Final Report
Addendum
Citizens for Milford
Town Meeting Working Group
2017 Survey of Town Meeting Members
Milford, MA.

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ALL SURVEY COMMENTS

Available
On Line at www.milfordma.gov Town Meeting Tab
or via
U.S. Mail or email upon request to: Town Clerk, 52 Main St., Milford MA 01757)

Question 4. What do you like most about Milford's Town Meeting?
1. Opportunity to become involved, informed, and participate in the decision process
An opportunity to be better informed about issues facing the town and to have a vote about some important decisions in regard to the town's future.
being a part of decisions for the town
Being able to play a valid role in making the decisions that guide our town.
Being involved
Being involved with our town's development. I like how pro's/con's are made available prior to the Meetings for our consideration
Each precinct is fairly represented. Provides an opportunity for registered voters to get actively involved in government. Gives attendants and TV audience access to town business.
Explanation of articles.
Finally good audio w/ supplemental aid available. Like: Openness & direct citizen participation vs. other less-open forms of gov't. which I've experienced elsewhere.
Feel a part of the town!
Getting to know what's going on with the town, giving back, helping to shape the future of the town.
Having an impact on what and how town spends budget
I don't really have anything to compare it to as this is really my first time being involved in the town this way. I've enjoyed being a town meeting member and attending the meetings because they keep me informed about what is happening in the town in a non-intimidating and informational way.
I like doing my civic duty. As a lifetime resident it makes me feel like I'm part of the development for Milford.
I like to understand what is going on in the town and having the opportunity to be a part of what happens
Information shared.
It is very informative.
Learning about the proposals in the various warrant articles and helping the Town determine its priorities by voting on them.
Necessary materials are provided in advance so that members are/can be informed at Town Meeting.
Opportunity for relatively wide participation in town governance (the fact that we have a town meeting rather than mayor-council).
Opportunity to keep abreast of town finances and business.
participating in the forward progress of how the town is run
Participating in town government with other members of the community
Participation in local issues.
Seeing process of town government @ work
Staying informed on issues in town and having a voice in decisions
That we help make decisions regarding the town.
The ability for everyone to see what is happening there. Transparency is definitely there. A great way for people to be involved.
The ability to hear the information on topics affecting the town and the as well as the opportunity to speak.
The ability to listen to debate on issues requiring approval prior to voting.

The decisions that members get to make
the details of the articles presented & the ensuing debates etc.
The information provided by the different committees so you can compare it.
Hearing the opinions of others on the motions before Town Meeting.
The participation of town meeting members
information provided and debate
interaction on articles
Listening to both sides of issues debate
The opportunity to discuss issues affecting the town
The opportunity to participate in the decisions in Town.
The opportunity to see firsthand where the town spends money and how different departments are run.
The sense of participation in running local affairs.
TM members get to listen to all sides of an issue and vote on the merits of the issue, sometimes against the rec. of the Fin com and/or Board of Selectmen.
To hear different points of view on arguments.
Very informative - cordial group
Not only is data provided in advance for review, but we're plenty of opportunity to discuss articles as desired
That each department can present articles and explain why and how much to spend on the request.
The warrants are sent out prior to the meeting for review.
2. The ability of TM members and registered voters to speak freely and express their views
A chance to have an input, however small, in how the town is run.
Every citizen has an opportunity to speak
Everybody gets to have his or her say
everyone gets to be heard and express their opinion
Everyone has a voice
Free exchange of view, opinions and ideas.
All representatives/members have an opportunity to speak on articles.
It allows members, residents and others an opportunity to state their case on a particular issue/article.
It gives the members a chance to air their views
It is a chance to be heard
Members are allowed to express opinions of their membership and there are no time limits on this
Open
Open forum to speak about the town article being considered.
Open frank input from all members and the discussion of all topics.
Openness
Opportunity for everyone to be heard and represented.
Participation in discussion by all members
That everyone's voice can be heard.
The ability and responsibility to have a voice in Milford's governance
The ability *(to)* speak for or against an article and then vote upon the article.

