

Town and School Meeting Committee
Organizational Meeting-February 7, 2022
MINUTES (Draft)

Present: Susan Manley; Ryan Scelza; Adam Ricker; Nikki Boyle; Chuck Wooster, Town & School District Moderator; Lisa O'Neil, Town Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm by Lisa O'Neil, Town Clerk. Lisa provided each member with an excerpt of the Charter outlining the purpose and role of the Town & School Meeting Committee (TSMC) and a packet of material samples as an historical reference of items and duties performed by previous iterations of the Town and School Meeting Committee. Since 2019, Town staff have been tasked with coordinating the Town & School District Meeting Cycle of events.

Chuck Wooster explained the idea behind the creation of the TSMC in the Charter was to make the process more inclusive and representative of the community and, to encourage residents to become more involved in the process and in voting. He stated there is a statutory component to the Annual Town & School Meeting handled by the Select and School Boards; the Town Manager and Superintendent; and staff. These functions are independent of the Moderator and the TSMC. The role of the TSMC is to work around that piece to enhance the process for residents/voters through the Information Night in January; the Budget & Candidates Night eight days before voting day and the Town Meeting Day held on the Saturday preceding voting day. The hope is it will be a collaborative process between the committee, the two Boards, Administrators, and staff.

Lisa asked how the Committee would like to be organized-such as Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk, etc. After a brief discussion of the benefits of such a structure, the Committee, by unanimous consent, selected Ryan Scelza as Chair and Susan Manley as Clerk. There was a discussion about Open Meeting Law requirements, posting of Notices/Agendas and minutes. Lisa agreed to gather some information pertaining to these requirements and send it along to the committee.

The members asked if there are tasks for them to help with this cycle of events being held remotely. Chuck indicated he thinks he has the technology piece under control with CATV for the remote meetings. Lisa reviewed some of the items she and Paula Nulty, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager, have handled in the past few years in the absence of a full TSMC. For this year, help with distribution of the Town Reports would be appreciated (Lisa will obtain a distribution list from paula and provide to the TSMC members). Nikki offered that they could also distribute the Town & School Cycle postcards at the same time. The members were encouraged to "attend" the two events this year to observe in hopes of developing a better

understanding of the purpose of the events, how the public engages, etc. to help prepare and plan for next year. Paula prepares the agendas for both meetings; Lisa will forward to the committee members.

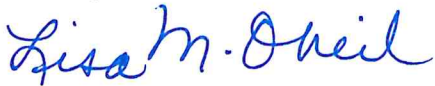
The members discussed having a brainstorming meeting after the 2022 Town & School Meeting Cycle to establish priorities; ideas for next year and formulate any questions they may have. Lisa, Paula, and Chuck are available to assist with questions and other aspects of the process.

Lisa reminded the members this is one vacant position remaining on the committee for a three-year term to be appointed by the Select Board. If they know of anyone who may be interested, please encourage them to apply to the Town Manager's Office for consideration by the Select Board.

Chuck offered the TSMC has a two-pronged purpose: the outreach piece to promote the events to the public and the "in-reach" piece to create interesting events to engage folks to participate.

The meeting adjourned at 6:34pm by unanimous consent.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lisa M. O'Neil
Hartford Town Clerk

2-8-2022