



Article: 89

Warrant Article Title:

RESOLUTION / HYBRID TOWN MEETING

Warrant Article Text:

To see if the Town will vote to support the implementation of hybrid capabilities for Town Meeting; or take any action related thereto.

Requested By:

Alexander Bagnall and ten registered voters

Report Excerpt:

The Town Meeting Procedures Committee refers this resolution to Town Meeting (4-1).

COMMENT: The Town's exploration of hybrid participation at Town Meeting began with the Hybrid Town Meeting Study Committee¹, formed by the 2023 Special Town Meeting. Though this resolution is nonbinding, the Committee expects its disposition to provide important input on whether to take further steps toward a remote-hybrid option for Town Meeting. Committee members do not all agree about the form, if any, that hybrid meetings should take. The Committee expects that Town Meeting will be consulted again if further explorations lead to proposals to change the format of Town Meeting.

¹ The report of the Hybrid Town Meeting Study Committee to the 2025 Annual Town Meeting:
<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/73849/638811829568300000>

Vote Language:

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following Resolution:

Whereas, the Moderator has the latitude to allow for remote participation.

Whereas, we have much of the technology already in place for remote participation, including audio and video capture.

Whereas, the costs associated with the equipment and personnel support required for hybrid Town Meeting fall within a fairly wide range and need to be more specifically determined.

Whereas, a limited pilot implementation could provide much needed information about the equipment and personnel costs.

Whereas, the next contract for a voting system (clickers) will include provisions for location-agnostic vote tabulation.

Whereas, attending an in-person meeting two nights a week for several weeks is a significant barrier to participation for reasons related to family responsibilities, travel, etc.

Whereas, neighboring towns, including Lexington and Belmont, have implemented hybrid Town Meeting.

Whereas, a hybrid format has the potential to significantly enhance participation for Members with mobility, health, and/or other challenges.

Be it hereby resolved that it is a goal of the Meeting to remove unnecessary barriers to participation in our Town government.

Be it hereby resolved that it is the will of Town Meeting that the Town continue to take the next steps in creating the capability for Town Meeting Members to participate in Town Meetings remotely, beginning with a limited-size pilot.

[Town Meeting Procedures Committee Report](#)