

Harwich Voter Information Committee
Wed. Jan. 26, 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 December 15, 2021
3. Public Comment
4. Old Business:
 - a. Info packet for Candidates
 - b. Know Your Town- update on progress,
 - c. Discussion regarding efforts to boost attendance at town meeting and local elections
 - d. Discussion regarding Local Comprehensive Plan
 - e. 2021 Annual Town Report
 - f. Current vacancies on town boards and committees- recruiting efforts
 - g. Upcoming vacancies for the May 2022 election
5. New Business
 - a. Availability of recordings of public meetings
6. Other
7. Upcoming Meetings/Events
 - a. Committee Meeting- February 23, 2022 and March 23, 2022 at 2 p.m.
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.*

DRAFT Harwich Voter Information Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 15, 2021
Channel 18 Studio, Harwich Community Center
100 Oak St., Harwich MA 02645

1. **Call to Order/Attendance:** Chair Emily Milan called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.
Present: Emily Milan, Joy Jordan, Christina Joyce
Absent: Pamela Groswald
2. **Vote to Approve Minutes of November 17, 2021:** Joy Jordan moved and Emily Milan seconded the motion to approve the November 17, 2021 minutes; the motion passed unanimously.
3. **Public Comment:** No one from the public attended.
4. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Info packet for Candidates:** Deferred to the January meeting.
 - b. **Know Your Town Program:** Targeted to boards and committees, the podcasts will be recorded in February after invitations are sent to chairs in January with the first series dedicated to regulatory boards. VIC committee members developed a series of questions for the participants. Included are: Time commitment, committee's charge, elected or appointed, helpful experience or expertise, number of vacancies. Also included will be questions about important committee achievements and challenges, misconceptions about the committee, and how the committee works with other boards and town departments.
The Chair will present a final package at the January VIC meeting and encourages members to forward any other ideas to her.
 - c. **Discussion regarding efforts to boost attendance at town meeting and local elections:** Joy Jordan described the recent Cape Women's Coalition co-hosted by Cape Cod Young Professions which was dedicated to increasing attendance at Town Meetings especially with younger voters. Work to inform voters how the outcomes at Town Meeting affect their lives may be an effective approach.
 - d. **Discussion regarding Local Comprehensive Plan:** Excellent email sent today using Civic Ready re: recruiting at large members for the LCP. Emily asked that we share the email with friends.
 - e. **Annual report to the Board of Selectmen:** Emily submitted the report; Chris spoke briefly before the BOS on 12/13.
5. **New Business**
 - a. **Current vacancies on town boards and committees-** recruiting efforts: Emily posted an informative presentation on the library's Facebook page. She will ask Jamie Goodwin if it can be used on Ch 18.

- b. **Upcoming vacancies for the May 2022 local election:** Vacancies will be - two Selectmen, one Water/Wastewater Commission, two Brooks Free Library Trustees, and one Monomoy Regional School Committee. Chris will keep the committee updated as Town Clerk's web page provides information on the local election i.e., when papers are available, etc.
6. **Other:** Chris mentioned that Channel 18 Community Journal host, Dinah Lane lost her brother in December.
Chris also expressed concern that some committees are not recorded and, therefore, unavailable on Ch 18 or YouTube. She will work with Ch 18 to see what might be done so Harwich voters can stay informed.
7. **Upcoming Meetings/Events**
a. Committee Meeting- January 26, 2022 and February 23, 2022 at 2 p.m.
8. **Adjournment:** A motion by Joy Jordan and seconded by Chris Joyce to adjourn passed unanimously. The committee adjourned at 2:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Joyce, Clerk

DRAFT Report from the Harwich Voter Information Committee

2021 Annual Report

The Voter Information Committee charge is to *inform and prepare voters on issues to be addressed at Annual and Special town meetings and the local annual election and to encourage voter registration and participation*. The committee meets monthly on the 4th Wednesday at 2 pm in the Channel 18 Studio located in the Harwich Community Center. Members of the public are encouraged to attend.

Civic Engagement Programs: In an effort to expand community awareness ahead of the May 2021 Annual Town Meeting as well as the October 2021 Special Town Meeting the following programs were hosted and recordings can be found on the committee webpage:

- *Know Your Town 2021:* podcast series interviewing department heads and discussing operations, budgets and impacts of the pandemic.
- *Financial State of Harwich:* review of current town finances and proposed budget with Town Administrator Joe Powers, Finance Director Carol Coppola, Finance Committee Chair Jon Chorey , Selectman Larry Ballantine, and Monomoy Regional School Superintendent Scott Carpenter.
- *Annual Town Warrant Review:* review of warrant for annual town meeting with Town Administrator Joe Powers
- *Special Town Meeting 2021 Warrant Review:* review of warrant for special town meeting with Town Administrator Joe Powers

- *Special Town Meeting 2021 Wastewater Article Review Podcast:* review of warrant articles related to Wastewater with Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Pelletier

Election Programs: In support of the May 2021 Election and the September 2021 Special Election the following programs were hosted and recordings can be found on the committee webpage:

- *Annual Election Candidates Forum - 2021*
- *Candidates Forum for the Board of Selectmen Special Election- September 2021*

Support and Assistance: The work of the committee could not be undertaken without a great deal of assistance from town and community partners. First, the committee would like to thank Jamie Goodwin and Caleb Ladue of Channel 18 for their support recording special programs throughout the year. Additionally, thanks are owed to the Town Administrator and Department heads for their participation in the programs outlined above as well as to the staff in the Town Administrator's office for its assistance in scheduling and coordinating programs. As always, we thank the Board for its support of our endeavors, participation in special programs and assistance in helping to spread the word about our efforts to the wider community. Finally, we owe a good deal of thanks to

the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area for moderating the Candidates forums and to the candidates themselves for their participation.

Future Plans: Our plans for the upcoming year included a follow-up Know Your Town podcast series focusing on the charge of town committees and boards and recruitment efforts to fill associated vacancies. In addition to annual programs related to town meetings and local elections, we also intend to focus on voter registration and participation activities in an attempt to boost voter turnout. Finally, we would also like to express our willingness to pursue new programming. If the Board or community members have suggestions, please feel free to attend a meeting or contact us in writing. Our contact info is on the VIC webpage.

Memoriam: Until her sudden passing in April, VIC was also served by Margaret "Peggy" Rose. Peggy was a long-time member of the Voter Information Committee as well as a long list of other boards and committees. A dedicated volunteer, known informally as the unofficial "Mayor" of Harwich, Peggy was extremely giving of her time, talents, expertise and experience. A great deal of institutional knowledge was lost with her passing and she is greatly missed.

Emily Milan, Chair
Pam Groswald
Joy Jordan
Christina Joyce

2022 May Local Election Vacancies (May 17)

Selectmen (2)

Michael MacAskill

Julie Kavanagh

Water/Wastewater Commission(1)

Judith Underwood

Brooks Free Library Trustees(2)

William Crowell

Bernadette Waystack

Harwich Housing Authority

One per Town Clerk; committee web page differs

Monomoy Regional School Committee(1)

Tina Games

Town Clerk

Anita Doucette

Important dates:

3/25/2022 - Last day to take out nomination papers

3/29/2022 - last day to turn in papers

4/12/2022 - last day to register to vote

at Annual Town Meeting and Local Election

5/2/2022 Annual Town Meeting

rev 1/7/2022 caj