

**Moderator's Committee on Public Hearings  
Minutes  
June 21, 2012**

The organizational meeting of the Moderator's Committee on Public Hearings was held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 21, 2012 in the Selectmen's small hearing room on the sixth floor of Town Hall.

Attendees: Sandy Gadsby, Harry Friedman, Helen Herman, Donna Kalikow, Richard Leary, and Sean Lynn-Jones

Public attendees: Regina Frawley

Sandy Gadsby, Town Moderator opened the meeting with the charge of the moderator's committee (Article 9 from the May 22, 2012 annual town meeting) and suggestions on approach to the committee's review process. He noted the following:

- Is this by-law necessary? If there is not a problem, you don't automatically create a by-law.
- The advisory committee has been excluded from the charge, but the committee is not confined to that conclusion.
- Few committees actually take a position on warrant articles.
- He suggested that the committee might want to ask representatives from those boards and commissions that are often asked to review and discuss warrant articles on a regular basis to meet with the committee and describe how they handle input from the public.
- He suggested that we hold a public hearing.
- If the committee decides to draft an article for fall town meeting, we would have to formally report to Town Meeting. The deadline is August 30. The Selectmen have flexibility to add a warrant by September 10 (under their signature).
- Four meetings should be enough, plus a public hearing. Public comment at meetings is up to the Chair.
- The Moderator indicated that there was no particular incident that precipitated this warrant article.
- Minutes are required to be filed with the Town Clerk and must include subject matter discussed and committee decisions. They need not be a transcript.
- The committee has the ability to call on town staff to provide input, such as Town Counsel, etc.

The Committee nominated Sean Lynn-Jones as Chairman of the Committee. The vote was four in favor of the appointment with one abstention.

The Committee nominated Donna Kalikow as Secretary of the Committee. The vote was four in favor of the appointment with one abstention.

The meeting scheduling was next discussed. We discussed the number of committees that we would invite to report to the committee and the priorities of the invitations to the town boards, commissions, and committees. The priorities are listed below.

School Committee

Planning Board

Board of Selectmen

Advisory Committee

Zoning By-Law Committee

Preservation Commission

Transportation Board

Conservation Commission

Housing Advisory Board

We agreed to invite Town Counsel to the next meeting to discuss the Open Meeting Law and representatives from the above commissions and boards. We also agreed to solicit written comments from petitioners and the public. The chair recognized Regina Frawley for some brief comments. She indicated that there was a previous incident wherein the Board of Selectmen did not take public comment about a particular warrant article. She then researched the subject and found out that there was no definition of a public hearing in Massachusetts state law.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, July 12, 2012 at 7 pm. There was a motion to adjourn. These minutes were amended and approved on July 12, 2012.