

Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Sub Committee

Preliminary Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Attendees: Joe Isgro, Betsy Samuelson, Lyndsey Marston, Troy Moody, Libby Waldron, Ashlie Stubbs, Rachel Norgang, Andrea Stark, and Ray Wirth.

Joe opened the meeting at approximately 6:00pm by asking members to introduce themselves. All attendees introduced themselves and shared why they are interested in participating. Attendees also noted which Town committees they are representing:

Select Board: Joe Isgro
Planning Board: Troy Moody
Recreation: Ashlie Stubbs
School: Rachel Norgang
Library: Andrea Stark
Conservation: Ray Wirth

Troy shared a survey which the Planning Board had prepared with the intention to send it to all residents. After a discussion about the survey and the related correspondence between the Planning Board and Select Board, Joe also asked that the Planning Board not send the survey so that the Sub Committee could focus on one larger survey.

There was a discussion on why this Sub Committee has been formed and who has initiated the effort to make a new comprehensive plan despite the latest town vote in 2021. Joe explained that the Select Board initiated the effort, primarily in order to seek grant funding to repair Town roads. DOT grants require a comprehensive plan. Joe also explained that comprehensive plans are required by the State, but there is no enforcement.

Joe shared copies of the existing comprehensive plan which was prepared in 1993 and has since expired. He also shared a survey that Rick Hillman had prepared when he was on the Planning Board. This survey was never sent out to residents.

The Sub Committee brainstormed ways to get the most Town input on a new plan. Joe has already reached out to members of the aggregate extraction industry to get their support.

Joe has been in discussions with Tom Miragliuolo who is a contractor for the State Municipal Planning Assistance Program. Tom approves comprehensive plans and is available to meet with the Committee. Joe suggested that he attend the next meeting. Rachel asked if we could invite the public to that meeting and all agreed it is a good idea. Joe will reach out to Tom to get a few dates in late April and send a poll to the Sub Committee to finalize. The date will then be advertised to the public. Prior to this meeting, the Sub Committee will email around ideas for a narrative on how to share our work with residents. Joe expects that the Committee will need to meet monthly.

Joe asked for a volunteer to be Secretary. Lyndsey volunteered. The vote passed unanimously.

Joe indicated he would like three more members for the Sub Committee and asked for suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30pm.

Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Sub Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

Sub Committee Members Present: Wade Brown, Ken Clements, Joe Isgro, Lyndsey Marston, Troy Moody, Rachel Norgang, Betsy Samuelson, Andrea Stark, Ashlie Stubbs, Libby Waldron, and Ray Wirth.

Approximately 37 additional members of the community were in attendance.

Chair Joe Isgro opened the meeting and welcomed attendees at 6:00pm. Sub Committee members introduced themselves, followed by the guest speaker, Tom Miragliuolo, from the State of Maine Municipal Planning Assistance Program.

Tom explained the following key points about Comprehensive Plans (“Plans”):

- Plans are not required by the State. The 1988 statute requirement was repealed in 1991. The only case where they are required is if you have place-based zoning (other than shoreland).
- Plans are not legally enforceable documents and are not ordinances.
- Most towns with Plans do not have zoning.
- Plans are valid for 12 years.

Tom’s role at the Municipal Planning Assistance Program is to review all Plans submitted to the State. He follows review criteria rules with procedures, but primarily uses a 20 page checklist of what each Plan is required to have. Towns can use the checklist as a “short cut” version by simply answering each question in the checklist and compiling it in a document. The Town of Brooks recently adopted a new Plan using this method.

Tom provided the following reasons for creating a Plan:

- By not planning, towns are allowing for change. Towns need to plan in order to keep things the same
- Plans are required for place-based zoning. Zoning can be challenged by developers otherwise.
- Plans provide a framework to respond to new proposals (wind, solar, mini storage, etc.)
- Plans are required to qualify for grants with the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Program.

Joe then invited questions from the audience. The following are questions with responses. All responses are from Tom unless otherwise indicated.

1. If a town has a Plan are they more eligible for grants?

Yes, for certain grants, including those from DOT. Most are for coastal towns but not nearly as many grants require Plans anymore.

2. This is a strategy document to lay out high level priorities and a baseline to build things off of, correct?

Yes, the most important part is the vision statement—what do we want to be and how do we want to look in the future. All towns want to “stay the same” but things aren’t staying the same here. The population has already changed. Not planning is planning for chaos. If you want things to be the same, say it!

3. What is the process? What do we gain?

The process is flexible. Some towns hire consultants. It usually starts with creating a committee and having up to 20 meetings. Towns often have one meeting per topic

area (historical resources, agriculture, population, recreation, etc). Experts can be pulled in for specific topics. The committee or consultant drafts the plan and runs it by the select board. They then send Tom a draft to review before it goes to the town. There is a 25 business day period for public comment, then 10 business days for Tom to review.

- 4. Can you give examples of what we might cover in the housing section?**
It depends. Think of it like an apple pie. You want a piece of pie, but why? You need to identify goals, policies, and strategies.
- 5. A large component of this process will be asking residents what they want and what is important to them. How do towns typically get information from residents?**
Visioning sessions and surveys.
- 6. A large portion of residents may not want to change anything or have a Plan. What is the sales pitch to have a Plan?**
It depends on the town. If you want things to stay the same, they will not without a Plan. If there is a particular thing you want to stop, the Plan can serve that purpose and give legal backing for zoning. It also makes the town eligible for certain grants. For example, if the town wanted to block a methadone clinic, having a Plan would be the only way.
- 7. What are the negatives?**
Cost and time.
- 8. Is there a process of getting input from the entire community (not just those who can attend meetings), and is there an opportunity to give input throughout the whole process?**
(Betsy) We are researching how to get good survey results. Some towns send out a survey and get 10% completion and call it good. We want 70%. That may mean sending out multiple copies, putting in \$1 as an incentive, calling residents, giving email links, or going door to door. If the community is on board, we can facilitate a dialogue and have community meetings for each section to key in on what we cherish about this community.
- 9. Who pays for this?**
The State used to have a grant program but it ended in 2006. No grant funds are available. Most towns create a Plan for \$0 or maybe \$500. The State provides all State-level data required for a Plan, including maps, so there is no cost for those services.
- 10. Will having a Plan speed up urban development? If we want affordable housing, do certain developers work with the State to develop towns?**
No. A Plan in itself does nothing. LD 2003 has two components: accessory dwellings and larger scale affordable housing developments. Where you designate a growth area will impact the scale of affordable housing. It's not likely to happen in Monroe because there is no public water or sewer.
- 11. If we had a Plan and had grant money allocated to the town, would developers jump on those grants?**
Having a Plan doesn't open the door to more development. If you don't have a growth area, you can avoid LD 2003. (Ben Hooper) is a developer and offered to explain the process outside of this meeting. The income levels are very low to qualify.
- 12. What problem are we trying to fix? Why would the solution be a Plan?**
(Rachel) There is no problem. The idea is to have a Plan before a problem happens. We want to know what is important to residents so we can react appropriately.
- 13. Are the roads the issue?**
(Joe) We need to put some teeth behind stopping things we don't want and protecting things that are important. Roads are just one example of grants that need

a Plan to be eligible. (Libby) Roads were the primary reason given for needing a Plan based on discussions at the March meeting.

14. If a Plan makes the town more eligible for grants, does it also change the town's responsibility? Will we vote?

Grants may require matching funds which will need to be voted on separately from the Plan. It will depend on the grant.

15. Most people have to work. Could the town call a meeting with short notice in order to get a vote?

That would violate the law. Public input is required. The town needs to post a final draft with changes 30 days before a public hearing for a vote.

16. What is the matching fund? Will taxes go up?

Matching funds depend on the grant. You don't have to apply for grants.

17. When was the last plan? Has there been an effort since then? There doesn't seem to be an appetite for a Plan and only a small number of people usually participate. Some people will say no either way and we need to make an effort to engage as many people as possible.

(Lyndsey) The last Plan was approved in 1993. There was an item on the warrant at a Town meeting that was voted down a few years ago.

18. How will the Sub Committee get the questionnaire out?

(Betsy) We are researching other surveys from similar communities between now and July 1st. After July 1st, we will compile questions and do a pilot survey with Town staff, Select Board, and Sub Committee at the end of July. We will send out the survey on August 1st by mail and follow up with other forms of contact. We are trying to get contact information from the Town Office. Please bring ideas and questions to Betsy.

19. Are the meetings open to the public?

(Lyndsey) Yes. There is a new tab on the Town website for Agendas & Minutes. We are posting approved minutes for each meeting and will post agendas in advance of the next meeting. We have not yet set the next meeting date or a regular schedule.

(Ashlie) We will also post larger meetings to the community Facebook page, Republican Journal column, and the Town sign.

20. Is this the only time that Tom will be at a meeting?

Likely yes, but Tom can be available by email: tom.miragliuolo@maine.gov

Sub Committee members reiterated that a Plan is based on community input. If residents want ordinances, they need to be voted on separately from the Plan and need to match the contents of the Plan. A lot has changed since the last Plan was approved in 1993 and this is an opportunity to give residents a voice to share what is important to them. Our primary focus at this time is to survey the residents to have a better understanding of what people want and need in this community. Once that information is compiled, we can collectively decide what a Plan might look like.

The Sub Committee thanked Tom for his presentation and time.

Rachel made a motion to approve the March meeting minutes. Joe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Sub Committee will meet again on the 2nd or 3rd Wednesday of May—whichever falls between Select Board meetings. Joe will confirm the date via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.

Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Sub Committee

Agenda

May 14, 2024

1. Check-in

Action Items

1. Clarify Select Board intention with comp plan process
2. Clarify comp plan/grant requirements

Old Business

1. Review/Approve meeting minutes

New Business

1. Determine who wants to continue
 - a. Do we rename ourselves?
2. Discuss Roberts Rules
3. Elect Officers
4. Confirm number of committee members & quorum
5. Set meeting frequency, schedule, and duration
6. Recordkeeping preferences
 - a. How much time do people need for edits?
 - b. Keep drafts or just final versions? Website and office only?
 - c. Emails?
 - d. Contact information for website
 - e. Agenda process
7. Survey update (Betsy)
8. Warrant
 - a. Do we need a warrant item or can the select board approve the funds?
 - b. Deadline for warrant items?

Other

1. Questions from attendees?

Next Meeting Date:

Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Sub Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

Attendees: Joe Isgro, Andrea Stark, Lyndsey Marston, Betsy Samuelson, Rachel Norgang, Ray Wirth. Ashlie Stubbs, Libby Waldron, and Wade Brown arrived late.

