TMMA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

June 12, 2013

Vice Chair Michelle Goddard called the meeting to order at 7:32. With 18 members representing 9 precincts, a quorum was present.

Name Precinct

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Joel Adler\* | 1 |
| Barry Orenstein\* | 2 |
| Judy Pappo\* | 3 |
| Michelle Goddard\* | 3 |
| Rosemary Levy\* | 3 |
| Gloria Bloom\* | 4 |
| Molly Nye\* | 4 |
| Andy Friedlich\* | 5 |
| Jeff Crampton\* | 5 |
| Ginna Johnson\* | 5 |
| Frank Sandy\* | 6 |
| George Burnell\* | 7 |
| Andrei Radulescu-Banu\* | 8 |
| Jim Osten\* | 8 |
| Bob Avallone\* | 8 |
| Jeanne Canale\* | 9 |
| Vicki Blier\* | 9 |
| Sam Silverman | 5 |
| Edith Sandy | 6 |
| David Kaufman | 6 |
| David Kanter | 6 |
| Dawn McKenna\* | 6 |
| John Pompeo | 7 |
| Deb Mauger | 8 |
| Deborah Brown | At Large |

Note: \* denotes members of Executive Committee

**Treasurer’s Report.** Treasurer Barry Orenstein reported that the account balance was $1,927 at the end of April and stood at a very apropos $1,776 at the end of May. Changes in the balance were due to late dues coming in and payments to the League of Women Voters for the community discussion on climate change.

**Minutes.** A vote on past minutes was deferred. There was also a discussion of why minutes had not been sent or posted to the TMMA website in the past.

**Review of 2013 Spring Town Meeting**. Several aspects of the 2013 TM were discussed:

* **Warrant info report**. Comments were made about the process of creating the WIR. The sense of the meeting seemed to be that the WIR itself was quite useful as is but would be improved by having more TM’s involved in drafting. Some other specific suggestions were:
  + **Selectmen should set warrant article list earlier.** This would allow more time to review the articles and draft the WIR.
  + **Questions should be asked and answered at the info session.** The questions in the write-ups should be answered / addressed at the info session. Article sponsors should also put answers / responses to questions in abstract on the TMMA list and/or on handouts at TM.
* **Facilities and systems**. Several questions were raised about the facility and systems. The sense of the meeting seemed to be that they are what they are and are perfectly adequate for our needs, but improvements could be made.
  + **Sound**. AHD’s were helpful, but it was possible for some to hear without them as well. In the back of the hall, though, sound is not as good. Speakers might be helpful.
  + **Microphones**. Presenter mic heights need to be adjusted for each presenter, as do the floor mics. It might be wise to get presenters to use clip-on or mobile mics. Deb Brown will speak with Town staff about this.
  + **Temperature**. Some felt that the room was a little cold, but the consensus appeared to be that cold is better than hot because you can dress against it and it keeps people more alert.
  + **Side Aisles**. To recreate the side aisles would require taking a column of chairs out of the middle. Another option would be to rotate the precincts around the floor so that precincts get access to aisles (or lack thereof) more equally.
* **Conduct of the Meeting**. The overall sense seemed to be that 2013 TM was relatively efficient but could probably have been a little better. There was a lot of discussion on the amount of time different groups get on the floor and possible changes to floor time allocation.
  + **Agenda**. The agenda was helpful, as were the email reminders about the agenda.
  + **Order of articles**. Some members felt we could have been out a night or two earlier by adjusting order of articles – for example, squeezing another article or two in at the end of meetings in order to speed things along.
  + **Question Mic**. It would be helpful for the Chair and Moderator to encourage TMM’s to come prepared with succinct questions as opposed to taking their time to formulate a question on the fly.
  + **Proponents’ vs. Opponents’ Time**. Some members commented about perceived advantages to article proponents, who have time at the info session and at the start and end of discussion. Questions were raised about possibly letting neighborhood groups speak longer on zoning articles. It was noted, though, that TM can move to have a presentation extend beyond the 3 minute limit.
  + **Moving the Question**. There was a discussion about when moving the question is or it not appropriate; there did not seem to be any egregious examples in 2013 TM.
  + **Info Session vs. TM.** We talked about how to improve the info sessions, get more people to attend, and focus TM on the key issues in an article rather than basic details of the proposal which should be covered at the Info Session. It was the sense of the meeting that this would be a good area for a committee to look into in the fall.
  + **Citizens vs. TM presentations**. We discussed how to encourage more citizen participation, including possibly allowing more time for citizens to speak. No consensus was reached, though there were several comments to the effect that TMM’s should be close enough to citizens to represent their concerns.
  + **Presentation length vs. complexity**. Presenters should gear their presentation not to the allowed length but rather to the complexity of the issue. Several CPA articles and sub-articles could have been shorter, for example.
  + **Moderator’s Power**. Some members were concerned that the Moderator may have exercised too much power in cutting off debate on the TIF. Deb Brown stated that she was only cutting off debate in accord with rules on time.
* **Bus**. Discussion was postponed on the Bus item.
* **Penalties for violating TMMA email list rules.**  A discussion was held over possibly censuring a member for inappropriate behavior on the TMMA list. Dan Fenn noted that, legally, since TMMA is a quasi-governmental agency, we have a “special onus not to inhibit the free exercise of speech” and therefore should not suspend a member’s posting rights. Censure was the preferred option. TMMAXC voted 8-7 against a motion to censure, with the Chair casting the deciding vote after a 7-7 tie.
* **Preparation for 2014 TM**. Issues are likely to include the anaerobic digester, electronic voting, and Unicare. There will also be some commonality, with Hartwell Avenue germane to AD and Unicare. George Burnell will present on this.
* **Other.** Due to TM’s moving, there will be at least 2 new TM’s in 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30PM.