

ALG Minutes, November 19, 2018

Meeting was held at 7:30 AM in Room 204, Acton Town Hall, AKA Francis Faulkner room

Present: Bart Wendell, facilitator; Katie Green & Joan Gardner, BoS; Paul Murphy & Diane Baum, SC; John Mangiaratti, Peter Light & Marie Altieri, staff. Absent: Roland Bourdon, FC. Audience: Mark Hald, Asst. Town Manager.

This is a special meeting of the ALG; Agenda Topic

1. Discussion of response to OML complaints All members participating

Included in the information was a description of the OML complaints

John explained that town has received multiple OML complaints and it's required that these complaints be addressed in a public session. The responses are due tomorrow.

John read out the allegations for OML 8 & 9 [the BoS has numbered the allegations from the same individual and 1-7 deal solely with allegations against the selectmen while 8 & 9 deal with allegations against the ALG] Members answered and discussed the allegations with an eye to putting them into the letter of response.

Allegations include: the inability of the complainant to discover the June 28th minutes prior to the September 27th meeting and that they were only discovered indirectly through the school committee packet; the minutes did not identify the place or time of the meeting; the minutes did not adequately list the extra information, some of which were not in the school committee packet and are not discoverable on the town (ALG) website; the minutes did not record any votes.

The complainant wants to have the ALG disbanded claiming that it is a super committee that works outside the OML and other municipal governance and usurps municipal authorities.

It was agreed that John would write the letter of response. The ALG members then proceeded to give their suggestions as to how the various alleged complaints should be answered while John made note of their suggestions.

Jason noted that the posting does need to identify the meeting place but he was not sure of the 30-day posting.

Bart asked if the 30-day posting was correct.

Katie volunteered to look into this aspect.

Members noted that the ALG process is not one of voting but of consensus and continual iteration.

Marie noted that the ALG did not make the final decisions but those were made by the boards: selectmen, school committee and finance committee. Members took the ALG discussion back to their

various boards and they were the ones who did the voting or if there was not agreement, the ALG went over the issue again until all could reach consensus.

Jason thought that the only vote he could remember was at the March meeting for the spreadsheets that were put into the warrant for the town meeting.

Paul said [the letter] should say that the ALG sessions were an information transfer and that there was no authority to vote and the voting took place on the boards.

John asked how to answer the complaint of being a super committee and to disband.

Marie said that its clear there is intensive feedback between the boards and the ALG.

Peter noted that there may be agreement among the boards but he could not speak for the finance committee—that each board had its voice in the ALG process.

There was the question of having each board compose a response. Katie noted that the time was short counsel need the letter and suggested that once all the points were covered, drafts would be sent to each committee for perusal .

John said that he thought the reply needed to be done through the administration.

The substance of the letter will address the allegations: request for timely minutes; that the ALG does not take votes--which is not a violation of the OML; the identification if documents and their availability (perhaps being listed on an ALG website—or having a better site for ALG on the town website); the availability of the spreadsheet; reply to June minutes; March ALG plan and the draft minutes in the various board packets.

[Jason and Paul attended an OML meeting in Harvard where it was suggested that all the extra info documents be listed at the end of the minutes for ease of discovery]

Marie said she would help with the letter's composition in any way needed. She also suggested that the school's attorney know of these complaints. She also said that the minutes were taken by an "outside party" not connected to any of the boards and the LWV has provided volunteers for many years.

Members wanted to know what happened next.

Katie said that the response is to the Attorney General, where a finding will not be made unless the complainant appeals within a 60-90 day period

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 AM

The next meeting is scheduled for November 29th; 7:30 AM in room 204, Acton Town Hall

Ann Chang

Extra documents: OML complaints filed on October 31, 2018 with description of alleged violations