

Cotuit Fire District
Prudential Committee
Bylaws Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes Friday, April 21, 2023

The Cotuit Fire District Prudential Committee Bylaws Subcommittee met on Friday, April 21, 2023 at 5 PM by Zoom. In attendance were:

Mark Lynch

Rick Pisano

Amy Kates

Carrol Zais

Mark Robinson

The minutes from the March 28, 2023 bylaws subcommittee meeting were approved.

There was a continued discussion relating to article 11 section 11. It was proposed that advisory committees be open to all individuals with expertise on the topic at hand, regardless of residency. Ms. Kates expressed the view that outside people should not be involved in such advisory committees. Mr. Robinson pointed out that the Cotuit Fire District is a very small district, and we should be willing to expand our talent pool for such committees. It was noted that advisory committees have no power, and only elected commissioners can make decisions based on their recommendations.

Mr. Pisano indicated that he didn't understand Miss Kate's concerns with the proposed change, stressing that advisory committee members don't vote. He noted that the fire department had previously hired an outside firm to advise on hiring decisions. More recently, Fire officials from other Cape communities had given their hiring decision input free of charge. He also noted that the water department has previously used outside technical service advisors. Ms. Kate's responded that village citizens have "skin in the game". Ms. Zais stressed that we don't want to limit the pool of possible advisory committee members, and that we want the best minds on the topic. Mr. Robinson noted that some students at Tufts University did research to help the water department develop its Source Water Protection Plan.

A proposal was made to delete "panel of citizens" and replace it with "individuals" in article 11, section 11. All voted in favor of that proposal with the exception of Ms. Kates. She indicated that she may make a "friendly amendment" to the proposal at the annual meeting.

Mr. Robinson noted the lack of governance policies in the bylaws. He identified whistleblower, conflict of interest, record retention and harassment as examples of such policies. It was noted that all elected officials are required by state regulation to take on-line conflict of interest training every two years. It was discussed that such policies were governed by state law and regulation. The general consensus of the group was that such topics were best covered by state law rather than Cotuit Fire District bylaws.

On motion made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM.