

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING TO ATTEND WELLFLEET'S ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Hello Voters,

Wellfleet's Annual Town Meeting is when we fulfill our role as citizen-legislators and decide many issues, including our Town's budget and bylaws. Needless to say, this year's meeting will be very different from our normal Town Meeting. Town staff have put a lot of thought and work in creating a setting that allows us to meet and conduct business in the midst of a global pandemic.

The Annual Town Meeting will begin at 10 A.M on Saturday, September 12, 2020 on the Elementary School ballfield. Check-in will open 45 minutes earlier at 9:15 A.M.

With the safety of voters and town officials as our goal, here's what you can expect when you come to Town Meeting.

PLAN SUBJECT TO CHANGE IF HEALTH REGULATIONS CHANGE

PARKING:

The parking spaces facing the ballfield are reserved for handicapped parking.

MASKS:

Masks must be worn from the moment you exit your vehicle until the moment you return to your vehicle at the end of the meeting. If you have a medical reason why you cannot wear a mask, please inform the Fire Department personnel as you approach the school and before you join the screening line. If you cannot wear a mask, you will be required to sit in a seating area separated from other voters.

ARRIVAL & SCREENING:

The screening and check-in process will begin at 9:15 AM. The screening line will be along the fence on the outside of the ballfield. Please maintain a safe distance while in line. If you attend with other members of your household, please stay together throughout the arrival and check-in process.

Before you enter the ballfield to be checked-in for the meeting, a member of the Wellfleet Fire Department will ask you a few questions and take your temperature with a non-contact thermal instrument. This process will only take a few moments. There will be a list of symptoms posted near the screening line. If you have any of the symptoms listed, or if you show evidence of a fever, we ask that you not attend the meeting for the safety of your fellow voters.

CHECK-IN:

When you approach the entrance to the ballfield, you will be directed to one of the registrars. All registration tables will accept all voters; you do not need to go to a specific table based on your last name.

Only voters will be admitted to the ballfield. There will be a separate seating area outside the ballfield for non-voters, who will also be required to wear masks and maintain a safe distance at all times. This restriction does not apply to town officials who are non-voters but are required by charter to attend Town Meeting.

Children may accompany parents who are voters. They must wear masks (if over the age of 2). Children must stay with their parents at all times, remain distanced from other meeting participants, and not distract voters from the business of the meeting. There is no provision for childcare at this meeting.

SEATING:

After you have been checked in, a volunteer will help you find a seat. Seats will be arranged in pairs and have been specifically placed in rows on a grid pattern to maintain a safe distance between voters. Please do not move the chairs for any reason. If there are more than two people in your household party, we ask that you be willing to sit separately. If you must sit together, please ask a volunteer for assistance. Once you are seated, we ask you remain seated for the duration of the meeting unless you need to use the restrooms. Please cooperate with the volunteers.

There will be some seats under a tent for shelter from the sun, but these should be reserved for older, more vulnerable voters. A special seating area is reserved for those with limited mobility. Depending on attendance, there will likely not be enough seats under the tent for everyone, so you should plan on bringing a hat and sunscreen.

You may bring your own beach chairs or a blanket, but you must set them up at least 6 feet away from others. There will be ample room at the rear of the tented area in the outfield area to set up your own chairs or blankets, and our audio system provider assures us that there will be no problem hearing the meeting anywhere on the ballfield.

BATHROOMS:

Porta-potties, hand wash stations and hand sanitizer will be available at the meeting.

NO SMOKING, NO AEROSOL INSECT REPELLENTS OR SUNSCREENS:

No smoking is allowed on the ballfield. Smoking is allowed only on the paved surfaces at least 100 feet away from any seating or check-in areas.

If you bring insect repellent or sunscreen, it must be a liquid or wipe-on type. **Absolutely no aerosol spray insect repellent or sunscreen will be allowed within the ballfield area.**

NO POLITICAL BUTTONS, CLOTHING OR CAMPAIGN SIGNS

Town Meeting is a non-partisan legislative body. No political buttons, clothing with political or campaign slogans, or campaign signs are permitted within the Town Meeting venue. Any political activity must take place outside the Town Meeting (in this case, outside of the ballfield fence) and must not impede voters checking in or interfere with the meeting in any way.

FOOD AND DRINK:

You may bring your own snacks and beverages, but no alcoholic beverages will be allowed. There will be bottled drinking water available for distribution, courtesy of the Fire Department.

MOTIONS, TOWN REPORTS AND INFORMATIONAL HANDOUTS:

For this meeting, there will be no PowerPoint presentations. Each seat will have a booklet with the wording of the motions that are expected to be made under each article. There will also be a copy of the annual town report at each seat, along with any handouts related to individual articles.

Presenters of articles and others who wish to make presentations may prepare informational handouts for distribution to the voters. **All handouts are strictly limited to one page, double-sided, and should be sent to Courtney Butler, Executive Assistant (courtney.butler@wellfleet-ma.gov) before Sept. 1 if possible, and absolutely no later than Friday, Sept. 4.**

QUORUM:

In accordance with special state legislation relating to municipal governance during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Selectboard, with the approval of the Moderator, voted on July 28, 2020 to reduce the quorum for this Annual Town Meeting to 100 duly registered voters. The meeting will begin promptly as soon as a quorum has been achieved. Voters are strongly encouraged to come early and complete the screening and check-in process so the meeting can begin on time at 10 A.M.

DEBATE:

If you wish to speak during the meeting, please stand in place at your seating location and wait to be recognized. A volunteer “microphone wrangler” will bring a microphone to your location once you have been recognized. Only the wranglers will handle the microphones, which will be held on booms and brought to a voter who wishes to speak. Microphones will be sanitized between speakers. Please identify yourself clearly once recognized, and before speaking, as the Moderator may not be able recognize you by name because of distance and masking.

VOTING:

When you check in, you will be given a brightly colored piece of paper. This will be your voter card for this meeting. Votes will be taken by a show of cards held in the air. If the outcome of a vote cannot be determined by the Moderator by this method, there will be a counted vote taken.

SOUND SYSTEM, RECORDING AND FM BROADCAST:

The sound system for this meeting has been designed to make sure that all voters can follow the proceedings and participate in the meeting no matter where they're seated on the ballfield. There will be no visual slide presentations, so there should be no concern about visibility from any of the seating areas.

The meeting will be video recorded for later viewing by those unable to attend. The meeting will also be broadcast live on radio at FM 92.7. The FM signal should carry about a mile from the ballfield, so anyone within that distance who wishes to follow the meeting without checking in can listen on the radio. If you choose to listen in your car anywhere near the ballfield, you must leave your car engine off.

LEAVING THE MEETING:

Please try to stay for the duration of the meeting to minimize foot traffic that would disrupt the meeting and bring you too close to other voters.

After the Town Meeting is dissolved, voters are asked to remain in their seats and leave only when their row is called. This will help to minimize crowding at the exits and maintain safe distancing. In order to maintain social distancing and allow everyone to leave the meeting in a timely manner, we ask that you not linger outside the ballfield once the meeting ends.

This town meeting will be a unique experience for us all and will become part of Wellfleet's history. I ask you all to be patient, maintain your good humor, and respect one another as we work through these challenges together.

Dan Silverman
Wellfleet Town Moderator