



# TOWN OF PLYMOUTH

26 Court Street  
Plymouth, Massachusetts 02360

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>SB-111522(2)</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Town Meeting Warrant Article Process</b>
<b>Established</b>	<b>November 15, 2022</b>
<b>Revision Approval Dates</b>	<b>January 7, 2025</b>

## 1. PURPOSE

The Select Board adopts the following policy to direct the timing and content of article submissions from Town Staff, Boards, Committees, and Citizens to insert into warrants for the Annual and Special Town Meetings.

This policy is intended to provide the Select Board and Town Manager with sufficient and timely information for warrant preparation. This policy will outline the process to submit a proposed article and the requirements to submit the necessary corresponding and supporting material for consideration of the same. Timely submission of proposed warrant articles will help ensure that the article is, or will be, ready for consideration of the Select Board, Advisory and Finance Committee and Town Meeting Members.

## 2. POLICY GUIDELINES

### 2.1 Scope

This policy shall apply to Staff, Boards, Committees, and Citizens to insert articles into any warrant for Annual and Special Town Meetings. Citizens must follow the process for submittal of a Citizen Petition as outlined by the Town Clerk.

### 2.2 Steps for Insertion of Warrant Articles

The Town Manager shall have the discretion to determine if an article submission satisfies the requirements of this policy before permitting the article to be inserted in the warrant. Submissions that are determined not to meet the requirements of this policy

may not be inserted in the warrant. Such determinations shall be made in good faith. The Town Manager may delegate this authority to the Assistant Town Manager.

- 2.2.1** All submissions to the Select Board shall be in electronic form and legible.
- 2.2.2** All submissions must adhere to the closing date of the warrant. No article submission will be accepted after the close of the warrant. [See Section 2.6, Master Calendar, for submission deadlines.]
- 2.2.3** Any Board or Committee member or Citizen who is seeking insertion of an article is encouraged to make an initial presentation to the appropriate body (Board or Committee) for preliminary review and guidance.
- 2.2.4** An article submission (not a Citizen petition) from a Board, Committee or Precinct must receive a majority vote in favor of the proposed article prior to submission to the Town Manager's Office.
- 2.2.5** At the time of submittal, all proposed articles must be accompanied by ALL relevant supporting materials as detailed in Section 2.4. No other materials will be accepted after the warrant closing date.

## **2.3 Text of Proposed Warrant Articles**

All article submissions should include the proposed text for an article, with the expectation that legal requirements and technical terms will be addressed by Town Counsel. Final text for all warrant articles that the Select Board votes to insert into a Town Meeting warrant will be reviewed and approved by Town Counsel.

Per MGL, text for Citizen petitions cannot be changed after collection of signatures. Voters sign the citizen petition with text for the proposed article thus no changes can be made.

## **2.4 Supporting Materials**

- 2.4.1** A complete submission should provide information that the Select Board, Advisory and Finance Committee, and Town Meeting should have for fair consideration of the proposal. To be deemed sufficient, a complete submission will ordinarily include:

- A short narrative explaining the purpose(s) of the article
- Supporting materials, such as reports by staff and/or consultants
- For bylaw changes, a redlined text of the existing and proposed bylaw
- Copies of statutes or regulations that authorize or pertain to the article
- Drawings for proposed improvements to land or facilities
- Cost estimates and the basis for such expenses
- Funding sources and availability, including information on any required grant match
- Overview of project management, including:
  - Anticipated project timetable
  - Identification of responsible Town Official(s) and/or Department(s)
  - Identification of required local, state, or federal approvals
- A record of the affirmative vote of a Board or Committee which has considered such proposed article

**Zoning articles.** Insertion of articles concerning the Zoning Bylaw are governed by G.L. c. 40A, s. 5. Any person may make an initial presentation of a zoning article directly to the Select Board, which shall refer the matter to the Planning Board, as provided by the statute. Complete submissions from the Planning Board, that follow the Planning Board's Petitioned Zoning Amendment Policy, for articles affecting the Zoning Bylaw will ordinarily not be considered unless the Planning Board has completed public hearings as required by G.L. c. 40A, s. 5.

## **2.5 Master Calendar**

- 2.5.1** By June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, the Town Manager will submit to the Board for final approval an annual Master Calendar depicting dates and deadlines for Town Meeting, Town Election, and the Annual Budget Process. The Master Calendar will be used to establish deadlines for this policy.

## **3. Questions**

Please direct questions to the Town Manager's Office.

Signed By:

  
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Chair, Select Board

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Manager

1/7/25  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

1/7/25  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date