

Topsham Community Center Committee
October 2nd, 2023 Minutes

The mission of the Community Center Committee is to understand the desires and needs of the Topsham Community to identify accessible, affordable, sustainable recreational solutions that will serve the multi-generational community and social connections among Topsham citizens.

1. Call to order. Time: 5:12 p.m.

Members present: Leslie Byrne, Ann Callahan, Steve Kessler, Lynn Sirois, and Alison Cary-Blais.

Staff Present: Mark Waltz.

Members absent: None

Staff absent: Pam LeDuc

Guests present (if any):

2. Any changes to this agenda?

- Welcome Alison Cary-Blais
- Erika McKenney has resigned from the TCCC
- Meeting Scheduling and Cancellations
- Policy question on Quorum vs. non-official meetings

3. Review minutes

June 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes - A motion was made and seconded to accept the June 10, 2023 minutes as revised. The motion passed.

August 29, 2023 Meeting – A motion was made and seconded to accept the August 29, 2023 minutes as revised. The motion passed.

4. Focus Group Questions (item tabled until the end of the agenda)

What focus group questions do the consultants have? Lynn suggested we remain neutral and not lead the consultant in any specific direction but to use broad questions. We should also look to the public for guidance rather than providing a check list from which they choose. Brian Robertson has access to many ideas including mailings, focus groups, etc. The team will be expecting Mr. Robertson to guide us in the Needs Assessment/Focus group process.

5. Harriman Progress Report and Next Steps – Steve, Mark and Pam had a meeting with Harriman CEO Mark Lee and Brian Robertson. Mr. Lee said he would bring in a subcontractor to gather community data we needed. Harriman will meet with the TCCC to make plans moving forward. Steve stated that TCCC may be asked to facilitate the focus groups but Brian Robertson will assist with questions. The team did not commit to facilitating focus groups. It was expected the Harriman group via Market Decisions would facilitate focus groups. Market Decisions (the company subcontracted by Harriman) will compile the results of the focus groups and the town will provide the link for read access. There may be an additional cost. Mark W. reminded the committee we do not want an identical second survey, but to be able to fine tune specific details of the community's needs.

Possible survey at polls just for community input is likely too late for now. Early voting begins next week. We need expert input prior to moving forward with focus groups or surveys. We had a great response to our last survey. Now we need to identify the priorities and not move forward with all suggestions and wants.

Robertson has confirmed he can meet with the TCCC on October 16th. Allison Tippery from Market Decisions will also attend.

6. Welcome Alison Cary-Blais – Family from Topsham for many years for generations. She has been back in Topsham for 2 ½ years. She is married and has five adult children. Both Alison and her husband work for IDEXX. They have two cats. This is her first time being on a town committee.

7. Erika McKenney has resigned from the TCCC. She followed through with organizing Google docs for the committee prior to her resignation.

8. Meeting Scheduling and Cancelations

The TCCC will meet on the 1st Monday of the month and reserve their calendars on the 3rd Monday of the month should an additional meeting be required. The town website will be updated with this information.

The Next meeting is October 16th at 5 p.m. due to another committee scheduling conflict at the Town Hall.

Nov 6th meeting will be held at 6:15 p.m.

Dec 4th meeting will be held at 6:15 p.m.

9. Policy question on Quorum vs. non-official meetings

No meetings are classified as an unofficial meeting. Ideally all meetings should be recorded. Members can be charged with instructions to meet with Harriman to gather information and report back to the committee. These requests for members to meet with non-committee professionals should be scheduled during the meeting (recorded in the minutes) and not via email between meetings.

With Erika's resignation a quorum is currently three.

10. Action Steps – Members should go to the Google docs and make suggestions as they think of them. Mark will contact Robertson to bring suggestions to the Oct 16th meeting.

11. Meeting adjourned at 6:04.

Parking Lot:

- Membership – two vacant positions on the TCCC.