

TMMA Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes for September 11, 2024
Virtual Meeting (via Zoom)

Attendees:	Precinct	Attendees:	Precinct
Bridger McGaw	6 TMMA Chair	Andy Friedlich*	5
Sarah Higginbotham*	5 TMMA Vice-Chair	Kristin Pechinsky	5
Brielle Meade	8 TMMA Clerk	Joyce Murphy	5
Vicki Blier	9 TMMA List Moderator	Innessa Manning*	6
Bob Avallone	8 TMMA Website Manager	Jyotsna Kakullavarapu	6
Valerie Overton*	1	Frederic Johnson	6
Tanya Gisolfi-McCready*	1	Meghana Khanolkar*	7
Bronte Abraham*	3	Heidi Pasternak*	8
Frank Smith*	3	Betty Gau*	8
Ipek Ozer-Stillman	3	Alicia Morris*	9
Cindy Arens*	3	Todd Burger*	9
Ruth Thomas*	4	Shireen Ahmed	9

*Denotes Precinct Officers

The Chair Bridger McGaw called the meeting to order at 7:32pm as quorum was confirmed.

- I. **Welcome and Moment of Remembrance** - Bridger McGaw opened the meeting with a moment of remembrance for those we lost on September 11, 2001. He went over the date for the next meeting (October 9) and then asked all members to introduce themselves and talk about something they are currently trying to learn. A lot of folks are working on work-life balance, the meaning of life, and growing various plants. Bridger asked members to update their Zoom name to include their precinct number. He talked about our job as TM members to stay informed so we are better prepared for discussions and voting.

- II. **Officer Reports and Updates**

Clerk's Report—Brielle Meade submitted the draft minutes for the June meetings to the group for review and approval over email. The June minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report—Bridger McGaw, in his best Darth Vader voice in honor of James Earl Jones who passed away September 9, reported no new expenses or collections since the last report. The current balance is \$2,794.18. The Treasurer's Report was unanimously accepted.

Website Manager's Report— Bob Avallone has been making updates to the website and lists for recently resigned TM members. He also reported he is getting complaints about the precinct group email aliases and messages not getting through.

Email List Moderator's Report—Vicki Blier reported she has not encountered any new issues with the Google Group related to lost or undelivered emails. She and Bob Avallone led continued discussion on next steps regarding the possibility of transferring the TMMA email list Google Group to a paid Groups.io account:

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- Following Bob Avallone's report on complaints about the precinct group email aliases, Sarah Higginbotham noted that she also could not use the group email for Precinct 5 and had to type in all addresses manually.
- Bob Avallone proposed to purchase a Groups.io account for the Executive Committee only at this time and test it for possible transition of the full TMMA Google Group for the next Town Meeting season.
- Andy Friedlich asked if Groups.io would allow a similar feature to the precinct email aliases. Since Vicki and Bob were unsure, Sarah Higginbotham suggested that Bob's idea of testing with the Executive Committee is a good idea to iron out details like this.
- After more discussion, Bridger McGaw summarized: there is a few examples of precinct lists not functioning as intended, along with other examples of different emails being caught in spam filters with the Google Group; Bob and Vicki have identified a new option for a paid service (Groups.io) that may fix these issues; we have a suggestion to run a paid pilot for the next few months with just the members of the Executive Committee (the full 27 members); after the pilot, the committee would accept (or not) to move the full TMMA Google Group to the paid Groups.io account in January. Bridger made a motion to approve \$200 to purchase a Groups.io account to pilot this. The committee approved the motion unanimously.

III. **Lexington High School Building Project Update** – Bridger McGaw noted there is a lot of effort going into communicating and engaging on the LHS building project, and he requests that members attend the Community Forum on September 18, 6:30-8:30pm in Battin Hall in the Cary Memorial Building. He also asks that we encourage our precinct members to engage as well. The project is being discussed in many committees across town and there is a lot of information available for people to get up to speed now. Cindy Arens put links to the project website in the Chat. She encouraged members to watch some of the recorded videos as well.

