



# TOWN COUNCIL – AGENDA REQUEST FORM

THIS FORM WILL BECOME PART OF THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION USED BY THE COUNCIL AND PUBLIC

Please submit Agenda Request Form, **including back up information**, 8 days prior to the requested meeting date. **Public Hearing requests must be submitted 20 days prior to requested meeting date to meet publication deadlines** (exceptions may be authorized by the Town Manager, Chairman/Vice Chair).

## MEETING INFORMATION

Date Submitted: May 7, 2020  
Submitted by: Town Moderator Lynn Christensen  
Department:  
Speakers: Lynn Christensen

Date of Meeting: May 14, 2020  
Time Required: 30 minutes  
Background Info. Supplied: Yes:  No:

## CATEGORY OF BUSINESS (PLEASE PLACE AN "X" IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX)

Appointment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition/Resignation/Retirement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Public Hearing:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Old Business:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New Business:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent Agenda:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonpublic:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>

## TITLE OF ITEM

Continuation of Town Election Discussion

## DESCRIPTION OF ITEM

Town Moderator Lynn Christensen to continue the discussion with the Town Council on the date and polling locations for the upcoming Town Election.

## REFERENCE (IF KNOWN)

RSA:	Warrant Article:	_____
Charter Article:	Town Meeting:	_____
Other:	N/A	

## EQUIPMENT REQUIRED (PLEASE PLACE AN "X" IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX)

Projector:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grant Requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easel:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joint Meeting:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Seating:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laptop:	<input type="checkbox"/>	None:	<input type="checkbox"/>

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Lynn Christensen Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## APPROVAL

Town Manager: Yes  No:  Chair/Vice Chair: Yes  No:

Hold for Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Town of Merrimack, NH  
Thursday, November 21, 2019*

## Chapter C. Charter

### Article III. Elections; Election Officials; Conduct of Elections

#### § 3-4. Conduct of elections.

- A. Date of elections. The election officers shall conduct regular and special elections on the dates specified by New Hampshire State Law. The election officers shall use a nonpartisan official ballot system as detailed in the election laws of the State of New Hampshire, on the second Tuesday in April to choose Town Councilors and such other officials as specified by this Charter, each of whom shall be elected by the voters of the entire Town.  
[Amended 4-10-2007]
- B. Time and place of elections. The election laws of the State of New Hampshire shall govern the hours of polling. The Town Council shall specify the polling place(s) of the Town and determine the hours the polls shall open and close at least 30 days prior to any election.
- C. Qualifications for office. To be eligible for election to office in Merrimack, any candidate must meet the requirements of applicable New Hampshire state law and constitutional provisions concerning such qualifications. In accordance with RSA 669:6, no person shall hold elected office unless the person has a domicile in the Town. In addition to other requirements, a candidate for Town Council must be a registered voter as well as having been a resident for a minimum of one year prior to the first day of the filing period for candidacy.

1 For Planning Board and Zoning Board applications, please understand that a meeting date for when  
2 applications will be heard is not able to be determined at this time.

3  
4 **Consent Agenda** - None

5  
6 **Old Business**

7  
8 **1. Town Election Discussion (Official Ballot Vote) – May 12, 2020**

9 Submitted by Town Moderator Lynn Christensen

10 Town Moderator Lynn Christensen to provide the Town Council with an update on the upcoming  
11 Town Election scheduled for Tuesday, May 12, 2020.

12  
13 Lynn Christensen, Town Moderator, remarked, based on the current situation, the election will not take  
14 place on May 12<sup>th</sup>. From comments she has heard, she does not believe the State will re-open until the  
15 end of May or later. If the State remains closed until the end of May, the earliest the election could be  
16 held would be June 9<sup>th</sup>, which is a timeframe she would not be comfortable with, given the amount of  
17 work that would have to be done. We will follow the two-week increment process as is allowed;  
18 however, she anticipates an election date of June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

19  
20 Residents will be encouraged to request absentee ballots. Absentee ballots are being sent out with a  
21 postage paid envelope for ease of submission.

22  
23 When the election is held, social distancing will be adhered to, volunteers will be wearing masks and  
24 voters will be required to wear masks. She has spoken with the Secretary of State's Office and the  
25 Attorney General's Office. There are only a handful of towns in this situation. They are looking into  
26 Federal funding, and, if needed, will work with the Town to fund some of the need. Election  
27 workers/volunteers who are in a vulnerable situation will not be utilized.

