

Townshend Planning Commission Minutes

Community Dialogue on Police Coverage and Law Enforcement in Townshend

Dutton Gym February 15, 2018 -5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Present: John Evans; Andrew Snelling; and Robert DeSiervo
Lt. Anthony French, Vermont State Police;
Sherriff Keith Clark, Windham County Sherriff's Office
Many members of the community

The event was organized by Community Hope and Action, Grace Cottage Hospital and West River Valley Thrives as a moderated discussion about law enforcement and police coverage in Townshend. A quorum of Planning Commission members were in attendance at the gathering, as interested private citizens. The issue discussed concerned which law enforcement agency the town should retain for supplementing police coverage in Townshend. This issue falls outside of the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission did not discuss the business of the body among themselves, and no actions were taken. It would seem, therefore, the Planning Commission members did not "meet" at this gathering as defined by 1 V.S.A. § 310(2).

"The requirements of the law (open meeting) are triggered whenever a "quorum" of the body is "meeting." ... "Meeting" is defined as a gathering of a quorum of the members of a public body for the purpose of **discussing the business** of the body or for the purpose of taking any action. 1 V.S.A. § 310(2).

The law does not prohibit members of a public body from gathering at social functions or discussing topics that do not fall under their official duties. "

The above is excerpted from VLCT FAQs: OPEN MEETING LAW section 4

In an attempt to comply with the spirit of the Vermont Open Meeting laws, as well as the letter of the law, the above description of activities of the Planning Commission members has been recorded.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Snelling