



Reminders from Town Hall

News & Information for the Residents of North Yarmouth

From the North Yarmouth Communications Advisory Committee

(northyarmouth.org)

TOWN MEETING: Here's What You Need to Know

North Yarmouth operates under the Town Meeting-Select Board-Town Manager form of government. As we grew in size, and as state and federal regulations increased in number and complexity, we decided to hire a Town Manager to administer the day-to-day activities of town government. The Select Board serves as the town's executive body, and Town Meeting performs the legislative function. Having a Town Manager doesn't decrease citizens' responsibilities to participate in the town meeting process.

Here are some questions you might be asking about Town Meeting:

- ***What happens at town meeting?*** Everyone looks at and votes on all items on the warrant. You can see the warrant in advance on the town website, northyarmouth.org or pick up a copy at the Town Office. Town meeting serves many of the same functions as other legislative bodies – passing laws and adopting budgets. However, unlike the state legislature and Congress, town meeting is not a representative body. It is a “meeting in which participation is the right and responsibility of every voter.” It has been defined as the “purest form of democracy” because “citizens, not their representatives, participate directly in the making of laws and the raising and spending of their taxes.”
- ***Why should I participate in town meeting?*** The way things get changed is by folks attending and making their thoughts and ideas known. The purest form of democracy is participatory democracy, where you sit in a chair, listen to other folks' opinions, have your say, and vote on every item in the warrant. Problems you don't solve, someone else will.
- ***Will asking questions make me seem silly or uninformed?*** No! Most warrant articles are written to comply with legal requirements and may not be self-explanatory or clear. ***Voting for something you don't understand is worse than not voting at all.*** You might ask: How does this spending compare with last year and can you explain the difference? Are we taking too much from surplus? How much will this leave in surplus? Is this ordinance really necessary? How will this article (or all articles passed) affect the mil rate? [Note: For unfamiliar terms, see sidebar on page 2.]
- ***How is voting done?*** There are several ways of voting: voice vote (yeas and nays), show of hands, standing vote (if show of hands is indecisive), and written ballot. You don't have to vote, but you should be clear why you are not voting – if you don't want to call attention to yourself, call for a written ballot; if you don't think you have enough information, ask questions; if you think the real issue hasn't been addressed, say so. If an article is voted down, that service doesn't happen and that money isn't spent. Our Select Board is responsible for making sure the decisions of the citizens at Town Meeting are carried out and town business is transacted. They can't approve new money spending without Town Meeting approval. If there are changes during the year, special town meetings must take care of this business.

On this year's warrant, you'll see:

- ⇒ Legislative articles – amendments to ordinances and/or the town charter (to include tax-acquired properties, land use, barking dogs, and standing and ad hoc committees).
- ⇒ Financial articles covering Municipal Administration, Community Services, Public Safety, Public Works, Fixed Expenses, Capital Reserves, and Revenues.

On this year's annual warrant, you **won't** see:

- MSAD 51 education budget. This is a separate vote on June 12th.
- Wescustogo Hall and North Yarmouth Community Center. This will also be voted on June 12th.



A place we will gather with family and friends today, tomorrow, and for a lifetime!

Wescustogo Building and Design Committee

To continue its mission of rebuilding Wescustogo Hall the Wescustogo Building and Design Committee will sponsor four Community Dialogues.

April 12th - 7pm * April 14th - 10am

May 10th - 7pm * May 12 - 10am

The objective is to reach as many residents as possible and the content of all four will be identical. All gatherings will be held at the former school.

The plans for the new Wescustogo Hall and North Yarmouth Community Center are now complete and posted on the town website (northyarmouth.org). This includes a 3-D animated "walk" through the building. Using this tool is a fascinating way to "experience" the building.

The budget is also complete -- coming in at \$3.43 million after application of insurance money and other design specifications.

The upcoming meetings will not primarily focus on the budget, the brick or the mortar, but rather the uses that the building will have, the ways the community will live in it.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? *Town Meeting Terms and Definitions*

Moderator The person elected by the Town Meeting to conduct the meeting. Usually the moderator will use the rules in the *Maine Moderator's Handbook* to provide the formal guidelines.

Warrant The written notice, signed by at least a majority of the Select Board, that calls a Town Meeting and lists all the articles or items of business that will be voted on at the meeting. It must be posted in at least one conspicuous place at least seven days before the meeting.

Amendment A secondary motion that must be acted on before the main motion is voted on. It must be seconded and discussion allowed before the vote. If it is passed, it becomes a part of the original motion; if not passed, the original motion stands.

Ordinance A law or regulation enacted by a municipal government usually targeting a specific subject, such as dog control, parking, or zoning. An ordinance cannot be amended on the floor of Town Meeting, only voted up or down.

To raise The wording used to get the money through municipal taxation of real and personal property. Typically, the motion is made "to raise and appropriate" the money for the purpose stated in the warrant article.

Revenues and expenditures Revenues are incoming monies. Most of the money spent at Town Meeting comes from property taxes; other money comes from excise taxes on vehicles and from the state in the form of revenue sharing and road assistance. Expenditures are what the money is spent on. Our town budget includes expenditures for roads, services, and solid waste disposal.

Surplus Also known as "undesignated" or "unappropriated fund balance." These funds result from not spending monies that were approved or from getting more revenue than expected. They should be considered as an operating cushion to be used in emergencies. The general guideline is to make sure that surplus contains 8-10 percent of the total operating budget of the town or an amount equal to one month's expenses. Only Town Meeting can authorize the spending of surplus.