Community members present: 3 community members present in addition to selectperson Eric Bunker.

Lyndsey called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm and wanted the minutes to reflect that since the last meeting, Joe Isgro had resigned from his position as Chair via email. As the only remaining officer, Lyndsey supplied an agenda and asked members to share a brief check-in after the last meeting and the latest email correspondence.

Check-in comments:

- People still want to move ahead with a survey and pursue a comprehensive plan only if residents indicate they want one.
- Joe is willing to stay on as chair
- The public meeting was confusing and not productive
- We need clearer communication, and less emailing back and forth between meetings
- The process has gotten off on the wrong foot and may benefit from re-naming the committee based on a new information

Action Items:

Lyndsey provided an update that Comprehensive Plans are not required by the State unless we want to regulate land use (as Tom shared at the public meeting). Likewise, most grants seem to award a few points for having a comprehensive plan in their scoring system, but do not require one. The Select Board minutes do not provide details on why the Sub Committee was formed or which grants they want to pursue for roads.

Andrea raised the question of whether we have authority to continue without a chair or change the focus and name of the committee. Lyndsey suggested that we bring the decision to the Select Board next week after we have discussed how to proceed. A discussion followed in regard to not having an active chair for the current meeting.

Libby **made a motion** for Lyndsey to be acting Chair for this meeting. Rachel seconded. The motion passed with 6 in favor and 2 abstaining.

Betsy requested to move the survey update forward in the agenda since there are imminent deadlines. Ashlie **made a motion** to table new business items 1-6 until after the survey and warrant discussion. Betsy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Deadline-Sensitive New Business:

Survey Update: Betsy has been researching surveys, comprehensive plans, and journal articles. She proposes that we break the work into two groups: question development and survey marketing. Everyone can then work on analysis together. The first step is to have addressees and contact information. We need to make decisions on a few things:

- Household or per-person survey?
- Include youth survey?
- Cost?
- Do we want to have unique identifiers to prevent duplicates?

Household surveys are more straightforward and could use EDDM (every door direct mailing). We might be able to include extra copies for additional household members or choose a format that allows for multiple people to respond (like the census). Using the address as a unique identifier is a possible option to prevent duplicates and allow for mixed-modes. There are a few ways to check identifiers. Betsy could use her school or see if the Town has other resources. If we use the school, it will have a University of Omaha logo which might seem suspicious. MCOG may also have resources, but the Town is not a member. The University of Southern Maine also has a planning program. Online surveys like Survey Monkey or Qualtrics can also do analytics. It costs money to do survey collection and analysis. Surveys will likely be handled by hand and either entered into a spreadsheet or into the online survey form. Libby offered to manage spreadsheets if needed.

Betsy's recommendation to the group is to send out a postcard and a news blast through the Town office before the survey is mailed. Then the survey will be mailed with a QR code for an online option. Correspondence needs to come from the Town on letterhead and be official and legitimate. Follow up with a postcard reminding people that they can do it online. From there, if we have enough interest and contact information, we could check in with residents who have not responded afterward.

The format of the survey is to be determined. It will depend on our goals. Ideally it would take 10 minutes to fill out so there are likely going to be issues that we are passionate about which won't make it into the survey. Betsy recommends we follow up with breakout areas and focus groups.

Warrant

Betsy would like to get an item on the warrant to approve the cost of the survey. The deadline is June 1st. A discussion followed regarding potential costs for each mailing and printing needs. The mailer that went out prior to the April information meeting was not sent by any committee members, so there is no estimate based on that mailing.

Lyndsey commented that the timeline seems rushed given that we don't have actual quotes or a sense of what the survey will look like. Can the Town approve this expense without it being on the warrant? Can we approve it later once we have actual numbers? Joe offered to ask the Select Board if it could be approved outside of the warrant, but committee members want to be transparent and have community support.

The costs will include:

- two postcard printings and postage
- survey printing and postage
- return envelopes and postage
- online survey subscription

Betsy **made a motion** to put an item on the warrant to approve expenses associated with completing a public survey estimated at \$1500 not to exceed \$2000. Rachel seconded. The motion passed with 7 in favor and 1 abstaining.

A suggestion was made to draft a statement to include in the town report and in the next newsletter. Lyndsey will start a draft in a google doc and send it around.

Old Business

Andrea **made a motion** to approve the April minutes as written. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Determine who wants to continue:

The consensus from the meeting's discussion has been that moving forward with a survey is still a priority and all are interested in continuing with that goal. Using the name "Monroe Comprehensive Plan Sub Committee," however, no longer reflects the committee's goal of prioritizing the survey and only continuing with a comprehensive plan if the community asks for it. We now know that a comprehensive plan is not required by the State or for most grants.

Suggestions were made for potential new committee names, including from community members in the audience. The top choice was Monroe Visioning Committee.

Eric Bunker noted that the survey is critical and we need it for business and planning purposes. He voiced concerns on the optics of changing the committee identity after publicly announcing an effort to have a comprehensive plan.. Libby noted that we could also pursue a Town Charter in place of a Comprehensive Plan if residents want it. Wade noted that pursuing a comprehensive plan was voted down even when residents still thought it was required by the State. Knowing it's not a law, more people would likely vote it down.

Once a survey is complete, the committee can either modify its focus or dissolve and create a new comprehensive plan committee.

Rachel **made a motion** to propose to the Select Board that we rename ourselves the "Monroe Visioning Committee" in recognition that our primary goal is to survey the town and see where we go from there. Libby seconded. The motion passed with 6 in favor and 3 abstaining.

Robert's Rules:

Lyndsey shared a "cheat sheet" of Robert's Rules and how different groups modify them to suit their needs. The key elements for this group will be making motions and voting on them, amending motions, postponing or tabling items, and adjourning the meeting. Lyndsey also shared a sample charter from a committee she used to chair; it describes the purpose of the committee, key responsibilities, membership, and roles. She suggested that the committee create a similar document and include which Robert's Rules we want to follow.

Elect officers:

There was a discussion to wait to elect officers until after we hear back from the Select Board on the new name and purpose. We can reassess at the next meeting based on that outcome.

Rachel **made a motion** to table electing officers until our next meeting once we have feedback from the Select Board. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Number of Committee Member and Quorum:

Lyndsey suggested changing the preferred committee size to 11 to reflect the current membership. With a goal of having a majority at each meeting, the quorum would be 6 members.

Joe **made a motion** to cap the committee size at 11 and to establish a quorum of 6 members. Andrea seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting frequency, schedule, and duration:

Ashlie suggested that since Wednesday meetings have already been set, we should stick with the proposed schedule of 3rd Wednesdays unless it conflicts with Select Board meetings. Committee members preferred that meetings start at 6:30pm instead of 6:00pm. Betsy noted that we might need more meetings for survey development and marketing teams. There was a consensus to stick with the current schedule of meetings through August.

Lyndsey asked if there is a preference for duration. The consensus was that we can aim for 1.5 hours and we should select a timekeeper when we elect officers.

Audience Questions/Feedback:

Eric Bunker noted that the Town has resident contact data. Tax rolls will tell us who owns property and the Post Office can tell us who has a PO Box. He asked if there will be other categories. Betsy responded that we need to get a count and make sure to capture landowners who don't live here. Eric then asked how we plan to prevent duplicates. Betsy responded that we would love to verify each survey if we have the volunteer capacity. The online option will allow for unique identifiers and they will need to enter a code.

He then indicated that we should not worry about the cost of the survey. We won't need additional approval since the Select Board has enough latitude to approve extra if needed. He also suggested that we use the printers in the town office for everything possible. They can do postcards, 11x17, and envelopes.

He also noted that someone will be called upon at the Town meeting to explain what we are doing and what we have done so far. Finally, he noted that it will be difficult to have the date shift in order to accommodate the Select Board meetings. He suggested we set a regular time.

Another community member asked where the minutes are on the website. Lyndsey explained the location and what is on the website currently. He then suggested that we think of a place to put the raw data and should make it digital and anonymize the data. Betsy responded that we need to consider validity and capacity. We haven't discussed yet whether it will be anonymous, but we could make it anonymous and easy to duplicate. We could do all of the above if we have the volunteer capacity.

Recordkeeping Preferences:

Lyndsey asked several questions about recordkeeping. The following preferences were agreed upon:

- 1 week is sufficient for editing minutes
- We need a folder to store all of the documents in google drive. Lyndsey will create one and share it.
- We will minimize emails between meetings in order to have all correspondence and decisions discussed and documented at public meetings. We do not want to add emails to the minutes in order to keep them streamlined.
- We will each have at least one method of contact available on the website. Lyndsey passed around a notebook to gather contact information and will update the website
- We will continue to post a draft agenda for everyone to add items to. Agendas will be finalized and posted to the website at least a week before each meeting.

Ashlie **motioned to adjourn** the meeting at 8:50pm. Libby seconded. The motion passed unanimously

Next Meeting Date: June 12th, 2024

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

June 12, 2024

6:30pm

Pre-meeting Google Doc Review Session (starts at 6:00pm)

1. Check-in

Action Items

1. Update on Select Board Meeting
2. Select Board representative replacement

Old Business

1. Elect Officers
2. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes

New Business

1. Survey Update and Next Steps
 - a. Identify a clear research goal to narrow questions
 - b. Identify date for survey to go out and date required for completion
 - c. Sign up for Survey Sub-Committees
 - i. Marketing – In charge of planning timing for distributing all information about the survey including postcards, newspaper, social media, town digital banner, and creating content for those personalized communications that motivate increased response rate. Also mailing surveys and supporting with follow up postcards, etc.
 - ii. Questions – In charge of choosing questions and responses, formatting questions, creating content to explain questions that may need explanation. Creating a survey intro including a picture of the town and explanation of how each response makes an impact and what we will do with the results.
 - iii. Determine if/when these committees should meet prior to July.
 - d. Choose Digital Survey Platform
 - i. Betsy has a Qualtrics account through UNO, it would display UNO on the digital survey, we would need to explain. MCOG has Survey Monkey, they would assist us with a membership. Google forms is also a fine option.
 - e. Decide if Every Home Direct Mailing (EHDM) list from the post office is sufficient or if we want to review town/tax records and confirm every household, or is there another option that the town has already. If not EHDM, assign roles, responsibilities, and timelines.
2. Town Meeting on 6/26
 - a. Representative to speak for Committee
 - b. Do we want to take suggestions for survey questions? How?
3. Committee Charter

Other

1. Questions from attendees?

Next Meeting Date: July 10th

Monroe Visioning Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 12, 2024

Attendees: Ashlie Stubbs, Andrea Stark, Libby Waldron, Ken Clements, Rachel Norgang, Lyndsey Marston, Eric Bunker, Troy Moody, Ray Wirth, Betsy Samuelson.

