
PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

Boxborough Town Meeting

Persuade

The goal of a presentation at Town Meeting is to convince the Meeting to support your proposal. The best approach in most cases is to aim your presentation at the undecided voters.

You are there to answer these basic questions:

- ☆ **What is the need/problem?**
- ☆ **What is the proposed solution?**
- ☆ **How does it benefit the town?**
- ☆ **How much will it cost and how will it be funded (if applicable)?**

Consider whether you want to address opposing views in your presentation or wait for a question from the floor. Ask yourself: Will incorporating the criticism take you off message? Will you be raising an issue that might not otherwise surface? Will you gain an advantage by raising the concern and framing it in a light most favorable to your point of view?

Prepare

Talk with your committee and identify the key points you want to make in your presentation.

Assume that the Town's residents have read the material you put in the warrant, but *do not assume that Town residents know all relevant background*. Briefly include history as it directly impacts the article. Let someone not directly involved read or listen to the presentation and ask questions as part of your preparation.

Provide handouts at town meeting for complex information or supporting documents so your presentation focuses on the high points.

Prepare responses to potential questions that might arise during discussion. You can include additional slides not in your original presentation to address complex questions. Consider allowing other committee members to answer questions if they have a fuller grasp of the topic.



Present

Most issues are capable of being presented in much less than ten minutes. Keep your presentation short, but interesting.

A presentation can be solely verbal or involve PowerPoint slides. If your article is capable of being presented verbally don't feel compelled to do slides.

Use your slides as a guideline or visual support for your presentation but do not simply read them aloud. Keep slides simple and uncluttered. Use contrasting colors and large fonts. Slides should contain:

- ☆ **Key facts**
- ☆ **High-level points**
- ☆ **Pictures or graphs as needed**

Practice your presentation and its timing (both pace and length). Use audiences unfamiliar with your issue to see what questions arise.

Familiarize yourself with the podium and the microphones before the meeting starts. Hold the mike very close to your mouth so people can hear you.

If you are using PowerPoint, the Town Administrator's Administrative Assistant will run your presentation. Presentations are to be formatted in a 4:3 Aspect Ratio and a template can be provided. Adhere to all deadlines for submission to ensure your presentation is ready at town meeting.

When the floor is open for discussion, be receptive to the questions. The question may be repetitive, off-point, or uninformed. Trust the moderator to intervene if a questioner is uncivil or the question is out of order. You may give a bad impression if you treat the question or the questioner without respect or patience.

Once the floor is open for discussion don't rebut each comment. Unless the speaker presents inaccurate information, let it go. You can ask the Moderator to make a clarifying statement if necessary.