



A New Resident's Guide Town Meeting

Town Meeting is a long-standing New England tradition—and a cornerstone of local democracy in Seekonk. If you're new to town or attending for the first time, this guide will help you feel informed, prepared, and empowered to participate.



What IS Town Meeting?

Town Meeting is the legislative body of Seekonk. It's where residents (like you!) vote on town budgets, bylaws, zoning, and other important decisions. In Seekonk, this is typically held twice a year:

- Annual Town Meeting - Second Monday in May
- Special Town Meeting - Second Monday in November



When and Where?

- **Location:** Seekonk High School Auditorium
- **Time:** Usually 7:00 PM (doors open early for check-in)
- **Check Town Website:** www.seekonk-ma.gov for the exact date, warrant, and updates



What's a "Warrant"?

The warrant is a formal agenda listing the articles (items) to be discussed and voted on. It includes:

- Town budget
- Departmental spending
- Bylaw changes
- Citizen petitions will be included in the warrant as submitted



Who can attend and vote?

- ✓ You must be a registered voter in Seekonk
- ✓ Bring photo ID (just in case)
- ✓ Non-voters can attend but cannot vote or speak unless recognized by the Moderator



Check-in Process

1. Arrive early! Check-in begins at 6pm
2. Receive your voter card (usually a colored card to raise for votes) and electronic voting device
3. Sit anywhere you'd like—there's no assigned seating



How to Participate

- To Speak: Go to the designated microphone and wait to be recognized by the Moderator
- State your name and address
- Be respectful and keep comments brief
- Questions are welcomed—this is your meeting!



Need help?

- Call Seekonk Town Clerk's Office: (508) 336-2920
- Visit www.seekonk-ma.gov for warrant info, registration, FAQs, and more



How Voting Works

Seekonk employs an electronic voting system to ensure accurate and efficient tallying of votes during Town Meetings. This system utilizes handheld devices provided by Meridia's TownVOTE audience response software, which allows for swift and anonymous voting.



Electronic Voting with Meridia Devices

- **Distribution:** Upon check-in, each registered voter receives a handheld electronic voting device.
- **Usage:** During the meeting, when a vote is called, voters use these devices to cast their votes.
- **Anonymity and Accuracy:** The system ensures that votes are recorded anonymously and accurately, with results displayed in real-time.



Backup Voting Method

In the event of technical issues with the electronic devices, Seekonk has a contingency plan:

- **Colored Paper Cards:** Voters will use colored paper cards to cast their votes manually.
- **Counting:** Votes are then counted by hand to determine the outcome.

This dual-system approach ensures that the voting process remains uninterrupted and that every vote is counted, regardless of technological challenges.



Key People at Town Meeting

- **Moderator** – Runs the meeting, enforces rules
- **Town Clerk** – Records the official results
- **Select Board** – Elected leaders who help set the agenda
- **Finance Committee** – Reviews financial proposals, makes recommendations



Helpful Tips for First-Timers

- Review the warrant in advance
- Arrive early to get a good seat and settle in
- Stay respectful—Town Meeting is civil, even during disagreements
- It can go late—bring water or a snack if you need
- Ask questions—don't be shy! If you're unclear, chances are others are too



Why it matters

By attending Town Meeting, you're directly shaping how your town operates—everything from road repairs to school budgets to community programs. Your vote truly matters.