The meeting was called to order at 6:36pm.

No committee members had check-in remarks to share.

Action Items

1. Libby gave an update on the May 22nd Select Board Meeting. She confirmed that the Select Board supported changing our name to Monroe Visioning Committee and that we don't have to be a subcommittee. The Select Board also supported our focus on the survey. We have sent an update for the town report and an item for the warrant to approve the survey cost.
2. Libby also shared that Eric Bunker is now the representative from the Select Board. Eric provided updated contact information.

Old Business

1. Elect Officers:

Lyndsey suggested we have a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary and asked if people want to nominate potential officers or have a discussion first to see who might be interested. The consensus was to have a discussion first. Troy indicated he is interested in one of the positions. Lyndsey said she does not want to be Chair since her preference is to be Secretary. Libby also indicated she is willing to be Chair or Vice Chair. Lyndsey explained the roles of each position.

Rachel **made a motion** to appoint Troy as Chair, Libby as Vice Chair, and Lyndsey as Secretary. Betsy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:

Troy **made a motion** to approve the May minutes as written. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Survey Update and Next Steps

a. *Identify a clear research goal to narrow questions.*

Betsy has gone through surveys from across the country and this region. She has added in surveys for education and public safety which seem important but weren't well represented, and she has narrowed down the selection to 13 surveys. Betsy noted that Andrea had suggested a research goal is important as it helps identify which questions we are going to drill down on, what we are going to measure, and helps questions relate back to a common goal. Betsy noted that the Town is looking for certain information, the Planning Board is looking for other information and as a committee there is information that we are

trying to gather based on certain goals. Ray asked for examples and Betsy suggested "What is the quality of life in Monroe today?". The committee discussed other options to reference the future. The final suggestions were: (a) How do you feel about living in the town of Monroe?, (b) What is the current quality of life in Monroe, and what improvements would make it better?, (c) What is the current quality of life in Monroe?, and (d) How do you feel about living in the town of Monroe and what improvements would make it better?

Troy **made a motion** to choose option a, b, c, or d as our research goal. Libby seconded. Libby second. Option D was selected with 9 votes. 1 abstained.

b. Identify date for survey to go out and date required for completion

Betsy explained that the next steps will be to figure out what questions go on the survey. Once we have questions, we need no less than 2 weeks for the committee, Town staff, and Select Board to take the survey and provide feedback. We'll then need another week to make changes and send it out to the public. The survey will be open for no less than 3 weeks. We need to have the timing decisions publicized so people know how important it is. Once we have the surveys back, one month after the deadline, we will announce the results in a community setting. We need to have three dates: when it goes out, when it is due, and when we will share the results.

The committee discussed making time to gather suggested questions from the community and the best time of year to get the most responses. Betsy acknowledged that she will likely need to delay her capstone project, so the timing is not defined by her school program. Libby noted that there is value in having everyone work on the questions (rather than breaking out into subcommittees), and a discussion followed regarding how this would impact timing of the survey and how everyone can stay involved and informed without having to be a part of every meeting, including sharing all questions in google docs, highlighting which questions to discuss as a full committee, and providing subcommittee reports at each meeting. Betsy noted that her school contacts strongly suggest having two groups to keep everyone from getting exhausted. We will likely need 2 or 3 subcommittee meetings in addition to monthly meetings. The committee discussed potential mailing timelines of October or November, and Betsy reminded all that we'll need to have the survey done a month in advance of that deadline. Rachel suggested we move the initial deadline to early 2025. The committee further discussed how to allow for responses, depending on the amount of follow up or door-to-door contacts. Libby noted that going door to door might feel aggressive and people should have the right to not respond if they choose.

The following dates were suggested:

January 8: send out survey

January 31: deadline to get responses

March 5: share results

Ashlie **made a motion** to select January 8th as the date to send out the surveys, January 31st as the deadline for responses, and March 5th as the date to share

results. Libby seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The sample survey should be ready a month before the mailing date, so December 8th would be the deadline.

c. *Sign up for survey subcommittees*

Based on the discussion above, Ashlie **made a motion** to have two subcommittees: Marketing and Questions. Andrea seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Betsy reviewed the descriptions of the Marketing and Questions subcommittees. Lyndsey noted that these will not be public meetings themselves since all of the information discussed at the subcommittee meetings will be shared with the full committee monthly. Lyndsey will not be able to take minutes for both, so each committee will need to take notes and prepare a report for the committee meeting each month. Troy suggested that the subcommittees might meet at the same time at the town office, with one upstairs and one downstairs. Ashlie took an initial poll of which subcommittees members are interested in. Marketing: Ashlie, Ray, Rachel. Questions: Troy, Ken, Libby, Eric, Betsy, Lyndsey.

The committee discussed ways for people to opt in to contact the committee if they need help with the survey. We could include it on postcards and the survey. Betsy offered to merge all of the existing questions and send them around to the group to start reviewing. She asked that people use the comment function or suggesting mode only.

The committee discussed having the subcommittee assignments as free flowing rather than permanent assignments.

The committee agreed that subcommittees do not need to meet prior to our July group meeting.

d. *Choose digital survey platform*

Betsy has a Qualtrics account through UNO which would display UNO on the digital survey. We would likely need to explain it on the survey. MCOG has Survey Monkey, and they would assist us if the Town pays for membership. Google forms is also a fine option. Betsy does not suggest having UNO. MCOG has survey monkey. The committee discussed the fees and services provided by MCOG compared to the low cost of survey monkey or google. MCOG could be useful if the town decides to move forward with a comprehensive plan. Andrea suggested tabling the decision until we have the final questions and know what our needs are. Andrea **made a motion** to postpone the decision about the platform until we know the questions and necessary platform functions. Eric seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

e. *Decide if Every Home Direct Mailing (EHDM) list is sufficient*

Ashlie said the EDDM/EHDM process is simple and the post office will tell you the number of mailings you need to print. The mailing will say "Monroe postal patron." Lyndsey is concerned that it will not capture all of the residents,

especially those who may live here seasonally or own land but do not live here. Alternatively, focusing on tax records alone would miss anyone who is renting. The Town does not have a discounted postal rate so a regular mailing would cost significantly more in postage. It also raises the issue of whether Town records are accurate. Troy described how the Planning Board has been looking into Town-owned properties and has found that the tax records are incomplete and do not match the tax maps. Eric noted that this is a good time to get records corrected. We could compare the tax records, voting records, and post office information. The tax assessor could be another source of information. We could also sort the tax records by zip code and mail individual surveys to anyone outside of Monroe, using EDDM for the rest. Betsy noted that EDDM is much easier and straightforward. She sees value in having an updated list with as much info as possible (contacts, etc) for emergency management. If the Planning Board, Select Board, and us work together it is possible to get that list. Eric suggested splitting duties with the Planning Board. Libby is concerned that there could be push back from residents who don't want to share their contact information. Betsy asked for the Select Board and Planning Board representatives to ask their boards if it is important to have a database of addresses and names. Ashlie **made a motion** to table the decision on EHDM/EDDM. Ray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The committee discussed whether to capture multiple people in a household. We need to add to that agenda item for next time.

2. Town Meeting on 6/26

a. Representative

Troy will be the representative at the Town meeting. He asked if we wanted to draft something, but the town report summary should be sufficient guidance. Betsy suggested he focus on how valuable each survey is and highlight the dates.

b. Survey suggestions

The committee agreed on having a suggestion box at the Town meeting that will stay at the town office until the end of July. Troy will print out a sticker to put on the box with the deadline, and will make note of it at the town meeting.

3. Committee Charter

Lyndsey will send around a draft for everyone to review.

Other

Questions from attendees? n/a

Rachel **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:22pm. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Date: July 10th

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

July 10, 2024

6:30pm

1. Check-in

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes
2. Choose Digital Survey Platform
3. Decide if EHDM/EDDM is sufficient
 - a. Did other entities weigh in on whether emergency info is helpful?

New Business

1. Committee Charter
2. Decide meeting times and dates for subcommittees.
3. Single survey or capture household members?

Other

1. Questions from attendees?

Next Meeting Date: August 21, 2024

Reminders!

- 8/1/2025: Remove suggestion box from Town Office
- 12/8/2025: Deadline for sample survey
- 1/8/2025: Send out survey
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 03/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee
Agenda
July 10, 2024
6:30pm

Attendees: Eric Bunker, Betsy Samuelson, Libby Waldron, Rachel Norgang, Lyndsey Marston, Ashlie Stubbs, Troy Moody. Ken Clements arrived late.

Troy called the meeting to order at 6:48pm.

Check-in: Betsy said she has to prioritize her capstone project for this fall, so she won't have as much time to dedicate to the actual survey data process.

Action Items:

1. Eric will bring the approved Monroe Visioning Committee Charter to the Select Board for review/approval.
2. Libby will compare survey platform functions and costs and bring information to the August meeting.
3. Eric will start cleaning up town records, with support from Ashlie.
4. Ashlie will research the cost differences between an EDDM mailing and a regular postage mailing. She will also review the restrictions on how big of a mailing (# pages) can be sent via EDDM.
5. Troy will ask Drew Pickering to share his tax research findings with Eric and Ashlie to support their record clean-up.

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:

Betsy **made a motion** to approve the June minutes as written. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Choose Digital Survey Platform:

Betsy said the decision is between survey monkey and google forms. Survey monkey has a fee, but it can do more. We need to look into the specific costs. Lyndsey asked if we know for sure that survey monkey can do what we want (if we know yet what we want). Betsy said she is not familiar with google forms, but is hoping to have a format where a response to a question can trigger another question. Rachel thinks survey monkey will have more options given the fact that Betsy won't have as much time to spend on data entry. Libby looked into prices and said it can be as low as \$25-75 a month, but has a minimum of 3 users, and seems to require annual payment instead of month to month. Lyndsey noted that the questions could determine the platform we choose, or if one platform is more limited we will need to alter the question format accordingly. Libby noted that the survey monkey \$25 tier will pick up on IP address, download results, and print results. She offered to compare platforms and bring information to the next meeting. Rachel noted that questions should match online and on paper, so we should plan the phrasing accordingly. Betsy said having fewer questions in paragraph form (versus multiple choice) will make analysis easier. Lyndsey noted that Google AI features may help with paragraph form analysis.

