

## **Town Government Study Committee – Meeting of July 26,2016 Milton Town Hall, Baker Conference Room**

Chairman Rick Neely called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. Other members present: John Cronin, Kathy Fagan, Marvin Gordon, Ted Hays, Mary McNamara and Peter Mullin. Members absent: Philip Mathews and Leroy Walker.

### **Review/Discussion of the Election for the 5-member Board of Selectmen**

Chair Neely began the discussion by sharing Town Counsel John Flynn's email on this subject sent this morning to Town Clerk Susan Galvin that concluded:

"That question [Shall an act passed by the general court entitled "An act increasing the membership of the board of selectmen of the Town of Milton" be accepted?] may not be placed on the ballot for the November, 2016 Presidential election. That question may only be placed on the ballot for the next annual or special Town of Milton election which follows May 12, 2016."

Mr. Hays reported on his interview of Town Clerk Susan Galvin on July 22 and outlined the three issues confronting the Committee's desire to place the referendum on the size of the board of selectmen on a ballot at the November presidential election. The first of these, as underlined by Town Counsel's opinion above, is the lack of specifically enabling legislation to add the referendum to the presidential ballot. In order to place the referendum before the voters at the presidential election a special election to be held concurrently but with a separate ballot would have to be called by the Board of Selectmen. The cost of a special election, and the procedural and logistical difficulties of running two elections compounded by the additional burdens of early voting requirements are the other two issues. Costs were determined between \$30,000 and \$33,000. Polling place procedure and absentee ballot and early voting requirements were discussed. Note was taken of Town Clerk's opposition to the special election on grounds ranging from the potential of longer lines to the possibilities of procedural failures and equipment breakdown.

On a motion made by Mr. Gordon and seconded by Mr. Cronin, the Committee voted unanimously, but with regret, not to ask the Board of Selectmen for a special election to place the referendum in front of the voters of the Town in November.

As scheduled on the agenda, at 7:56 PM, the Committee, with the loss of Mr. Gordon and Mr. Mullin moved to the Board of Selectmen's meeting in the Cronin conference room.

### **Board of Selectmen's meeting**

Chair Neely addressed the Board of Selectmen on the outcome of the vote above and on other matters lately or currently among the Committees' areas of concern or study. Chair Neely reported on the Committee's desire to have a special election for the referendum on a five-member Board of Selectmen on the November ballot, but that the Committee concluded that the added cost of \$33,000 was too great for the Town to incur. The Board of Selectmen and the Town Clerk expressed their agreement with the Committee's vote. Subsequently Chair Neely reported on the Committee's work since the May town meeting including the Committee's decision to table temporarily further discussion of departmental consolidation. The Board of Selectmen expressed their hopes that the Committee would revisit this topic."

The Committee left the Cronin conference room and adjourned its meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted 8/14/2016,

Ted Hays