

**TOWN OF PANTON  
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING  
JULY 23, 2018**

At 6:59pm, Douglas Dows called the meeting to order.

Article 1: Shall the town vote to change Town Meeting day to the first day preceding the first Tuesday in March pursuant to 17 VSA §2640(b)?

David Raphael moved the article, Edward Biello seconded. David Raphael stated that it is a good idea to maximize attendance and follow suit like other towns. Teresa Smith stated that people who are working find it difficult to participate and an evening meeting offers the possibility for more residents to attend. Diana Raphael asked for clarification if the meeting would then be in the evening. The Board confirmed that the meeting would be scheduled for a time to be determined in the evening. With no further discussion, Doug Dows asked for a vote all in favor of Article 1. The Ayes have it and the Article passes.

Article 2: Shall the Town of Panton elect its town officers by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 VSA §2680(b)?

Louise Giovanella moved the article, Paula Moore seconded. Zachary Weaver explained that a resident interested in a Town Office would no longer be nominated from the floor at the Annual Meeting but would need to obtain a petition from the Town Clerk and acquire signatures of one percent of the registered voters, which currently are five signatures. Zachary Weaver also stated that electing Town Officers by Australian ballot would enable residents to also participate by being able to vote by absentee ballot. Beverly Biello also spoke to clarify her understanding of absentee ballots. Howard Hall clarified the voting process stating a candidate would need to begin with filing a petition with signatures of one percent of the registered voters along with a consent of candidate form. Diana Raphael asked if the voting would include the election of the moderator. The Board advised that all Town officers would be elected positions. David Raphael asked more about the moderator. Chris Cook asked the Board more about the petitions and what the deadline is for filing a petition. A brief discussion followed. David Raphael stated that he has mixed feelings about changing the voting to Australian ballot primary because residents may lose the opportunity to seek out what a candidate has to say. Town Treasurer/Clerk Pam Correia clarified that the deadline for petitions to be returned to the Town Clerk's Office is in January. She advised she will check the exact date for those with more questions about returning a petition. Paulette Bogan asked the Board if a candidate has to declare if they run as democratic or republican. The Board advised that a candidate does not have to declare if they are running as a democrat or republican. Paulette stated that it is a great idea to give more people the opportunity to run for a Town office and believes it is the most democratic way. A brief discussion ensued regarding more participation of residents. Jean Jackson asked the Board what

if there is no change in participation. Zachary Weaver stated that the Town could vote to go back to voting from the floor at Town Meeting if they needed to. Zachary Weaver explained that at the last Annual Town Meeting, only 4.8% of the Town's registered voters elected Town officers. With no more discussion, Doug Dows asked for a vote all in favor of Article 2. The Ayes have it and the Article passes.

Article 3: Shall the Town of Panton adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 VSA §2680(c)?

Katie Werthmann moved the article, Paul Sokal seconded. Beth Tarallo thanked the Board for proposing these changes. David Raphael questioned that there would be no opportunity to amend an article. Teresa Smith confirmed the question and stated there would not be an opportunity to amend an article because there would not be a vote at that point but would allow for greater participation. Howard Hall stated that a petition could be filed allowing for an item to be placed on the ballot. There was a brief discussion. David Raphael stated that he is worried that if everything is done by Australian ballot, that people may not want to come to Town meeting. Teresa Smith stated that the Board holds numerous budget hearings and notifies residents well in advance if someone would like to add something. She added that people, who may be stuck in their homes and can't make it, can still come to discuss the articles at Town Meeting. Zachary Weaver stated that the Board is looking for direction at Town Meeting of what the voters want to see. David Raphael stated that he understands that the Board is trying to promote inclusion. There are no objections. Doug Dows asked for a vote all in favor of Article 3. The Ayes have it and the Article passes. Motion carries.

Doug Dows stated that there is no other business but anyone can share something if they would like to.

Howard Hall thanked the Selectboard and the Town Hall Committee for working hard on the renovations to the Town Hall and reviewed all of the upgrades to the building inviting everyone to take a walk through the building. Howard Hall stated that a lot of effort was put into taking care of the building and he wants the people to use and enjoy it. David Raphael thanked the Selectboard for their support.

Doug Dows asked for a motion to adjourn. Diana Raphael moved to adjourn, Gretchen Bailey seconded. So moved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Correia  
Town Treasurer/Clerk