



Town of Nantucket Finance Committee

April 2nd, 2024 – Minutes

REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM

Staff:	Mariya Basheva, Assistant Town Accountant
Attending Members:	Denice Kronau, Chair, Peter Schaeffer, Jeremy Bloomer, Jill Vieth, Stephen Maury, Rob Giacchetti
Absent Members:	Joanna Roche, Joseph Wright, Christopher Glowacki

Finance Committee Meeting Introduction and Roll Call

- Denice Kronau opens the meeting, confirming the presence of all members and anticipated speakers.
- Denice explains the meeting's format, including public comments and the agenda.
- Denice seeks approval of the agenda, made by Jill, seconded by Peter. **Roll Call Vote: Peter Aye, Jill Aye, Rob Aye, Jeremy Aye, Stephen Aye, Denice Aye. Passes Unanimously.**

Public Comment and Meeting Agenda Approval

- Denice opens the floor for public comments, but no one raises their hand or submits electronic comments.
- Denice turns the meeting over to Jill Vieth and Joe Grause for the discussion on the town council study work group.
- Jill Vieth provides an update on the town council study committee, emphasizing the importance of keeping the Finance Committee informed.
- Joe Grause introduces himself and outlines the committee's progress, including meetings with various town government officials and the Collins Center for Public Policy.

Committee Formation and Initial Focus

- Joe Grause explains the committee's formation in response to Article 81 from the previous year's town meeting.
- The committee includes nine members, including Jill Vieth as the Finance Committee representative and Tom Dixon as the Select Board representative.

- The committee has been meeting since November, focusing on education and understanding different forms of town government.
- The committee plans to shift focus to composing a town charter and public outreach activities to communicate the idea to voters.

Discussion on Town Council Form of Government

- Joe Grause discusses the pros and cons of different forms of government, including open town meeting, representative town meeting, town council, and strong manager or town council with mayor city council.
- Curtis Barnes emphasizes the need for a strong town manager and council, similar to Barnstable.
- Jill Vieth clarifies that the town council would decide on the organizational structure, including the retention of existing committees.
- Jeremy Bloomer stresses the importance of defining the problem the new form of government aims to solve before selling it to the public.

Pros and Cons of a Town Council

- Peter Schaeffer highlights the inefficiency of the current system, which requires decisions to be made only once a year.
- Jeremy Bloomer points out the need for a clear rationale for the change, emphasizing the importance of public input and efficiency.
- Stephen Maury questions the workload and efficiency of a town council, comparing it to the current Select Board.
- Jill Vieth and Joe Grause discuss the potential benefits of a town council, including increased public input and the ability to make decisions more quickly.

Challenges and Considerations

- Jill Vieth raises the issue of zoning as a significant change that would need careful consideration.
- Joe Grause notes that the current town meeting system attracts a relatively high participation rate compared to other towns.
- The discussion touches on the need for a clear and compelling reason for changing to a town council form of government.
- Denice Kronau emphasizes the importance of having a diverse town council to avoid a small group of people making decisions.

Final Remarks and Next Steps

- Joe Grause thanks the Finance Committee for their candid comments and acknowledges the need for a clear rationale for the proposed change.
- Denice Kronau reiterates the importance of understanding the current system and the proposed changes to make an informed decision.
- The meeting concludes with a motion to adjourn, which is seconded and approved by the members present.
- Jill Vieth encourages members to watch recent meetings for more context and information on the town council study committee.
- Motion to Adjourn, made by Peter, seconded by Jeremy. **Roll Call Vote: Jill Aye, Peter Aye, Jeremy Aye, Rob Aye, Stephen Aye, Denice Aye. Passes Unanimously.**