

# Mapping the Road to Town Meeting November 9, 2017

# Mapping the Road to Town Meeting

## Sessions:

- **From Issue to Warrant Article: Make it Happen!**

November 9, 2017 –Fowler Library

- **How it Works and How to Work it: Advocacy, Public Hearings, and You**

January 11, 2018 – Harvey Wheeler Community Center

- **Warrant Review: Be Prepared for the 2018 Town Meeting**

April 3, 2018 – Hearing Room at the Town House

# Town Meeting

- The 2018 Town Meeting is at the CCRHS from April 9 – April 12<sup>th</sup>. Town Meeting begins at 7:00pm on each night.
- Town Meeting is the legislative body of the Town and its citizens are the legislators.
- All registered voters of the Town are eligible to attend and to vote on all matters before the legislative body.
- You must be present to vote, there is no absentee ballot.

From Issue to Warrant Article...  
Make it Happen!

# Mapping the Road to Town Meeting

November 9, 2017

# What's the Big Idea?

- Identified a need?
- Found a solution?
- Proposing an Initiative?
- Presenting a Broader Issue for Community Consensus?

# Town Meeting Business

## Spending / Appropriation

Available funds

Borrowing

Within the Levy Limit

Over the Levy Limit

Prop 2 ½

Ballot Question

## Governance

Bylaws and Zoning

Maps

Charter/Special Acts

Local Acceptance of  
Legislation

Policies

## Sense of the Meeting

Resolutions

# Is it a Town Meeting Idea?

- Appropriations and Borrowing \$
- Budgets: Town & School
- Bylaws (general, zoning)
- Classification/Compensation (non-union)
- Community Preservation Committee recommendations
- Enterprise / Revolving Fund expenditures
- Land acquisition and disposition
- Resolutions (sense of the meeting)
- State Law Acceptance / Local Initiatives
- Street Acceptance / Grants of Easement

# Research



Don't reinvent the wheel!

# Getting your Idea ready for Town Meeting: Drafting the Language

- **Talk** to the board or committee that will be responsible for it.
- **Discuss** your idea with Town staff
- **Look** at other communities that have passed similar measures . . .

# Putting it in Writing

- What will it accomplish?
- What will it cost?
- Who or what does it affect?
- Beware of unintended consequences!
- Who is responsible for carrying it out?
- Who will enforce it?
- Who else has done it?
- Who supports it?

# What's what?

## Definitions

- **Warrant:** agenda for the meeting
- **Article:** an agenda item on the warrant
- **Motion:** specific action to be taken
- **Amendment:** suggested change to the action
- **Vote:** final outcome

# Learning from the Past

- Has Concord addressed this issue in the past?
- What happened and why?
- Learn from past town meetings.

# Constructing a Warrant Article

1. Title
2. To determine whether the Town will vote to ...
3. Add a verb – to appropriate, to adopt, to authorize, to accept, etc.
4. Insert what you want to do
5. Insert cost (if any) and source of funds (include options)
6. Who will be responsible?
7. Add "... or take any other action relative thereto."

# Aerial Ladder Truck Replacement

## Article's appearance in the Warrant Book

**Article xx.** To determine whether the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds in the Treasury, or authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow by the issuance of bonds or notes under the provisions of Chapter 44 of the Massachusetts General Laws the sum of \$900,000 or any other sum, for the purchase of an aerial ladder truck and any necessary related equipment, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Town Manager, or take any other action relative thereto.

# Aerial Ladder Truck Replacement

## ... Warrant Article Deconstructed

- **Article xx.** To determine whether the Town will vote
- to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds in the Treasury, or authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow by the issuance of bonds or notes
- under the provisions of Chapter 44 of the Massachusetts General Laws
- the sum of \$900,000, or any other sum,
- for the purchase of an aerial ladder truck and any necessary related equipment,
- said funds to be expended under the direction of the Town Manager,
- or take any other action relative thereto.

# Town Meeting Preview Meeting

- When is it?
- Who goes?
- All boards, committees, petitioners and interested public
- Get on the agenda
- Share ideas and get preliminary feedback
- Get a sense of what else is coming
- Networking opportunity

# Research: Who Weighs in on What?



# The Value of Committee and Staff Input

- Clarify language
- Effective date
- Practical implementation
- Sponsoring the idea as a warrant article

# Getting Committee Support

- Get on their agenda
- Be prepared
- Be open to suggestions

# Committee-sponsored or Committee support?

## Sponsored

- Becomes the committee's article
- Committee decides the final language and makes presentation at public hearings and Town Meeting

## Support

- Petitioner responsible for presentations
- Committee may speak in favor at Town Meeting
- Committee may speak against it ... be prepared

# Petitioner's Responsibilities

- Preparing to go it alone
- Petition Form
  - Language
  - Signatures
  - Deadlines

**TOWN OF CONCORD  
TOWN MEETING -- CITIZEN PETITION FORM  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

Please return the Citizen Petition form to the Town Manager's Office

A minimum of 10 signatures of registered voters in Concord is required. It is suggested that you obtain a few more than that.

We the undersigned registered voters of Concord, do hereby petition the Board of Selectmen to include the following Article in the Warrant of the next Annual Town Meeting.

Warrant Article Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Warrant Article Language

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

	Printed Name (substantially as registered)	Signature (substantially as registered)	Voting Address
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			

Total Signatures Certified: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

Name the Article

Finalize warrant article language **before** you get signatures.

Voting address must match what we have on file (voter reg. cards)

10 signatures: Annual TM Article

100 signatures: Special TM Article

200 signatures: To Call a Special TM

# Participation Begins with You!

- Questions and Comments



# Stay tuned for ...

- Session 2: How It Works and How To Work It – Advocacy and Public Hearings
  - Thursday, January 11, 2018, 7:30-9:00pm
  - Harvey Wheeler Community Center
- Session 3: Warrant Review – Be Prepared for Town Meeting 2018
  - Tuesday, April 3, 2018, 7:30-9:30pm
  - Town House Hearing Room