

Moderator

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1. Tell us about yourself and how your experiences will make you a good candidate for this office.

Choosing Norwood as the best place to live and raise a family, I moved here over thirty years ago. Our family loves living in the town and taking advantage of all it has to offer. I have been a long-time town meeting member and more importantly a fan of the process. Town Meeting is the legislative branch of town government where the people of the town make the important decisions for the town on the budget, borrowing, land purchases and sales along with town by-laws, including zoning. My family and I are believers in public service and have stepped up to serve. In addition to being the current Town Moderator, I have served on several selection committees, the Rules Committee and currently serve as a member of the Morse House Committee. I also sit on two Norwood based non-profit boards.

I'd like to continue to serve as your Town Moderator, as I've enjoyed the experience and can continue to implement positive change while still having more to learn. I believe this is the right position for me to continue to serve our town.

2. As Moderator how would you manage the discussion at Town Meeting to ensure all voices are heard?

Once a motion is open for debate by recognizing different speakers and not recognizing someone who has already spoken. That is why you see me looking across the auditorium when hands are raised to make sure I am calling on someone who has not spoken. This does become harder when there are registered speakers as they must be recognized first in the order they registered. I do ask registered speakers if they are planning to speak for or against a motion, but they are not required to tell me. Although the body votes on moving the question and stopping debate, as Moderator I do not have to accept the motion if in my opinion all sides have not been heard. In that case, it will allow the debate to continue and more voices to be heard.

3. What would you tell people to encourage them to seek election to Town Meeting?

We are extremely fortunate in Norwood to have a representative Town Meeting. It is the purest form of government where the people of the town make the most important decisions for the town. It is a forum where the voices of our residents can be heard on all articles being addressed. This is a privilege not universally enjoyed in other parts of the country and the world. In encouraging people to run I say try it. Run for a one-year term, if available in your district, and give it a try. It is an opportunity for your voice to be heard and everyone's vote truly counts. Town Meeting greatly benefits from diverse opinions and representation so we need you.

Lastly, don't be intimidated by the rules or procedures. We have all sorts of resources to help you through those including Town Meeting 101, the Town Clerk's office, watching meetings on NCM and the Moderator is there to help. And the League has a number of great resources too.

4. Since adopting electronic voting at Town Meeting this past year, how would you gauge its success and how do you believe it can be improved?

Implementing electronic voting was one of the main goals I set when I initially ran for Moderator. Thanks to the combined efforts of the Town Clerk's office, the Town IT department and the General Manager's office, it became a reality, and I couldn't be prouder. The use of electronic voting has been a game changer for Town Meeting. Not only has it resulted in efficiencies by ensuring accurate vote counts and transparency through publishing the results, but it also has been universally embraced by Town Meeting Members. That being said, we still have ways to continue to improve as we all get used to utilizing electronic voting and I will continue to ask the members for improvement suggestions. One suggestion we are going to implement is a standard time to vote. Although I monitor the voting and can see when everyone has "clicked," in order to enable members to not feel rushed or to change their vote, we will have a set time limit and countdown. This may add a little time to the meetings, but we will try it and see if it helps.