

**TOWN MEETING STUDY AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE
(TMSIC)**

**TOWN HALL
52 MAIN STREET
MILFORD, MA 01757**

Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Town Meeting Study and Improvement Committee was held on Monday, November 18, 2019, in Room 14 of the Town Hall. Renaldo A. DeLuzio being in the chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Present at the meeting were seven members of the Committee: Chairman Renaldo A. DeLuzio, Clerk Michelangelo Bon Tempo, Charles M. Clark, Sr., Vice-chairman Bartholomew R. Lawless, Kathryn L. Mastroianni, Jose M. Morais and Steven J. Trettel. Two members of the Committee were absent: Susan Marie Hastert and Richard A. Heller. Three Participating Applicants to the Committee were present: Christine Crean, B. Gregory Johnson and Brian W. Long. Present from the public was Michael P. Visconti, Jr.

1. Chairman DeLuzio moved and the minutes of the regular meeting of October 10, 2019 were accepted as read.

Chairman DeLuzio moved and the minutes of the Pre-Town Meeting Forum of October 22, 2019 were accepted as read.

2. Chairman DeLuzio made the following announcements:

- working with Alberto A. Correia, member of the Finance Committee, the Town's Long-term Capital Plan has been updated and posted on the Town's website
- updating the Town Meeting Standing Vote on capital expenditures is still outstanding item with the Finance Committee
- Christine Crean and Brian W. Long are now Participating Applicants on the Committee

3. Pre-Town Meeting Forum – debrief

A. The consensus of the Committee members was that the Forum went well and was very informative, especially, despite the technical difficulties, the presentation by Mark Fite of Option Technologies International (OTI) on electronic voting; however, the low attendance was notable, there were some presenters and responders to questions who did not use the microphone, and there was a poor use of visual aids by some of the presenters.

Mrs. Crean opined that greater attendance will take time.

[Mr. Johnson entered the room at 7:30 p.m.]

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- B. The results of the Questionnaires were still being compiled and will be available at the next regular meeting.
- C. Chairman DeLuzio reviewed the statistics (requests for Article responses and attendance estimates) of the three Forums.
- D. Chairman DeLuzio provided a handout to facilitate discussion on future Forums.

In preparing the Forum for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting, adjustments will be necessary as a result of the experience of preparing the Forum for the October 2019 Special Town Meeting. Since the Warrant availability was unpredictable, Chairman DeLuzio proposed developing a new timeline based solely on the Town Meeting date and modifying all press releases, flyers and interviews on MilfordTV.net to refer to the Town's website for Warrant availability. The Committee agreed by unanimous consent to implement the Chair's proposals.

Chairman DeLuzio proposed reducing the number of Articles for the Forum from ten and two (time permitting) to six and two (time permitting) to allow for more time and discussion per Article.

Mr. Long opined it was too early to change the number with data from only three Forums to base that decision on. The Committee agreed by unanimous consent to keep the number of Articles at ten and two (time permitting).

Chairman DeLuzio proposed providing the purpose of Articles to improve the Article selection process.

Mr. Bon Tempo suggested using the purpose provided on the Article submission forms that are submitted to the Town Administrator's office. Chairman DeLuzio stated that he will confer with Richard A. Villani, Esq., Town Administrator, and report back to the Committee.

Looking beyond the 2020 Annual Town Meeting, Chairman DeLuzio observed that the three Forum's low participation (in requests for Article responses and attendance) reflects the same pattern of Town Meeting members not taking the initiative to become better informed as reflected in the Town Meeting Survey questions on attending or viewing Board of Selectmen meetings, Finance Committee meetings, Planning Board meetings, etc.

Chairman DeLuzio proposed re-examining the purpose of the Forum: Town Meeting members expressed a desire to ask questions of sponsors of Articles. In the past, Town Moderator has reminded Town Meeting members that Town Meeting is a deliberative assembly and not a question and answer forum. Therefore, the need for a Pre-Town Meeting forum where members could ask questions of the sponsors.

In view of the low attendance at the Forums, Chairman DeLuzio suggested exploring the only alternative to a Forum – allowing questions at Town Meeting. This would entail

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ascertaining what various manuals of parliamentary law and procedures have to say about asking questions, as well as the practices of other towns. Chairman DeLuzio noted that allowing questions at Town Meeting may result in additional sessions.

Chairman DeLuzio requested that Mr. Bon Tempo review and report to the Committee on what the manuals have to say, and that he would review and report on the practices of other towns.

Furthermore, a survey of Town Meeting members would be necessary. Three questions would be asked.