The ability to speak freely and represent people in each precinct
The fact that you are able to voice your opinion.
Having a representative say
Hearing different points of view.
it gives all the voters an opportunity express in the way their government works
It gives TM members, as well as citizens of the town, the opportunity to voice their opinion, for or against, on any article that is brought up for vote.
It is a great institution that allows all registered voters to voice their opinion on the affairs of the town.
People can express their feelings
People have an opportunity to speak.
The ability for all to speak and be heard. Each issue is carefully considered.
The ability to oppose matters that are not appropriate for Milford.
Town Residents ability to participate and vote.
Town's people can express their opinions.
The ability to voice concerns,
All town meeting members have the opportunity to be heard.
Precinct members can express their views.
That they give the public a chance to say how they would like their town to be run (though their elected representatives).
The opportunity to express my opinion.
the sharing of valued opinions
The interest, Input and feedback from the members
Varying viewpoints of 200+ members have served the town well to assure that articles are well vetted
3. Well Organized and structured
Also, the rules provide for a streamlined manner of proposing, debating and acting upon measures
I feel the meeting is organized and for the most part,
town officials are very prepared and make process go smoothly
The ability to have everyone express their opinion.
A lot of town business is accomplished in two nights per year.
I like Roberts rules when they are followed, it gives structure.
How efficiently it is conducted.
How organized it is.
It is conducted in a very orderly fashion and ample opportunity is provided to Town Meeting Members and registered voters to express their views.
It is very organized and structured
The ability to transact all business within a reasonable time frame usually one evening
The Moderator's professionalism.
The orderly way Mike Noferi takes charge of keeping everyone in line and very professional! Everyone is always well prepared and informed.
the way it is conducted
The way its run.
Things seem to work relatively smoothly.

Town Moderator does a good job keeping order and pace in town meetings.
Well organized
Well run.
All the articles are covered in the one night, good pace.
Getting business done.
seem organized
that we usually only have it 1 night unlike other Towns
4. Moderator does an excellent job managing the meeting and moving it along.
Good cross section of the community. Moderator does an excellent job managing the meeting and moving it along. I really enjoyed having students perform the national anthem at the last meeting. The more we can engage the community and include them in the process the better.
I believe that the Moderator is fair in allowing Town Meeting members and others to make their presentation without time pressures. I also believe that there are divergent views and that this is healthy in assessing matters before the Town Meeting.
It is organized well once the meeting begins and the pace of the meeting is maintained to allow anyone to be heard while not delaying the process.
It seems to be well run in terms of time.
It well moderated, and controlled
Mike Noferi does a great job. It feels good to be involved
Moderator does a great job.
Moderator keeps process on task.
MODERATOR KEEPS THE MEETING ON TRACK
Our Town Moderator. He does a great job and is very fair.
Spirit of cooperation and respect for each other. Moderator runs a tight ship! ;)
The meetings are organized and actively managed
The moderator
Town moderator does a great job at moving the meeting along
5. Finance Committee report
Most all the Committees and Boards are well prepared for the meeting and can explain the articles. Our Financial presentations are simple and easy to understand. The meeting is competed in one night.
FINCOM comments
FINDING OUT WHAT THE TOWN SPENDS TAXPAYER'S MONEY ON
It starts on tine and the moderator keeps it moving. Good financial presentation and updates.
it's a great way to operate the towns finances
The finance report
The Fin Com now posts info on line submitted by various departments to support their requests for funding. The info shared with members from the Fire Dept. & the Highway Dept. for the most recent meeting was very useful.
The presentation by the Finance Committee
The way out Finance Comm. handles our money

