

**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 21, 2020, via a Vast conference call. Renaldo A. DeLuzio being in the chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Present at the meeting were six members of the Committee: Michelangelo Bon Tempo, Charles M. Clark, Sr., Renaldo A. DeLuzio, Richard A. Heller, Kathryn L. Mastroianni, and Jose M. Morais. Two members of the Committee were absent: Susan Marie Hastert and Justin Redden. Two Participating Applicants to the Committee were present: B. Gregory Johnson and Brian W. Long.

Administrative Items

Chairman DeLuzio requested that Mr. Bon Tempo take a roll call of members of the Committee present. Present for the roll call were Mr. Bon Tempo, Mr. Clark, Chairman DeLuzio, Dr. Heller, and Ms. Mastroianni.

Chairman DeLuzio read a revised statement from Charles D. Boddy, Jr., Esq., Town Counsel, regarding the conduct of public meetings via remote participation post COVID-19 under Governor Charlie Baker's March 12, 2020 Executive Order modifying certain requirements of the Open Meeting Law.

Chairman DeLuzio reviewed the protocol for a meeting being held via a Vast conference call.

[Mr. Johnson entered the meeting at 7:08 p.m.]

1. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Chairman DeLuzio moved and the minutes of the regular meeting of November 16, 2020 were accepted as corrected. Mr. Bon Tempo noted that the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

2. Communications from the Public

No communication (e-mail or U.S. mail) from the public was received in advance of the meeting by the Committee.

[Mr. Morais entered the meeting at 7:25 p.m.]

3. Milford Town Meeting Procedural Guide – draft of 12-15-2020

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Chairman DeLuzio noted that pursuant to the Open Meeting Law the Milford Town Meeting Procedural Guide draft was posted with the meeting agenda on the Town's website. Chairman DeLuzio requested that Mr. Bon Tempo provide the Committee with an overview of the process and what is still left to do.

Mr. Bon Tempo provided the following brief history.

A sub-committee, comprised of former member Bartholomew R. Lawless and Mr. Bon Tempo, was tasked with developing a Town Meeting Handbook. This was one of the of the enumerated duties listed in the Standing Vote establishing the Committee.

The Sub-committee surveyed the handbooks and procedural guides of 17 towns, as well as the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Citizen's Guide to Town Meeting and found that a town meeting handbook contains not only a procedural guide, but also sections on, for example, insertion of articles in the warrant; the budget process and annual budget cycle; how to run for town meeting; presentation guidelines; and a town government organizational chart.

Also, in common to most of the handbooks and guides surveyed was an underlying town by-law that adopted a recognized manual of parliamentary procedures or laws; a subsequent survey of all 34 towns with a representative town meeting revealed only six, including Milford, did not have such a by-law.

Conversations with the late Moderator Atty. Michael J. Noferi revealed that he relied on *Town Meeting Time* (his primary and principal manual of parliamentary procedures), as well as the procedures found in two Milford Daily News articles from the late 1950s and early 1960s written by then Moderator, John Curran and a book entitled *Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance* for moderating town meetings.

The Sub-committee felt that the first step before writing a town meeting handbook was for Milford Town Meeting to adopt a recognized manual of parliamentary procedures. At the Sub-committee's request, the Committee sponsored an article at the October 15, 2018 Special Town Meeting for Town Meeting to adopt *Town Meeting Time*.

After the defeat of this article at town meeting, the Sub-committee refocused on developing just a procedural guide that would highlight very plainly the fact that *Town Meeting Time* is the handbook of parliamentary law by which town meeting is run.

At the regular meeting of November 18, 2019, the Committee's Duties and Responsibilities were revised which resulted in the Sub-committee on Developing a Town Meeting Handbook being rebranded as a Study Group. Furthermore, with the resignation of Mr. Lawless in July of 2020, the Study Group on Developing a Town Meeting Handbook was comprised solely of Mr. Bon Tempo. A Study Group is required to periodically provide results of its study to the Committee.

This procedural guide was written with the intent of providing a first-time Town Meeting member a readable text for understanding how Milford's town meeting works. For existing

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Town Meeting members, it is a way to introduce them to the fact that for the last 45 years town meeting has been run according to *Town Meeting Time*.

The next chapter for the Study Group would be reintroducing at a future town meeting an article to adopt *Town Meeting Time* and, hopefully, with its passage to develop a comprehensive Town Meeting Handbook.

For this draft, Mr. Bon Tempo sought input from each member on the content and formatting to make the document more readable.

Chairman DeLuzio provided general comments on the guide, and then asked for and was provided with additional general comments from Mr. Clark, Ms. Mastroianni and Mr. Johnson.

Chairman DeLuzio then provided specific comments for amending the draft, and then asked for and was provided with specific comments from Mr. Clark, Dr. Heller, Ms. Mastroianni, and Mr. Johnson.

These amendments were:

- Under **Introduction** – add a section for **Additional Motions**
- Under **Participants** *Town Meeting Members* – clarification on members at large (*ex officio* status) as well as examples.
- (1) Quorum and Call to Order – additional clarification
- (3) Swearing in New Members – confirm procedure with Amy Hennessy Neves, Town Clerk
- (9) Main Motion on an Article – clarification on detailed affirmative main motion and negative main motion
- Motion to Waive the Reading – additional examples of when this motion is used
- (11) Debate – place the rules of debate (time limits and number of times speaking) in its own sectioned box
- Add a section on handling the budget (Article 4)

Chairman DeLuzio stated that this procedural guide will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Mr. Morais questioned whether it would be appropriate at this time to address a remote town meeting and the use of electronic voting in the procedural guide.

Chairman DeLuzio opined that to address those issues at this time would be premature. The town has issued no guidance on how a remote meeting will be conducted and electronic voting will likely be postponed for a couple of years.

Chairman DeLuzio adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.; Mr. Bon Tempo asked the Chair about setting a date for the next regular meeting date.

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Chairman DeLuzio brought the meeting back into session, and scheduled the next regular meeting for Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Michelangelo Bon Tempo
Clerk

Approved

2-16-2021