Tax rate (Mil rate) The rate that determines how much residents pay in property taxes. It is stated as "X dollars per thousand dollars of valuation." For example, in a town with a tax rate (mil rate) of \$16 per thousand, the owner of a house valued at \$300,000 would pay \$4,800 ($\$16 \times 300$) in taxes. The North Yarmouth mil rate can only be computed when the MSAD 51 budget has been approved. It can be estimated at Town Meeting.

To see what sum The wording for an open-ended article that signals the need for someone to make a motion and set an amount for discussion. Often the Select Board and the Budget Committee recommend in the warrant the amount(s) they think are in the best interest of the town.

From "A Citizen's Guide to Town Meeting," published in by the Maine Municipal Association.

ATTENTION RESIDENTS OF NORTH YARMOUTH!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR RECYCLING SERVICE

AS OF MAY 1, CASELLA WILL NO LONGER PICK UP BAGGED RECYCLING.	PLEASE PLACE ALL RECYCLING IN A TRASH CAN, TOTE BIN OR CARDBOARD BOX LABELED RECYCLING.
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Acceptable recycling list on back! ✓

PUBLIC NOTICE
STATE & LOCAL ELECTIONS
VOTE - June 12th

IMPORTANT LOCAL ISSUES:

To vote on the financial expenditure for the Wescustogo Hall & North Yarmouth Community Center.

To vote on the MSAD 51 FY19 Education Budget.

Election of Municipal Officials: 1 1-year Select Board member, 1 3-year Select Board member; 1 MSAD 51 Board of Directors for 3 years; 1 5-year Cemetery Commissioner; 1 3-year Yarmouth Water District Representative; and 3 3-year Budget Committee members.

Got a Sweet Tooth?

Come to the Ice Cream Social!

The Living Well in North Yarmouth Committee and Events Committee invite you to the **Spring Ice Cream Social, Friday April 27, 6-8 pm, Community Center (North Yarmouth Memorial School).**

Toots of North Yarmouth will provide the ice cream and the tasty toppings that make the perfect sundae.

Entertainment will be provided by the North Yarmouth Troubadors.

Donations will benefit the continuing social activities sponsored by the two committees.

Families and people of all ages are welcome!

FMI: Call Steve Palmer 829-6230 or 572-7151.



Now Open!

Fitness Center at Community Center

Open daily from 9-12 Monday thru Friday.
Free to all residents of North Yarmouth. Pre-registration is required at
Town Office or the Fitness Center.

Equipment Available: treadmills, rowing machines, ellipticals, stationary bikes, Nordic Track Pro Skier

CHILDCARE AVAILABLE

AT TOWN MEETING

The Living Well in North Yarmouth Committee is pleased to sponsor *childcare services* for children 3 years and up at Town Meeting on April 28 at the Community Center.

Pre-registration is strongly advised so certified staff can be assigned. This is in partnership with Cumberland-North Yarmouth Parks and Rec. Certified childcare workers from that program will be here that day.

There is no charge but donations that benefit LWNV programs are always welcome.

Please send snacks, books and toys so your child has the things that she/he likes. *To pre-register or for more info, call Donna Palmer at 829-6230 or 383-9215 or email plainviewfarm1@gmail.com*

Channel 2 Now Features Only

North Yarmouth News

For many years North Yarmouth and Cumberland shared Public Access Cable Channel 2 (digital channel 121). Residents of both towns tuned in to learn the latest events, meetings, or important news—but often had to wait for an extended period of time to see their own town's news.

Not only did the two towns share the channel, the studio was based in Cumberland and our town office staff had to record information on DVDs and deliver them to the other location for uploading.

That changed on March 1st when the each town received its own exclusive channel. This means direct access to all of North Yarmouth's live or recorded meetings, local programs, and informational bulletin board slideshows.

"This system we have now allows North Yarmouth to have complete control of the content and the schedule of meetings that the public is going to see," explained Melissa Henes, North Yarmouth's video broadcast technician. "It will be 100% North Yarmouth content." Melissa is responsible for the video meetings and rebroadcasts while the town's office staff will maintain the bulletin board postings.

She added that the slideshow templates offer many options and she will have the capability to add scrolling messages as a meeting is going on or an urgent alert, if needed.

Residents who have information they would like to submit for broadcast consideration should contact the Town Office. All art submitted must be in a JPG file format.

2017 Was a Busy Year for Parks and Recreation

2017 was a year of many accomplishments for this committee. In keeping with its long-term plan, which was endorsed by the Camoin Economic Development Plan, the Parks and Recreation group was able to make our town better – much better. Some recent accomplishments:

- Installed maps at the entrances of the Ristich Trail and Chandler Brook
- Installed six bike racks around town
- Planted trees in Wescustogo Park for future picnic area
- Located birdhouses in three parks
- Cleaned up old garbage site at Old Town House Park
- Removed invasive plants in OTHP – an ongoing project
- Placed warning signs and treated poison ivy in OTHP
- Sponsored the first “Once in a Blue Moon” (this was a great success and will be repeated next January!)

And the future is bright as it works in 2018 to:

- Obtain easement to connect canoe launch to OTHP
- Obtain approval for tree thinning program
- Sponsor the first “Once in a Blue Moon” snowshoe party in January
- Add the north river loop trail at Chandler Brook
- Create bike/hike trail in Town Forest



Communications Committee

Produced by the North Yarmouth

of North Yarmouth

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Resident

North Yarmouth, ME 04097



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