

What you can do as a Town Meeting Member

Steve Revilak

Nov. 12, 2016

The Structure of Town Government

- ▶ Board of Selectmen (Executive Branch)
- ▶ Town Meeting (Legislative Branch)
- ▶ Town Manager

Types of Town Meeting

- ▶ Representative town meeting (sometimes called a “limited town meeting”). Members are elected.
- ▶ Open town meeting. Any registered voter can be a member.

Do you get paid for doing this?

- ▶ No
- ▶ But, participating gives you a voice in decisions that directly affect your community.

Arlington has a representative town meeting. Each precinct has 12 members, who are elected for three-year terms (252 members total).

Things town meeting deals with

All of town meetings business is contained in the *Warrant*.

Examples:

- ▶ Any changes to town bylaws and zoning
- ▶ Operating Budgets
- ▶ Capital expenses
- ▶ Financial Appropriations and revolving funds
- ▶ Community Preservation Act

(We'll talk more about the warrant later)

If you need to get elected

- ▶ Get Nomination Papers from your town clerk
- ▶ Gather signatures
- ▶ Campaign
- ▶ Election day

Nominations usually happen during Jan–Feb, with the town election in April. (Check your town's website for specific dates)

Gathering Signatures

E229

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts TOWN NOMINATION PAPER

DATE and TIME received by
Board of Registrars

TOWN ARLINGTON

ATTENTION REGISTRARS: Before certifying signatures, see Instruction to Registrars on reverse side of this paper.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

INSTRUCTION TO CANDIDATES

Fill in all the required candidate information prior to circulating nomination papers. Call the Town Clerk about campaign finance reporting requirements.

DO NOT ALTER THIS NOMINATION PAPER IN ANY WAY. ADDITIONAL MARKINGS ON THIS PAPER MAY DISQUALIFY ANY SIGNATURES ON THIS PAPER.

DEADLINES

Nomination papers must be submitted to the Board of Registrars of Voters for certification of names by 5 p.m.

SATURDAY , FEBRUARY 7, 2015
day date

Nomination papers must be filed with the Town Clerk by 5 p.m.

--- , ---
day date

On at least ONE of the nomination papers, have the Registrars complete and sign the Certificate of Voter Registration which is printed on the other side of this paper.

SIGNER INFORMATION

INSTRUCTIONS TO SIGNERS

For your signature to be valid, you must be a registered voter in the town named above and your signature should be written substantially as registered.

If you are prevented by physical disability from writing, you may authorize some person to write your name and residence in your presence.

TYPE OR PRINT:

NAME OF CANDIDATE STEPHEN A. REVILAK

RESIDENCE 111 SUNNYSIDE AVE. ARLINGTON 02474
street & number town zip code

OFFICE TOWN MEETING MEMBER PR-1
exact title of office

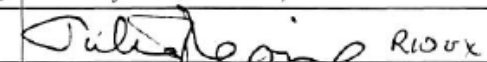
TERM 3 YRS CANDIDATE FOR RE-ELECTION N/A
years yes no

POLITICAL DESIGNATION (if any) N/A
not more than three words

I ACCEPT THE NOMINATION 
written signature

SIGNERS' STATEMENT

We are qualified voters of this town, and in accordance with the provisions of law, nominate the candidate named above for town office.

