



## MINUTES

January 29, 2014

4:38 p.m. called to order. Chaired by David Cole.

**Present:** Jack Baughan, Ann Boxler, David Cole, Gay Gillespie, Jim Hartnett, Elaine Ostroff, Melissa Pacheco, Nancy Rioux

**Absent:** Jeff Bull, Jim Coyne, Sean Leach

### 1. Approve Minutes December 18, 2013.

Baughan motioned to approve the minutes. Gillespie seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous with all in favor.

### 2. Update School Participation

Pacheco and Rioux reported on meeting held with Irene Buck of the Westport Education Foundation (WEF). Wendy Goldberg of WEF also on this group but unable to attend initial meeting. Discussed next steps for Schools section of Master Plan. Intent is to develop a process to engage broader community to determine what town sees as priorities. This will dovetail with upcoming strategic planning by the schools. They want to hold a visioning session, with facilitation, to get responses to 5 main questions.

Have looked at Easthampton's Master Plan to see how they've included schools.  
Boxler asked if more public use of school facilities would be considered.

### 3. Consultant Responses to RFP for Facilitators

Hartnett presented a chart showing the 5 consultants who responded to the RFP and their prices. He reported that his reference checks on the Horsley Witten Group (HWG), the lowest bidder, got strong recommendations from towns that used them for similar services. Ostroff noted that the HWG proposal was the most responsive to the RFP, with detailed information about the process. Gillespie moved to accept HWG; Pacheco 2nd and unanimously approved.

Hartnett proposed to bring in HWG for a meeting to discuss the addition of the school's visioning session. Their contract would then go to the Board of Selectmen to be signed.

There was discussion of possibility of combining the schools visioning session with another chapter, to have more people engaged.

### 4. Economic Development Update

Baughan reported that his review of previous Master Plans confirmed the intent to tweak the earlier plans, not rewrite them. He provided some background on the development of the Economic Development plans since 1966. Baughan noted several key issues: there was no mention of capital in previous plans; the most critical error was overestimating population growth at great expense to the town; the expansion of the "Village Concept" and that the earlier limitations of sewer capacity now could be addressed with changes in technology to address waste water.

# MASTER PLAN UPDATE SUBCOMMITTEE

Westport Planning Board



Wednesday, Jan 29, 2014  
*Town Hall Annex*

The ED worksheet with action steps was reviewed and Cole questioned the earlier priorities of expanding the administrative capacity for economic development. He also noted the need to reflect the opinions collected from the Town-wide survey on types of economic development that community wanted.

Discussion of need for data, especially on why businesses leave Westport - citing Crosby and Baker, as well as why businesses come to Westport. Need to know how many Westport people are employed locally. Boxler noted that the infrastructure costs of operating a business are higher in Westport, especially for Internet and other communications operations. She noted that in service industries such as her insurance business, customers like local people helping them. Further discussion on employees; noted that previous MP work on Ec. Development had not looked at employees.

Discussion on functions of Westport businesses:

- provide services for Westport
- provide employment for Westporters
- increase the tax base

Baughan noted that employees with high tech skills are not available.

Hartnett will reconvene the Econ Development group to review/consider issues raised.

## **5. Calendar for visioning sessions**

MP Visioning Session on Saturday morning April 12, possibly at the library. Chapters that may be ready to include are: Natural Resources; Open Space and Recreation, Economic development. October would be good for a session on schools.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Subcommittee adjourned at 5:40 p.m. Gillespie moved, Rioux 2nd. Unanimous.