

# TOWN MEETING STUDY AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

(TMSIC)

February 13, 2023

## Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Town Meeting Study and Improvement Committee was held on Monday, February 13, 2023. Renaldo A. Deluzio being in the chair called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Present at the meeting were: Renaldo A. Deluzio, Brian Long, Christine Crean, Dr. Richard A. Heller, Michael Visconti, Gregory Johnson, Charles Clark, Joe Morais. No members of the Participating Applicants to the Committee were present.

**Administrative Items:** Chairman Deluzio announced the meeting is being audio recorded and if there was any objection. Hearing none the meeting was recorded.

**1. Approval of the January 9,2023 minutes:** The minutes were accepted as presented.

**2. Invitation to Speak:** No one from the public being present, an invitation to speak was unnecessary.

**3. TMSIC Annual Report:** Chairman DeLuzio has been using the report he writes for the Town Report (due in Feb.) as the required Annual Report to Town Meeting (due in May). Since so much time elapses between Feb. and May, he proposed preparing a separate draft report for the Committee's approval in April and continue updates to be approved by the Vice Chair before submitting it to the Town Clerk in time to mail it with the Warrant. By consensus, the Committee approved the report for the Town Report and the Chairman's proposal for the Annual Report to the Town Meeting.

Chairman DeLuzio handed out the additional information he plans to add to the February report. Suggested edits: In the first sentence strike ..by (amongst others). After the word "operations", add "to include but not necessarily limited to". The last sentence, after the word "The", strike the word "survive" and replace it with the word "mission".

**4. Town Meeting Members Email Addresses Authorization Status:** Chairman Deluzio made reference to a chronology of discussions he had with Christopher George (IT Director) and Attorney Gerry Moody(TMSIC Consultant Volunteer) regarding authorization to use Town Meeting Members (TMM's) email addresses (Previously email to Committee Members). The purpose was to give the Committee members a sense of the arduous and time-consuming negotiations over the past several months.

Due to the uncertain future of the TMSIC, Chairman DeLuzio proposed a question and an alternative authorization to Attorney Moody for consideration:

- a) Question: Do all Elected Town Officials (as published in the Town Report), the Town Administrator, and the Town Counsel have the authority to use Town Meeting Members email addresses without their authorization?

Attorney Moody: No. Not without approval from the Select Board, or Town Clerk. And even then, can only be used for matters related to TM process, not the substance of any issue before Town Meeting.

- b) Alternative: Make the Affidavit for a generic Town Meeting Member Select Committee in lieu of the TMSIC Select Committee.

Attorney Moody: Not acceptable. A Town Meeting Member would have to consider the select committee's specific provisions to decide whether or not to authorize the use of his/her email address. Every TMM select committee would have to seek authorization.

Chairman DeLuzio will now forward the Affidavit (approved by Attorney Moody in September) to the new Town Counsel (Attorney Brian Murray) for his review and approval. Dr. Heller suggested capitalizing "will not use" on the first page of the Affidavit, item number 6. Chairman Deluzio suggested bolding the entire sentence.

**5. Revisit Jan. 9, 2023 Motion:** Motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Heller to rescind the December 12, 2022 vote to add two questions to the Town Meeting Member Survey as recommended by Mr. Morais. Motion passed unanimously

**6. TMSIC May 22, 2023 Town Meeting Warrant Articles:** Chairman DeLuzio handed out the TMSIC funding and expenses report. Original funding for the committee was \$5,000. Expenses to date \$1,859 ( Survey Monkey Subscriptions for 2 years). This subscription expires on March 31, 2023. Account balance \$3,141.

2023 anticipated expenses:

- a) renew the Survey Monkey subscription---- \$900
- b) Procedural Guide Publication estimate ---- \$3000 for 300 copies.
- c) Total expenses \$3,900.
- d) Shortfall \$759.

Chairman DeLuzio proposed submitting an Article for the May 22, 2023 ATM requesting an appropriation of \$2,000. Dr. Heller moved, seconded by Mr. Long. Motion passed unanimously.

**7. TMSIC Future:** In response to Ms. Crean's question at the January meeting regarding what is left for the Committee to do going forward, Chairman DeLuzio updated the Committee's accomplishments from February 26, 2018 - December 31, 2022 and the initiatives not being addressed (Previously emailed to Committee Members).

Chairman DeLuzio noted that the Committee is approaching a critical phase this year for a number of reasons:

- 1. Four Committee Members' term expires in 2024 [Chairman DeLuzio (1/24), Dr. Heller (1/8), Mr. Morais (11/20), and Mr. Clark (12/10)].
- 2. There are only 2 Applications for membership consideration on file.
- 3. Previous recruitment efforts have not been very successful (Results previously emailed to Committee Members).
- 4. It appears no Committee member is willing to assume the Chair.

The Committee is at an inflection point requiring some difficult decisions.

*[Historical Note: Chairman DeLuzio was willing to be considered for TMSIC Chairman in Jan. 2018 when Mr. Jose Costa (the presumed Chairman) notified the Moderator that he would not be able to participate.)*

Chairman DeLuzio noted that being retired, he had the time, background, and management skills to devote to the Committee, which turned out to be an enormous effort. In his opinion, he cannot envision a Town Meeting Member who would have the time, background, and management skills to take on the Chairmanship. There are a few options:

1. More Town Meeting Member involvement (The question is how to inspire them). Discussion ensued regarding recruitment publicity via (media, town website, flyers on town meeting chairs, etc.). Chairman DeLuzio noted this these methods have not worked in the past (e.g., Pre-Town Meeting Forum publicity). Public media to get the attention of Town Meeting Members is not needed. The Committee will soon have a direct link via email to the vast majority of Town Meeting Members. Committee favored multiple avenues for publicity. Mr. Long suggested that perhaps a member speaking on behalf of the Committee should give the pitch at the May 22, 2023 Town Meeting.
2. Restructure the Committee with more manageable objectives.
3. Dissolve the Committee.

Chairman DeLuzio opined that the TMSIC is the only body representing the interest of the Town Meeting Members. Somehow, they have to be convinced that the TMSIC is of value to them. He also opined that the Committee may be in bubble thinking TMSIC is important to Town Meeting Members. He recalled that the motion to create the TMSIC passed by about 70%.

Chairman DeLuzio introduced the following suggestions:

1. Involve the precinct captains. Committee felt it would not be effective.
2. Do a talent survey of Town Meeting Members. Committee favored pursuing.
3. Conduct a survey for TMSIC specific issues to get a sense of the Town Meeting Members' views. Committee favored pursuing.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:55 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

*Christine Crean*

Christine Crean

Date: 3/23/23