



Town of Arlington

John D. Leone, Moderator

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June 8, 2020

RE: Town Meeting Procedures
June 15th, 2020 –
6:00 p.m. arrival – 6:30 commencement of meeting

Dear Town Meeting Members:

Welcome to the Town of Arlington's 214th 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 limited number of Articles before us.

As you are no doubt aware this year's Town Meeting, like our lives in general, will be vastly different. First off it will be held at Peirce Field in the AHS Football Stadium. We will have strict social distancing protocols in place as well as prepositioned seats on the field for the Town Meeting Members. Second, we will only be dealing with the financial Warrant Articles. All other Articles have been placed onto a "Consent Agenda". Third, there will be no pomp and circumstance, no Minuteman, no signing of the National Anthem, no reports of committees, no resolutions etc. We will start the evening promptly at 6:30 p.m. with a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and an Invocation. Fourth, we will not have the electronic voting system, we will be using voice votes and if necessary, tellers for standing votes.

Also, in a change of my efforts to modernize and digitize Town Meeting, this year we have provided printed reports of the Redevelopment Board, Select Board, Finance Committee, Capital Planning Committee and CPA Committee to all Town Meeting Members by mail. No copies will be available the night of Town Meeting so please bring them with you. These reports are available online on the Town Meeting webpage, arlingtonma.gov/townmeeting, along with the Warrant and reports of other Committees, Commissions and Boards. Also available on the website will be the video presentation of those Committees, Commissions or Boards that wish to present a report to Town Meeting. Please view these in advance of the Meeting. We will not be able to provide internet connectivity at Peirce Field for your tablet, computer or electronic device nor will we have any type of large electronic presentation display system.

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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 amendments to motions must be submitted no later than *Friday, June 12th, 11:00 a.m.* to me at JLeone@town.arlington.ma.us and to Town Counsel, Doug Heim at DHeim@town.arlington.ma.us, for legal review, a determination of scope and for prior distribution to the other Town Meeting Members. You must also provide the original and two copies to the Moderator, and a copy to each Town Meeting Member on the evening of the meeting. 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.

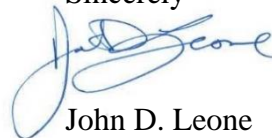
As provided by our Bylaws, Article 1, §7 (c), a speaker on each article is limited to a 7 minute period of time to speak upon their first time being called, and 5 minutes on their second trip to the microphone. Non Town Meeting members must be introduced by a Town Meeting Member using their time. To 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. As I do every year, 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. This is especially relevant this year.

A further change this year is that if a Department Head or Committee member is not presenting or expected to be questioned, then in all likelihood, they may not be in attendance. If you have a specific question, or information request from one of our Department Heads, Boards, Commissions or Committees, such as the number of tons of salt used on the roads this year, please direct your question or information request to me no later than *Thursday, June 11th, 11:00 a.m.* I will then direct it to the appropriate person and then provide the question and response to all Town Meeting Members via the TMM list serve.

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 online at: www.massmoderators.org.

I have attached hereto the a: "What to Expect"; "Key Points", Parliamentary Guide; and, the Town Meeting Q & A with Oath of Office, for your review. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely



John D. Leone
Moderator

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.

- Download and read all of the material that is available at the Town Meeting website, arlingtonma.gov/townmeeting , read the materials that were mailed to you.
- View the video presentations of the Committees and Commissions who usually present in person on the Town Meeting website.
- Sign up for the Town Meeting Members email distribution list arlingtonma.gov/communications-center/email-subscription-lists . At the bottom of the page select the "*Town Meeting Members*" box to subscribe. This is a non-discussion list. The purpose of the list is to disseminate materials about Town Meeting Warrant Articles only (substitute motions, presentations, etc.) in advance of debate and voting so all members can be well prepared.
- Review the Town Bylaws relating to Town Meeting, Title I - General Government, Article 1: Town Meetings. (<http://www.arlingtonma.gov>)
- Bring all of the mailed printed materials and a bottle of water to the meeting on the 15th.

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 those 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 .

Town Meeting:

Q: What should I do upon arrival at Peirce Field?

A: On each night of Town Meeting, begin arrival at, 6:00 p.m.. Please follow the directional signage and directions of the Volunteer Medical Corp members who will be assisting. Sign in at the Town Clerk’s table then proceed to the prepositioned seating area.

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 must 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 a copy must be provided to each TMM prior to the commencement of the meeting. It is required that all substitute motions and amendments to motions must be submitted no later than *Friday, June 12th, 11:00 a.m.* to me at JLeone@town.arlington.ma.us

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 a standing 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.

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.