

**TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
MASSACHUSETTS**

**REPORT OF THE  
SELECT BOARD**



**TO THE  
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2023**

**8:00 P.M.**



## **ARTICLE 2**

## **VOTE/HYBRID TOWN MEETING STUDY COMMITTEE**

**VOTED: That Town Meeting hereby establishes a Hybrid Town Meeting Study Committee to be structured, organized, and charged as follows:**

### **Hybrid Town Meeting Study Committee**

#### **1. Committee Membership and Organization**

- A. The Committee shall consist of no less than six (6) and no more than nine (9) members, the number to be determined and appointed by the Town Moderator, but a majority of whom should be current or former Town Meeting Members, and a member of Town staff appointed by the Town Manager as a non-voting member.**

**Voting membership of the study committee shall reflect racial, ethnic, and other forms of diversity in Town Meeting.**

- B. It is expected that the Study Committee will have access to and be able to consult with Town Counsel, the Town Information Technology Department, the Town Clerk, the Town ADA Coordinator, and any other Town departments and employees, who may have pertinent expertise to share with the Study Committee.**
- C. The Town Moderator or their designee shall serve as chair of the committee for the purposes of the Committee's first organizational meeting, in which the Committee may elect officers as it deems appropriate.**
- D. A majority of voting members of the committee at any given time shall constitute a quorum, and decisions shall be based on the vote of a simple majority of those committee members present and voting.**

#### **2. Committee Charge**

**The Committee is charged with comprehensively examining options and requirements for conducting Town Meeting with hybrid participation. For the purposes of this Committee, hybrid participation is defined as a combination of in-person and remote participation, where remote participation includes: deliberation, voting, calculation of quorum, or any combination thereof. The Committee's study shall include, but not be limited to:**

- A. Identifying if any best practices by other town meetings in the conduct of hybrid meetings;**
- B. Providing opportunities for public comment on the Committee's work;**

- C. Identifying potential legal requirements, issues and constraints in conducting Town Meeting with hybrid participation;**
- D. Identifying technical requirements, issues and constraints in conducting Town Meeting with hybrid participation, including estimates of the requisite monetary costs;**
- E. Identifying potential new policies and procedures requisite for conducting Town Meeting with hybrid participation;**
- F. Identifying the potential beneficial and detrimental effects of conducting Town Meeting with hybrid participation. Questions central to this inquiry include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. evaluating the impact of hybrid options on the functioning of Town Meeting as an effective and collegial body, and**
  - 2. the potential for increased or decreased interest in serving as a Town Meeting Member for under-represented populations in Town Meeting;****
- G. Supporting the implementation of relevant proposals as needed.**

### **3. Committee Reports**

**The Committee shall make recommendations to Town Meeting, including:**

- A. Providing information and updates to the Town Moderator as requested;**
- B. If warranted, developing specific proposals for the implementation of Town Meeting with hybrid participation;**
- C. Making reports of its progress, findings, and recommendations to every Annual Town Meeting until the Study Committee is dissolved.**

### **4. Dissolution of the Study Committee**

**The Committee shall be dissolved by a vote of Town Meeting.**

**(5 – 0)**

**COMMENT:** The Select Board supports the Town Meeting Procedures Committee’s proposal for formally assessing interest in, and feasibility of providing for hybrid Town Meeting participation options. Without presuming the findings of such a Study Committee, the Board believes an examination of the varied and complex issues for realizing a truly “hybrid” Town Meeting, as well as the potential impacts of a hybrid meeting on efficient and effective conduct of Town Meeting would be beneficial. Recent legislation of the Commonwealth may authorize a

version of hybrid Town Meeting and the Board assumes the work of a Study Committee would include consideration of same. Accordingly the Board respectfully urges Town Meeting to support a vote to create this Hybrid Town Meeting Study Committee.

**ARTICLE 3                   SPECIAL LEGISLATION/POLICE RECRUITMENT AND  
HIRING CIVIL SERVICE EXEMPTION FROM CIVIL SERVICE**

**VOTED: That the Town does hereby request and authorize the Select Board to file Home Rule Legislation to provide substantially as follows:**

**“AN ACT ALLOWING ‘EXEMPTING THE TOWN OF ARLINGTON FROM THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 31 OF THE GENERAL LAWS AS THEY CONCERN THE RECRUITMENT AND HIRING OF FULL-TIME PERMANENT POLICE OFFICERS”**

**SECTION 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law or rule to the contrary, the Town of Arlington shall be exempt from chapter 31 of the General Laws concerning the recruiting and hiring for the position of permanent full-time police officer; furthermore, following: (1) an original appointment as a permanent full-time police officer and graduation from a police academy, or (2) a permanent full-time position transfer from another police department, said police officer shall engage in the actual performance of the duties of such position for a probationary period of twelve (12) months; whereupon after completion of the probationary period, or extended probationary period, the police officer shall be considered a full-time tenured civil service employee in said position under chapter 31 of the General Laws.**

**SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.**

**(4 – 0)**

**Mr. Helmuth recused himself.**

**COMMENT: The Select Board moves positive action on this article.**



**ERIC D. HELMUTH, CHAIR**  
**JOHN V. HURD, VICE CHAIR**  
**DIANE M. MAHON**  
**STEPHEN W. DECOURCEY**  
**LENARD T. DIGGINS**