- Do they want the opportunity to ask questions?
- Do they prefer the Pre-Town Meeting Forum or Town Meeting to ask questions?
- Do they prefer Town Meeting even if it may result in multiple sessions?

Lastly, Chairman DeLuzio suggested that if participation at the 2020 Annual Pre-Town Meeting Forums is low and the survey does not favor the Pre-Town Meeting Forum, then the Committee should prepare and submit a Warrant Article to amend the Committee's Standing Vote by striking out the enumerated duty to organize and conduct Pre-Town Meeting Forums.

4. Town Meeting – debrief

Ms. Mastroianni felt that there was an issue with a quorum not being present towards the later part of Town Meeting, and with the Moderator ending debate on a motion too quickly after asking "Does any other voter care to be heard?".

Mr. Bon Tempo opined that though Town Meeting members leaving early is regrettable, they are essentially giving their tacit approval to other members to act in their best interest. He also suggested that the Town Moderator take a distinct pause for perhaps three to five after asking "Does any other voter care to be heard?". Chairman DeLuzio stated that he would confer with Michael J. Noferi, Esq., Town Moderator, on the matter.

Chairman DeLuzio proposed making a revision to the speaking guidelines to address the rapidity with which some members speak. He also observed that where the technician sits is not productive for adjusting the volume of the audio system, and that he would confer with Adam Diorio, Information Technology Manager, on the matter.

Mr. Morais proposed that one Committee member from each precinct rate the speakers. Chairman DeLuzio stated that he would develop a "scorecard" to facilitate the rating.

5. Mr. Visconti asked the Committee to consider including a Town Meeting attendance rule in the Town Meeting handbook the Committee is developing. The source of this rule is from the former town meeting handbook of Framingham.

Mr. Bon Tempo stated that the rule was part of the Framingham town by-laws.

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The Committee agreed to take the matter under advisement.

Ms. Mastroianni moved to table the matter. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Visconti left the meeting and did not return.

6. Mr. Trettel reviewed the Electronic Voting Plan Summary.

Phase 1 (Inception through February 2020)

- A. Accumulated research materials through August 2019
- B. Prepared and sent informational letter to Town Meeting members
- C. Conducted familiarization with electronic voting (hands-on demonstration and PowerPoint demonstration) at the October 22nd Pre-Town Meeting Forum
- D. Authorization to conduct the 2020 Annual Town Meeting with electronic voting was approved under Article 29 of the October 28, 2019 Special Town Meeting
- E. Prepare electronic voting ground rules for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting trial run
- F. Prepare Phase 2 survey questions
- G. Prepare final draft report
- H. Define the scope of services that OTI will provide based on item E. and issue authorization to proceed on a date to be determined

Phase 2 (May 2020 – September 30, 2020)

- A. Conduct 2020 Annual Town Meeting with electronic voting (demonstration #2)
- B. Conduct survey after 2020 Annual Town Meeting
- C. Prepare educational materials
- D. Prepare final report using Natick report format
- E. Solicit endorsements and support

Phase 3 – Implementation (October 2020 – May 2021)

- A. Request authorization and funding to adopt electronic voting at the October 2020 Special Town Meeting
- B. Procure electronic voting services
- C. Implement electronic voting at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting

By unanimous consent the Committee agreed to the Electronic Voting Plan Summary.

7. Chairman DeLuzio moved to purchase the Advantage Plan of SurveyMonkey at a cost of \$32 per month (\$384 billed annually).

The motion was carried: 7 in favor, 0 opposed.

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8. Chairman DeLuzio reviewed the revisions to the Committees' Duties and Responsibilities. The revisions were accepted by unanimous consent and the revised Duties and Responsibilities were placed on file.

Chairman DeLuzio reviewed the revisions to the Committees' Ground Rules. The revisions were accepted by unanimous consent and the revised Ground Rules were placed on file.

9. Chairman DeLuzio requested that Committee members forward their comments on Mr. Bon Tempo's revision of Mr. Lawless's Recruitment Policy by Monday, November 25th.

Chairman DeLuzio moved to table the Recruitment Policy until the December 18th regular meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

10. Chairman DeLuzio moved to implement a New Town Meeting Orientation Program before the completion of the Town Meeting Handbook. The program would include the Town Clerk's handout "A Guide to Representative Town Meeting", the Secretary of the Commonwealth's "Citizen's Guide to Town Meetings", and the video on town meeting with Atty. Noferi, Town Moderator. Chairman DeLuzio assigned Mrs. Crean the task of researching programs other towns may have in place.

The motion was carried unanimously.

11. No one from the public was present.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Michelangelo Bon Tempo
Clerk

Approved
12-16-2019