

TOWN MODERATOR

I believe that the open Town Meeting as it exists in Marblehead and throughout Massachusetts and New England is the purest form of democracy. My job as Moderator is to see that the Town Meeting is conducted to keep it that way.

That means that free and open debate on the issues is available for all registered voters as long as carried out in a civil and non-repetitive way.. This means that no personal attacks, or heckling or other disruptive behavior are permitted. Views must be presented on the merits, and the statements of different points of view, listened to with respect and restraint, or at least silence.

Every meeting goes through a lengthy Warrant including.

- 1) An examination and funding of the Town's regular operations.
- 2) The presentation and debate of non recurring items (for example numerous citizen sponsored Articles including, this year renaming the Joseph Brown recreation area, plowing sidewalks, the terms of members of the Board of Selectmen and related Town governance matters, and regulation of leaf blowers and
- 3) special proposals by Town Boards such as Funding of the library renovation, and a significant change in the by-laws of the Old and Historic District).

My job is to seek to ensure that each Article is debated fairly and to the extent required (some require no debate some a great deal) and is then voted on.

The last two years have been especially challenging because of the strictures of the Covid pandemic, and really bad weather. I commend the Town administration and the leaders of our public safety Departments, (Fire, Police and Public Health) for the work that made these meetings possible all. Hopefully, we will return to a more normal Town Meeting in 2022, and at least be warm.

I am honored to be a steward of this long tradition of Democracy. My goal is to preserve that tradition and adapt it to reflect the times and circumstances.

Respectfully, Gary Spiess, Town Moderator