

**Government Study Committee Minutes
February 16, 2021**

Present: Gary Champion; Craig Saline, chair; Tammy Jones, Diane Young. Also present: Bill Fabri, Paul Conboy, Scott Finlay, Tom Burgess.

Call to order: 7:05pm.

Citizens queries: None.

Minutes: The minutes of January 21, 2021 were accepted as amended.

Waterways regulations: The Harbormaster is working to include all of the suggestions in the proposal that will go to the Select Board. He needs to get input from Town Counsel, especially concerning re-titling the regulations. He will let GSC know when the proposal is scheduled to go before the Select Board. Prior to this meeting, the Chair sent the input of the Waterways Advisory Committee to GSC members.

Meeting with the Select Board: GSC members were encouraged to attend the February 22 Select Board meeting, when GSC is on the agenda. Saline has prepared a document (attached to these minutes) that summarizes how the Committee has operated, and what it has accomplished, since he joined in 2012. Notably, the description on the Town website no longer gets to what the GSC does and erroneously gives GSC as author of the 1998 Administrative Manual.

Saline will send the document to the Town Manager's office to be included in the Select Board's packet, along with the list of priorities that he brought to the Board a year ago. Champion recommended adding the list of resources that the GSC uses to do its work.

The Committee discussed, with a variety of opinions: what a good outcome of the meeting with the Select Board would look like; the level of autonomy of the GSC and its advisory nature; the role of Town Counsel and the Committee's own legal research; whether Select Board members should be voting members of GSC; and whether a new bylaw defining the GSC would be beneficial.

Adjournment: 8:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane J. Young, Secretary

Select Board- Ipswich GSC priorities discussion February 22,2021

How has the GSC done its work since 2012?

Q. Since 2012 has the GSC decided on its own what to work on?

A. No. Topics come from Town Meeting, Select Board, Town Manager, Town Counsel, other Boards or Committees. However, the GSC has prioritized its work and decided how best to address/utilize information or best practices that arise during its work.

Q. What have been the various types of GSC recommendations?

A. Reports, letters, proposed by-law, or charter articles for Town Warrants.

Q. Since 2012 has the GSC bypassed the Select Board and gone directly to Town Meeting with a Charter or by law proposal?

A. No. The GSC has not bypassed the Select Board.

Q. Since 2012 Has the GSC gone to Town Meeting with a proposed article without majority support of the Select Board?

A. No. As an advisory committee the GSC seeks support for its recommendations. If not supported, the GSC has listened to Select Board feedback and adjusted accordingly in revising its proposal for reconsideration by the Select Board or withdrawing it.

Q. How has GSC work stayed aligned with the Select Board expectations?

A. Every 12-18 months the GSC communicates with the Select Board to review current topics and priorities. Most recently 7/18/20.

Current town website description

Town Government Study Committee

(9 Members/ 3 Year Terms) – Select Board Appointment. This committee advises the Select Board, Finance Committee, and other Town Officials on matters of policy and practice as they relate to the Town of Ipswich. Specifically, this committee has authored an Administrative Manual (1998) and several policy review studies concerning various aspects of the Town's structure and governance.

Established under Article 17, December 17, 1962 town meeting.

Accomplishments since 2012

- Recall of Elected Officials By law. Town Meeting request. ATM 5/16/13
- Update of Committee Boards Commissions Handbook. Select Board Request.2013-2017.
- Non-Resident Committee member SB policy- Select Board Request. 7/15/15
- Town Manager Residency Charter change. Select Board request. STM.11/7/17.
- Gender Neutral Language- Charter & Bylaws-Select Board Request. ATM 10/16/18
- Inspector, Civil Defense Charter update. TM request. STM 10/16/18
- Changing the Charter . Town Counsel request. Withdrawn. STM 10/16/18
- Select Board Role Charter update.SB & GSC request. STM 10/16/18 & ATM 5/14/19
- Elect or Appoint Plng Board report. ATM request.5/14/19
- Acting Town Mgr Charter change. TM request. STM 10/29/19
- Waterways Advisory Committee by law. SB/TM request. STM 10/17/20
- Waterways 118 by law suggestions. SB request. 2021.

Who determines what the GSC works on?

- 2016 Select Board/Town Mgr. request Waterways Adv. Cmt. & mooring reg adoption
- process review
- In 2016/17 Select Board, Town Manager, Town Counsel identified 31 Charter/bylaw
- Issues that needed to be addressed.
- 2017 interviews were held with: former selectmen, former town managers, town
- counsel, former MMA President/Burlington Town Administrator
- 2017 GSC prioritized findings and began Charter/Bylaw project with Town Mgr.
- residency issue.
- Town Meeting has directed GSC priority in 2013 (recall) and 2019 (Plng. Board- elect or
- appoint?).

How can Charter or bylaws be amended?

- Either Home Rule Charter Commission or Special Act Charter (home rule petition)