

Annual Town Meeting - May 2022
Article 62 - Amend Home Rule Charter re Quorum - Nay Votes
Elaine Baird, Finance Committee

As proposed by the Charter Review Commission, Article 62 proposes to reduce the quorum from 200 to 100, and further, to quote the actual article, "Once the Moderator has declared that a quorum is present and called the Town Meeting to order, the quorum necessary to continue Town Meeting business shall be zero."

The Charter Commission's logic for this change is to eliminate the possibility of needing a second town meeting, because the second night of town meeting might not reach the 200 quorum, therefore requiring the expense of a second town meeting, with a new warrant and new advertising. With this amendment, town meeting could proceed with virtually or literally NO VOTERS. As noted, to quote Article 62, "... the quorum necessary to continue Town Meeting business shall be zero."

In addition, this Article 62 means that a voter from the floor, could propose an amendment to an article—and with few voters remaining – those voters could authorize an amendment to an article that could have huge financial implications.

As one of our Finance Committee members said, "This is anti the spirit of town meetings in New England. It doesn't smell right."

Further, in reviewing all the town meetings listed on the Town Clerk's website since 2005, only three annual meetings required a second night. Why are we trying to solve a problem that we don't have?

The Finance Committee unanimously opposes Article 62.