Lyndsey **made a motion** to table the decision on the digital survey platform until the next meeting. Rachel seconded. A discussion followed of other options including Qualtrix and Constant Contact. Libby offered to include other options in her comparison. The motion passed unanimously.

Ken arrived.

3. Decide if EHDM/EDDM is sufficient:

Betsy summarized the discussion from last month including the fact that we realized EDDM would be easier. We'll know the number of households receiving surveys, so we'll also know our success rate. She noted that we can compare information against tax data, Trio (used for assessing), voting records, postal records. Rachel asked what we would compare it against. Lyndsey said it seems like we have two options: use EDDM or take the time to clean up the town systems to ensure records are accurate. There isn't any need to compare EDDM against the other systems. Rachel recalled that if we use EDDM we'll lose out-of-town landowners or seasonal residents; if we use tax records we lose renters. Lyndsey reminded all that we discussed a solution where we can use EDDM and then send surveys individually to anyone with a zip code other than 04951. Eric said he is willing to do the work to clean up town records. Ashlie is also willing to help and can research cost comparisons between EDDM and regular mailings. She will also look into restrictions on whether EDDM must be a single page or if it can be a multi-page survey.

The committee agreed that a decision didn't need to be made at this meeting. Eric will start in on cleaning up records and will have a sense of the timeline in the next couple of months. The committee suggested the following resources to verify: Trio (tax), voting, post office/PO box, registration data.

Lyndsey asked if the planning board, select board, or fire department discussed whether emergency information would be useful. Ken shared that the fire department uses the town tax spreadsheet and their systems have been working fine. They mostly need an address only anyway. Ashlie asked for an update on the planning board's efforts to rectify town land records. Troy said he would ask Drew Pickering for an update and to share his information.

Ashlie **made a motion** to table the decision on how to mail surveys. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Committee Charter:

Lyndsey explained the purpose of the document and noted that people can vote on it if they have had a chance to review it or she can make changes based on any feedback or discussion at the meeting. Rachel said she looked it over and it looked good. Ashlie agreed that it is good to have one in place as a reminder of our goals. Betsy also said it looks good.

Rachel **made a motion** to approve the Monroe Visioning Committee Charter. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The committee preferred to have additional approval by the Select Board. Lyndsey asked Eric to add it to their next meeting agenda.

2. Decide meeting times and dates for subcommittees:

Troy asked if we plan to meet again as a whole group or if we plan to meet as subcommittees only. Lyndsey said we should keep the monthly whole group meeting and do additional meetings for subcommittees. The next meeting was scheduled for 8/21 and was the last of the previously scheduled dates. Many committee members responded that they will be away, so the next meeting date was changed to 8/14 at 6:30pm. Betsy said that we have 3 months to come up with questions and a marketing strategy. That seems achievable in 3 meetings as long as everyone is willing to review information outside of meetings and respond to emails. Since our agendas are smaller now, she suggested we could break out into subcommittees at the next meeting. Ken noted that he prefers one meeting a month. A discussion followed on whether to stick to the current schedule that changes based on Select Board meetings or to meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

Betsy **made a motion** to have one long meeting on the 3rd Wednesday of each month which will include our group meeting and subcommittees. Ashlie seconded. A discussion followed about including subcommittee items in the agenda and Lyndsey agreed to add new prompts to the template. The motion passed unanimously.

The committee had previously agreed to meet at 6:30pm rather than 6:00pm. The benefits of each were discussed, but no change was made in order to allow for Eric to attend after Select Board meetings and for the convenience of other members.

Troy asked if we want to appoint someone to take minutes for the subcommittees. The consensus was that it is best to allow everyone to participate equally, and as long as each subcommittee reports to the full group at the following meeting, their actions will get captured in the official minutes.

Lyndsey noted that the change in the meeting schedule just approved is different from what is in the charter. Lyndsey **made a motion** to modify the charter to reflect that the committee now meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Betsy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Single survey or capture household members:

Betsy said that the online survey can easily accommodate more household members. The paper copy is more difficult to accommodate and make it clear on how to fill out the additional sections (like a census). We can provide a digital link. It would affect our numbers (# sent vs received) since we wouldn't know the source. We could require names to avoid duplicates, but people may be less likely to fill it out unbiased if their name is attached to it. Demographic information is sensitive too. Lyndsey suggested that we include an option to provide additional copies. Rachel said we discussed using a #/code for each survey; if someone requests more we could ask for their code. A discussion followed. A discussion followed on the benefits of having multiple responses per household, including capturing younger residents. Betsy noted that we will also need to know the IP address of the library in case residents fill out their surveys there. We need to check if Google Forms can track IPs.

A discussion followed on concerns about validity and survey response rates. Eric suggested that we could serialize the letters that we send out and check them against a list when we receive responses. That could capture anything that is photocopied. The general consensus is to capture as many responses as possible and not worry as much about validity.

Libby **made a motion** to capture as many household members as possible and prioritize response rates over concerns of validity. Troy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Other

1. Questions from attendees?

There were no public attendees. Troy checked the comment box for any survey suggestions. There was one response that stated “reliable high speed internet for entire town.” Betsy compared the suggestion with #174 of our current question bank and made note in the document.

Ashlie **motioned to adjourn** the meeting at 7:57pm. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Date: August 14th at 6:30pm

Reminders!

- 8/1/2025: Remove suggestion box from Town Office
- 12/8/2025: Deadline for sample survey
- 1/8/2025: Send out survey
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 03/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

August 14, 2024

6:30pm

1. Check-in

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes
2. Select Board response (Eric)
3. Digital Survey Platform
 - a. Platform comparison feedback (Libby)
 - b. Decision?
4. EDDM vs. regular mailing
 - a. Cost comparison and mailing size feedback (Ashlie)
 - b. Town record clean-up progress (Eric)
 - c. Decision?

New Business

1. Vote on whether or not to put a definition of a comprehensive plan in the survey.
 - a. If a comprehensive plan definition passes, vote for said definition.
2. SubCommittee Breakout Sessions
 - a. Questions:
 - b. Marketing:

Other

1. Questions from attendees?

Next Meeting Date: September 18, 2024

Reminders!

- 12/8/2025: Deadline for sample survey
- 1/8/2025: Send out survey
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 03/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee

Minutes

August 14, 2024

Present: Troy Moody, Rachel Norgang, Ray Wirth, Andrea Stark, Lyndsey Marston, Eric Bunker, Ashlie Stubbs, and Betsy Samuelson. Ken Clements arrived late.

Troy called the meeting to order at 6:41pm.

Action Items:

1. Eric will bring the approved Monroe Visioning Committee Charter to the Select Board for review/approval.
2. Eric will research getting a bulk mailing permit.
3. Ashlie will inquire about print shop donations.

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:

Andrea **made a motion** to approve the July minutes as written. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Select Board Response:

Eric has not yet brought the committee charter to the Select Board. He will add it to the next agenda.

3. Digital Survey Platform:

a. Platform comparison feedback:

Since Libby could not attend the meeting, she asked Troy to share her research. He said that any survey option she found with an online purchase cost was as much as survey monkey and would take $\frac{3}{4}$ of our budget. Her recommendation was to move forward with google forms. Rachel and Ray noted they both have experience using it. Some formatting decisions will need to be made to make it do what we need, and we can note format needs in the question bank as they are reviewed. Andrea asked if any of the features are better in survey monkey vs. google forms. Lyndsey said she thought Libby was going to report back on functions, not just cost. Troy wasn't sure but thought she focused just on cost. Rachel listed off all of the google forms formats and put a screen shot in the google drive. Betsy suggested that Rachel and Ray work together on formatting once we reach that stage. Ken entered.

b. Decision:

The consensus was to move forward with google forms and look into other options once we have our final questions, if needed. We'll have more decisions to make on preventing duplicates or ensuring anonymity.

4. **EDDM vs. regular mailing:**

a. Cost comparison and mailing size feedback

Ashlie went to the Belfast post office to get information. Post card stamps are \$.56 each. There are 476 mailboxes in town so a post card mailing would be \$266.56 via EDDM. A 3-page (3 pieces of paper) survey with two envelopes would be \$.73 each for a total of \$347.48. The survey is too thick for EDDM so we have to use regular postage. If we use 5 pieces of paper, the cost would go up to \$1.01 each. 8 pieces of paper would be \$1.19. These don't include return postage stamps or mailing out extra copies as needed. Andrea asked why paper copies are preferred, and Betsy responded that her research shows there is a better return rate with paper copies. Research also shows including return postage is a must.

Lyndsey asked if the town might consider getting a bulk mailing permit. Eric will look into it. Ashlie asked about what printing the town is willing to cover. Eric thought the town will cover regular paper, but probably not envelopes or special paper for postcards. Ashlie will inquire about printing donations at a print shop she knows well.

Troy asked how to move forward with upcoming expenses. Eric said to submit a form to Brenda for reimbursement and to save receipts.

b. Town record clean-up progress:

Eric said the tax records are public and we can use those for survey contacts. Motor vehicle registration, voting records, and postal records are not available for public use. Tax records won't include renters, so we'll need to find another way to capture them. They'll receive the EDDM mailings, but not the survey itself unless we find a way to get contacts.

We can have a link to the survey on the town website (along with a separate page with info). We can also have some information available at the town office for voting day.

c. Decision:

The decision is made for us, given that EDDM isn't available for the actual surveys. The reminders will be EDDM and can include extra suggestions on how to get copies of the survey.

Eric and Ashlie will keep moving forward with the town records.

Andrea asked when we plan to send the save the date postcards. The marketing subcommittee will decide.

New Business

1. Vote on whether or not to put a definition of a comprehensive plan in the survey:

Betsy suggested we include a definition in the survey. Troy supported the idea. Rachel **made a motion** to include a definition of what a comprehensive plan is along with a question about whether residents want a comprehensive plan in the survey. Betsy seconded. Discussion: Lyndsey suggested we keep the definition short and simple. Troy suggested we have a “Please explain” option on the question about whether or not to have a plan. Betsy recommended we limit the number of blank space questions but agreed this is one of the most important questions. Research shows it is best to sandwich these questions in the middle and have demographics last. The motion passed unanimously.

Troy passed out a paper with four sample definitions:

#1: A Comprehensive Plan is a State-recognized town document, which outlines the will of the towns' people, serves as a roadmap and guide for town leadership, and provides the town legal ground in protecting its established land use ordinance.

