

Kevin Coffey

2/23/2021

1 Stafford Lane

Andover, MA

Questions for February 25, 2021 Meeting

To the Andover Town Governance Study Committee:

The agenda published for your February 25, 2021 meeting invites public questions or comments and I wish to submit the following for your consideration and response.

Does “remote” in your definition necessarily also imply “synchronous” in the sense that remote participants, should that become an option, would need to log in at the same time that the live, in-person town meeting was happening? Or do you consider a more encompassing definition of “remote” to also allow asynchronous participation wherein, as one example, articles might be finalized at one time and voting decisions made at a separate, later point after participants have had an opportunity to both remotely and at their convenience (subject to some bounded time limit) consider the finalized articles before voting?

These are obviously quite different variants of “remote,” one perhaps being “bifurcation” as you have noted as one possible town meeting reform. As you consider these possibilities, how then might you label an SB2-like construct, which is surely bifurcated, might or might not be remote, and might have final votes on articles taken by ballot instead of by hand count, mobile/web app count, or other means?

I urge you to keep an SB2-like alternative in your consideration as a potential town meeting reform. Though it would certainly require significant effort to fully define and put to the town and state legislature for approval, it could have several important advantages including retaining the valuable in-person open meeting debate to clarify and finalize articles, allowing residents to gather information in different ways and register their voting decision even if not able to or judging not necessary to participate in article finalization, and taking advantage of any and all secure remote, early voting, or absentee ballot technology likely to be developed for elections.

Regards,

Kevin Coffey

1 Stafford Lane

kevin@andovergovernance.com

(978) 704-1566

Contact Me    The Committee May Contact Me to Discuss my Input.