6. Purest form of Democracy
A true representation of our democracy
Democracy
Form of government.
It is the purest form of democracy.
It's the purest form of democracy. Theoretically the citizens hold the purse strings---It would be great if TMM recognized that and acted accordingly
Representative form of government. Not just voters showing up for one or two pet articles.
representative town meeting
The fact that it is a representative form of government.
7. Opportunity to Represent Constituents
Citizen and precinct representation
and represent the voters in our precincts and the Towns best interest
and represent the voters in our precincts and the Towns best interest
Representing my constituents and being a voice in things for the betterment of the town.
The ability to represent people in each precinct
The people having representation
The representative nature.
8. Miscellaneous Likes
The opportunity to bring attention to an agenda.
The interactions
Town Meeting is forum bringing together Milford residents from all areas of the community.
It is a check by the people on the way that the town spends its money, and keeps a check on the zoning issues that the town faces.
Leadership
Members who come take it seriously and seem to be doing their best in evaluating how to vote.
Not much
Not much
Repeated speaker on same issue
Seeing old friends and meeting new friends.
Seeing people working together to get issues do
The problem arises when appointed committees get involved and interfere sometimes with the process of elected officials who know what they need and prioritize themselves what is needed. Elected officials should not be told what is needed or have some committee telling them how to spend their request for money (capital expenditures) that have been approved at town meeting.
The overall body and their ability to continue to work together with articles
Town Meeting Member

Question 5. What do you dislike most about Milford's Town Meeting?
1. Speaker time limits
A few members who cannot stop talking.
How individuals are allowed to go on too long about their point of view. Should be a time limit.
and are not shut off after 10-15 minutes. Most members are not listening after that time.
I feel that there is too much time given to a very few people who like to make multiple trips to the podium. Often their comments are very long and do not serve the meeting well. Can we place limits on the number of times an individual speaks on one article, and can we place a limit on how much time one speaker can present for?
and multiple times a speakers can talk
Length of time
Length of time - Certain speakers always get up - To the point of no one is listening anymore to the point!
Let people talk too long, get to the point. Limit the people only a certain amount of time.
Long speeches at the podium
Long winded speakers.
Long winded speakers. Be clear. Make your point. Sit down!
No time limit for speakers.
No time limit on speakers
No time limits on speeches.
No time limits on the speakers
as well as no limit to time for town meeting members to voice their objection or support of different issues.
some members ramble on and on!
Some members take a disproportionate amount of time discussing issues.
They sometimes speak several times for the same issue with little value added. I believe that this discourages others from offering opinions as the meeting has already been "dragged out" by the few that need to be heard on every issue.
some of the members ramble on too much.
Speakers sometimes being allowed to ramble and not speak succinctly about topics at hand.
Start time is very late,
That an individual can speak for an unlimited time and a few selfishly speak for a very long time, which discourages hearing multiple speakers/views.
that the same people get up and talk too long at every meeting
That there is often no time limit on how long someone is allowed to speak to an issue.
That Town Meeting members have unlimited time to question multiple articles;
The lack of time limits on speakers and people's ability to ramble on with NO end in sight
The long speeches that the testifiers make
All debating speakers should be limited in their time to speak/argue a point and we should not have to wait while they return to the Podium. A separate mic should be provided for Members to use on each side of the room.
The amount of time we give people to speak.
the time that some individuals take in discussing articles, often too long and off point.

