

Notes for Presenters at the November 16th STM

In Littleton, we have never needed to impose strict time limits on presentations or debate at Town Meeting. However, given recent experience at previous Town Meetings with some of the articles on this warrant I am proposing some common sense guidelines which I hope will move matters forward efficiently while also giving citizens the opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions.

I believe that 12-15 minutes time is more than adequate for most presentations. And by presentation, I mean all remarks by the article sponsors and any visual aids, such as PowerPoint slides. My observation is that the longer a presentation goes the greater the odds that Town Meeting tunes out and loses interest. Article proponents and opponents will be given equal time and opportunity for a single presentation. After 12 minutes I will remind presenters to begin concluding their remarks. Anyone who anticipates difficulty keeping their presentation to 15 minutes or less should contact me directly.

Those planning a PowerPoint presentation should email their slides to the Selectmen's office no later than Monday, November 14th so that I will have adequate time to review them. Final presentations should be sent no later than November 16th at 12:00pm. My only advice to those using PowerPoint is to avoid being wordy and present summary level text and information. The goal is for people to listen to your presentation and not try to read it from the screen. Keep charts/graphs simple as well so that they can be seen clearly by everyone in the gymnasium. In the event of technical difficulties be prepared to carry on with your presentation without slides.

Debate is not subject to time limits; however, there are some simple rules. You must be recognized by the Moderator in order to speak and that includes responding to questions raised during debate. I will also remind Town Meeting voters to please not speak more than once on an article if others have not spoken and to resist the urge to simply reiterate the comment of others. I intend to recognize speakers both pro and con regarding the various articles and will not entertain moving the question until both sides have had the opportunity to be heard. Having said that, please trust that I will move things along if the comments get repetitive or redundant.

I am looking forward to the November 16th Special Town meeting and would be happy to answer any questions that presenters or citizens may have. I can be reached by email at timgoddard@verizon.net or by cell phone at 978-501-2207.

Thanks,

Tim Goddard, Town Moderator