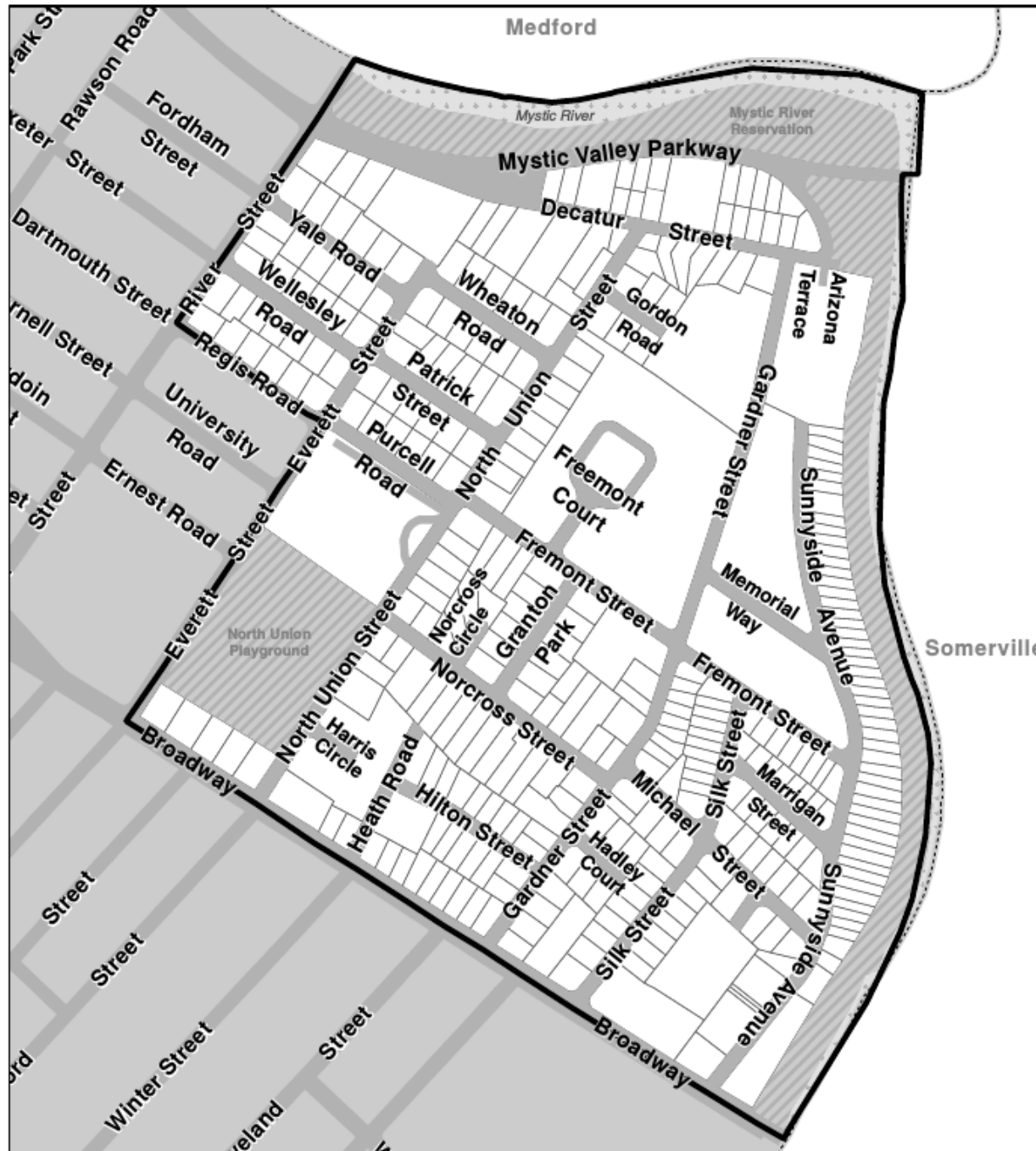
CHECK	I SIGNATURES to be made in person with name substantially as registered (except in case of physical disability as stated above)	II NOW REGISTERED AT (street, number and apartment number, if any) (town will be the same as stated above)	PRECINCT
1	<u></u> Rivoix	<u>111 Sunnyside Ave</u>	

Gathering Signatures (2)

You'll need 10 valid signatures from registered voters in your precinct.

- ▶ In order to validate a signature, the town clerk must be able to match the name with voter registration records.
- ▶ If necessary, ask the signer to print their name next to the signature.
- ▶ Gather extra signatures
- ▶ Going door-to-door, you're likely to gather 6–10 signatures/hour.
- ▶ Avoid stray marks.
- ▶ Be sure to turn in signatures by the deadline.

Campaigning



Campaigning (2)

- ▶ Get a map of your precinct
- ▶ Work on an elevator pitch
- ▶ Put together a schedule (i.e., which days, what times)
- ▶ Knock on doors, introduce yourself
- ▶ More fun when done with friends

(Note: OCPF considers town meeting a form of direct democracy, rather than an elected office. You won't need to form a campaign committee.)

Election Day

- ▶ Be sure to vote.
- ▶ Stop by your polling place a few minutes before closing, to see the election results.

The Schedule

- ▶ Town meeting starts in April, and goes until you get through the warrant (typically a few weeks)
- ▶ Arlington town meetings are held at town hall, from 8–11pm on Mondays and Wednesdays
- ▶ Additional town meetings (“Special town meetings”) can be called during the year, if needed

The Cast of Characters

- ▶ Town moderator. Oversees the meeting, decides the order of speakers, keeps time, decides scope, calls votes.
- ▶ Town clerk. Records the results of votes.
- ▶ Town officials. Often speak to warrant articles, and answer questions from town meeting members.
- ▶ Town meeting members.

Town meeting follows parliamentary procedure. Arlington uses rules from *Town Meeting Time* (available from the Massachusetts Moderator's Association).

