

Harwich Voter Information Committee
Wed., June 22, 2022 at 2 pm
Channel 18 Studio, Harwich Community Center
100 Oak St., Harwich MA 02645

Agenda

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. Vote to Approve Minutes of May 22, 2022.
3. Public Comment
4. Old Business:
 - a. Discussion regarding future programming and voter outreach efforts, assign tasks as needed and create timeline
 - i. FAQs: One page voter outreach documents- select topics and outline
 - ii. Town Meeting 101
 - iii. Municipal Finance 101
 - iv. CPA/CPC FAQ
 - v. Newsletter
 - vi. Municipal Bootcamp- create outline
 - b. Meeting times and locations for FY23 committee meetings
5. New Business
 - a. Committee reorganization- vote on officers
6. Other
7. Upcoming Meetings/Events
 - a. Voter Information Committee Meeting TBD
8. Adjournment

Authorized posting officer

Posted by

Emily Milan

VIC Chair

Town Clerk's Office

** Per the Attorney General's Office: The committee may hold an open session for topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting following "New Business." If you are deaf or hard of hearing or are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation, contact the Selectmen's Office at 508-430-7513.*

Harwich Voter Information Committee
Wed., May. 25, 2022 at 2 pm
Channel 18 Studio, Harwich Community Center
100 Oak St., Harwich MA 02645

Minutes

1. Call to Order: Chair Emily Milan called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm
Present: In addition to the chair were Christina Joyce, Joy Jordan, and Trish Murray.
Absent: Pamela Groswald.

2. Vote to Approve Minutes:

The motion by Joy Jordan and seconded by Trish Murray to approve the April 6, 2022 minutes passed unanimously.
The motion by Joy Jordan and seconded by Trish Murray to approve the April 13, 2022 minutes passed unanimously.
The motion by Joy Jordan and seconded by Trish Murray to approve the April 20, 2022 minutes passed unanimously.
The motion by Joy Jordan and seconded by Trish Murray to approve the April 28, 2022 minutes passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment: There were no attendees.

4. Old Business:
 - a. **Review of April Programs and Annual Town Meeting –**
 - i. **Candidates Forum:** committee members' comments included positive feedback from attendees for the Town Clerk forum and brief interviews with unopposed candidates. The forum seemed a bit short and might have benefitted from additional time and questions.
 - ii. **Other programs –** might consider greater publicity for the Warrant Review, Financial State of Harwich, etc.
 - iii. **VIC Table at Town Meeting –** will pursue this idea with Moderator Michael Ford and include one-page handouts on such topics as how to introduce self when speaking, time limits,

5. New Business:
 - a. **Town Election Results:** 10,525 registered voters/ 1,962 votes cast for an 18.6 percent turnout.
 - b. **Discussion re: future programming and voter outreach efforts**
 - i. **Town Meeting 101 –** work with Moderator Michael Ford to tape an overview in the fall. Chris Joyce will distribute draft brochure, A Guide to Town Meeting, to committee members.
 - ii. **Municipal Finance 101 –** Will ask Channel 18 to play this program early in the budget cycle

- iii. **CPA/CPC Articles** - VIC might consider adding more special programs especially for complicated Charter and Bylaw changes and CPA/CPC articles
 - iv. **Newsletter** – Chatham produces one weekly; VIC will keep this on the agenda for the fall.
 - v. **Citizens Academy** – VIC proposed a 6+ week program based on the Barnstable model a few years back to Administration. While well received, the project stalled due to employee turnover, COVID-19 and became “Know Your Town” podcasts. The committee will work on a proposal this summer. Marblehead also has a similar program called “Municipal Boot Camp” that has been successful.
- c. **Discussion re: potential meeting times and location for FY23 VIC meetings:** Emily will pursue scheduling meetings in the small conference room in Town Hall to be more convenient for the Town Clerk and Town Administrator to attend. Preferred time appears to be 4pm.
6. **Other:**
- a. **Committee Handbook** - VIC will contact Administration to suggest including a section on the budget cycle in the revised handbook.
 - b. **Public Comment** - Chris noted that a recently posted committee agenda appeared to set requirements that anyone wishing to speak during public comment submit those comments to the committee prior to the agenda being posted. This issue might also be addressed in the Committee Handbook.
 - c. **Committee members thanked Chris for her 9 years on VIC;** she is not seeking re-appointment.
7. **Upcoming Meetings/Events – Voter Information Committee Meeting June 22, 2022 @ 2pm.**
8. **Adjournment** - After a motion to adjourn by Joy Jordan which was seconded by Trish Murray, the chair adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina A. Joyce, Clerk

