

**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, December 16, 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 eight members of the Committee: Chairman Renaldo A. DeLuzio, Clerk Michelangelo Bon Tempo, Charles M. Clark, Sr., Susan Marie Hastert, Richard A. Heller, Vice-chairman Bartholomew R. Lawless, Jose M. Morais and Steven J. Trettel. One member of the Committee was absent: Kathryn L. Mastroianni. Two Participating Applicants to the Committee were present: B. Gregory Johnson and Brian W. Long. Present from the public were Michael P. Visconti, Jr. and Kevin Rudden.

1. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Chairman DeLuzio moved and the minutes of the regular meeting of November 18, 2019 were accepted as read.

[Mr. Johnson entered the room at 7:23 p.m.]

2. 2020 Committee Meeting Calendar

Chairman DeLuzio presented a calendar of Committee meetings for 2020. The schedule of meetings for 2020 was accepted as read and placed on file.

[Mr. Trettel entered the room at 7:26 p.m.]

3. Committee Term Limit

The Committee was established by Town Meeting under Article 15 of the October 30, 2017 Special Town Meeting. At that town meeting session, Section (b) *Committee Vacancies* was amended such that applicants to the Committee were given preference to fill vacancies over Committee members seeking re-appointment. The proponent of the amendment argued that allowing the Committee members to be continually reappointed would result in an entrenched membership.

The Committee recognized at its regular meeting of February 26, 2018 that this arrangement was not in the best interest of the Committee. The minutes of that meeting noted the necessity to

“...strike a balance between the need for the continuity of the committee's work by keeping a stable membership with a caveat to ensure that the membership does not become entrenched.”

TOWN MEETING STUDY AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE (TMSIC)

And so, the Committee voted to sponsor an Article at the May 14, 2018 Annual Town Meeting which would amend Section (b) *Committee Vacancies* by giving preference to a Committee member for re-appointment over other applicants, while also limiting a member's tenure on the Committee to six consecutive years.

Subsequently, Chairman DeLuzio has identified an issue with the language that Article 9 used to define those six consecutive years – “for not more than two consecutive terms”. When adopting this phrase, the Committee did not consider it in relationship to Section (b) *Term of Office*, which stipulates that

“Each member shall serve on the committee for the duration of his/her term of office as a town meeting member. Each member's term shall begin upon notification of appointment and swearing in by the Town Clerk. Each member's term shall expire upon the dissolution of the Annual Town Meeting that coincides with the expiration of the member's term of office.”

The unintended consequence is that no current member will serve for six consecutive years. (Please refer to the Chair's analysis which was accepted and placed on file.)

For example, Mr. Bon Tempo, Dr. Heller, Ms. Mastroianni and Mr. Trettel were appointed in January of 2018. Their three-year term of office as a Town Meeting member ended in April of 2018. They were re-elected at the April Annual Town Election, and their term on the Committee ended at the dissolution of the May 14, 2018 Annual Town Meeting. They were subsequently re-appointed to the Committee. So, their first term on the Committee lasted for four months and their second term will last for three years – 8 months and 2 years less than what the Committee intended.

Chairman DeLuzio moved to place an Article in the Warrant for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting to amend Section (b) *Committee Vacancies* by striking the words “two consecutive terms” and inserting in its place the words “six years.”

The motion was carried 8 in favor; 0 opposed.

4. Citizen's request to consider Town Meeting Attendance Rule

Chairman DeLuzio moved to remove from the table the matter of including a Town Meeting attendance rule in the Town Meeting handbook.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Chairman DeLuzio thanked Bryan Cole, Consultant Volunteer, for the compilation and analysis of Town Meeting members' attendance records since 2012 and Mr. Long for his analysis of the data as well. The compilation and analyses were accepted and placed on file.

The petition would require Town Meeting adopting a by-law based on the town of Framingham's former town meeting by-law on attendance.

TOWN MEETING STUDY AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE (TMSIC)

A Town Meeting Member who does not attend at least twenty-five (25) per cent of the Town Meeting sessions for which the person is qualified during the period beginning from the first day of the year, or beginning from the time the person is qualified, and ending on the last day of the year shall be deemed to have abandoned that office as of the last day of such period.

The Committee was of the unanimous consensus that removing a Town Meeting member from office was a decision best left to the electorate; however, the Committee was also of the unanimous consensus that the electorate needs to make an informed decision when voting for an incumbent Town Meeting member. To that end, the Committee directed Chairman DeLuzio to confer with Amy Hennessey Neves, Town Clerk, on her office adopting the following practice:

No later than thirty (30) calendar days before nomination papers for Town Meeting members are due, the Town Clerk shall post on the Town website and publish in the local print media the attendance records of all incumbents for the previous three-year term.

Lastly, Chairman DeLuzio thanked Mr. Visconti for his continued interest in and his exemplary commitment to Town Meeting. The Committee concurred with the Chair's sentiments.

[Mr. Visconti left the meeting and did not return.]

5. October 2019 Pre-Town Meeting Forum Questionnaire – Compiled Answers to Questions

Chairman DeLuzio informed the Committee that Ms. Mastroianni has the data from the Questionnaire on the Pre-Town Meeting Forum.

Mr. Bon Tempo moved to table the matter. The motion was carried unanimously.

6. Pre-Town Meeting Forum Survey

Chairman DeLuzio noted that in addition to conducting a survey of Town Meeting members regarding the issue of asking questions at Town Meeting, the committee should have some examples of other towns that allow this practice.

Chairman DeLuzio asked if Ms. Hastert and Mr. Long would be willing to research other town meetings' practices with respect to allowing questions at town meetings.

Ms. Hastert and Mr. Long graciously accepted the task.

7. Electronic Voting Program Plan Update

Chairman DeLuzio reported on the Plan Summary. A working meeting between the Chair and Mr. Trettel on November 20th was held to further develop the Plan Summary and the Detail Plan. Markups from that meeting (and several iterations thereafter) are now being reviewed by Mr. Trettel.

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

8. Town's Financial Information – Format and Availability

Chairman DeLuzio moved to table the format and availability of the Town's financial information.

The motion was carried unanimously.

9. Recruitment Program Revision

Chairman DeLuzio moved to table the Recruitment Program Policy.

The motion was carried unanimously.

[Mr. Rudden entered the room at 8:30 p.m.]

10. Citizen Participation

Mr. Rudden shared with the Committee some of his views on Milford Town Meeting. He informed the Committee that "town meeting" has become a newsworthy item over the last few years and would share, via the Chair, these articles.

He reaffirmed his commitment of sharing any relevant information on town meeting that he receives from the Massachusetts Moderators Association with the Committee.

The Committee thanked Mr. Rudden for his comments and aid.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Michelangelo Bon Tempo
Clerk

Approved

1-15-2020