

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES  
NAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
March 13, 2006 – Monday

Present: Paul J. Leary, Chairperson  
Michael Smart, Council President  
Arthur Mathews

Also Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Councilor  
Thomas J. Lacey, Councilor  
Kevin Whitaker, Councilor  
Gregory Shanahan, Councilor  
Patrick O'Connor, Councilor

Recording Secretary: Mary Briggs

Chairman Leary called the NAS Advisory Committee Meeting to order at 7:25 PM.

The meeting was called to discuss the composition of the Committee. Councilor DiFazio was asked to report on his proposal for the make-up of the Committee, and his thoughts on the objectives via a letter to the Council in 2005. He advocated for non-council members to meet with the Committee, with voting rights within the subcommittee, but not to report out to the full Council. He states there are several constituents in the town who are extremely active, with regards to development of the Naval Air Station, and their experience could be utilized.

Chairman Leary stated that his objective of the Committee is communication- to report back to the full Council each month on status of the project, and that is being accomplished. He read aloud the goal of the NAS Advisory Committee, and stated that all Committees are appointed by the Town Council President.

Councilor Smart was asked by Chairman Leary and agreed that he did not think citizen activity is required on the Committee. Any citizen is welcome to communicate with any member of the Committee any concerns, pro and con, and they will be addressed. Any feedback will be reported back monthly to the full Council.

A discussion followed.

Councilor Smart noted that he thought this Committee was a great idea when Councilor DiFazio first brought it up. The Council was learning information on the development through the news media, and felt there should be some oversight of the meetings with TriTown and LNR, and that it was too much to assign one member to cover it all. He made it clear on the night the

Committee was formed that it was strictly the responsibility of the elected officials, not the public, to attend the meetings on the progress of the development for the town, and report back to full Council. He appointed the three standing members, but will appoint others if he finds it necessary to make sure all meetings concerning development are covered.

Councilor Mathews felt one of the goals of the Committee should be to be the eyes and ears of the full Council. There is good communication as well with the members of the Committee on a weekly basis, to determine attendance at the development meetings. It has been working so far. The goal should be not to watch out for the Council but also for the citizens.

Councilor DiFazio noted that the goal of the Committee should be not only to know what's going on with the development- but to be proactive in every phase.

Chairman Leary noted the Committee will not meet on a regular basis, but will communicate regularly, and any citizen may call with input. He reminded that the Town owns none of the land on the base as of yet, at the moment what isn't still under jurisdiction of the Navy is owned by TriTown.

Councilor Mathews agrees with Councilor DiFazio, but offered a suggestion of a public comment period at the end of Town Council meetings as an alternative.

Chairman Leary noted that hasn't been allowed previously and could add significant time to the meetings.

Councilor Lacey reminded the Committee that he wasn't for the formation of this Committee, believing the work could be done through the existing committees of the Council. He cautioned if there are three members on the Committee, two people need to be present to form a quorum; they need to be cognizant of how and when they communicate to comply with the Open Meeting Law.

Councilor DiFazio proposed an alternative structure with a focus on communication. His concern is that once implementation begins, there are far too many components, such as schools, DPW, Parks and Recreation, Fire, etc., before even ground breaking, and that the town should start advocating now. Without enough participation, the town could lose the chance to be involved.

Chairman Leary noted that once the plan was voted, the Committee's role is one of guidance.

Councilor Mathews noted that any specific issues that need to be will be brought before full Council.

Councilor Smart noted that LNR has drafted a meeting schedule, all of which will be attended by a member of the Committee.

Councilor Whitaker noted that during the MEPA review process, the CAC is breaking into sub-

groups to study, and suggests the Council do the same. He feels they should not wait to respond, but should be proactive.

Councilor Smart noted that police, fire safety, and school issues are all part of what the executive branch of the town negotiated in the agreement, and input from the town administration will be requested.

Chairman Leary noted that the development affects the town, and the town wants answers; which the Committee can accomplish by attendance at all meetings.

Councilor O'Connor noted he is a proponent of allowing citizens the opportunity to speak at Committee meetings, and questions which arise can be brought to full Committee.

Councilor Smart noted there is a process for citizens to speak before Council.

Chairman Leary noted that the discussion at this meeting is for organization of the Committee. Citizens may contact the Council via phone or email anytime.

At this point, a member of the audience spoke up without being recognized. His comments were brief concerning government accountability.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Smart to keep the NAS Advisory Committee to three members of the Council. This was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Councilor Smart noted that he has some questions to be referred to TriTown which were brought up during the Citizen's Concern/Public Comment section on the agenda of the last Town Council meeting. He will forward the questions through Diane to TriTown for response. Councilor Mathews asked if they should go through the list of questions, and Chairman Leary suggested they send for response as a group from the Advisory Committee.

Councilor Whitaker reinforced what Councilor Lacey stated earlier in the meeting- any discussion between two members of the Committee concerning NAS development constitutes a quorum and a violation of Open Meeting Law.

### **Adjournment**

At 8:10 PM, there being no further business, Councilor Smart made a motion to adjourn, and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Paul J. Leary, Chairman