USEFUL TERMS

- **Town Meeting** – a gathering of Harwich's eligible voters and the town's legislative body.
- **Warrant** – list of articles proposed by the Board of Selectmen or petitioners to be acted on at the Town Meeting. The articles will include budget and other proposals.
- **Fiscal Year** – July 1st through June 30.
- **Article** – a proposal in the Warrant to be acted upon and voted on at Town Meeting.
- **Capital Outlay Plan** – a seven-year long range forecast of capital improvement needs (\$50k or more) and intended to help keep level the borrowing from year to year.
- **Quorum** - a requirement of 150 registered voters in attendance for both the Annual Town Meeting or Special Town Meeting.
- **Operating Budget** – a single article in the Warrant detailing the next fiscal year's budget to be acted on at Town Meeting

2/17/2021

SOME OTHER INFO

Town Meeting – is that event when Voters assemble to set salaries of elected officials, appropriate money to run the Town, and vote on local statutes.

Special Town Meeting may be called by the Board of Selectmen or by petition of 200 of registered voters.

Speaking on an Article - A speaker may speak two times on the same article for a total of 10 minutes.

Who may Attend - Anyone may attend; however, only registered voters may vote. The moderator will assign voters and non-voters to their designated seating areas.

How Votes are Talled – usually by voice or standing count.

SUBMISSION OF PETITIONER ARTICLES:

Annual Town Meeting - the article must be signed by 10 voters and submitted no later than ??? prior to the meeting

Special Town Meeting - the article must be signed by 100 voters and submitted 40 days prior to the meeting.

IMPORTANT DATES

First Tuesday in October – Board of Selectmen issues general policy statement to guide Town Administrator in budget development.

No later than First Friday in December – department heads and agencies submit budgets to Town Administrator.

Deadline for Board of Selectmen to submit Articles in Annual Town Meeting Warrant – noon on 2nd Friday of February

Approved Budget – 4th Tuesday of February Board of Selectmen submits to the Financial Committee which then holds 1 or more public meetings. No later than March 31st, the Financial Committee also prepares written recommendations either positive or negative.

Publication of Warrant – no later than 14 days prior to Town Meeting and is published in the Cape Cod Chronicle.

Annual Town Meeting - First Monday in May

Annual Local Election – Third Tuesday in May.

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The Town Moderator prepares in simplified form the rules which are included in the Warrant.

WHO DOES WHAT?

Town Moderator – Elected for a

three-year term, the Moderator is the presiding officer at town meetings. The Moderator's goal is to conduct the meeting in an impartial yet expeditious manner.

Board of Selectmen - 5 members

elected at large for 3 year overlapping terms. The Board attends Town Meeting and is available to explain and answer questions on the warrant's articles.

Town Administrator – Chief

Administrator Officer appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Registered Voters - As Town Meeting

approaches, voters become informed on the articles and vote accordingly.

Channel 18 Manager – Tapes and

broadcasts programs relevant to the upcoming town meeting and election.

WHO DOES WHAT?

Town Counsel - Answers questions

concerning legal matters that may arise during the course of Town Meeting.

Finance Committee – provides budget

and expenditure oversight including for capital expenditures.

Planning Board – Makes

recommendations on articles in its area of responsibility such as zoning.

Monomoy Regional School &

Cape Cod Regional Technical

High School Superintendents -

Are usually asked to speak from the floor on school funding articles.

Department Heads - Are sometimes

asked for additional information on articles in their purview at Town Meeting.

Committee Chairs - May be asked to

speak to any article relevant to their committees' charge.

by Channel 18 on Town Financial State of Harwich, Warrant Review, and candidates for office.

A GUIDE TO TOWN MEETING

TOWN SEAL HERE

TOWN OF HARWICH, MASSACHUSETTS

This guide provides a brief overview of the Town Meeting process.

See also Chapter 27, Town of Harwich Bylaws.

Additional copies: ???

Town Office, - Administration,
732 Main Street, Harwich MA 02645
Email: ??