



Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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APPRAISAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021, 10:00 AM TOWN HALL AND VIA ZOOM

Attending: In person: Paul Sokal; Via Zoom: Maggie Catillaz; Bob Groff; Paula Moore; Dave Sullivan

The meeting was called to order by the committee chair, Paul Sokal, at 10:12 am.

Maggie Catillaz moved, and Bob Groff seconded the motion to approve the agenda. All in favor and motion passed.

Public comment – None

Paula Moore moved to approve the minutes of the September 1, 2021 meeting and Maggie seconded. All in favor and motion passed. Paula did not vote because she was absent from that meeting.

Appraisal Issues – Paula outlined the four aspects of the committee’s work at this point:

- 1) Original charge to research and understand what informs the values on the Grand List and write an explanation of the process.
- 2) The work we are doing about interview questions for an appraiser; the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP). She indicated that we needed the selectboard’s authorization since this was not in the original charge.
- 3) Documenting processes that center on the appraisal process
- 4) “The parking lot”- keeping track of any other recommendations we might have for the selectboard

Dave Sullivan noted that we were at an “inflection point,” and that we should report back to the selectboard right now. There was a discussion about the future role of the committee in the RFP and interviewing process as part of the next town-wide appraisal process and what the selectboard’s expectations might be. Paul observed that this would be a heavy lift for the committee.

Discussion about the Tables - Used to assess a property parcel, the tables have not changed since 2012 when Spencer Potter completed the last town-wide appraisal. Dave pointed out that we do have the ability to change the tables and that they can be refreshed through NEMRC. The town has discretion in changing the Stocking Tables. There is a Stocking Program Tables document in Microsoft Teams files.

We reviewed the information about the assessment of non-lakefront and lakefront property. This is described in Maggie’s document “What We Have Learned – Amended 9/12/21.” Maggie said the town’s goal was to be sure there was sufficient revenue; whatever the town does affects what is collected. She wondered who makes the philosophical decisions about the values in the tables. Dave responded that it might not be philosophical. The differences might be due to the use of more up-to-date tables, not necessarily more cautious choices in taxation.

Paul thought this was a question that could be posed to appraiser candidates: Why are the values different between towns? He noted that many decisions in Panton were made a long time ago.

Paul agreed that the committee needed to clarify its charge. After talking to the selectboard, he felt that the committee members should be polled to see if they wished to continue.

Dave wondered if a town-wide appraisal was a priority at this time for the selectboard. There was a consensus to recommend moving forward at this time, recognizing that it would take time to complete the hiring process and complete the appraisal. We also thought the selectboard should consider whether a more frequent appraisal was in the town's best interest.

For the selectboard meeting on Tuesday, September 14, Dave volunteered to present the committee's report. The report will consist of these three points:

- 1) We have completed research that allows us to meet the committee's original charge. Maggie's document "What We Have Learned" will be edited and used as the basis for the public explanation.
- 2) The selectboard will need to expand the committee's charge to focus on writing an RFP and interviewing appraiser candidates. Paul thought the RFP could be ready by November. Committee members need to be asked whether they want to be involved in this next stage.
- 3) The committee recommends a town-wide appraisal be conducted at this time.

Next meeting and agenda - We will meet on Tuesday, September 28 at 10 am. The agenda will remain the same with the addition of an item about polling the committee members about any new charge. Dave was asked to be the host for the meeting on Zoom.

Paula moved and Maggie seconded that the meeting adjourn. All in favor and motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.

Minutes taken by Paula Moore