Attendance:

TMMA Officers:
Edith Sandy – (Chair, Pct 6)
Marsha Baker (Treasurer, Pct 7)
Jim Osten – (Clerk, Pct 8)
Vicki Blier – (List Moderator, Pct 9)

Precinct Officers:
Pct 1: Nancy Adler
Pct 2: Joe Pato, Barry Orenstein
Pct 3:
Pct 4: Gloria Bloom, JJ Krawczyk
Pct 5: Andrew Friedlich, Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti
Pct 6: Frank Sandy, Ann Kane
Pct 7:
Pct 8: David Horton
Pct 9: Laura Hussong, Francine Stiglitz

Other Town Meeting Members:

Other Attendees: Carl Valente (Town Manager), Donna Hooper (Town Clerk), Fernando Quesada (Vision 2020)

Agenda:
Edith called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Motion to approve Minutes from December Meeting as amended by Frank Sandy and Francine Stieglitz was approved unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report:
Marsha noted a balance of $1826.73
Expenditures since the December 2008 meeting include:
$48.00 to Edith Sandy for Information Book printing – Fall 08

Motion to approve the Treasurer’s report was passed unanimously

Motion to approve an expenditure of $105.00 for TMMA share of the new Town Meeting Member information booklet was made by Andy Freidlich and approved unanimously.

Vision 2020: Fernando Quesada, Ann Redmon

The Vision 2020 committee is looking for new persons to serve on the committee. Transparency in the 2020 process is to be achieved by precinct meetings which will also reinforce the relationships of constituencies and town meeting members.
Group Insurance Commission Review by Mike Kennealy

Mike and Deborah Brown prepared a memo on the state GIC program as a response to the Appropriations Committee to a Spring 2008 town meeting resolution asking for an investigation into health expenses. The memo from Deborah Brown and Mike Kennealy and the presentation made by Mike are or will be available on various town websites.

The town faces a structural deficit in that revenues face slow growth while health costs under existing programs have very high growth. Nearly 80% of revenue comes from property taxes with limited growth (Proposition 21/2) while health costs which are an appreciable share of expenses (16%) are increasing at 11% to 14% per year, equivalent to more than two thirds of the projected revenue increases.

The state GIC program has provided health insurance to state employees since 1955. Recently, the state has made the program available to municipal governments provided that they agree to minimum three year participation and also obtain a 70% weighted favorable vote of the town employee bargaining units and retirees.

The principal advantages of the GIC are:
1) It represents over 300,000 participants and thus has substantial power to negotiate favorable terms with service providers
2) GIC cost escalation is expected to be 8% for the next year compared to 14% for Lexington.
3) The GIC has many providers – there are 9 plans under the GIC.
4) The threat of GIC lowered BlueCross/BlueShield rates proposed to Brookline.

Disadvantages or limitations of the GIC are:
1) It does not include BlueCross/Blue Shield which is the preferred provider for many employees
2) It requires the approval of the bargaining coalition
3) Retirees must take Medicare if eligible and the GIC functions as a Medigap policy
4) Co-pays are determined by a 15 person board and co-pays are not tax advantaged so changes have noticeable tax consequences
5) The GIC maintains very strict analysis for eligibility
6) The earliest that Lexington could enter the GIC is FY2011

The process for entering the GIC would include:
1) Town enters into an RFP for providers and reaches a conclusion on possible savings
2) The town bargains with coalition
3) 70% weighted vote of approval by bargaining units and retirees
4) Lexington could join by Dec. 1 of 2009 for FY 2011 (current insurance runs through June 30th, 2009 and Dec. 1, 2008 was deadline for joining GIC for FY2010)
5) There is a possibility of legislative action that could change the rules for towns entering into the GIC

Mike concluded that the GIC has merit for Lexington.

Warrant Article Assignments:
Edith reviewed the warrant article assignments and found a volunteer for almost all of the articles.
Adjourn:
Edith adjourned the meeting at 9:05 PM