



**Residents' Advisory Committee
(RAC)**

Thursday, October 6, 2022

YouTube recording of meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mb-47vZafrM&list=PLcnmFtV6BPFNpxCxGIv8it91Ecia2NhVG&index=8>

2:00 PM

Present: Jim Pistrang, Meg Gage, Anastasia Ordonez, Angela Mills, Paul Bockelman joined later (noted below)

Pistrang read the suspension of open meeting laws.

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 2:00 PM

Pistrang performed sound checks to ensure that everyone could be heard. Pistrang read a review of the suspension of certain parts of the Open Meeting Laws as detailed by Governor Baker's order.

2. Welcome to the New Members

Pistrang welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes

Pistrang asked the new members to trust his judgement that the actions are accurate. Called for vote: To approve the minutes from the Residents' Advisory Committee meeting of April 11, 2022 –

ROLL CALL VOTE: Approve: Ordonez, Pistrang, Abstain: Gage 2-0-1 vote. **APPROVED.**

4. Review of RAC Best Practices - Interview

Pistrang sent out the RAC script to new members. He mentioned the script was not set in stone and is open to changes.

Pistrang understood that the job of the RAC committee members during interviews is to ask, "Has the candidate attended any meetings? Have they watched a Zoom recording of a meeting?"

Sometimes Pistrang might ask, "Is there an agenda item that drove you to get involved in this committee?"

If Pistrang asks a different question – then he tries to ask the same question of each candidate.

Gage asked about viability of candidates and when those conversations happen with the Town Manager.

Pistrang noted that conversations about candidates happens after all of the interviews take place.

Pistrang clarified that only one RAC member attends the interviews.

Interviewers: A RAC member, Paul Bockelman, Chair, Staff Liaison sit together to interview candidates.

Paul Bockelman joined the meeting at 2:06 PM

Pistrang gave an overview of what happens at interviews.

Ordonez mentioned that it might be helpful to hear from individuals, during the interview, about why they were prompted to apply for the given board/committee/commission.

Pistrang noted that Bockelman usually begins the interview with that question. The “Why?” question.

Pistrang explained that the RAC member will receive a spreadsheet with upcoming schedule, a copy of the Community Activity Form, and necessary links to the meeting.

Gage asked when they can discuss ‘recruitment.’

Pistrang added the topic of ‘recruitment’ to “Items not anticipated 48 hours before the meeting.”

Pistrang gave an overview of the deliberative process and how the recommendations were made to the Town Manager.

5. Review of Recent RAC Activities

Pistrang explained that he keeps a spreadsheet of recent interviews. It catalogs the interviews that he has attended.

Pistrang explained that he has done twenty-five interviews since April.

Bockelman explained how people can express interest in several groups. We try to be as open as possible but we do not interview everyone who states ‘general interest.’

6. Public Comment – None

7. Other Items Not Anticipated by the Chair 48 Hours In Advance of the Meeting

Pistrang noted that he had been the Chair of RAC since 2019.

He encouraged Ordonez and Gage to consider becoming the Chair of RAC in the near future.

Topic of Recruitment:

Gage asked about recruitment and wanting to diversify the population of our Town Boards/Committees/Commissions/Working Groups.

Gage would like to get guidance on what is appropriate in terms of recruitment.

Gage noted she had been approached to join a Board and the Chair's comments about her abilities made her feel valued.

Gage asked, "How can we personalize our recruitment so that we find individuals who are otherwise not on our radar screen?"

Mills shared screen and reviewed the current vacancies list.

Pistrang shared his methodology for recruiting new members.

Gage suggested changing the name of the CAF to Community Participation Form.

Bockelman asked that we add that idea of renaming the form to the next RAC agenda.

Mills stated that she will be sending an invitation for an interview next week (Recreation Commission).

Pistrang stated that the interviews by Zoom have pros and cons. In-person brings that in-person feel and the zoom interviews are convenient.

Consensus from the RAC group in April 2022 was that Zoom made it feasible to do more interviews.

Topic of discussion for a later meeting. Stick with Zoom for interviews?

Discussion of back-to-back interviews. Pistrang asserted that is usually the way that these interviews take place.

Discussion of next RAC meeting – January 2023 or early February 2023.

8. Adjourned 2:29 PM

Link to meeting agenda: <https://www.amherstma.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/15149>

Link to meeting packet: None.

Link to YouTube Channel recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mb-47vZafrM&list=PLcnmFtV6BPFNpxCxGIv8it9IEcia2NhVG&index=8>

Respectfully submitted to Chair, Jim Pistrang, on October 6, 2022 at 3:20 PM.

Voted APPROVED by unanimous vote at the Residents' Advisory Committee meeting on 02/22/2023.