TOWN MEETING, TOWN ELECTIONS & RECORDS

(HISTORY: Adopted February 25, 1974 ATM Article 18; Approved by Attorney General March 21, 1974)
[Amended April 22, 1980 ATM Article 26 "Section 1"; Approved by Attorney General July 28, 1980; Amended May 8, 1995 ATM Article 22 "Section 3 Under Article 1"; Approved by Attorney General June 6, 1995]
[Amended June 9, 2009 STM Article 4 "Article 1, Section 4"; Approved by Attorney General July 28, 2009]
[Amended January 25, 2010 STM Article 7 "Section 7"; Approved by Attorney General February 23, 2010]
[Amended May 9, 2016 ATM Article 30 "Article III, §1"; Approved by Attorney General July 15, 2016]
[Amended May 8, 2017 ATM Article 29, 30 and 31, Article 2 Sections 3 and 4; Approved by Attorney General September 11, 2017]

[Amended May 14, 2018 ATM Article 14; Section 7 Added To Records and Reports; Approved by the Attorney General July 11, 2018]

Amended: ATM 04-10-1989 Revised Article #36

Amendment of 04/22/80 changed date of Annual Town Meeting from February to third Monday in April of each year and Annual Town Election from February to fourth Monday in April of each year. Amendment of 04/10/89 changed Town Meeting to 2nd Monday in May and Town Election to 3rd Monday in May. Amendment of 05/08/95 increased the required time for submittal of Annual Town Meeting warrant articles and clarified filing requirements.

ARTICLE I - TOWN MEETINGS

Section 1. The Annual Town Meeting shall be held on the second Monday of May each year. [Amended]

Section 2. The Warrant for the Town Meeting shall be directed to the Constables who shall post attested copies thereof at least seven days before the meeting in two or more public places in the Town, one of which shall be the Post Office; and, the Selectmen shall be required to send notice of any and all Special Town Meeting by mail to each household.

Section 3. Articles to be inserted in the warrant for any Town Meeting must be in writing, signed by the petitioner or petitioners and delivered to the Selectmen. Such petitioner(s) shall be registered voters of the Town. Articles to be inserted in the warrant for Annual Town Meeting shall be delivered to the Selectmen forty five (45) days prior to the date set for posting the warrant. All other requirements shall be as provided in Section 10 of Chapter 39 of the General Laws, as amended from time to time. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the power of the Selectmen to insert articles in any warrant under the authority of their office. [Amended]

Section 4. Upon check in, voters shall be issued a voting card for that meeting which must be held up for all hand votes on articles, whenever a hand count is required. Only those voters holding cards shall be included in the count. **[Amended STM 6/9/2009 Article 4]**

Section 5. The records of the Town Meeting shall, unless otherwise directed by the meeting, be read to the meeting by the Town Clerk for approval before adjournment.

Section 6. The Clerk shall give to each person elected or appointed at any Town Meeting to any Town Office, board or committee notice in writing of such election or appointment stating the names of each of the other members of any such board or committee and the general nature of the duties thereof.

Section 7. 50 Registered voters shall constitute a quorum, provided that, for the limited purpose of convening a special or annual town meeting in order that it may act to postpone the meeting to a day certain under circumstances of inclement weather or other circumstances that render the conduct of a town meeting impracticable, one (1) registered voter shall constitute a quorum **[Amended STM 1/25/2010 Article 7]**

ARTICLE II - TOWN ELECTIONS

Section 1. The election of Town Officers shall be on the third Tuesday of May each year. The polls shall be open from twelve o'clock noon until eight o'clock in the evening. **[Amended ATM 5/8/17 Article 31]**

Section 2. Subject to the provisions of the General Laws, any duly elected person holding a Town Office as of the effective date of this by-law, shall hold such office until a successor is duly elected and qualified.

Section 3. In the election of write-in candidates to town offices the candidate must be verified by the Town Clerk as a registered voter to be declared elected. **[Added ATM 5/8/17 Article 29]**

Section 4. The term of the Town Moderator shall be three years. **[Added ATM 5/8/17 Article 29]**.

ARTICLE III - RECORDS AND REPORTS

Section 1. The Selectmen shall cause notice of the availability of the Annual Town Reports to be mailed to each household at least five (5) days before the Annual Town Meeting, specifying not fewer than two accessible locations in Dunstable at which copies can be obtained, including when feasible the Town Hall and the Library**. [Amended ATM 5/9/16 Article 30]**.

§ 2. Each board, permanent committee, head of a department and other officer of the Town shall annually submit to the Selectmen a written report setting forth clearly and completely the work of such board, committee, department or officer during the preceding year, provided, however, that reference may be made in such report to the report to the Town Accountant in respect to the detail of the financial transactions of such board, committee, department or officer. Each such report shall be set forth in the next annual Town report.

§3. All reports other than reports of progress in temporary committees shall be submitted in writing to the Town Meeting and shall be filed with the Town Clerk for preservation; the acceptance thereof by vote of the Town Meeting shall discharge the committee, but shall not operate as an adoption of recommendations contained in any such report unless the vote shall expressly provide otherwise.

§4. Each board, committee, head of department and other officer of the Town, having the charge of the expenditures of money, shall annually submit to the Selectmen, to the Accountant and to the Advisory Committee of the Town an itemized estimate of the requirements of such board, committee, department or other office for the succeeding year, with a brief statement explaining any changes from the amounts appropriated for the same purpose in the preceding year. The Accountant shall immediately, at the close of the year, compile a statement of such estimates, together with the appropriations and expenditures of the previous year, and forthwith furnish copies of such statement to the Selectmen and to the Advisory Committee.

§5. Within fifteen days after each annual or special Town Meeting, the Clerk shall submit to the Selectmen a copy of the warrant for such meeting, and a written report of the action taken at such meeting. The Selectmen shall reserve such copies and reports for their use and reference and shall incorporate them in the next annual Town Report.

§6. Within five days after each annual or special Town Meeting, the Clerk shall submit to the Board of Assessors and the Accountant, a written report of appropriations voted at such meeting.

§7. The Town Clerk is authorized to assign appropriate numbers to sections, subsections, paragraphs, and subparagraphs of the General Bylaws and Zoning Bylaws where none are approved by Town Meeting, and, if such numbers are approved by Town Meeting, after consultation with the Board of Selectmen, the Town Clerk is authorized to make non-substantive, editorial revisions to ensure consistent and appropriate sequencing and numbering, provided any such editorial revision shall be identified by a footnote or other convention. **[Adopted ATM 5/14/18 Article 14]**.