

Town Meeting Study Committee Minutes

3/8/2018

Committee in attendance: Beth Murphy, Erin Underhill, Jim McCaffrey, Mary Russo, Craig Schultze, Jim Angelo

Not In Attendance: Mark Conroy

Meeting called to order at 7:35

Approval of minutes from first two meetings, Motion made by E. Underhill, seconded by M. Russo. Passed unanimously.

Topic: Day and time of Town Meeting

- Suggestion to survey community about Saturday or Monday TM (and what time to start).
- Age Breakdown of Town Meeting Attendance prepared by Marc Conroy (see attached). This showed the representation by age of voter at Town Meeting and at Elections. The other item presented in the report showed the impact of a campaign (or contested race) on turnout. The Town Meeting where contested issues, with an organized campaign, had the highest turnout. For example, the Library, Police Station, and School vote had a significantly higher turnout than the meetings where there was no organized “get out the vote effort”.
- Special Town Meetings for highly charged topics, that are likely to generate long meetings.
- Mandatory recess at 10:00pm, with a second night planned for following night/ week. This can be waived by a vote from TM.
- To encourage more voter turnout, several items were proposed:
 1. Babysitting services to encourage parent turnout
 2. Transportation for Seniors (or those who need transportation services)
 3. Marketing:
 - Reverse 911
 - Social Media Posts
 - E-Mail or List Serve from the school, informing parents of TM
 - PSA on Cable
 - TM Lawn Signs (Generic “turnout” signs)
 - Editorial or letter to the editor from the Moderator
 4. Education:
 - Send 10th and 11th graders to observe TM as a school assignment (at least one hour).

- Pre-Town Meeting “procedure” session, hosted by Moderator, to discuss and educate on process, not educate on the Articles (that is the FinCom Pre Town Meeting).
- Discussion then focused on if the issue is Motivation or Awareness. Do people not care about attending TM or are they not aware of how important TM is, when it is held or what to expect at the Town Meeting?

Meeting adjourned at 8:15. Motion made by C. Schultze, Second by B. Murphy. Passed Unanimously.