There should be a limit on the length of time a person speaks. Too many times a single person takes up an hour going on and on and this desensitizes the town meeting members for later articles. This would also shorten the town meeting. It is a concern that many times we start with a bare minimum quorum and you can count people leaving that would indicate we are below the number required. If we did not spend an hour listening to a single person or the same person multiple times restating what they said, the meeting would be faster and people would stay more engaged
Limit speaking time.
members who want to speak should have a time limit given to them. moderator should have better control over meeting and time limits.
We need a time limit on speaking time except when showing items on the screen. Some people go on and on for 1/2 hour plus.
Long winded orations
and/or take too long to make their point.
Speakers that monopolize time speaking.
2. The length of the meeting
Town meeting runs later than it needs to.
Can drag on
Starts too late. Start it earlier.
Having to stay after 10:00 pm to finish the warrant.
How late the meetings run.
How long it runs sometimes.
HOW LONG IT TAKES, THE RULES/LAWS ARE UNNECESSARY
How long the meeting can last...the nearly midnight one was a bit much.
I dislike the apparent pressure to complete TM in one night and the lack of discussion on many articles.
They are too long.
it is too long
Length
Length. Start time and duration of meeting
Length of each meeting
Meetings too long.
and I feel the meeting should end by 10:00pm and continued.
Sometimes it drags on
Sometimes the meeting seems to go on and on to the point that I get disinterested.
lack of participation,
takes too long. Less articles-- Especially the year accounting articles that clear or return money to the town they should all be combines into one.
that, given how late some meetings have run, starting it one hour earlier would be helpful.
The length of the meetings.
The Moderator repeats every motion taking up valuable time. We can read.
The Moderator usually does a good job but gives some speakers too much leeway to stray from actual article or amendment being discussed. Meetings run longer than necessary due to this. Allows a speaker to get up again to say the same point again.

The start time should be moved to 7:00, once the night gets to 10 the interest dwindles.
They finish too late. Some members leave before we are done. I think the meeting should not run any later than 10pm. I have seen some people nodding off when it is late.
Too long. Almost like a philibuster
Too long
Too long -
-Too long -Seems decisions are made before meeting -Same speakers over and over, same remarks
Too long.
Too many articles packed in one session. I hate having the town meeting us week. We get out late and most of us have to get up early in the morning. I sometimes will leave early
Would like meetings to start earlier like 7:00 pm
Occasional lengthy meetings
3. Debating Issues
Circular arguments lead to unnecessarily long discussions.
Constant debates over issues that have already been thoroughly vetted (having gone before numerous boards, on many different occasions, most of which have open discussion periods and access to information and for questions to be asked).
even though the moderator does a fantastic job to limit it, some issues are addresses over and over. beating a dead horse as it were. seems like some people enjoy the spotlight too much.
Getting bogged down in minutiae (which may be very important to others)
How every time someone wants to have a debate they need to go back and forth from their seat. Takes too much time.
Some people feel the need to argue just for the sake of arguing.
Meeting members repeating what has already be said
Occasionally, articles get bogged down by speakers that feel it is necessary to comment or opine about many articles.
Presenters who mumble, speak too softly, too loud or too fast.
The biggest fault I have, is when someone gets up and calls for the debate to end before everyone has a chance to have their say, I realize that sometimes the debate can be lengthy, but the purpose of the meeting is to get everyone's input before a vote is taken.
and the droning on and on of individuals who are seemingly giving us all a lecture.
When one addresses the floor and go off on a tangent
When someone has something to say they have to walk to the front and address from the podium. Waste of time.
when speakers wander off topic
When speakers continuously get up to speak but do not really have much to say.
too much debate. A person should only be able to approach the stand once per warrant.
When debate is shut off.
Too little real discussion.
If a person is sponsoring multiple articles, that person should do them consecutively, instead of getting up and down
Why do they have to read the article, then someone says to pass on it, makes no sense.

Sometimes things move too fast.
pretty much many meetings have happened prior to town meeting and minds are already made up
4. Membership, Moderator, and Finance Committee critique
Absentee's rules (no shows should be removed).
Eliminate members with poor attendance.
It appears that the great majority of members have never approached the microphone.
Many of the meeting members appear also be town employees causing what I believe is conflict of interest and lacking proper representation of the town people.
Members exiting the hall after an important vote
Members not attending
people speaking on topics that they are not educated on
People who do not listen and do not come to the meeting informed
Rubber stamp mentality.
Too many town meeting members are town employees.
And some seem clueless on how it operates.
maybe too many town meeting members,
and that Elected members never go to the meeting, but want their name in the Annual Report as being "members"
that some seasoned members, despite having prior experience submitting amendments, continually fail to follow the required format and take that failure out on the Moderator;
The behind the scene soliciting. The town employees and their supporters influencing the vote.
the lack of members who don't show up, and also the amount who leave right after the more important warrants are voted on
The Moderator has lost his impartiality. He has his favorites. Give more leeway to some but not others.. Mike, you've done a good job in the past, It's time to move on.
the way some people try to use the town meeting for their own self interest and not for the good of the community.
The way the finance committee gives it's take on the pre-meeting and there superior attitude towards the way they cast their decisions on spending.
Too much control by the finance committee. They are supposed to be a recommending board, not the final decision maker. Town meeting just dumped the capital planning board because they tried to switch requested articles the way they looked at them, and never would consult with department heads. In the end sometimes departments would have to go without until the following year. There is much favoritism toward certain departments by the finance committee. I can see emergencies happening but not at every town meeting where the larger departments get there requests and the smaller departments usually have to wait.
5. Audio/visual system quality including speaker issues at the mic.
Speaker (audio) still not being loud enough.
Acoustic
Acoustics - always difficult to hear speakers - and
HARD TO HEAR THE SOME OF THE SPEAKERS