#2: A Comprehensive Plan is a State-recognized document, which provides the town legal ground in protecting its land use policies, outlines the will of the towns' people, and serves as a roadmap and guide for town leadership. A comprehensive plan consists of:

- An inventory of current conditions and trends in the town*
- Goals for the next 12 years set through public input*
- Strategies to achieve the town's established goals*
- Guiding policies which support the town's goals and strategies*
- Ultimately, the comprehensive plan will establish collection town vision for future growth over the next decade*

#3 A comprehensive plan is a recommendatory document, developed through a community-driven process intended to proactively and comprehensively address future growth and development scenarios to make sure that any growth that does occur happens in line with town's vision. By outlining the needs, desires, and future vision of the community, a comprehensive plan provides the town with the agency and legal tools to preserve the town's character and resources.

#4: A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range strategy intended to guide growth and development within a community or region for an established period of time, typically 10-20 years. Comprehensive planning is an intensive process that identifies current conditions and demographics of a community, fosters public engagement and involvement for community feedback, and analyzes data obtained from both sources to formulate future strategies and objectives to accomplish the community's desired goals. It proposed an action plan on how to grow and develop and address economic development, housing, transportation, public facilities and services, land use, and natural and historic resources.

A discussion followed regarding the sample definitions, none of which was fully acceptable to the committee. Suggestions were made to use portions of some, but no agreement was reached. Lyndsey **made a motion** to table the decision on the comprehensive plan definition. Eric seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Troy noted that we will shift into subcommittee meetings for the last 20 minutes, and will have more time next month to spend in subcommittees. Ashlie **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:57pm. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The attendees then broke out into subcommittee meetings.

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

September 18, 2024

6:30pm

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes
2. Select Board response (Eric)
3. Bulk mailing permit? (Eric)
4. Comprehensive Plan definition?

New Business

1. Subcommittee Reports
 - a. Marketing
 - b. Questions

Other

1. Questions from attendees?

Next Meeting Date: October 16, 2024

Reminders!

- 12/8/2025: Deadline for sample survey
- 1/8/2025: Send out survey
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 03/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee
Minutes
September 18, 2024
6:30pm

Attendees: Andrea Stark, Betsy Samuelson, Troy Moody, Ashlie Stubbs, Eric Bunker, Lyndsey Marston

Troy called to order at 6:37pm.

Action Items:

1. Eric will bring the approved Monroe Visioning Committee Charter to the Select Board for review/approval.
2. Troy will follow up with Ray about his ability to participate in upcoming meetings.

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:

Betsy **made a motion** to approve the August minutes as written. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Select Board response:

Eric noted that not everyone was at the last select board meeting, but he sent around the committee charter for review and will bring it back to the next meeting for approval.

3. Bulk mailing permit:

Eric confirmed that the Town does not have a bulk mailing permit. Town staff explained that since only one bulk mailing is sent per year, it hasn't seemed worthwhile. Andrea noted the Town has recently been sending two newsletters in addition to tax bills, so it may be worth it. Lyndsey added that while it had been her initial suggestion, she could not remember if bulk mailing permits rely on using a commercial printer or not, and it would be worth clarifying if the Town wants to pursue a permit.

4. Comprehensive Plan definition:

Troy noted that the comprehensive plan definition is something we need to discuss at some point, but it is not a valuable use of our time before the survey is ready.

Lyndsey **made a motion** to continue to table the comprehensive plan definition.

Besty seconded. Discussion: Ashlie clarified that we agreed about putting the definition in the survey so we need to have a definition before the survey is actually finalized. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Subcommittee Reports:

A. Marketing:

Ashlie said that she and Rachel met after the last meeting. Rachel posted notes to the google drive, and Ashlie highlighted that they talked about a dedicated page on the Town website, Facebook posts, videos, flyers, Town

column, and posters to get the word out about the survey. She noted that they set the date for 12/16 to send out the “survey coming soon” flyer and 1/6/2025 to have envelopes at the post office. They did not yet decide on a second survey date.

Eric asked Betsy about the timing for surveys to be open, and she confirmed that one month is the recommended maximum. Ours is approximately 3 weeks and we may have some responses trickling in after the deadline. She suggested the second week after it is open to send the next reminder flyer and include a link to the online survey and a contact if they want more copies. Ashlie noted we can do online reminders frequently too. If we’re not happy with participation after two weeks, we should consider door to door.

Ashlie said the marketing subcommittee will present a draft of the postcards for the whole group.

B. Questions:

Troy summarized that we spent the last meeting trying to discuss how to pair down the long list of questions. We debated starting with categories or questions. Betsy clarified that we asked Andrea to remove duplicates and otherwise decided we would dive into the questions one by one at this meeting.

Other

1. Questions from attendees? n/a

2. **Request by Ray:**

Troy said that Ray reached out to him to say he would be unable to attend tonight and likely the October meeting. He understands we need to move quickly and asked Troy if another member of the conservation commission could sit in for him and vote in his place, although no one was available for tonight’s meeting. Troy said he didn’t see a problem with it but wanted to make sure we all agreed. Troy said that Ray had some questions that he’d like to see put into the survey, which Troy shared.

Lyndsey asked Troy to add the questions to the question bank if they are not already there. She also asked if it would be possible to have Ray use the question bank to highlight which questions specifically the conservation commission wants. She noted that our charter provides guidance on how to replace members, but she would prefer to not have to vote in a rotating cast of representatives if Ray is otherwise able to use the question bank to capture his concerns. Betsy also noted that open ended questions add a real challenge for assessment, and we have decided to limit those so it would be better to come up with a list of specific choices. She also said we need to move a lot faster and would need to catch up any new members. People can come and provide comments, but she agreed that it would be better to have Ray continue to weigh in. Troy said he would follow up with Ray.

Andrea noted she also won’t be here in October and asked how we want to decide which questions to use, which led to a discussion about the subcommittee process.

Given the time constraints, the Committee agreed to use the entirety of the next meeting to go through questions instead of breaking into separate subcommittees. Rachel's input on the education questions will be especially useful.

Ashlie **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:07pm. Betsy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

October 16, 2024

6:30pm

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes
2. Select Board response (Eric)

Other

1. Questions from attendees?

Next Meeting Date: November 20, 2024

Reminders!

- 12/8/2024: Deadline for sample survey
- 12/16/2024: Send survey coming soon flyer
- 1/6/2025: deliver envelopes to post office
- 1/8/2025: Survey goes live
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 3/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

November 20, 2024

6:30pm

Old Business

1. Review/Approve September Meeting Minutes (October meeting was canceled due to low attendance)
2. Select Board response (Eric)

New Business

1. Subcommittee Reports
 - a. Marketing
 - b. Questions

Other ?

Next Meeting Date: December 18, 2024

Reminders!

- 12/8/2024: Deadline for sample survey
- 12/16/2024: Send survey coming soon flier
- 1/6/2025: deliver envelopes to post office
- 1/8/2025: Survey goes live
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 3/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee

Minutes

November 20, 2024

6:30pm

Attendees: Troy Moody, Ashlie Stubbs, Andrea Stark, Eric Bunker, Lyndsey Marston, Rachel Norgang, and Betsy Samuelson.

Troy called the meeting to order at 6:38pm

Action Items:

1. Ashlie will prepare a draft “save the date” postcard to mail out by the 12/16 deadline
2. Lyndsey will create a new page on the website for the survey and provide a link/QR code for Ashlie
3. Lyndsey will prepare the draft survey (print and online) to meet the 12/8 deadline

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:

Ashlie **made a motion** to approve the September minutes as written. Andrea seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Select Board response:

Eric brought the Committee Charter to the Select Board and said there were no problems. He said to consider it approved as of the Select Board meeting last month.

New Business

1. Subcommittee Reports

- a. **Questions:** Lyndsey provided an update on the survey questions. The subcommittee met most recently on 10/30 and finished reviewing the full question bank. After the meeting, Lyndsey reviewed the comprehensive plan categories and MCOG/State grant information and added a few more questions to be discussed tonight. Lyndsey also noted that she is willing to put together the survey (both online version and print) drafts in order to meet our deadline of 12/8.
- b. **Marketing:** Ashlie planned on focusing her time tonight on marketing plans to meet the 12/16 deadline for the postcard. She plans to send it using EDDM. Rachel reminded all that the dessert auction is next week and it will be good to announce it at the event. Ashlie also plans to get it on the town sign and to make fliers. Lyndsey offered to make the new web page and provide a link to be printed on the postcards. Ashlie asked if printing should be done through the Town or through a printing service. Lyndsey encouraged her to price out a printing service, based on her experience of printing postcards from small office printers. If the cost is acceptable, the end result will be a better quality product without all the paper jams. Ashlie plans to contact SBS in Waterville.

2. Data Sharing/Personal Info

Betsy noted that Google forms make it easy to share the link for data. One important caveat is that we won't want anyone entering names or other identifying information. We can make a group contact so that people can follow up outside of the survey. Eric asked what would be the problem of sharing identifying information. If it's not required or requested and someone shares it, they would assume it would be public. As a group, we will need to decide if we redact the information or keep it in. Lyndsey noted we should have a header on the survey that indicates how any identifying information will be handled. We can also use the same/test survey to determine how to proceed. Rachel noted it will be good to test the back end of the google survey to see if we can easily delete columns or categories of information.

Betsy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:56pm. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Subcommittee Date: December 5, 2024 at 6:00pm

Next Meeting Date: December 18, 2024

Reminders!

- 12/8/2024: Deadline for sample survey
- 12/16/2024: Send survey coming soon flier
- 1/6/2025: deliver envelopes to post office
- 1/8/2025: Survey goes live
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 3/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

December 18, 2024

6:30pm

Old Business

1. Review/Approve November Meeting Minutes

New Business

1. Subcommittee Reports
 - a. Questions
 - i. Survey Test Results/Edits
 - ii. Comp Plan definition
 - b. Marketing
 - i. Follow up on Save the Date Postcard
 - ii. Printing Plans (due January 8)
 1. Printing Quote/Format
 2. Help with addresses?
 3. How to capture renters?
 - iii. Put survey on website Jan 8th
 - iv. Plans for next postcard?
2. Data analysis/sharing

Other ?

Next Meeting Date: January 15, 2025

Reminders!

- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 3/05/2025: Share results

Monroe Visioning Committee

Minutes

December 18, 2024

6:30pm

Attendees: Andrea Stark, Troy Moody, Lyndsey Marston, Ray Wirth, Ashlie Stubbs. Eric Bunker entered late.

Troy called the meeting to order at 6:45pm

Action Items:

1. Lyndsey will revise the survey to reduce it to 8 pages.
2. Eric will check on whether Trio can export to excel, and determine the number of actual mailings.
3. Eric will print labels for envelopes (or print directly onto envelopes).
4. Troy will get stamps.
5. Lyndsey will get samples of paper to get a final weight to determine postage.

