

## A Message from the Durham Select Board

September 1, 2020

As we all know, restrictions on large group gatherings prevented us from having our normal in-person Town Meeting last April. Instead, we held a secret ballot referendum-style Town Meeting in July. Several articles that had been planned for the April warrant were removed and not included on the July warrant in order to focus on the most important Municipal budget articles.

The Select Board's intent at the time was to schedule a Special Town Meeting this Fall to vote on the articles that were not included on the July warrant. Given the current situation, it seems very unlikely that large group gatherings will be possible this Fall. The Board also feels it is very unlikely an in-person Town Meeting will be possible in April of 2021. However, the Board also feels it is important to keep working on issues facing the Town, even if we cannot meet in person.

Therefore, the Board has decided to schedule a Special Town Meeting, using the secret ballot referendum process, in conjunction with the national election in November. When you go to vote on **November 3**, or earlier [via absentee ballot](#), there will be a separate ballot with our local articles on it.

We will be voting on four issues, all of which were originally part of last April's warrant, but were removed for the July warrant. They include:

1. [Proposed changes to our Zoning Map and Land Use Ordinance](#) needed to bring Durham's regulations into full compliance with the State's Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act.
2. A minor [change to the Historic District Ordinance](#) that will permit the Historic District Commission to increase the number of Alternate members from 2 to 4.
3. A series of Articles asking which, if any, **commercial** Adult Use Marijuana or Medical Marijuana establishments the Town wishes to allow. Please note that these questions have nothing to do with, and no impact on individual rights to use or grow marijuana for personal use in accordance with State law. We are only asking if voters want to see marijuana-related **businesses** in Town. If any of the commercial establishment types are approved, we are also asking for funds necessary for professional assistance in drafting appropriate ordinances.
4. Approval to hire a Town Manager and for the funds required for the recruitment and search process, if approved.

There will be two public hearings scheduled in late September and/or early October. Both public hearings will be for all the issues above. These hearings will be in a “virtual” format using Zoom. A postcard notice will be mailed to all households with information on how to participate once details have been finalized. We will also be posting information related to these issues on the Town website so that voters can be as well-informed as possible.

If you have questions or concerns, please use the [Contact Us](#) link on the Town website home page or reach out to any Board member directly.

Thank you and stay safe!

Kevin Nadeau  
Rob Pontau  
Rich George  
Todd Beaulieu  
Marc Farrin