Citizen's Article Petition Guide

Each November, the Select Board votes to open the Town Warrant for the next Annual Town Meeting for the submission of articles. In accordance with our Town Bylaws, our Annual Town Meeting is scheduled on the first Monday in May. The warrant typically closes in the end of January. If you want an article to be considered at Town Meeting, it must be submitted during the time that the warrant is open for article submission. With the signatures of 10 registered voters of the town, a registered voter may place an article on the warrant. The town has published this form to assist citizens in this process. https://marbleheadma.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2026-Citizens-Petition-Referendum-Form.pdf

The 3 main components to get an issue to Town Meeting are the warrant, the articles and the motion. Here is a brief description of each:

- **Warrant** – The Select Board is responsible for the warrant. The warrant states the place, date and time and acts as the Town Meeting agenda. A Town Meeting's action is not valid unless the subject and scope is presented in the warrant.
- **Article** – Articles are the agenda items, and the scope of the article is what is allowed for discussion and a vote by the Moderator.
- **Motion** – The main motion is presented at Town Meeting for voting purposes. The motion must be within the scope of the article and is open to discussion and amending prior to the vote. Any amendments must also stay within the scope of the article.

If you have an idea or issue you would like to see changed in town, a Town Meeting Citizen's Article Petition may be the course to take.

Some things to consider:

- Start early. The process not only requires additional signatures from other registered voters but may also benefit from the review of other town officials, boards, committees, commissions or from independent legal counsel. A "contacts and resource" list is on the following page.
- There is a chance that your idea may be supported by the board, committee or commission that it falls under through our governance structure or there may be another avenue through existing procedures or bylaws to accomplish your goal other than the Town Meeting process.
- Review past Town Meeting Warrants for structure. An example is that most articles start with: "To see if the Town will vote to…". Video of past Town Meetings are also available online and can be found with an internet search.

The Town Moderator is available to discuss any questions you may have and welcomes any citizen to reach out. Although the Moderator will not give legal or specific advice on the details of an article, he can give advice, direction and assistance on the process.

Key Contacts and Resources

Contacts

ROLE	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Town Moderator	Jack Attridge	jack@allmarblehead.com	781-883-3200
Town Clerk	Robin Michaud	michaudr@marbleheadma.gov	781-631-0528
Town Administrator	Thatcher Kezer	kezert@marbleheadma.gov	781-631-0000
Administrative Aide	Kyle Wiley	wileyk@marbleheadma.gov	781-631-0000

Resources

Marblehead Town Website	https://www.marbleheadma.gov
Annual Reports	https://www.marblehead.org/finance-committee/pages/finance-committee-reports
Annual Town Meeting Warrants	https://www.marblehead.org/town-meeting/pages/town-meeting-warrants
Town Bylaws	https://ecode360.com/MA1991
Finance Committee Reports	https://marbleheadma.gov/category/finance-committee/
Marblehead Boards, Committees and Commissions	https://marbleheadma.gov/finance-committee/#
Public Meetings Calendar	https://marbleheadma.gov/events/