



Town of Arlington

John D. Leone, Moderator

51 Irving St.
Arlington, Massachusetts 02476
Telephone: (781) – 648 - 2345
(781) – 641 - 3546
JLeone@town.arlington.ma.us

April 11, 2019

RE: Town Meeting Procedures

Dear Town Meeting Members:

Welcome to the Town of Arlington's 213th Annual Town Meeting. Thank you for keeping the debate at last year's Annual on topic, focused, thoughtful, well delivered and within the scope of the articles. Let's keep it up this year and hold true to our civility pledge, as we carefully consider the Articles before us.

Arlington's Town Meeting is conducted in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, our Town By-Laws, traditions, customs and practices that we have followed for many years, with guidance provided by the principles and rules of conduct contained in *Town Meeting Time, a Handbook of Parliamentary Law*. Copies of *Town Meeting Time* can be purchased for \$25.00 each. If you would like a copy, please bring a check payable to the Massachusetts Moderators Association to the first meeting, or purchase one online at: www.massmoderators.org.

We will again use a "Consent Agenda" for noncontroversial, no action and housekeeping Articles. We will conduct two separate electronic votes on all of the articles. Attached is the Consent Agenda Articles and Procedure. This will be done on the first night.

In order to provide your fellow Town Meeting Members with ample time and opportunity to fully prepare for each Article, it is required that all substitute motions and substantial amendments to motions must be submitted both electronically to me at JLeone@town.arlington.ma.us and in writing, by providing the original and two copies to the Moderator as well as providing 150 printed copies on the table at the back of the hall, no later than the commencement of the session before which the Article is expected to be considered. The Moderator may allow exceptions to this advance filing requirement in cases of motions that are short, clear, concise and easy to understand, but such exceptions are within the exclusive discretion of the Moderator. The only blanket exception to the 48 hour rule, will be for Articles considered at the first session, April 22nd. It is suggested that prior to April 15th you e-mail your Substitute Motions to both Town Counsel, Doug Heim at DHeim@town.arlington.ma.us and to me for legal review and to allow for a determination, by me, on the scope of the substitute motions.

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Please join the Town hosted Town Meeting Members email list serve for the prior electronic distribution of materials by visiting: arlingtonma.gov/communications-center/email-subscription-lists. At the bottom of the page select the "Town Meeting Members" box to subscribe. The list is not for debate. You are required to send all substitute motions and supporting documents to me for a review of appropriateness and for posting.

We currently have over 135 Members who have requested electronic distribution of materials. This is an important step toward streamlining Town Meeting, reducing paper and printing waste, and minimizing wasted resources. If you have chosen electronic distribution, please bring your tablet, computer or electronic device to Town Meeting and log onto the Town Hall network. We will be testing the capacity of the Town Hall network in anticipation of all electronic distribution of materials on 2020.

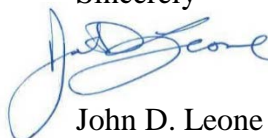
If it is your intention to utilize a Power Point or other computer aided presentation you are required to provide the computer files to Kristin DeFrancisco, Town Manager's office, KDeFrancisco@town.arlington.ma.us, prior to the meeting. If you wish it to appear on ACMI's cablecast, then you should also contact Sean Keane of ACMI at 781-777-1115, sean.keane@acmi.tv. Prior contact is critical to resolve all format and connectivity issues. It is urged that you contact them as soon as possible.

As provided by our Bylaws, Article 1, §7 (c), a speaker on each article is limited to a 7 minute period of time to speak upon their first time being called, and 5 minutes on their second trip to the microphone, all speakers for reports and announcements are limited to 4 minutes. To be fair to your fellow Town Meeting Members and hear all points of view, I ask that you not request to speak for a second time until all others have had a chance to speak once. I would like to quote Mr. Jim Doherty, Andover's Moderator until the age of 90, upon the question of time limits for speakers, ***"I don't have a formal limit, but I did tell the meeting that about three minutes is enough for anyone. After five, you put them to sleep. After seven, they're going to vote against you even if they agree with you"***. I urge you to take his sage advice to heart and remember if a point has been made once, there is no need to repeat the point.

As a matter of courtesy to our Department Heads, Boards and Committee Members, if you have a specific question, or information request of one of them, please discuss the question or information request directly with the appropriate person well in advance so that they can gather and prepare the information. All Department Head email and telephone numbers are freely available on the Town's Website. It is hoped that this will eliminate Articles being tabled or postponed due to a lack of information, and also eliminate the placing of an individual in an awkward position or begin set up for failure.

