

BELMONT VISION 21 IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

2015 NOV 20 PM 4:07

JUNE 16, 2015

Present: George Durante, Chair, Natalie Leino, Vice Chair, Paul Solomon, Donald Mercier, Jennifer Page, Mary Power, Carol Trager, Doug John

The meeting was convened at 7:16 p.m. by the chair, George Durante

The business of the meeting proceeded as follows:

I. APPROVAL OF 5/19/2015 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of May 19, 2015 were unanimously approved.

II. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- a. George Durante was nominated for chair by Paul Solomon, seconded by Carol Trager. No other nominations being made, the nomination period was closed. A vote was taken, and George was unanimously reappointed chair of the committee.
- b. Natalie Leino was nominated for vice chair by Mary Power, seconded by Paul Solomon. No other nominations being made, the nomination period was closed. A vote was taken, and Natalie was unanimously reappointed vice chair by the committee.

III. SURVEY REPORT DISTRIBUTION

a. PRESENTATION

George reported that until that afternoon, the VIC had been scheduled to present the survey report to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) at the 6/22 BOS meeting. However, that afternoon, George was notified that the VIC had been removed from the agenda due to multiple executive sessions on the agenda. The group discussed next steps given the importance of presenting the results as soon as possible before the survey data grows stale. It was agreed that George would send another email to the BOS again expressing the importance of making the results available to the town as soon as possible and request to be on the July BOS meeting agenda. The email would request that the BOS review the report ahead of the BOS meeting with the goal of having the report approved for distribution at that meeting and the results distributed as soon as possible thereafter.

Jennifer Page noted that the report regarding Meet Belmont 2014, which was previously circulated to and discussed by the VIC, would be sent to the BOS.

b. MARKETING STRATEGY

Discussion of the marketing strategy was deferred to the next VIC meeting given that delay of the presentation also delayed any marketing initiatives.

IV. NEXT VIC INITIATIVE

As was agreed upon at the last VIC meeting, Committee members came to the meeting prepared to discuss ideas for possible next VIC initiatives. Several ideas that were presented by members were discussed further by the Committee, as summarized below:

- a. Potential "Ted Talks Belmont" series: - The Committee discussed having a series of "Ted Talks" by interesting people with a Belmont connection. This would serve as a great means to highlight the interesting people in Belmont and also as a forum to bring the community together. Committee members floated various Belmont residents that could be great potential speakers, as well as other potential logistics.
- b. "Official for a Day" program - The Committee discussed initiating a program where Belmont students would serve as town officials for a day with the goal of teaching students about town government. Carol mentioned that she participated in such an event as a student in Michigan and had very fond memories of it. It was discussed that while this was a great idea, it may be hard for the VIC to play a central role given that it would primarily impact town officials, but that the Committee could consider presenting this idea to the town for consideration.
- c. Civics Course - The Committee discussed organizing a course on how town government works for Belmont residents, with one goal being to increase civic engagement. The idea of a live, six-week course was discussed, as well as the possibility of videotaping it for future use. It was suggested that incorporating historical elements of why New England town government is organized how it is could be particularly interesting.
- d. Email distribution lists - The Committee discussed that currently there are not great mechanisms for getting information to Belmont residents regarding important town events/updates, and that having good means of communication will be important for any potential initiative (such as those discussed above) that the VIC will do in the future.

The committee discussed the possibility of setting up informal precinct-wide email listserves with the idea that this may serve as a good mechanism for dividing up town residents so that they get information particularly useful to them while not being overloaded (e.g., if there is an upcoming meeting on a specific playground is to be redesigned in a certain part of town, on work to be done on a specific road, etc). It was discussed that town-wide events could be submitted to these lists as well, or potentially a townwide listserve could be set up as well. The Committee discussed the possibility of

having Town Meeting members volunteer to serve as precinct captains to run the listserves, as there is a decent amount of work involved in maintaining the lists and moderating.

The Committee discussed other means of communication, including a booklet organized by the VIC in the past that Ellen Cushman O'Brien prints for new residents that come to Town Hall. Jennifer stated that she would confirm whether this was still being done. It was noted that communications has been prioritized several times in the past, including through a public information subgroup of the VIC and a taskforce on townwide communications. It was also mentioned that the League of Women Voters did a report on this issue.

V. MEET BELMONT LEADERSHIP

Committee members agreed to continue to put feelers out for potential future leaders of Meet Belmont. It was noted that former PPO presidents might be a good pool to try to recruit from. A discussion of the size of the VIC followed. It was noted that there used to be 15 people on the committee - 12 members and 3 liaisons, as opposed to 9 as is the case currently. It was noted that the larger size allowed for more ongoing projects at a time and greater participation by members on subgroups, but it was noted that the larger size often made it harder to get a quorum.

VI. MEMBER REAPPOINTMENTS

- a. Paul Solomon informed the group that his term was coming to an end and after several terms on the VIC, he would be stepping down. He noted that he would like to continue to attend in an unofficial capacity for the next while. The Committee congratulated Paul on his many years of wonderful service to the VIC, including serving as Chair, and let him know they were sad to see him go but wished him well.
- b. Mary Power stated that her term was also up, but that she would serve an additional 1-year term to provide consistency due to Paul's retirement from the committee.

VII. GOALS FOR OUR NEXT MEETING

2. A list of tasks to be done in preparation for the next Committee meeting was generated. Committee members volunteered to work on specific projects discussed at the meeting.
 - a. All members to consider potential interesting people for initial Ted Talks.
 - b. George to investigate potential qualification as an official "TedX" location
 - c. Subgroups were formed for potential initiatives. Members of the subgroups to connect on next steps offline and report back at the next meeting. The subgroups were as follows:
 - c.i. Tedtalks: Mary, George, Carol, Natalie, Doug, Jennifer, Allen.

c.ii. Communications: Natalie, Doug

c.iii. Civics Course: Jennifer, George, Paul

d. George to send follow-up email to Selectmen to request that the VIC be placed on the agenda for next BOS meeting.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

The next Committee meeting will be held on July 21 at 7 pm in Room 1 of Town Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalie Leino
Secretary pro tem