

**HAMPDEN  
MASSACHUSETTS**

**Government Study Committee**

Cliff Bombard, Ex officio  
Michal Boudreau  
Eric Brewer  
Donna Hatch  
John Matthews, Ex officio  
Keith Pixley  
Luis Severino



**TOWN HOUSE**

625 Main Street  
Hampden MA 01036  
413.566.2151 x100

**GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**Meeting: September 26, 2023; 6:30pm**

**Attendees:**

	Cliff Bombard	x	Keith Pixley
x	Michal Boudreau		Luis Severino
x	Eric Brewer		Rick Green
x	Donna Hatch		
x	John Matthews		

Meeting called to order a 6:30pm.

**Minutes:**

Minutes for the September 12 meeting were reviewed and accepted as written. The Minutes were posted to the website on September 27.

**Interview:**

**Craig Rivest, BoS Member**

- Board works well together and is functional. BoS is the Town's ultimate authority.
  - It's difficult to not break Open Meeting Laws (OML).
  - Thinks BoS collectively has a good relationship.
  - Micromanagement is a problem.
- Relationship with Town Administrator (TA) is excellent and he seeks guidance.
  - Perhaps could increase Town government's efficiency by giving TA more responsibility.
- BoS historically has met weekly on Monday evenings. Consider a change to the frequency and perhaps meet on Tuesdays to allow more time for catch up from the prior week.
- Hampden needs more than one Town meeting per year.
- Town needs a fulltime TA to work a normal business week.
  - Need TA or Admin Assistant to handle Human Resources (HR). The fulltime TA should handle this role.
  - Grant writing takes time.
  - TA should not be engaged in contract negotiations. The TA position is not a decision making role.
- The Admin Assistant position is not well defined.

- Elected versus Appointed Officials: Appointed is better for Town for Treasurer, Clerk, Collector, and Accountant due to larger hiring pool and, therefore, more experienced candidates. Volunteer positions should be elected.
- Benefits of an increase to 5-member BoS: divided workload, OML. Negative: Ability to find people to run.
- Reasons residents don't engage: Time consuming, work too much, fear becoming a target in social media.
- Not enough IT support
- Need Facilities manager
- Town Hall needs \$4-7M to repair
- If anything was possible, priorities would be:
  - Sidewalks
  - Safety
  - Asset tracking
  - Cumberland Farms
  - Reestablish the Capital Planning Committee

**Discussion:**

At the conclusion of the interview, the Committee began to define the contents of the Interim Report for the Special Town Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

**Next Meeting:**

October 10, 2023; 6:30pm