

Precinct 4 Town Meeting Member

7 for 3 years

Question for Town Meeting Member candidates:

The Town Meeting Members Association (TMMA) holds three information session nights prior to the beginning of Town Meeting. Attendance at these TMMA information sessions is fairly low. What do you think could be done to encourage more Town Meeting Members to attend information sessions?

Incumbents

Alessandro A. Alessandrini

E-mail address: alessandrini@comcast.net

Phone number: 781-861-8207

Community Activities:

Current Town Meeting Member, Precinct 4 (2005-Present)

School Committee Member (2010-2019; Chair, 2017-2018)

Cary Library Art Selection Committee (2012-Present)

Question

Provide food catered by local businesses. If that doesn't work, then, like Oprah Winfrey did, provide everyone with a new car...an electric car.

Michael P. Boudett

Norman P. Cohen

E-mail address: linorm@comcast.net

Phone Number: 781-862-3098

Community Activities: Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Fund for Lexington Board, Cary Memorial Library Foundation Board, Lexington Scholarship Fund Committee, Lexington Symphony Board and Precinct 4 Town Meeting Member.

Question

All Town Meeting Members and Candidates should be notified of the dates of the information sessions well in advance of the times they are to be held. Information sessions should be taped for later viewing if a member of Town Meeting decides not to attend or is unable to attend.

These sessions are also valuable for the presenters of the Articles in order to enable them to be prepared to answer more fully questions which will be raised at Town Meeting.

Kathryn R. Colburn

E-mail address: KathrynRColburn@gmail.com

Phone number: 617-872-9428

Community Activities: Town Meeting Member 2014-present
Permanent Building Committee 2015
Appropriation Committee 2015-2016
School Committee 2017-2020

Question:

If attendance is low, we should consider whether the information sessions are necessary. Perhaps most members are receiving enough information from reading the committee reports, following the TMMA list, and attending other meetings where articles are discussed. We could poll Members to see whether they believe they receive enough value from the information sessions to justify the staff time, Member time, and resources they require. Another option is to have Town Meeting Members rank which articles they would like to see covered in an information session and then present only the top five in one night.

Katie Ponty Cutler

Nancy Ann Shepard

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Phone number: 781-674-9296

Community Activities

- Town meeting member for 6 years
- Community Member of LHS Site Council
- Member of Ceramics Guild at LexART
- Hospice volunteer for VNA Care
- Program volunteer for the Nature Connection
- Former Chair of the Community Center Program Advisory Committee, the Cary Memorial Building Renovation Design Committee, the Cary Lecture Series and the town-wide PTA Presidents Group
- Former member of the Cary Library Foundation Board and Lexington Reads Committee

Question

I usually attend the first session so I can participate in the precinct meeting. Since I rarely ask questions, I usually watch the information sessions on LexMedia from home.

I don't know whether other members who don't attend the information sessions, watch from home as well. I read all the information that comes through on the TMMA list as a way to be informed on the upcoming articles and though I rarely post any comments, I appreciate the information and the discussions prior to town meeting.

The content of the information sessions is repeated during Town Meeting, so I think that many members feel that they will get the information during the regular sessions. I feel that the questions that come up during the information sessions often help to refine the presentations given during Town Meeting and that they are valuable, especially for Citizen articles.

I think it's important to consider what is the goal for having more members attend the sessions. If a clear goal was conveyed to TM members, that could possibly increase attendance.

It might also be useful to determine how many TM members are watching from home and getting the needed content even though they are not in attendance at the sessions.

Ruth S. Thomas

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Telephone: 781-861-1575

Community Activities: Town Meeting Member

Question:

The information sessions provide a great opportunity for TMMs to ask article presenters probing and pointed questions and offer comments with no time restriction imposed. The problem is that because so few TMMs attend, the questions asked and comments made are repeated during debate at the ATM. The Planning Board also holds information sessions. This brings the total to at least five meetings prior to the ATM. Perhaps the number of TM sessions could be reduced to two and the PB to one. The presentations also should be brief with supplementing handouts.