# Town of Groton, MA Electronic Voting (EV) Study Committee (EVSC)

# Minutes of the Meeting of September 8, 2022

## Opening

Location: via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Mr. Petropoulos.

Present: Robert Anctil, Michael Bouchard, Michael Manugian Carolyn Perkins, Jack Petropoulos.

Guests: Jason Kauppi, Groton Town Moderator; Judy Anderson

## Public Comment Period

No public comments were made during this period.

## Approval of Minutes

A motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote to accept the Minutes of the EVSC meeting of August 31, 2022 as submitted. Mr. Anctil was not present and did not vote.

## Discuss final procedure recommendations

The Committee reviewed its procedural recommendations with Mr. Kauppi, Town Moderator.

Mr. Kauppi was asked to explain the current process whereby a voter may request a secret ballot vote. He stated that the voter would be required to make a motion that a ballot vote be taken. This motion would be voted on. If it passed, a ballot vote would be taken. If not, a hand vote would be taken. If the motion for a ballot vote passed, it would then be necessary to re-check-in all voters. If the Moderator felt it was appropriate, the Moderator could call for a ballot vote. Mr. Kauppi presented example where in another town a developer paid residents of a development to vote for another one of his developments at Town Meeting. In this case the moderator insisted on a secret ballot.

The Committee pointed out that the actual procedures to be used if electronic voting were adopted were up to the Town Moderator. Mr. Kauppi said that he would draft procedures and obtain public comment. He felt that any such procedures should not be codified in a town by-law. They should remain the choice of the Moderator.

The Committee felt that these recommendations as well as one or two other documents could be put together into a handout at town meeting.

ACTION: Mr. Manugian: Update the Procedure Recommendations based on comments from this meeting and send the updated document to the Committee.

## Discuss dollar value recommendation for EV article

The Committee reviewed a draft document containing cost estimates for electronic voting to determine a not-to-exceed dollar amount for the Electronic Voting purchase warrant article. The Committee discussed and refined the estimate. ACTION: Mr. Manugian: Update the Cost Estimate document and distribute it to the Committee.

A motion was made and seconded that the Committee recommend a $25,000 spending limit for an Electronic Voting System as part of our Town Meeting warrant recommendation. This passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

ACTION: Mr. Petropoulos: Ask Option Technologies how many Massachusetts Towns used their system. ACTION: Mr. Bouchard: Take photos of the actual clickers. This information and the photos will be added to the Cost Estimate document.

## Meet with Selectboard September 19 to discuss EV article for Town Meeting

The Committee discussed the preparation required for the Selectboard/Fincom meeting to review warrant articles. The Committee decided it should prepare a very brief presentation to be given by Mr. Petropoulos and be ready to answer questions. All members noted that they would be present for this meeting.

ACTON: Mr. Manugian: Prepare a brief presentation for this meeting. Mr. Bouchard noted that based on previous voter questions the presentation should clearly state that Electronic Voting is being considered for Town Meeting only, not general elections. The clerk will send the completed Recommendations and Cost Estimate documents to the Town Manager for submission to the Select Board as supporting material for their consideration of the warrant article.

The Moderator and Committee were all in agreement with the recommendations as amended at this meeting. Mr. Kauppi felt that the recommendations were very comprehensive.

## Plan for October 13 Public Informational Hearing on EV article

The Committee agreed that it was important this this Public Hearing incorporate feedback from September 19, 2022 meeting. Public Hearing preparation will be discussed in the EVSC Meeting following the that meeting.

ACTION: Mr. Bouchard: Reserve the Community room at the Groton Center for the Public Hearing on October 13, 2022 at 7 pm.

Mr. Manugian noted that there was a problem with the audio for the Electronic Voting demonstration video at the previous EVSC Public Hearing. ACTION: Mr. Manugian: Go to the Groton Center prior to the Public Hearing to make sure he knows how to get the audio to work properly.

## Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 pm.

All members of the Committee will attend the Selectboard/Fincom meeting on September 19, 2022.

The next meeting of this Committee will be on Thursday September 22, 2022 at 6:30 pm via Zoom, to be posted by Mr. Bouchard on the Town of Groton website with the meeting agenda.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Manugian, Clerk