

LOCAL STUDY REPORT: 2018-2020

INTRODUCTION

A seven member committee of LWVF members studied nineteen non-regulatory Falmouth town committees over a period of almost two years. (Second year was cut short due to pandemic shutdown.)

The first year's report was made available in the 2019 LWVF Annual Report and the second year's study of additional committees was done to increase validity of findings.

OVERVIEW

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

2018-2019: Doris Epstein and Sylvia Szulkin (Co-Chairs)

Alice Carey, Penny Duby, Joanne Treistman, Olivia White, Judy Ziss

2019-2020: Sylvia Szulkin (Chair)

Alice Carey, Penny Duby, Doris Epstein, Carol Rader, Joanne Treistman, Judy Ziss

COMMITTEES REVIEWED

2018-2019	2019-2020	
Affordable Housing	Agricultural Commission	Community Preservation Committee
Council on Aging	Affirmative Action and Inclusion	Energy Committee
Recreation	Beach Department	Falmouth Cultural Council
Solid Waste	Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee	Historical Commission
Veterans Council	Commission on Disabilities	Human Services
Water Quality Management		Sign Review Committee
Waterways		Substance Abuse Commission

A generically composed questionnaire was used as part of the Interview process with committee chairpersons. Responses to nine relatively easy questions are presented in the following charts:

LWVF LOCAL STUDY 2018-2019 REPORT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES IN FALMOUTH TOWN GOV'T

COMMITTEE	SELECT BOARD LIAISON	CHAIR PERSON	MEMBERS	TERM	MEETINGS PER YEAR	TIMES IN 2019 LACKING QUORUM	MISSION STATEMENT
AFFORDABLE HOUSING	SAM PATTERSON	ED CURLEY	6 Out of 7	3 YEARS	12 MONTHLY	4	YES
COUNCIL ON AGING	MEGAN ENGLISH BRAGA	JIM VIERA	9	3 YEARS	12 MONTHLY	0	YES
RECREATION	DOUG JONES	BOB BROWN	7	3 YEARS	12 MONTHLY	3	YES
SOLID WASTE	MEGAN ENGLISH BRAGA	LINDA DAVIS	5 out of 7	3 YEARS	12 MONTHLY	0	2016 Created by committee
VETERANS COUNCIL	SUE MORAN	AHMED MUSTAFA	9	1 YEAR	12 MONTHLY	0	NO
WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT	DOUG BROWN	ERIC TURKINGTON	7	3 YEARS	TWICE MONTHLY (24)	0	YES
WATERWAYS	DOUG BROWN	JEFF THOMAS	7 + 2 non-voters	3 YEARS	12 MONTHLY	3	YES

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COMMITTEE	SELECT BOARD LIAISON	CHAIR PERSON	MEMBERS	TERM	MEETINGS PER YEAR	TIMES IN 2019 LACKING QUORUM	MISSION STATEMENT
AFFORDABLE HOUSING/ INCLUSION	Megan English Braga	Joanne Treistman	5	3 yrs. 9 yrs. max	Monthly-2 nd Monday Town Hall	NONE	
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION	Chair of Selectmen when needed	Karen Schwalbe	7	3 yrs. 9 yrs. Max	Monthly Last Monday Town Hall	ONCE	Represent town's agricultural community and interests
BEACH DEPARTMENT	Doug Brown	Bruce Mogardo	5	3 yrs. 9 yrs. Max	Monthly	NONE	Advise Beach Com. & Town Mgr. of needs
BICYCLE /PEDESTRIAN COMMITTEE	Megan English Braga	Scott Lindell	9	3 yrs. 9 yrs. Max	Monthly	ONCE	Deal with any authority related to Bikeways
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES	Megan English Braga	Will Eldes	9	2 or 5 yrs.	Monthly 2 nd Thursday	ONCE	
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE	Sam Patterson	Russell Robins	5 at-large 4 Rep. from other committees	3 yrs.-at large members	2 nd & 4 th Thursdays Sch. Admin. Building	NONE	State Handbook

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COMMITTEE	SELECT BOARD LIAISON	CHAIR PERSON	MEMBERS	TERM	MEETINGS PER YEAR	TIMES IN 2018 LACKING QUORUM	MISSION STATEMENT
ENERGY COMMITTEE	Sue Moran	Megan Amsler	6	3 yrs. 9 yrs. max	Monthly 2 nd week Town Hall	NONE	
FALMOUTH CULTURAL COUNCIL	None. Doug Jones is advocate but not official	Sam Houghton	7	6 years max (dictated by MA Council)	Monthly 1 st Wednesday Flexible	ONCE	Yes – Very connected to MA Council
HISTORICAL COMMISSION	Sue Moran	Edward Haddad	6 members 2 alternates	5 yrs. 10 yrs. max	Monthly 1 st Tuesday Town Hall	NONE	2 Handbooks
HUMAN SERVICES		Suzie Hauptman	6	3 yrs. 9 yrs. max			Advocate for and Supervising role of Falmouth Human Services Dept;
SIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE	PRESENTLY INACTIVE	Linda Clark	All members except Chair resigned 6/18				Sign Applications now reviewed by Building Committee
SUBSTANCE ABUSE		Karen Daley	5 Would like 7	3 yrs. 9 yrs. max	Monthly	ONCE	

LWVF LOCAL STUDY 2018 - 2020 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL COMMITTEES

- Create Mission Statement for **all** committees.
- Include Student Involvement clause in this statement for appropriate committees.
- Clarify process for posting agendas and minutes
- Provide **annual training** for all chairs and committee members to ensure common understanding of procedures and regulations,
- Ensure that all Chairs and committee members are **trained annually** re Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest Law
- All committees that are part of regional, state or federal initiatives should set up active liaison processes with those groups in order to benefit from the programs of others.
- Consider having a **common format** for yearly committee reports.
- Need to maintain meeting quorums and enforce requirements regarding absences.
- Consider having some form of financial disclosure e.g. budgets, grants procured, bidding procedures, etc.
- Create improved method of informing Falmouth residents of what volunteer committees exist and what the charge is for each committee.
- Publicize job description and qualifications required for each town committee.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT:

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, a mandated State Shutdown began in early March 2020 and still continues. Because of this, the Committee's work was curtailed and a public forum scheduled for April, 2020 was cancelled.