The Workflow

- ▶ Moderator announces the article to be discussed.
- ▶ Moderator calls upon members who wish to speak, or ask questions. You have seven minutes (five if called a second time).
- ▶ People run out of things to say, or someone makes a motion to terminate debate.
 - ▶ Town meeting votes to terminate debate, or continue debating.
- ▶ You vote on the article.

Warrant Articles, Recommended Actions, and Substitute Motions

For all practical purposes, the warrant is town meeting's to-do list.

- ▶ Warrant articles are submitted during the winter.
- ▶ Articles can be introduced by town officials, or by 10 registered voters.
- ▶ The relevant town body formulates a recommended action.
- ▶ The recommended action is what you vote on.
- ▶ Town meeting can amend a recommended action via Substitute motions.

2015 Warrant Article 26

**ARTICLE 26 APPROPRIATION/FINANCING OF CONSTRUCTION OR
RECONSTRUCTION OF SEWERS AND SEWERAGE FACILITIES**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money for the purpose of financing the construction or reconstruction of sewers and sewerage facilities for inflow/infiltration reduction or system rehabilitation, including costs incidental and related thereto, and to determine how the appropriation shall be raised or expended, including the possibility of borrowing all or some of same; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of the Town Manager and the Director of Public Works)

2015 Warrant Article 26 - Recommended Action

ARTICLE 26 APPROPRIATION/FINANCING OF CONSTRUCTION OR RECONSTRUCTION OF SEWERS AND SEWERAGE FACILITIES

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money for the purpose of financing the construction or reconstruction of sewers and sewerage facilities for inflow/infiltration reduction or system rehabilitation, including costs incidental and related thereto, and to determine how the appropriation shall be raised or expended, including the possibility of borrowing all or some of same; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of the Town Manager and the Director of Public Works)

VOTED: **That the sum of \$1,000,000 be and hereby is appropriated for the purpose of financing the construction or reconstruction of sewers and sewerage facilities, inflow/infiltration reduction or system rehabilitation, including costs incidental and related thereto; that to raise this appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, is authorized to borrow \$1,000,000 under and pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 7, of the General Laws, as amended, or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefore; and that the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager be and hereby are authorized to enter into any agreements they determine to be necessary in connection with the project and its financing and are further authorized to accept and expend in addition to the foregoing appropriation any grants that may become available from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority or other sources.**

COMMENT: This authorization allows the Town to receive an interest free loan from the MWRA and issue municipal debt in support of capital construction projects.

2015 Warrant Article 13

ARTICLE 13

DISPOSITION OF REAL ESTATE/ 1207 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to dispose of 1207 Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington and/or its appurtenant land by sale or otherwise under such terms as the Town may specify consistent with applicable legal requirements; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted by the Board of Selectmen)

2016 Warrant Article 22

ARTICLE 22

BYLAW AMENDMENT/TREE PRESERVATION BYLAW

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town Bylaws to establish a Tree Preservation Bylaw to preserve or replace trees over a specific size within the setback of private property in cases of significant demolition and/or major construction, including providing enforcement measures and/or fines for non-compliance; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of the Tree Committee)

Substitute Motions

Substitute motions generally take two forms:

1. Amending a recommended action.
2. Replacing a “no action” recommendation.

You'll have a vote to adopt the substitution, and then a separate vote on the article, with substitutions.

2016 Article 26

ARTICLE 26 VOTE/EMAIL ACCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS OF PUBLIC BODIES

To see if the Town will vote to provide email accounts for the exclusive use of Town business to members of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Assessors, Redevelopment Board, and possibly other public bodies; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of Christopher Loreti and ten registered voters)

The Board of Selectmen recommended “No Action” on Article 26.

2016 Article 26 - Substitute Motion

Article 26 – Substitute Motion

VOTED: That in accordance with Section 15(j) of the Town Manager Act of the Town of Arlington, Massachusetts, the Town does hereby request that the Town Manager provide individual Town email accounts to members of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Assessors, Redevelopment Board, and to members of any other public bodies subject to the Public Records Law that the Town Manager may deem appropriate. The email addresses for such accounts shall be the only addresses listed on the Town's websites for the members of the affected public bodies, and shall be the exclusive means of email communications from Town employees to the members of the affected public bodies when conducting Town business. Notwithstanding the above, no member of a public body affected by this vote shall be required to use email to conduct Town business.

Resources

- ▶ Your town's website. (Typically under a section called "Town Governance" or "Town Meeting")
- ▶ Massachusetts Moderator's Association
<http://www.massmoderators.org/>
- ▶ ACMi's Government channel, where you can find videos of Arlington town meetings.
<http://vod.acmi.tv/category/government/>
(Other towns may have similar resources)