28  
29 Asked if an election at the end of June would impact the budget, Assistant Town Manager/Finance  
30 Director Micali stated were the budget not to pass, the Town Council would have 7 days to approve a  
31 default budget. Asked if he would have to have a printed budget at that point or if there would be  
32 additional time allowed understanding the budget could not (and would not in a short timeframe) be  
33 overspent, he indicated he would have to check with the Department of Revenue Administration as the  
34 Town has not gone beyond July 1<sup>st</sup> without having the budget reconciled. It is likely the Town would  
35 operate under a Continuing Resolution until a budget could be approved by the Council.

36  
37 Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Micali stated the Town would do all it can to protect the  
38 election workers and voters, e.g., secure masks and gloves, look into plexiglass for registration booths.

39  
40 Chairman Koenig questioned the number of masks needed for voters and how they would be  
41 obtained/distributed, etc. The Town has collected hand sanitizer in gallon jugs that can be placed at  
42 polling locations, etc. Ms. Christensen commented on some of the precautions that have been/will be  
43 taken, e.g., golf pencils have been ordered to be used at the booths for single use in marking ballots.

44  
45 Asked if guidance has been received from the Secretary of State's Office relative to social distancing  
46 and wearing of masks at polling locations, Ms. Christensen stated she has been in touch with the  
47 Secretary of State's Office, and they are in agreement with her plans. Should a voter refuse to wear a  
48 mask, they will be required to stay in their vehicle, a designated election worker will bring an absentee  
49 ballot to them in their vehicle, they can mark it there, and it will be brought back in.

1  
2 Chairman Koenig asked, and was informed, technically, the election remains scheduled for May 12<sup>th</sup>  
3 until it can be changed again. It can only be changed in two-week intervals.

4  
5 Ms. Christensen stated the ballot boxes have to be opened before elections and the ballots counted in  
6 public. Ballot testing has to be conducted prior to the election. That will be done electronically.  
7 Because Town Hall has been closed, that cannot be done. Chairman Koenig stated the Town Hall can  
8 be opened for specific reasons when necessary. It can be done in a virtual meeting.

9  
10 Asked if the school is aware of the plans, Ms. Christensen stated the only concerns expressed are  
11 related to the janitorial staff. They have been given the day off. They will be available to do set-up  
12 prior to the election. The day of the election they will have a person designated that will be available if  
13 needed, but generally speaking the janitorial staff will not be available on that day.

14  
15 Councilor Woods questioned the latest date it would be known another extension would be sought  
16 beyond the May 12<sup>th</sup> date, and was informed it would depend on the situation in the State. Ms.  
17 Christensen reiterated she does not expect the election to be conducted any earlier than June 23<sup>rd</sup>. If  
18 something should occur early in June where the State experiences a sudden spike in infection rate, etc.  
19 that will be revisited. It is hoped, through the efforts of social distancing, etc., that the election will be  
20 able to be conducted on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. She stated the election would not be conducted any earlier than the  
21 23<sup>rd</sup> of June.

## 22 23 **2. Bedford Road Bridge Project Update**

24 Submitted by Public Works Director Kyle Fox

25 Public Works Director Kyle Fox to provide the Town Council with an update on the status of the  
26 Bedford Road Bridge Project.

27  
28 The new bridge is now open to one lane traffic. The previous bridge was installed in 1984 and was a  
29 21' span metal pipe arch bridge that had severe corrosion and was undersized for the roadway. The  
30 metal arch bridge bypassed the Darrah Bridge, which was used as the foundation for the construction  
31 of the detour bridge.

32  
33 Kyle Fox, Director, Public Works Department (PWD), stated the project was intended to fulfill three  
34 primary objectives. The first was to raise the road profile west of the bridge to keep Bedford Road  
35 from overtopping during floods. Following the Mother's Day flood in 2006, attempts were made to  
36 gain FEMA funding to do a permanent replacement that would fix this issue, but they were only  
37 offering replacement costs. That is when the project began rolling into the Bridge Aid program. DOT  
38 allowed for inclusion of addressing the issue of water overtopping the road.

39  
40 The second primary objective was to replace the metal arch bridge itself. It was a metal pipe arch that  
41 was badly corroded and was on the State's Red List. The new bridge is an approx. 90' span versus the  
42 old 21' span. It will easily pass the 100-year flood. The Darrah Bridge also constricts the waterway,  
43 and will be removed as part of this project.

44  
45 The third objective was to improve the pedestrian/bicycle access through the corridor. The area going  
46 through the bridge was very narrow. The guardrail was leaning back and there was no shoulder to  
47 speak of. The new bridge has shoulders and a full sidewalk on the north side of the bridge. The  
48 sidewalk will extend out to Pearson Road and wrap around into the existing sidewalk system.