New Business

1. Subcommittee Reports

a. Questions:

i. Survey test results/edits:

Lyndsey provided an update. The subcommittee met on 12/5 and culled more questions, reducing the survey from 12 pages to 9 pages. Tests show that it is still taking ~15 minutes to take the survey, so we need to remove more questions in order to meet the 10 minute time limit goal. With 9 pages currently, it would also be beneficial to remove questions in order to get down to 8 pages (to have two 11x17 sheets front and back). The committee then reviewed the questions and suggested a handful to cull. Suggested changes were noted in the Question Bank document.

Eric Bunker arrived. Paul McCarrier entered as well but had to leave shortly after.

ii. Comp Plan definition:

Lyndsey noted that she stuck a comprehensive plan definition in the draft survey as a placeholder, but she also looked up some new, concise options in addition to the definitions Troy suggested earlier this fall. After reviewing the new options, the committee determined that the following definition should be used: "A comprehensive plan is the community's blueprint for the future. It expresses a community's collective vision, values, and goals, provides an action plan for implementing the vision, and serves as the legal basis for zoning, subdivision, and land use codes."

b. Marketing:

i. Follow up on Save the Date Postcard:

Ashlie sent the Save the Date postcard. It arrived in mailboxes this week. The total postage was \$109.05. Printing expenses were \$57.70.

ii. Printing plans

1. Printing Quote/Format:

Lyndsey received a quote for 1000 copies of an 8 page document for \$200. This will be on 2 sheets of 11x17 paper with 4 “pages” per sheet, front and back. The survey (with the return envelope) could fit in a standard envelope, but we also have the option to use 6x9 envelopes. Eric liked the idea of larger envelopes since it will stick out from other mail. Lyndsey also noted that we could buy colored envelopes. 6x9 envelopes from Staples were just under \$200 for 1000. Ashlie’s original postage quote indicated it would cost \$1.19 for 8 pages, but we might be able to get it for less. Lyndsey weighed the 8 pages plus 2 envelopes and it came to just over an ounce, so postage would be \$1.01. If we can get it light enough for standard postage (under 1 oz), that will save quite a bit (standard postage is \$.73). Lyndsey will get a better sense of weight and bulkiness from the printer to finalize the envelope size and postage.

2. Help with addresses:

Ashlie said there hadn’t been any progress on the mailing list. There were 489 mailboxes on the EDDM postcard mailing. Town staff estimated there are 700ish tax bills, but that could include duplicates. Lyndsey asked Eric if Trio (the tax software) could export data to excel. Eric will check. If it can, we can easily sort data to remove duplicates to get the final number of mailings. Eric offered to make labels for the outer envelopes and the return envelopes, but he will also test out whether the printer can easily print directly to the envelopes.

3. How to capture renters:

The EDDM mailings will reach renters, so they will have to reach out to get a copy or do the survey online.

iii. Put survey on website for Jan 8th

iv. Plans for next postcard?

c. Other Survey prep:

Lyndsey asked what to do with the surveys once we start receiving them. Eric suggested we use the ballot box. Staff can place surveys in the ballot box once they come in by mail. Residents who want to drop off a survey can place their survey directly in the ballot box. We’ll enter paper surveys into the online survey form in order to streamline data analysis.

The surveys need to go in the mail by January 6th. The committee will meet again on January 2nd at 2:00pm to stuff envelopes and get the mailing ready.

Troy will get stamps once we know the exact number and values.

Lyndsey will send the revised survey around for final edits by Friday. All edits should be sent by 12/22 so the survey can be ordered on 12/23.

2. Data Sharing/Personal Info

The committee will discuss in January once we have actual data.

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:

Eric **made a motion** to approve the November minutes as written. Ray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Eric **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Subcommittee Date: January 2nd at 2:00 (Stuff envelopes!!!)

Next Meeting Date: January 15, 2025

Reminders!

- 1/6/2025: deliver envelopes to post office
- 1/8/2025: Survey goes live
- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 3/05/2025: Share results



Lyndsey Marston <lyndseymarston@gmail.com>

Printing/Postage Update: NEED EMAIL VOTE BY FRIDAY

Troy Moody <troymoody2324@gmail.com>

Tue, Dec 24, 2024 at 6:45 PM

To: Lyndsey Marston <lyndseymarston@gmail.com>

Cc: kenclem65 <kenclem65@gmail.com>, Betsy Samuelson <betsy4589@gmail.com>, Ray Wirth <raywirth.me@gmail.com>, Andrea Stark <apsmaine@gmail.com>, Ashlie Stubbs <ashliestubbs13@gmail.com>, Eric Bunker <erbz@pm.me>, Libby Emerson <libbymarie4395@gmail.com>, Rachel Norgang <rnorgang@rsu3.org>, Wade Brown <ghansonandson@aol.com>

I am in favor of the motion. Thank you for putting in so much work Lyndsey. I don't know if it is as easy for the town office to write a check for an invoice as it is to a member of the board however if it is not, please feel free to reach out to me with contact info as soon as an invoice has been created.

Merry Christmas and happy holidays everyone!

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 24, 2024, at 4:41 PM, Lyndsey Marston <lyndseymarston@gmail.com> wrote:

The postcard was \$109.05 postage plus ~\$57.70 for printing. With two postcards and Option 2, we'll come out around \$1833 total.

On Tue, Dec 24, 2024 at 2:58 PM kenclem65 <kenclem65@gmail.com> wrote:

I support Lyndsey's motion. Thank you all for the work you have done!

Ken

Sent from my U.S.Cellular© Smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: Betsy Samuelson <betsy4589@gmail.com>

Date: 12/24/24 09:24 (GMT-05:00)

To: Ray Wirth <raywirth.me@gmail.com>

Cc: Andrea Stark <apsmaine@gmail.com>, Ashlie Stubbs <ashliestubbs13@gmail.com>, Eric Bunker <erbz@pm.me>, Ken Clements <kenclem65@gmail.com>, Libby Emerson

<libbymarie4395@gmail.com>, Lyndsey Marston <lyndseymarston@gmail.com>, Rachel Norgang <rnorgang@rsu3.org>, Troy Moody <troymoody2324@gmail.com>, Wade Brown

<ghansonandson@aol.com>

Subject: Re: Printing/Postage Update: NEED EMAIL VOTE BY FRIDAY

I support option 2! Thanks Lydsey!

On Tue, Dec 24, 2024 at 8:09 AM Ray Wirth <raywirth.me@gmail.com> wrote:

I support Lyndsey's motion, which I understand to be Option 2.

On Tue, Dec 24, 2024, 8:19 AM Andrea Stark <apsmaine@gmail.com> wrote:

It sounds like having Snowman do the mailing is the clear choice.

Are the return envelopes (using EDDM) stamped with Snowman's free return insignia. If that's the case, great!!

On Tue, Dec 24, 2024 at 8:03 AM Ashlie Stubbs <ashliestubbs13@gmail.com> wrote:

I'll second Lindsay's motion.

Ashlie

On Mon, Dec 23, 2024 at 7:03 PM Lyndsey Marston <lyndseymarston@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi All,

I sent the survey to the printer this morning with a request for more information about weight, postage, etc and ended up learning some new information:

We swapped to a lighter paper, but the survey packet (survey plus return envelope and outer envelope) weighs more than an ounce so postage will be \$1.01, not \$.73. More importantly, **the printer can send the survey EDDM!** For whatever reason due to commercial vs. retail licenses, we would not be able to send the survey ourselves using EDDM but commercial printers have different rules.

EDDM will save us a significant amount in postage, BUT it then requires us to shift all folding, stuffing, labeling, etc. duties to the printer which comes with a fee. The good news is, it would still cost less than us doing it ourselves with regular postage.

Here's a sample breakdown:

1. **Option 1: Use First Class Mail.** Snowman Printing will print the survey for us (\$200). We'll then fold, stuff, and mail ourselves. Return envelopes will be stamped with regular stamps and the whole packet will be an additional \$1.01 each. Assuming we have ~700 addresses, **the cost would be roughly \$1668.**
2. **Option 2: Use EDDM.** Snowman Printing will print the survey for us, same as above, but will also then fold the survey, label return envelopes, label big envelopes, stuff and seal envelopes, and send surveys via EDDM. We can then send extras by hand to non-04951 zip codes by 1st class mail as originally planned. We have 489 EDDM mailboxes, so assuming we have 700 again total (with non-resident extras) and maybe 200 returned surveys, **the cost would be roughly \$1300.** We save on postage both ways here since we would only pay for return postage that actually gets mailed, rather than paying for stamps that may or may not get used. We can also save more if we can pinpoint the number of non-04951 addresses. This quote is for 1000 copies, envelopes, etc. so we could get it down a little bit by not having so many extras.

Given that we had decided back in August to use regular mailing by default, I'd like to **make a motion to use EDDM for the survey and have Snowman Printing prepare the printing and EDDM mailing for us.** I need to let them know by Friday, so I'm hoping we can do a vote by email that we can ratify in person at our next meeting. Please reply all with your response by Friday 12/27 at 8:00am.

I can refine the quote further if you can get me the exported tax list. Eric, any chance you were able to get it before the Town Office closed down for the week?

Thanks all. Sorry for the bad timing with the holidays, but hopefully everyone can respond and we can keep this on schedule.

Lyndsey

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

January 15, 2025

6:30pm

Old Business

1. Review/Approve December Meeting Minutes
2. Email vote on 12/23/2024

New Business

1. Subcommittee/Survey Updates
 - a. Surveys received so far
 - b. Plans for final postcard—send date?
 - c. Budget tally
2. Data analysis/sharing
 - a. How to enter surveys online
 - b. How to store data permanently (format & location)
 - c. How to share data
3. Public meeting plans (March 5)
 - a. Advertising
 - b. Food
 - c. Format (speaker, printed materials, projector?)

Other

Next Meeting Date: February 19, 2025

Reminders!

- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 3/05/2025: Share results

**Monroe Visioning Committee
Minutes
January 15, 2025
6:30pm**

Attendees: Troy Moody, Andrea Stark, Lyndsey Marston, Ashlie Stubbs, Betsy Samuelson, Ray Wirth. Eric Bunker entered late. Nancy Durand-Lanson attended briefly at the start of the meeting.

Troy called to order at 6:34pm.