I have attached hereto the Parliamentary Guide and the Oath of Office for your review prior to being sworn in. If you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience. Finally, I will be conducting a Town Meeting Member Orientation and Warrant Review on April 18th, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. in Lyons Meeting Room at Town Hall. Please join me.

Sincerely



John D. Leone
Moderator

P.S: Due to their size the Planning Department Reports will not be mailed. They are available for Town Meeting Members to pickup at the Planning Department office.

TOWN MEETING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: What can I do to prepare for the upcoming Town Meeting?

A: Here are several things to do to prepare for Town Meeting.

- Attend the April 18th, 2019, ‘Orientation and Warrant Review session, Lyons Hearing Room
- Download and read all the material that is and available at the Town Meeting website by the Selectmen, Fin. Comm., Redevelopment Board and School Department, read the materials that were mailed to you.
- Sign up to the Town Meeting Members email distribution list.
arlingtonma.gov/communications-center/email-subscription-lists
- Review the Town Bylaws relating to Town Meeting, Title I - General Government, Article 1: Town Meetings. (<http://www.arlingtonma.gov>)

Q: What is the Warrant?

A: Required by State law, the Warrant lists the articles that are to be deliberated and decided on during Town Meeting. It acts as a notice or ‘warning’ to the citizens of the Town that the Town Meeting will take place with the Warrant Articles as the agenda items for the Town Meeting. Only items listed in the Warrant can be discussed at Town Meeting.

Q: Where can Warrant Articles and their recommended votes be found?

A: The Warrant is provided to each Town Meeting Member and a copy is left at every dwelling house in the Town. The reports of the Redevelopment Board, Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee and subsequent reports of these and other committees are available on the Town Meeting webpage, arlingtonma.gov/townmeeting , or they may be mailed to you before the start of or during Town Meeting. Updates are also available of the webpage and may be on the table at the back of Town Hall during a Town Meeting session.

Town Meeting:

Q: What should I do upon arrival at Town Hall?

A: On each night of Town Meeting, arrive a little early, 7:45 p.m., sign in at the Town Clerk’s table *in the back of the hall*, and pick up your Electronic Voting Handset and pick up the printed material from the tables at the back of the hall. Download all reports onto your electronic device from the Town Meeting Webpage. Read all these additional materials.

Q: Who has the right to speak?

A: Town Meeting Members have the right to speak once recognized by the Town Moderator. To get recognized, raise your hand and the Moderator will note that you wish to speak. Residents of Arlington may also speak once introduced by a Town Meeting Member (TMM). Non-residents may also speak, but only with the approval of the assembled Town Meeting Members. Residents and non-residents should see the Moderator prior to the start of the evenings meeting.

Q: What exactly is voted on?

A: Town Meeting considers and votes upon the recommended vote of the respective committee or board that heard the Article. If no committee submits a recommended vote, then the Articles proponent must present a substitute vote. The recommended vote on an article can be amended or substituted by the TMMs. A substitute motion or a motion to amend must be submitted, in triplicate to the Town Moderator, and to each TMM no later than the commencement of the session before which the Article is expected to be considered and debated, the “48 hour rule”.

Q: How do we know what we are voting on?

A: The Town Moderator ensures that the wording and the order of the vote is clear to the assembled TMMs.

Q: If TMMs don’t agree with the Town Moderator, what are they allowed to do?

A: If TMMs doubt the Moderator’s declaration of the Vote, five or more TMMs can stand and challenge the Vote. This prompts an electronic vote “reveal” of each members electronic vote.

Q: Why might the order in which the Articles are deliberated change, especially if some are put off until late in the session?

A: This most often happens if the supporting information for the Article or the presenter is delayed. As a response to this situation, a Motion to Table the Article or to Postpone to a time certain is then put before the meeting for a vote. Be aware that these motions are not always granted.

Q: What Rules of Order does Town Meeting use?

A: Town Meetings operate in accordance with rules of procedure established by: The General Laws of the Commonwealth; our Bylaws, Title I - General Government, Article 1: Town Meetings; local customs and traditions; as well as *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law, 3rd ed.*, a standard parliamentary handbook which provides TMMs with a complete framework that all can readily learn and understand.

OATH OF OFFICE

Raise your right hand, repeat after me using your own name, I _____, will participate fully and will fairly evaluate all matters before Town Meeting; and vote in the best interests of the Town. I support free speech and will treat others with mutual respect and will conduct myself in a civil manner that is becoming of an elected Town Meeting Member.

I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully and impartially perform the duties incumbent upon me as a Town Meeting member of the Town of Arlington in accordance with the by-laws, the Town Manager Act and the General Laws of the Commonwealth, so help me God.