

**Town of Topsfield  
FY2019 Government Review Committee (GRC)**

**Approved Meeting Minutes**

December 18, 2018

7:30 P.M.

Topsfield Town Hall  
First Floor Conference Room

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Lou Ross called the meeting to order at 7:32 P.M. with Jon Palace and Roberta Sapienza present. Others present: Dick Gandt, Eldon Goodhue, Dave Larson. Dick Gandt made a recording of the meeting.
2. **Minutes:** Roberta Sapienza made a motion to accept the minutes from December 4. Jon Palace seconded the motion. Voted in favor 3-0. Draft minutes from the December 3 meeting, with the Board of Selectmen, will be addressed at the next GRC meeting.
3. **Discussion regarding Questions for Town Board's Chairpersons regarding Town Governance and Interviews:** (a) Lou Ross and Jon Palace had not done interviews yet. Both planned to complete at least one interview before the next GRC meeting. (b) Roberta Sapienza completed her first interview, with Martha Morison (chair of the Planning Board). The interview lasted approximately 90 minutes. Some questions seemed redundant to Ms. Morrison, or not applicable to the Planning Board. No changes to the interview questions are planned until we get more feedback.
4. **Investigating Town Governance Effectiveness and Efficiency:** (a) Lou Ross plans to research other forms of town governance and will share information with other members of the GRC. (b) Brief discussion of other people to be interviewed. Roberta Sapienza is willing to do more interviews before the next GRC meeting. (c) Brief discussion whether the GRC should look at recommendations made by a previous committee approximately 10 years ago. We are not sure how they gathered their data or if they had a goal in mind. We can look at their recommendations, but we are starting "fresh." (c) Brief discussion of the GRC strategy for making recommendations. We should offer pros and cons of any changes. (d) Jon Palace asked how long Topsfield has had a Town Administrator. The position was adopted in 2005, and the first TA started in 2006.
5. **Correspondence and Materials.** Chairman Lou Ross received an email from Dave Larson about Board of Selectman goals. No other correspondence was noted.
6. **Upcoming Meeting Schedule:** The next GRC meeting is Tuesday January 8. Chairman Lou Ross may have a conflict; he will contact GRC members beforehand.

7. **Other Topics:** Dick Gandt mentioned that the Board of Parks and Cemetery Commissioners did not know of the GRC and suggested a notification to the Town boards and officials that could be disseminated by Debi Morong. Dave Larson asked if the GRC had an org chart. Lou Ross said we have a draft.
8. **Adjourn:** A motion to adjourn was made by Jon Palace at 8:12 P.M. Seconded by Roberta Sapienza. Voted in favor 3-0.

**Materials used at the meeting:**

1. Agenda