Action Items:

1. Ashlie will draft a reminder postcard and send it around for edits.
2. A data-entry workday will take place on **2/13 at 2:00pm** in the library. Bring a laptop or other device to be able to enter paper survey data online.
3. Eric will inquire about how long to keep paper surveys and if the Maine State Archives can store them instead.
4. Betsy will share the survey to the Facebook group the week of 1/20.
5. Andrea will share the survey to the Facebook group the week of 1/27.
6. Lyndsey will turn off survey responses on 2/1.

Troy asked Nancy if she had any questions or if she was attending to observe the meeting. She thanked the Committee for doing the survey, but said she can't answer some of the questions because her answer will give the Select Board the ability to go in a direction that she doesn't want them to go in. She didn't feel like she could answer questions honestly and was wondering how to respond. Ashlie asked for an example, and Nancy pointed out Question 21 about the safety of roads. She asked if she says she doesn't feel safe, is something going to be done about it? Betsy responded that this is a good example of something the Town can write grants for. There are grants that wouldn't require matching funds that could allow the Town to add bike lanes, signs, or otherwise improve safety. Nancy indicated that she does not want any grants or government funding, so again, she wasn't sure how to respond. She also pointed to Questions 27 and 28 and indicated she couldn't respond truthfully without knowing what the Town might do in response. Lyndsey asked that she answer truthfully on the survey or not answer questions at all. She explained that by choosing to lie, Nancy would be skewing the results in favor of something that she doesn't actually want. The Town could then respond accordingly, and it would be unfortunate if the Town's actions are based on dishonest responses.

Several Committee members reiterated that the Committee does not have the authority to take any action based on the results of the survey. We are simply gathering information for the Select Board, Planning Board, and other committees to utilize. Any big decisions will be discussed as part of larger focus groups and no action will take place without a larger Town discussion.

Troy thanked Nancy for her time. Nancy left the meeting.

Old Business

1. **Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:**

Andrea **made a motion** to approve the December minutes as written. Ashlie

seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **Email vote on 12/23/2024:**

Lyndsey explained that the Committee had voted to send the survey via First Class mail based on the understanding that EDDM mailing was not permitted. Once Lyndsey learned that EDDM was possible, she didn't feel comfortable acting in direct opposition to a vote but she was up against a deadline to get the survey to the printer. This prompted a request for an email vote on 12/23, which had six votes in favor. Lyndsey noted that the Committee Charter does not specifically allow for email votes, so in order to make the vote and resulting actions valid, she **made a motion** to ratify the email vote on December 23rd. Betsy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. **Subcommittee/Survey Updates:**

A. Surveys received so far:

Lyndsey counted 75 surveys in the ballot box and 47 online responses, for a total of 122 responses to date.

B. Budget tally:

Paid and pending expenses to date total \$1413.16. Troy has not yet submitted reimbursement for the postage he purchased. The first postcard cost ~\$170 so there is still room in the budget to do one more mailing.

C. Plans for final postcard:

Ashlie will prepare another postcard right away. We should include a "thank you" for anyone who has already submitted their survey, a new QR code that leads directly to the survey, a reminder of the deadline, and a save the date for the public meeting. Ashlie will send around a draft for edits and get it to the printer asap.

2. **Data analysis/sharing**

A. How to enter surveys online:

Lyndsey asked if it would be best to have a Committee workday or take batches of surveys home to enter data. The Committee agreed that it would be best to keep the surveys on site and have a workday. Eric also noted that we need to have a process to check/verify each survey we enter so we don't make errors. Ray suggested that we modify the survey after it is closed to add a code that we can match to each paper copy. The workday was scheduled for February 13th at 2:00 in the library.

B. How to store data permanently (format & location):

Eric said that the Town Office computers are backed up by the Belfast Computer Company; he wasn't sure if the server is onsite or elsewhere. He confirmed that we can store the excel file on the computers once the survey is complete. We can also store the survey in the basement archives. Andrea asked how long we will need to store the paper copies; Eric said he would check with Maine State Archives as we may be able to send them there for permanent storage.

C. How to share data:

Lyndsey asked if we want to have just the summary of data available or the raw data available. The Committee agreed that having raw data would be best for transparency. We can post the data and summary online and have a larger discussion/presentation at the public meeting.

3. Public meeting plans

A. Advertising:

The rough date was generally marked for March 5th. Lyndsey asked if we want to stick to that date or set another. Troy suggested that we delay the meeting for a little longer to make sure we have enough time to do it well. We can still post the results online on March 5th, but then gather later in the month. A new date of March 29th at 11:00am was agreed upon. The new date can go on the reminder postcard. We'll post it to the Town sign once the survey closes. It can go on the website and on Facebook. Lyndsey also asked if there will be a spring Town newsletter, but no definite answer was given.

B. Food:

Andrea suggested a potluck.

C. Format:

Eric suggested that we have tables/stations set up for each topic area/category. It will help gauge interest in each topic and can provide an opportunity to sign up for focus areas. Committee members can be available at each station to answer questions. Ashlie suggested we still have a Q&A session to make sure everyone has a chance to voice any questions. Rather than having the Committee up front with the audience looking at us, Betsy suggested we have seats arranged in a circle for a more informal discussion. Lyndsey offered to make a handout summarizing the results to print and put online.

The event can start with an open house/potluck from 11-12 and move into a brief presentation and Q&A session at 12. Troy is willing to give a presentation and facilitate audience feedback.

Other

1. Final survey push:

- A. Lyndsey will close the online survey responses on 2/1.
- B. Betsy noted that Rachel planned to share the survey to the Facebook group this week. Betsy will do another next week, and Andrea will post for the library the week of the 27th.
- C. Lyndsey suggested that we all send personal reminders to anyone we know via email or text.

2. PO Box issues:

Troy shared that he heard at least 2 people didn't get surveys in their PO Boxes. They were able to get copies from the Town Office, but it's something to note for future mailings.

3. Committee attendance:

Troy also noted that Libby Waldron hasn't been attending regularly despite the fact that she is Vice Chair. He was wondering if we should replace her as an officer.

Lyndsey said that our Committee Charter doesn't require that we remove anyone who isn't participating, but does ask that anyone who wants to resign do so via email for our records. Lyndsey also noted that Wade Brown has not been attending either, but has not reached out to resign. At this time, even when someone can't attend, they have still had access to all materials in the google drive so there has been an opportunity to participate remotely.

Ashlie **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:47pm. Eric seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting date: February 19, 2025

Reminders!

- 1/31/2025: Deadline for responses
- 2/13/2025: Data entry workday
- 3/29/2025: Public meeting

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

February 19, 2025

6:30pm

Old Business

1. Review/Approve January Meeting Minutes

New Business

1. Survey tally and initial results
 - a. Storage (archive options?)
 - b. Online data for 3/5
2. Survey analysis plans
 - a. Handout
 - b. Info stations
3. Public Meeting plans
 - a. Info on Town sign yet?
 - b. Newsletter plans?
 - c. Potluck signup

Other

Next Meeting Date: March 19, 2025

Reminders!

- 3/29 Open House

**Monroe Visioning Committee
Minutes
February 19, 2025
6:30pm**

Attendees: Eric Bunker, Lyndsey Marston, Ashlie Stubbs, Andrea Stark, Ray Wirth.

The Chair and Vice Chair were absent, so Lyndsey called the meeting to order at 6:42pm.

Action Items:

1. Lyndsey will post the spreadsheet and link to results online on 3/5.
2. Lyndsey will create a handout with the survey results for review by the next meeting.
3. Volunteers will make draft info station visuals for the next meeting. **See assignments in 2B below.**
4. Ashlie will email Rick re: Town Sign.
5. Potluck signup—everyone share with others!

Old Business

1. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:

There were not enough members to have a quorum so the January meeting minutes will be voted on at the next meeting.

New Business

1. Survey tally and initial results:

Lyndsey noted that there were 310 survey responses. 135 were submitted online and the rest were paper copies. The paper copies were entered into the online forms in three work sessions on 2/13, 2/14, and 2/15. In each session, at least two committee members were present while the surveys were handled. Each survey was assigned a unique number which was recorded in a new field in the survey form. Any additional notes (outside of the requested responses) were also noted in a new field in the survey form. Lyndsey noted that after all surveys were recorded, she and Andrea sorted them in numerical order and confirmed that each number was recorded online. Number 101 was missing both online and in paper copy, so Lyndsey assumes she misnumbered the paper surveys.

- A. Storage (archive options?): Eric has not checked in with the Maine State Archives about storage options. Looking at the collected surveys, they could easily fit in one small box. Andrea confirmed that there should be enough space in the archive room. Once we have finished our analysis and the public meeting, we can add all remaining data and store the box (labeled and dated) downstairs.
- B. Online data for 3/5: Lyndsey reminded all that our earlier public messaging had said we would have data available publicly by 3/5. Now that our meeting is not until 3/29, she asked if we want to post data online to keep to our promise. The committee discussed how to share data, including the google form responses, without allowing it to be altered. Lyndsey will download the spreadsheet and remove the column about the town roads (as indicated in the survey). She will post the spreadsheet and a link to the google responses, if possible, to share with the public as “viewers”. Andrea said her

sense is that not everyone is going to want to see all of the details, but having it on the website so someone can seek it out would be good.

2. Survey analysis plans:

A. Handout:

Lyndsey would like to put the data in a handout to make it more digestible. The problem is the data doesn't easily copy from the google form and the google results seem to be too big to print. Lyndsey has tried three times, and each time has crashed her computer. Lyndsey asked for attendees to review the results and see if there is anything in particular we want to highlight or if there is any particular information that we don't need to include. The committee reviewed the data and noted that there are conflicting responses; i.e someone wants to regulate businesses but doesn't want a comprehensive plan or zoning. Eric noted that we may want to use the meeting for an educational opportunity on these points. Ray suggested that we recognize this discrepancy and ask the public to propose solutions to meet their needs if they don't want a comprehensive plan or zoning. Ray also suggested that we can use the spreadsheet to analyze the data differently and make new charts if these don't meet our needs. Andrea noted that there are a lot of "I don't know" responses which are important to pay attention to. Eric asked if we want to call out questions which have a clear public response as something the Town can take action on. Lyndsey recalled that our Committee Charter doesn't give us power to make recommendations, so she would prefer to present information but not conclusions. After the meeting, the Q&A and focus groups can start shifting into conclusions and next steps. Andrea agreed that we can present data and not make recommendations. Lyndsey offered to move forward with a draft handout and have something to review before the next meeting.