IV. **Project Updates**

- Precinct 1 and 3 elections to address resignations – Bridger McGaw informed the group that Precinct 1 and 3 members have resigned, leaving both those precincts with the requirement to hold a Precinct meeting where they will use a ballot from the Town Clerk to conduct a vote to fill the seats. Cindy Arens (P3) and Valerie Overton (P1) have been in touch with the Town Clerk and the process is moving forward. Bob Avallone asked that Cindy and Valerie keep him posted on results so he can update the website.
- Special Town Meeting Warrant Information Session – Bridger McGaw sent the draft warrant memo for Special Town Meeting (to be held in November) to the committee over email. The memo included two articles for appropriations for capital improvements that folks should find interesting, and there is also the possibility of Citizen articles coming forward. He asked if anyone was aware of any forthcoming Citizens articles, but no one has heard of any at this time. The two capital improvement articles in the draft warrant memo

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are for supplemental funding for the police station solar panels and for design funds for the Harrington athletic fields. Sarah Higginbotham reported we would potentially organize a one-night information session depending on the articles included. This would be held virtually on Zoom on October 22 if needed. Cindy Arens also mentioned that upcoming for the Annual Town Meeting next Spring there would be a funding request for solar along with the Muzzey St. parking lot improvements.

- Next Steps for the New Member Orientation Working Group –Andy Friedlich reported that the group took the summer off but that they are in the process of scheduling a meeting.
- Follow up with the “plating of pins” and cost/pin opportunities – Noah Michelson was not in attendance but is still looking into this.
- Bylaw review and updates – Bridger McGaw would like to discuss the previously shared memo on bylaw updates. He shared the memo with Deborah Brown and informed her we are discussing it, and asked for folks to share any comments:
 - Bob Avallone agreed with most of the memo except for the part regarding changes to calling the question.
 - Andy Friedlich suggested this would be a good topic for this group to discuss in email over the new Groups.io group.
 - Bridger reiterated there are some simple corrections and changes that should not be controversial, but other items he would like people to read and consider. He would like the group to have conversations about the ideas in the memo before drafting changes that people will support.
 - The committee has been asked to use the Groups.io list to share our thoughts.
- TMMA Connect! Ice Cream Social – Sarah Higginbotham asked the group to share thoughts on our last event and confirm if it is something we want to replicate for next year in March:
 - Ruth Thomas and others agreed it was a very successful event.
 - Heidi Pasternak shared that as a new TM member, the invite and scheduling was very rushed: she got through the election and then suddenly had an invite to this event and it was rather quick. She suggested that it would be very helpful if there was a way to inform potential new members ahead of time. Alicia Morris and Meg Khanolkar agreed. Meg suggested inviting everyone who is running (including people who do not end up getting elected) to address this issue. Cindy Arens and others liked this idea and pointed out that the people who are not elected may end up serving anyway in the future due to resignations or other reasons, so it would be helpful if TMMA can remain engaged with them.
 - Vicki Blier reminded the group we had ‘knowledge experts’ wear badges indicating their area of expertise at the event, and thought maybe we should consider doing something more formal to encourage discussion at the event.

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- Valerie Overton asked about combining this or discussing it in conjunction with another DEI session. She suggested this committee could potentially ask the TMMA members what types of DEI training or other material would be the most helpful. Bridger McGaw asked Valerie if the DEI subgroup had talked with Hemali Shah, the Town's Chief Equity Officer, about seeing TMMA as an advocate for their work or as a collaborator. Valerie did speak with Hemali about this (but not recently), and at that time, she was feeling constrained and not able to play that role with respect to Town Meeting and TMMA, but it's possible that may change.
- Todd Burger asked if it would be appropriate to host a Zoom or TMMA event to let the new Town Manager introduce himself to TM members.

V. New Topics

Folks can reach out to Bridger McGaw with ideas at any time if they have any additional topics to add to future agendas. Bob Avallone asked about the potential of doing hybrid or in-person meetings in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 pm. The next Meeting will be on October 9, 2024, at 7:30 PM conducted online via Zoom.