town
 - Mark Paolillo commented that we need a coordinated effort from the Board of Assessors and the Select Board to approach nonprofits for PILOT payments
 - Anne Helgen commented that it would be helpful to use the Northampton PILOT study as a template
 - Aaron Pikilingis commented that his understanding from the meeting was that the Assessor's Office is calculating potential PILOT payments every year, so he assumed that meant they were also asking for them every year; if not, his recommendation would be to make a coordinated effort to ask for them every year
 - Joe Bernard commented that he had the same understanding about nonprofits being approached every year, and this discrepancy speaks to a need for a more coordinated relationship between the Town and nonprofits

- Vicki Amalfitano commented that Boston expects nonprofits to invest in the city as part of any development project they undertake
- Joe Bernard commented that a potential recommendation for the Structural Change Impact Group write-up on PILOTs is for the Select Board to appoint a new committee that would be charged with the relevant financial analysis on behalf of the Town, as well as building relationships with the nonprofits in town
- Anne Helgen agreed and commented that the Select Board and Town departments have a lot of the information that is needed to perform the analysis
- Mark Paolillo agreed and commented that it would be helpful to research what other towns have done to implement their approach to PILOT payments
- Further discussion ensued on other topics from the meeting with Bob Reardon and Dan Dargon, including the following points:
 - Aaron Pikcilingis commented that other topics included tax exemptions for seniors, deferred payments, the process for certifying net new growth, potential regionalization of assessor's services, potential residential exemptions, and the assessment of commercial properties after public improvement projects
 - Mark Paolillo mentioned that the topic of an updated comprehensive master plan was discussed
 - Aaron Pikcilingis commented that the Vision 21 Implementation Committee had started the process of updating the Town's comprehensive master plan, but it was interrupted by the pandemic
 - Brian Antonellis commented that Belmont needs a master plan by state law, that there is plenty of funding available for an updated comprehensive master plan, and that the Town's zoning bylaws need to be updated accordingly
- Discussion continued with updates from the chairs of each Working Group, as follows:
 - Vicki Amalfitano provided a progress update for the Subcommittee on Revenue, Budget and Town Services
 - Further discussion ensued regarding this committee's balance between our own research and analysis of an idea versus writing a recommendation that the Select Board or other governing bodies conduct further research and analysis of an idea
 - Mark Paolillo commented that Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services provided a Financial Management Review to the Town of Belmont in 2011 which included, among others, a recommendation that the town form a committee to study the merits of adopting a town charter. He recommended that this committee's members read the report. Aaron Pikcilingis provided the following link to all committee members: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/belmont-financial-management-review-august-2011/download>.
 - Megan Moriarty and Anne Helgen provided a progress update for the Personnel, Compensation, Benefits & Retirement subcommittee

Discussion of Idea Matrix including decisions about moving ideas between Working Groups

- Discussion ensued about the subject of ensuring that ideas are assigned to the appropriate Working Group, as well as the overlap between compensation and outsourcing, but no individual ideas need to be moved at this time

Discussion of Next Steps, including coordination with other towns and Belmont departments/groups

- Discussion ensued about next steps, including the following points:
 - Norma Massarotti asked Mark Paolillo if the Select Board is expecting high-level recommendations or specific dramatic changes that drive savings. Mark Paolillo replied that he is looking for the latter, for actionable items that can result in savings.
 - Further discussion ensued on the topic of making recommendations that can change the Town's governance from reactive to proactive

[Brian Antonellis, Aaron Pikilingis, Meg Moriarty left the meeting at 9:06am]

- Discussion ensued about coordination with other towns, including the following points:
 - Vicki Amalfitano commented that the Subcommittee on Revenue, Budget and Town Services would still like to meet with other towns on the topics of budget guidelines, programmatic budgeting, and IT
 - Mark Paolillo will reach out to leaders in Lexington and Winchester

Discussion of Draft Idea Write-up Report

- Discussion ensued about the format of a potential interim report to the Select Board in December, including the following points:
 - Mark Paolillo commented that he would recommend focusing the report on the top 5-10 most impactful ideas

Decide future meeting schedule

- The committee's next meetings will December 9th and 16th, in advance of the next Select Board meeting which is on December 20th

[Vote to adjourn was unanimous; the meeting was adjourned at 9:18am]

Meeting minutes recorded by Joe Bernard