B. Info Stations:

The Committee still favors having a station set up for each survey category. There can be printed visuals, a computer monitor, powerpoint presentation, etc. Eric noted that the office printer can do 11x17 color so we can print any visuals in the office. There are six categories, and it seemed easiest to assign one person to the category to make visuals to review for the next meeting. The assignments are below:

Town Communication & Services: Eric

Recreation: Ashlie

Education: Rachel?

Environment & Natural Resources: Ray

Land Use & Zoning: Troy? Libby? (Planning Board representative)

General: Andrea

Eric reminded everyone to check the final survey field which captured additional hand-written notes on some categories.

Andrea said the library has a mobile stand to put a tv screen on if we want to project something.

3. Public meeting plans

A. Town Sign:

Lyndsey asked if the open house date is on the Town sign yet. Ashlie has not contacted Rick, but will email him something.

B. Newsletter:

Lyndsey asked if there are plans for a Town newsletter to help get the word out. Eric didn't know given that Rick handles the newsletter. Lyndsey noted it would be a good opportunity to share results and a summary of the open house if it does go out afterward. We could also highlight the "Are you aware" items that didn't make the final cut in the survey.

C. Potluck:

Andrea noted that we need to pay attention to make sure we have good food and participation. Eric suggested we enlist others outside the Committee to help too. Lyndsey offered to start a [spreadsheet](#) and asked everyone to sign up for something.

D. Getting the word out:

We'll get the date up on the Town sign. It's already up on the website. Ashlie will put a flyer up at the Town Office. Andrea will create a Facebook event and share it to the community page.

Other

1. Late responses:

Town Staff noted that some late responses came in after the deadline. Lyndsey and Eric checked the box and found only 1 additional response. It was postmarked 2/11 far past the deadline of 1/31 so it was not recorded. The ballot box containing the surveys was then locked in the select board office.

2. Sharing info:

Ray asked how we feel about sharing information with people who have questions. Andrea and Lyndsey suggested that we keep it general and highlight the fact that there was a big response from the Town. Make sure people know about the 3/5 and 3/29 dates.

Eric **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:53pm. Ashlie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting date: March 19, 2025

Reminders!

- 3/29/2025: Open House!

Monroe Visioning Committee

Agenda

March 19, 2025

6:30pm

Old Business

1. Review/Approve January Meeting Minutes
2. Review/Approve February Meeting Minutes

New Business

1. Handout and Info Station Visuals
 - a. Review drafts
 - b. Additional needs? Tech?
2. Potluck Plans
3. Open House Agenda
 - a. Presentation
 - b. Moderator
 - c. Q&A Prep
 - d. Focus groups
 - e. Setup/Cleanup

Other

Next Meeting Date: April 16, 2025

Reminders!

- 3/29 Open House

Monroe Visioning Committee
Minutes
March 19, 2025
6:30pm

Attendees: Eric Bunker, Ray Wirth, Rachel Norgang, Troy Moody, Lyndsey Marston, Ashlie Stubbs, and Andrea Stark.

Troy called to order at 6:37pm.

Action Items:

1. Eric, Ray, Rachel, Troy, Ashlie, Andrea will finish Info Station graphics. Send to Eric to print.
2. Rachel will make focus group signup sheets and bring a projector
3. Lyndsey will send the handout to Eric to print and put together demographic info
4. Lyndsey will bring a screen, laptop/monitor, tables, and the big notepad.
5. Andrea will inventory plates, bowls, napkins, cups, silverware at the Town Office.
6. Ashlie will bring a table
7. **Setup on Friday, 3/28 at 10:00am**

Old Business

1. **Review/Approve Meeting Minutes:**

Ashlie **made a motion** to approve the January minutes as written. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ashlie **made a motion** to approve the February minutes as written. Rachel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. **Handout and Info Station Visuals:**

A. **Review drafts:**

Lyndsey described the goal of the info stations given that several members were absent from the last meeting and reviewed who had signed up for each category. She also noted that the draft handout had been corrected and the latest draft was in the google drive folder for Open House items. Rachel offered to create a signup sheet for the education focus group to have at her station. Rachel had sent around graphics for the education section, including additional analysis. Eric asked if anyone is coming up with conclusions from the data. Rachel noted that some things are clear in the education section, like people don't want to consolidate to Mount View. She made a pie chart showing 1st choices, and another with 1st and 2nd choices together, trying to make the information easier to read. Lyndsey encouraged everyone to do the same with their sections, but not to necessarily write out any conclusions—just help people to read the data easily.

Andrea asked how much money we have. Lyndsey did a quick tally and estimated ~\$400 left. Andrea thought it would be helpful to have graphics larger than 11x17. Eric confirmed that we can print 11x17 color at the Town

Office. He has been using the graphics from Lyndsey's excel file to copy into PowerPoint, resize, and adjust labels. Anyone who wants to make use of printing at the Town Office should email files directly to Eric.

B. Additional needs? Tech?:

Rachel suggested we have a projector to have the graphics available to pull up when someone asks a question. She will bring a projector from the school. Lyndsey will bring a screen in case we can't find the one at the Town Office. Lyndsey will also bring a laptop and monitor to have other graphics available for viewing.

C. Potluck plans:

Lyndsey noted that there is not much on the list, and that her chili will not be enough to feed a large crowd. Ashlie and Troy said they would bring items. Andrea noted that there are lots of paper goods (plates, napkins, etc) at the Town Office and will do an inventory. We can bring up the trash can from downstairs. Ashlie is putting together fliers to put around town and will put a note encouraging people to bring a dish.

2. Open House Agenda

A. Presentation:

Troy is willing to give the presentation. Lyndsey suggested a brief presentation at noon to transition into the Q&A session. She put together a list of talking points, which is in the google drive. Eric asked if we want a dress rehearsal, but Troy was ok without it.

B. Moderator:

Troy is also willing to be the moderator for the meeting. Lyndsey stressed the need to keep people polite and concise, and not let people talk over each other. Troy asked if we want to allow some back and forth discussion, which everyone supported to an extent. If discussion becomes too lengthy, we can flag it for a focus group and encourage people to sign up. Ashlie noted that we are not here to solve all the questions necessarily, we have done the survey and are here to present data. Troy suggested that if someone asks a question about a certain topic area, the person assigned to that info station can be the first to respond, if appropriate, then others can chime in. Troy suggested that people raise hands.

C. Focus groups:

Andrea suggested that we have an idea of what the focus groups would be and what the process will be going forward. Eric preferred that we wait to see what we get for a response and for names. The focus groups are not part of the committee's purpose, so it will be up to the select board to reevaluate next steps. Eric did suggest that we present our results to the select board after the open house.

D. Setup/cleanup:

We'll need to put benches in a circle and move the others out of the way and

will need tables for food and info stations. A setup day was scheduled for **Friday the 28th at 10:00am**.

Other

1. Demographics?

Lyndsey asked if we wanted to have some information on Monroe demographics from the latest census, since we didn't include any questions in the survey. The general consensus was it could be helpful to have.

2. Internet update?

Lyndsey asked if there were any updates on getting fiber optic internet in Town. She anticipates that some people might ask during the meeting, since it was a popular topic in the survey responses. Eric said that all funding is currently on hold due to Trump's federal spending cuts.

3. Themes?

While preparing the handout, Lyndsey noticed that there were some questions that had clear majority responses, others that conflicted with other questions, and some that show the Town needs to do a little extra education. She asked if we should address these in the presentation or not. The consensus was that she should keep these on hand to discuss during the Q&A if there is an opportunity.

Eric **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:32pm. Ray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Reminders!

- 3/29/2025: Open House

Monroe Visioning Committee Open House

March 29, 2025

Monroe Visioning Committee members present: Troy Moody, Lyndsey Marston, Rachel Norgang, Ashlie Stubbs, Eric Bunker, Andrea Stark.

Approximately 40 additional members of the community were in attendance.

A potluck and informational session was held from 11:00am to 12:00pm. During this time, informational stations were set up for each survey category. Attendees had the option of reviewing survey results and speaking with a Committee member at each station.

At noon, Troy Moody gave a brief presentation that outlined the work that the Committee had done to complete the survey. Questions and comments were then welcomed from the audience, which included:

1. What is the next step to make a comprehensive plan, and will it happen?
2. What are the demographics in Town as it relates to wanting a comprehensive plan (i.e. what percentage of the Town is under 18 and would not have voted)?
3. There is a noticeable conflict in some results, as the majority of respondents want a comprehensive plan but are happy with current zoning and current environmental protections.
4. There is also a disconnect between wanting to keep taxes low but wanting services
5. The survey indicates that knowing what the rules are in Town is an issue.
6. There are still lingering fears over how a comprehensive plan might impact residents, particularly farmers.
7. A lot of towns try to react quickly to prevent something they don't want (e.g. a solar farm), but don't have a comprehensive plan or ordinances in place, so it is too late.
8. What can we do today to confirm that we want a comprehensive plan?
9. Comprehensive plans are benign and do not include any ordinances, zoning, or regulations. Ordinances or action items recommended by a plan would need to be voted on individually. It's important to come to Town meetings where these votes take place.
10. Attendees appreciate survey results to show what is important to residents.
11. If the school closes, it will change the character of the Town and discourage people from living here.

The audience requested that the Committee review results from each topic area. In addition to the survey results, the following topics were discussed:

Education (presented by Rachel Norgang):

- Creating an Alternative Organizational Structure would be extremely complicated
- The school capacity is greater than what was noted in the last comprehensive plan
- Brooks, Jackson, and Monroe used to be their own entity in the 1960s

Recreation (presented by Ashlie Stubbs):

- CMLT will take over trail work at Basin Pond once the purchase is finalized.
- Workdays would be great for people who can't commit to joining a committee but want to help otherwise
- Gesner Park is leased by the Town on a rolling basis

General (presented by Andrea Stark):

- Earth day cleanup happening in April
- Volunteers are working on historical documentation and could use help

Town Communication and Services (presented by Eric Bunker):

- Road satisfaction may align with whether it is paved or gravel
- There is a DOT special phone number to request maintenance on State roads (Routes 139 and 141)

Environment & Natural Resources (presented by Lyndsey Marston):

- Residents strongly favored protecting natural resources and passing ordinances to protect water and air quality, soils, and wildlife in the 1993 survey.
- Survey respondents still favor protecting natural resources

Land Use and Zoning (presented by Troy Moody):

- Providing examples of potential challenges the Town faces could influence how people feel about zoning/ordinances.

Sign-up sheets were located at each informational station. Attendees were encouraged to provide contact information if they are interested in joining focus groups or helping to move forward with creating a comprehensive plan. The Open House concluded at approximately 2:00pm.