Warrant Committee
October 28, 2020
Zoom Conference Call

(Conducted pursuant to the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Gen. L. c. 30A §20 et seq. and 940 CMR 29.01 et seq.)

Present: George A. Ashur (Chair), Erin G. Bradley (Secretary), Rosemary C. Bouzane, Christine J. Gimber, Douglas B. Scibek, John E. Driscoll, David Humphries, Emily Cavalier, Brigid Gaughan.

Absent: Kathleen A. Cassis, Brian G. Foster, Clinton Graham, Susannah H. Hegarty, Scott D. Johnson, Ohene Asare.

Guests: Michael Dennehy (Town Administrator), Lisa Ahern (Superintend for Milton Cemetery), Kevin Freytag (Town Counsel).

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

1.) Chairman remarks:
7:04 p.m. Chair Ashur noted that the previous meeting minutes are not completed.

2.) Warrant Discussions:
   a.) 7:06 p.m. Mr. Freytag addressed the Warrant Committee. Mr. Freytag discussed article 3 of the December Special Town Meeting Warrant.

7:06 p.m. Erin G. Bradley enters the meeting.

Mr. Freytag noted this article has not yet been submitted to the Select Board, but is anticipated to be approved once it is. Mr. Freytag stated that earlier this month, there was a storm that came through Milton and caused much damage, especially to Milton Cemetery. Many trees fell, some of the trees being significant size. Mr. Freytag noted that the DPW (Department of Public Works), will not be able to remove all of the trees themselves because they will require a crane to lift the large trunks. Mr. Freytag noted that the proposed article will allow transfer of funds from the Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund for the purpose of removing the trees. These funds have been accumulated by sales of burial plots in Milton for over a hundred years and the interest on the Fund has also grown significantly. Mr. Freytag explained to the Warrant Committee, that it is up to Town meeting to appropriate Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund that are in the custody of the Town Treasurer for the purposes explained in article 3. Mr. Freytag discussed the appropriation amount ($100,000), was originally based off of quotes of cost Ms. Ahern received for the work. Mr. Freytag noted that the DPW was able to remove some of the trees, so that the total estimated cost of tree removal has been reduced. However, Mr. Freytag noted that the rest of the money could only be spent on care, improvement or embellishment of Milton Cemetery. Finally, Mr. Freytag noted that the Warrant
Committee vote would be based on the article approval from the Select Board, and once the Select Board approves the article in their next meeting the Warrant Committee recommendation would carry over. Ms. Ahern gave the Warrant Committee an overview of the damage the storm on October 7th, 2020 caused. Ms. Ahern described the destruction as unfathomable, 22 trees have been knocked over and most are well over 100 years old. Ms. Ahern, noted the DPW has been very helpful, they bought larger chainsaws to remove these massive trees. Some trees have fallen in the middle of plots, requiring a crane to safely lift them out.

Mr. Denney noted that the Town had reached out to Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA,) for disaster relief funds related to the costs incurred by the storm. However, The National Weather Service, did not classify the storm as a “micro burst” and the funds were not granted. The Warrant Committee asked what requirements are needed to qualify for disaster relief funds from MEMA and FEMA. Mr. Dennehy noted that it started with the National Weather Service and the classification of storm and once that has been started, the Town can contact MEMA and FEMA for funding. Mr. Dennehy noted that the Town did contact the insurance company that the Town is insured with, some of the cemetery walls and structures are covered for repairs. The Warrant Committee also asked if the cemetery Trustee board is in agreement with article 3 as proposed. Ms. Ahern confirmed that they are.

b.) 7:18 p.m. The Warrant Committee discuss the comment for article 3. It was decided that a member of the Warrant Committee must draft the comment, thanking Mr. Freytag who offered a version of a comment to support the Warrant Committee.

c.) 7:20 p.m. On a motion from Douglas B. Scibeck, seconded by John E. Driscoll, the article and recommendation, (comment excluded pending edits from a Warrant Committee member) is approved 8 yays and one abstention.

d.) 7:21 p.m. The Warrant Committee discusses which member will write a comment for article 3.

e.) 7:23 p.m. Next Warrant Committee meeting will be November 12th.

f.) 7:29 p.m. The Warrant Committee discussed December Special Town Meeting being remote zoom or in person. Mr. Dennehy confirmed it will be zoom meeting. The Warrant Committee members who are not Town Meeting members requested to be part of the zoom for Town Meeting in order to follow along, and not on Milton Access TV that has a three minute delay.

7:26 p.m. On a motion from Clinton Graham, seconded by Douglas B. Scibeck, the meeting is adjourned.
Respectfully Submitted,

Lynne Hoye

Warrant Committee Clerk