

Rules of Order and Procedure

2024 Annual Town Meeting

1. The 2024 Town Meeting requires a quorum of two hundred and fifty (250) registered Medfield voters to commence. The Town Meeting shall begin when the Town Clerk acknowledges the quorum requirement is met and either reads the return of service on the Warrant, or the Moderator waives the reading.
2. The subject matter of the Town Meeting is limited to the Articles set forth in the 2024 Report on the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. The Warrant Committee Reports are contained in your Warrant, and will not be read out loud unless otherwise noted.
3. The only non-voters that are authorized to attend Town Meeting are 1) invited guests; 2) individuals providing technical or other support; or 3) Medfield students. All non-voting visitors invited to the Town Meeting shall be seated in an area designated for visitors and all Medfield students who are not yet registered to vote shall sit in an area reserved for students.
4. By my authority as Moderator, all Town Employees and individuals employed as consultants to the Town will be authorized to participate in Town Meeting as non-voters. No other non-voter is authorized to participate. Participation in Town Meeting as a non-voter does not include the ability to make a motion or register a vote.
5. The order of the Articles will be determined by the Moderator using the following general guideline:
 - a. Articles on the Consent Agenda.
 - b. Articles pertaining to Personnel issues which by law must be addressed before consideration of the Operating Budget.
 - c. The Operating Budget.
 - d. Remaining Articles requiring a simple majority vote.
 - e. Articles requiring a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) or greater vote.
6. The Moderator will recognize the Warrant Committee for the purpose of making the Main Motion on each Article, except in instances where the Warrant Committee is recommending dismissal and the sponsor of the Article does not agree. In such a case, the Moderator will recognize the sponsor of the article for the purpose of making a positive Main Motion. Immediately after the Main Motion, the Moderator will recognize a member of the Warrant Committee for the purpose of providing the recommendation of the Warrant Committee. The Moderator will then ask for any report required by law from a Town board or agency. There will be no requirement of a 'second' from the floor on Main Motions.

7. As each article of the Warrant is presented, the discussion and the vote are not on the Article as printed in the Warrant, but rather on the Motion that is on the floor for consideration. There may be several Motions at the meeting that will not precisely track the Articles as printed in the Warrant Report.
8. To avoid confusion, the Moderator will allow only one Motion to Amend to be pending on the floor at any one time.
9. Any voter wishing to speak to the Town Meeting should go to the designated microphone. There will be three microphones in the gymnasium, one for supporters of the article, marked "YES", one for opponents of the article, marked "NO", and one marked "?" for questions only. In the event that there is an overflow room or other alternate voting area, that area may only have one microphone. Upon being recognized by the Moderator, the speaker should identify themselves by name, street address and position in Town government (if any).
10. All speakers shall be recognized by the Moderator before providing their comments or views. It is requested that all participants speak to the community by generally addressing their comments and views 'through' the Moderator.
11. The Moderator will enforce a two-minute time limit on all speakers, which will be tracked by a digital clock in view of the voters. There may be occasions where the Moderator allows a reasonable amount of additional time, depending on the circumstances and based upon his best judgment.
12. Every speaker must directly address the article at issue. Any comments about an individual, an article not currently under consideration, or other topics not relevant to the article will result in redirection by the Moderator, and may result in the speaker forfeiting any remaining time.
13. It is the Moderator's discretion to end debate, which in certain instances may be done even though a voter is standing at a microphone.
14. It will be the practice of the Moderator to take voice votes. If the Moderator is in doubt as to the outcome of the voice vote, the Moderator will ask for a show of hands. If the Moderator is still in doubt, a count by standing vote will be taken. Such a standing count shall be administered by the Deputy Moderator. Once the voting procedures commence, no further discussion will be allowed on the Motion until the Moderator declares the outcome of the vote.
15. If members of the Town Meeting doubt the ruling of the Moderator on a voice or hand vote, by state statute, any seven voters may demand that a standing vote be taken.
16. State statutes and Town Bylaws require that Motions of a certain subject matter be enacted by more than a majority vote. Certain Articles will require a supermajority and the Moderator will inform the Town Meeting of the need for a supermajority when the Article is introduced.

17. The Town Charter (Sec. 2-12) provides: “A vote of the town meeting shall be subject to only one motion for reconsideration and such motion shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote. Action on any motion for reconsideration shall be postponed until the next session unless the current session has been declared to be the last. No motion for rescission shall be in order.” The Moderator reserves the discretion to rule on the appropriateness of any reconsideration.
18. The Moderator has broad discretion in the administration, operation, and orchestration of the Town Meeting. Moderator’s discretion will be grounded in applicable State Law, Medfield’s Charter and By-Laws, general principles of fairness, and efficiency.
19. Please, all cell phones and other portable devices should be turned ‘off’ or ‘silent’ throughout the Town Meeting.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, the May 6, 2024 Annual Town Meeting, if requested, will be offered by assisted listening devices or an interpreter certified in sign language. Requests for alternative formats should be made as far in advance as possible, but no fewer than 5 days. Should you need assistance, please notify the Town Administrator’s office at 508-906-3012 or bfranklin@medfield.net.