

**Questions from the Public Information Forum Held on October 10, 2017 on Town Meeting Warrant  
Articles #1-4**

**#1      Pauline asks why the collector position is the Tax Collector not the Town Collector**

**Town Administrator/Town Clerk Response:** The positions of Tax Collector and Town Collector are different in terms of function and responsibility. A tax collector collects only property taxes whereas a town collector collects all funds coming into a municipality. Though the 2010 Town Government Study Report recommended a Town Collector; the proposal was ultimately rejected by Town Meeting. Additionally, there are very few Town Collector's in the Commonwealth and the salary is considerably higher.

**#2      Pauline asks why not have the Treasurer/Collector reporting to the Finance Manager**

**Town Administrator Response:** There is not a substantive need to formalize such an arrangement for the Treasurer/Tax Collector to report to the Finance Manager. Currently the Town has an internal finance management structure in which the Treasurer; Tax Collector; Finance Manager; Benefits and Payroll Manager; and Town Administrator meet on a regular basis.

**#3      Pauline asks if the TA's office still had a copy of the Government Study Committee**

**Town Administrator Response:** Yes. A copy of the 2010 Town Government Study Committee's Recommendations is available tonight and will be posted on the website. Additionally the BOS Office has the complete binder of all materials from the 2010 Town Government Study Committee's work. All of the documents are public records and available for viewing upon request at the BOS Office. The Town will look into getting the minutes of the meetings on the website.

**#4      Michael asks about the central collection of town fees such as water and sewer bills and firearms permits**

**Town Administrator/Town Clerk Response:** The collection system of the current Town government is sufficient with the appropriate managerial and fiduciary controls in place. Water and sewer bills are collected by the DPW whereas firearm permits are collected by the Police Department. All monies must be turned over to the Town Treasurer by law.

**#5      Frank asks what is the difference between a strong Police Chief and a strong Fire Chief?**

**Town Administrator Response:** The Town has what is called a "strong" Fire Chief which is a term that refers to the fact that the Fire Chief can make direct hiring and firing of firefighters and all positions under the Fire Chief without BOS approval. The term "strong" Police Chief does not apply in terms of personnel. The Police Chief can hire and fire subject to BOS approval.

**#6 Rick asked about the need for volunteers on committees**

**Town Administrator/Town Clerk Response:** The proposed changes in Articles 1 thru 4 in no way affect the Town's existing Boards, Committees, and Commissions with the exception of the Personnel Board. Volunteers to be appointed to Town Boards, Committees and Commissions under the proposed changes in Article 3 would not be affected. Appointments would be made on recommendation by the Town Manager subject to BOS approval. The Town needs and welcomes volunteers!

**#7 Mark asked about changing collective bargaining agreements with the new titles?**

**Town Administrator Response:** If Article 3 passes and the position of Town Administrator becomes Town Manager, the Collective Bargaining Agreements would be changed to reflect those changes subject to negotiation.

**#8 Lee asked about the difference between "appointed" and "hired"**

**Town Administrator/Town Clerk Response:** The term appointed is a technical/legal term in municipal government. It is synonymous with the term "hired" as you have asked.

**#9 Lee asked about the justification to double the Town Clerk's hours to 40**

**Town Clerk's Response:** The position of Town Clerk has evolved in recent years into a highly technical position with added duties and responsibilities. It has changed from a part-time position to a full-time position.

**#10 Jonathan asked if the voters are sacrificing participating for professionalism**

**Town Administrator Response/Town Clerk Response:** Voters and residents are not sacrificing their participation and involvement in municipal government. What they are agreeing to with these proposed changes is that the day-to-day, technical management and functions of government are handled by qualified, accountable, and professional position holders that work in a centralized system modelled after proven best practices in the field of municipal government.

**#11 John asked if the policy decisions still remain with the elected officials**

**Town Administrator Response:** Absolutely. Articles 1 – 4 in no way change the authority of Town Meeting; the authority of the Finance Committee; the BOS remains the chief executive policy making Board. There is no change to the Planning Board, Parks Commission, Board of Health. In fact these proposed changes allow these respective boards to focus on policy and the larger issues and vision for the Town.

**#12 Pauline asked if any policy has been set by Town Meeting**

**Town Administrator: In terms of Town Meeting's authority required for the adoption and amendment of bylaws; a lot of policy considerations are encapsulated in bylaws for which Town Meeting ultimately decides.**