

# Town of Randolph

## David Willcox, Town Moderator



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<http://randolph.nh.gov>

### MEMORANDUM

**Re: Town Meeting 2021**

**To: Randolph Town Voters**

With the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus, the Town of Randolph is planning to be proactive in protecting health, while also ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate in our Town Meeting, the central annual event of our local democracy.

This year, the two parts of Town Meeting will be divided. Voting by secret ballot for officers, for Land-Use Ordinance amendments and for any other measures that require a secret ballot, will take place as usual on the **second Tuesday in March (March 9<sup>th</sup>.)** No-excuse absentee voting is allowed and encouraged while, for those who prefer to vote in person, the safety procedures put in place during last fall's state primary and general elections will be followed.

The business meeting, which would ordinarily bring us all together in the Meeting Room for an extended period of time, presents greater health challenges. We are, therefore, postponing the business meeting to **June 1, 2021**, when the intensity of the coronavirus danger may have eased, or, if it hasn't, when we can arrange to hold it either outdoors or in another venue which can accommodate everyone safely spaced six feet apart.

The deadlines which always precede Town Meeting will remain the same:

*January 29<sup>th</sup> is the final date for signing up to run for office;*

*February 2<sup>nd</sup> is the date by which all petitioned articles have to be submitted to Linda Dupont in the selectmen's office;*

*March 2<sup>nd</sup>, copies of the Town Report will be made available at the Town Hall.*

*Budget Hearing will be held at the Town Hall, starting at 6:00 pm on February 8<sup>th</sup>.*

*[The Cooperative School District will hold its budget hearing on January 28<sup>th</sup> and its District Meeting on March 4<sup>th</sup>. The District Meeting will take place in the high school gym.]*

Enclosed with this letter you will find a stamped return envelope and a form for requesting absentee ballots. There will be three ballots this year: one for the election of officers, one for the Land-Use Ordinance amendments and one for the school board. Those wishing to vote absentee should return the application as soon as convenient. The ballots, and another stamped return envelope, will be sent to you. Again, please fill out the ballots and send them back promptly. Remember to mark the “physical disability” reason for voting absentee, make sure that your name and address is on the envelope and sign the form in the space provided. If you prefer to drop the sealed envelope off at Town Hall instead of mailing it, feel free to do so. This time, you may place it in the drop box.

On **March 8<sup>th</sup>**, processing (not including counting) of the absentee ballots so far received will take place at the Town Hall between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm. Please note that will be the only opportunity for challenging those ballots.

On **March 9, 2021**, the polls will open at 11:00 am and stay open until 7:00 pm. When voters arrive at the lobby of the Town Hall, they may be asked to wait outside until they can enter without crowding those already in the building. Once inside, they will be asked to wear masks and have temperature checks. After leaving the lobby, voter will be asked to observe social distancing and follow the directions of election officials. We will try to get you in and out again as promptly as possible, while ensuring everyone’s safety.

If our Town Health Officers (John McDowell and Barbara Arnold) have any reason to believe a voter presents a medical danger to others, that voter will be shown to a separate space where they can vote without entering the general voting area.

The business meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup> will start at 5:30 pm and run to 7:00 pm. The actual location will depend on the circumstances at the time, and we may have to make some adjustments to the usual procedure. More information will be given out as we get closer to the event.

I am sorry that this devastating disease has disrupted the settled pattern of our Town Meeting practice, but, with your cooperation, I am confident that we can, despite the unusual conditions, have a successful Town Meeting.

Thank you all.

***David Willcox, Town Moderator***