

TO: Lyn Simmons, Town Manager
FROM: Katherine T. Ingram, Town Clerk
DATE: April 28, 2021
RE: ATE at Community House

Dear Lyn,

I am requesting that the Select Board vote at the May 3, 2021 meeting to hold the June 22, 2021 Annual Town Election at the Community House. The decision to change a polling location has to be voted on by the Select Board no later than twenty (20) days prior to the election. It is my understanding that the Community House will not cause a disparate, adverse impact on access to the polls on the basis of race, national origin, disability, income or age.

Last June during a time of uncertainty regarding COVID and without vaccines in sight, the Town safely held the Annual Town Election at the Community House and I am confident that can be done again this year. There were no concerns from the Election Workers or from the in-person voters, in fact most everyone complimented the safety protocols that were in place and felt comfortable voting in person.

The decision last year to hold the September Primary and the November Election at Greenwood was due to the anticipated larger turnout of voters and it worked out great and allowed us to safely spread everyone out. I understood that to be a temporary measure for those two elections. It is not anticipated that there will be an extraordinary number of voters showing up at this election, there is only one race for two seats on the School Committee.

The polls are open for thirteen hours and voters should be able to move fairly quickly through the lines. At this time, I only have ten absentee ballot applications on file, I expect that number will increase somewhat and I will in fact be promoting this as an option again.

I communicated with both Andy Fraser, COVID Compliance Officer and Chief Dearborn and they had no concerns. Restrictions are easing across the State and Andy did suggest holding a meeting about three weeks ahead of the Election to do a modified safety plan based on restrictions in force at that time

Lastly, for your review, I have included a chart that shows voter participation in the Annual Town Elections that have taken place in the time I have been the Town Clerk.

Thank you for your consideration.