



Preparing for Town Meeting: Timeline and Committee Responsibilities

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ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Annual Town Meeting Cycle

Phase I: Budgets, By-laws, Other Articles

August through November

- Budget Process
- CPA Process
- Zoning By-Law Amendments
- Committee-sponsored Articles
- Citizen Petitions



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Annual Town Meeting Cycle

Phase II: Preparation of the Warrant

December & January

- Town Meeting Preview Meeting
- Warrant opens (this year: December 7)
- Draft articles due
- Warrant closes at 4:00 pm (this year: January 10)
- Warrant Review Meeting w/Town Counsel
- Warrant printed, posted, mailed to households



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Annual Town Meeting Cycle

Phase III: Hearings

February & March

- Select Board Hearing (Feb 24)
- Planning Board Hearing (Feb 25)
- FinCom Hearing: Town budget (Mar 9)
- FinCom Hearing: School budgets/CPC (Mar 16)
- FinCom Hearing: Enterprise Funds (Mar 23)



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Annual Town Meeting Cycle

Phase IV: Motions & Presentations

March

- All draft Motions submitted
- Consent Calendar finalized
- FinCom Report to Printer
- Motions Review Meeting w/ Town Counsel
- ATM Presentations and Handouts submitted
- ATM Presentation Coordination Meeting
- FinCom Report mailed to households



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Annual Town Meeting Cycle

Phase V: Annual Town Meeting

April

- ATM Dates Reserved in Everyone's Calendars
- PowerPoint Presentations Approved and Pre-loaded
- Handouts Approved, Copied & Delivered
- Spoken Presentations Rehearsed & Timed
- Any Amendments Vetted & Prepared



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article

- Develop proposal within your Committee structure
 - Observe Open Meeting Law
 - Take and consider public comment
 - Coordinate with other Committees which also may have responsibility or interest
 - Keep Committee Minutes up to date and posted
- Discuss proposal with Select Board Liaison (ideally, in September or sooner)



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- For articles with financial impact:
 - Quantify impact and identify source of funds
 - Ask Committee staff to discuss funding with Town Manager
 - If no Committee staff support, discuss funding with your appointing authority (SB or TM)
- Discuss proposal with FinCom liaison (if none, contact FinCom Chair)



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Prepare draft of proposed Article (ideally by early November)
 - Use staff support
 - Use Select Board Liaison support
 - May request Town Counsel review through SB Liaison or Town Manager
- Summarize at Town Meeting Preview Meeting



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Finalize Article for Warrant
 - Article gives NOTICE to voters of what is to be deliberated and voted
 - Standard "...or any other action" language included in Article allows adjustment in Motion
 - Draft Article due by December 16
 - Final Article due before Warrant closes January 10



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Present Article (Motion) at Pre-Town Meeting Hearing
 - Opportunity to rehearse for Town Meeting
 - Best to have Motion drafted (but not required)
 - If PowerPoint slides, use Electronic Presentation Guidelines and Template at www.concordma.gov
 - Note comments and questions to improve presentation and perhaps to modify motion



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Submit Finalized Motion by deadline
 - Motion (not Article) is what Town Meeting acts upon
 - Motion must be within scope of Article
 - Town Counsel reviews all Motions
 - Motions under 100 words presented on first and last PowerPoint slides
 - Motions over 100 words must be printed on handout and are moved “as printed in handout”



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Submit PowerPoints & handouts by deadlines
 - Conform to guidelines
 - Secure Moderator approval
 - Pre-load slides on Town's computers for projection
 - Copy handouts double-sided on white paper in quantity required by Moderator
 - Deliver to CCHS by 6 p.m. (or to TM's office by noon) on day Article expected to be reached



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Attend Town Meeting Coordination Meeting
 - Moderator assigns Presentation and speaking times to identified individuals
 - Town Clerk notices all Committees for meeting on all nights of Town Meeting



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Prepare your oral presentation for Town Meeting
 - Read your presentation aloud (best way to edit)
 - Time yourself
 - Watch the video tutorial on speaking at Town Meeting by Public Information Officer Erin Stevens



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If NOT Sponsoring an Article

- Read the Warrant
 - Identify Article(s) within your Committee's scope
 - Place discussion of identified Article(s) on meeting agenda
 - If appropriate, invite Article sponsor to meeting
 - Invite and consider public comment
 - May be best to hold off on recommendation until after ATM Hearing on Article(s)



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If NOT Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Attend hearing on Article(s) within Committee's scope of responsibility
 - Aim for robust Committee attendance
 - Notice meeting of committee to coincide with date, time & place of Hearing
 - Determine whether your Committee wishes to speak at the Hearing and, if so, prepare statement (remember to observe Open Meeting Law)



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If NOT Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- Recommendation options: (1) affirmative action, (2) no action, or (3) no recommendation at all
- If making a recommendation, Committee may
 - Ask the Moderator for time to speak
 - Ask the Moderator to announce recommendation
 - Prepare a handout on your recommendation



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If NOT Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- If speaking on an Article, attend the Moderator's Town Meeting Coordination Meeting
- If asking the Moderator to announce your recommendation, send the request to moderator@concordma.gov
- Speaking as an individual, not as Committee member



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Committee ATM Responsibilities

If NOT Sponsoring an Article (con't)

- If distributing a handout:
 - Follow the guidelines for handout preparation
 - Submit handout to Moderator for approval
 - Deliver required number of double-sided copies of handout printed on white paper to CCHS Cafeteria by 6:00 pm (or to Town Manager's office by noon) on the day the Article is expected to be taken up



ATM Timeline & Committee Responsibilities

Concord relies upon its Boards
and Committees for so much of its
good governance

THANK YOU!!