

DRAFT-- Minutes of July 9, 2018

Town Meeting Advisory Committee (TMAC) with Town Meeting Coordinating Committee (TMCC), & Subcommittee on Policies and Procedures (SPP)

Present:

TMAC: Toni Cunningham, Janet McGowan, Maria Kopicki, Hilda Greenbaum, Jacqueline Maidana, Krista Ostering Rising, Meg Gage

TMCC: Peggy Roberts, Mary Streeter, Barbara Ford, Jacqueline Maidana, Alan Powell Chris Riddle

SPP: Jacqueline Maidana, Chris Riddle, Adrienne Terrizzi, Pat deAngeles, Janet McGowan

Public: Jessamyn Rising, John Hornik

TMAC Members absent: Chris Hoch, Vincent O'Connor

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:45 on Monday July 9, 2018.in the Glass Room at the Bangs Center. Maria moved that Toni be the facilitator for today's meeting – agreed by consensus.

Statement by John Hornik on the background behind the TMAC:

John led a discussion on how the TMAC originated and was voted as a Bylaw at the November 8, 2017 session of Fall Special Town Meeting. He noted that legislative bodies should have committees vetting legislation and that the Finance Committee was limited to analyzing financial impacts on Town finances. One primary goal is to present Town Meeting members with a balanced view of pros and cons of proposed legislation. It's easy for proponents of legislative changes to offer positive information and views since they are advocating for their proposal. Also, TMAC will present likely impacts, for zoning changes that would include potential impacts on the look and feel of neighborhoods affected by the bylaw. Issue of whether or not TMAC will make recommendations was left to TMAC. All bylaws will not be analyzed by TMAC. Language in the Bylaw was intentionally left vague to allow TMAC to develop its own procedures and methods.

The Town Meeting Archive contains information on the TMAC proposal as Article 13 and on the TMAC webpage at www.amherstma.gov/tmac . Suggestions for gathering information and presenting it in a systematic way were offered. The committee would allow individual members to voice their concerns while the committee as a whole would present a balanced view on the issues studied by TMAC members. A document with additional information is contained in the TM Archive for this page. Mary will post a link to it on the TMAC page.

Next steps:

1. Plan near-term operations until it is decided whether there will be another Town Meeting:

a. It was suggested that a form or template of questions be developed, listing questions that might be asked of committees to help the Advisory Committee assess impacts. Other communities use

templates to analyze the impacts of proposed regulations, construction or preservation of historic building, environmental impacts, etc. Janet, Hilda, and Toni will form a task force for this purpose.

b. Look at other towns with Advisory Committees or legislative committees to see how they work.

Janet McGowan has notes on her talk with the head of Brookline's Advisory Committee. Other legislative bodies and towns can be contacted.

c. Start attending meetings. In order to be ready for any special Town Meeting, members should start attending or viewing school, zoning, and other meetings. People not on TMAC can also help with this task. Members discussed their initial preferences for areas of observation:

Maria Kopicki and Jackie Maidana – capital projects and schools

Toni Cunningham – elementary school meetings; she will have someone attend the library meetings.

Pat deAngeles and Adrienne Terrizzi will view/attend Select Board meetings.

Hilda Greenbaum --Planning Board

People are needed to follow Regional School Committee meetings and Zoning Subcommittee of the Planning Board. Other boards?

Peggy asked how the information gathered would be publicized to the public. The group brainstormed possibilities such as the TMAC webpage, newspapers, a blog, FaceBook, a google group, etc.

Likelihood of a Special Town Meeting:

The Town Council will be seated in a few months. We currently have no way of knowing whether a special Town Meeting will occur. There was suggested it was unlikely that the Select Board would call a Special Town Meeting.

Possible futures in the City Council context:

The research, observations, and presentations by this committee could be very useful to a Town Council.

Election of Officers:

This was delayed until the next meeting, except that Janet McGowan will be a temporary minute-taker and Toni Cunningham will be a temporary facilitator. Mary Streeter will send her directions on posting meetings Toni Cunningham who will post the next meeting on July 30, 2018. The role of Chair vs Facilitator was clarified and several folks thought a Chair was important to be the go-to person for others to contact the TMAC.

Public Comment: None

The next meeting of this group will be on July 30, time and location TBA. The meeting adjourned.

Documents Distributed:

Agenda

Submitted by Janet McGowan, Clerk Pro Tem