

## **BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Town of Becket  
557 Main Street  
Becket, MA 01223

### **Minutes February 9, 2024**

PRESENT: Chuck Garman (CG), Bob Gross (BG), Vickie DeLorenzo (VD), Robin Mathiesen  
Town Clerk (Ex-Officio Member)

ABSENT: Ethan Klepetar Moderator (Ex-Officio Member)

PUBLIC: Jeff Piedmont (Select Board), Sarah Hoecker (Zoning Board of Appeals), Mary Canty  
(Zoning Board of Appeals), Bob Linden

ZOOM: None

Chuck Garman (CG) called to order at 10:04 am.

#### Meeting agenda

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Call to order

Approval of meeting minutes from January 17, 2024

Process for working between meetings without violating Open Meeting (15 min.)

Progress on the updates of the General Bylaws (1 hr.)

Our deliverables to the ATM (30 min.)

Any other business to come before the Committee

Adjournment

#### Introductions

##### Approval of meeting minutes

Chuck G. made a motion to approve the minutes from January 17<sup>th</sup>. Motion seconded by Bob G. Minutes approved.

##### Process for working between meetings without violating Open Meeting

We discussed the difficulties of understanding and complying with the Open Meeting Law. Our takeaway was that we are adhering to the rules as they pertain to working together in between meetings. In short, we are working independently and collaborating at the scheduled meetings.

##### Progress on the updates of the General Bylaws Format

Upon a page-by-page review of the current bylaws document, there were numerous questions that arose. As an example, there was a question about whether we can change the wording regarding the mailing of tax bills. The language in the document is incorrect but we're not certain whether it can be corrected before the Annual Town Meeting or whether it needs to be on the Warrant. Robin plans to reach out to the State Attorney General's office

for clarification on a number of issues.

There are also some committees and councils that either the name has changed, or the councils no longer exist, e.g. Moth Commissioner. We're looking for clarity on whether updates can be made prior to the Meeting or whether they need to be included in the Warrant.

We will provide newly proposed articles and updates or revisions to current articles in the Warrant for the meeting.

Members of the General Bylaws Committee will assist proposers of new articles with the language for those proposed articles. Members of the General Bylaws Committee will write the new language to update current bylaws as well.

The grammatical/editorial-type changes, e.g. he to he/she, will all be listed in one article.

In the meantime, the plan is to continue working on the document as if the editorial/grammatical changes will be approved so as to not lose valuable time on non-content-related corrections.

The content changes will be incorporated into a working document (tracked) in a way that makes them easy to find, edit or remove. This tracked copy will also provide an update trail for the State Attorney General whose office has requested such from Robin (Town Clerk).

#### Our deliverables to the ATM

For the purpose of the Annual Town Meeting, we agreed that we need to provide residents with a copy of the Bylaws from 2017 (as recorded on the Town website) which incorporate the changes that were approved in ATMs from 2018-2023.

All editorial and content-related changes will be created into Articles for the Warrant.

Following this Town Meeting, we will incorporate all the changes after they are approved by the residents.

#### Any other business to come before the Committee

Other business included a discussion and questioning of the composition of several boards and committees regarding appointment terms, alternates, and associates, including but not limited to the Board of Appeals, Finance Committee and Conservation Commission.

The group continued to focus on the need for clearer language in various articles and sections of the Bylaws. The meeting concluded with participants expressing their intent to continue the discussion at a future meeting.

#### Adjournment

BG made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Chuck Garman CG and approved. Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Vickie DeLorenzo, Secretary

Approved by Chuck Garman, Chair