It is difficult for members to hear
It is sometimes hard to hear people.
The hall's sound system leaves a lot to be desired.
People not talking into the mike
Sound system is not always clear.
Poor sound system.
sound
Sound Quality.
the audio system people do not talk into the microphone
The audio/visual equipment is very poor and it is hard to see or hear presentations or speakers.
The physical facilities (e.g., Audio, Visual, and Ambient Lighting) are sub-optimum which detracts from the presentation and reception of data, information, and debate. This results in losing the attention of the Members and makes for a less than pleasant and somewhat frustrating experience.
I wonder if it may be uncomfortable for people to make comments standing in front of the hall. Perhaps if the mic could be brought to an individual there may be more discussion.
6. Decorum and conduct of town meeting members
Some town officials who can be condescending.
Individuals not receiving the respect from others because they disagree with whatever is being said.
No member should be subjected to the subtle ridicule that often occurs, it's an open forum and all are entitled to express their opinions.
that some Town Meeting members are disrespectful toward the Moderator;
The lack of respect many show towards the moderator and other members.
Grandstanding from members/officials.
Sometimes what is said is not relevant to the motion in question
Often times members seem to speak just to be heard or be controversial
People that talk to get on camera that add no value
Sometimes members speak even though they have nothing substantive to say...but there is nothing you can do about that.
The need of some members to hear themselves speak for the sake of hearing themselves speak.
The Moderator usually does a good job but gives some speakers too much leeway to stray from actual article or amendment being discussed.
Topic maintenance could be better upheld by having speakers reduce sarcasm and pointless commentary.
Town meeting members who can't shut up during proceedings....always the same ones. Shut up and pay attention!
Very noisy.....
7. The content, clarity, and timeliness of Information provided
not enough information about we are voting on
Lack of provided information(relying on inferred) does not provide for a full vetting of issues-some topics-while seemingly up for debate and vote appear to have been predefined and awaiting a "rubber stamp."

Lack of historical accuracy pertaining to various articles.
New member have very little instruction.
Information to be voted on seems to be disseminated at the last minute.
Not having an opportunity to be better informed about topics before voted on
Planning board and zoning issues can be difficult to understand.
The order in which articles is presented seems random. Topics that require in-depth explanation and discussion should be presented first, to ensure they receive the attention they deserve. Plus, often not much information is provided to explain what is being voted on.
I would also prefer to receive information electronically prior to meeting as opposed to mailed hard copies.
Written documentation should be provided that indicates what would happen if the article does not pass. (Similar to State ballot questions.)
The lack of timely information in some cases - finding material on the chair with no time to give thorough consideration' I also feel there needs to be better visuals. Lastly, please time monitor speakers.
Advance information not easily available. Consider taking advantage of information technology. Consider Town Meeting tab on the Town's website to post reports and You Tube links to Fin Com, Planning Board, Selectmen, and School Committee meetings that deal with the budget and Warrant Articles
hard decisions matters should be put on agenda first NOT last when everyone is tired and no thought goes into the vote
Why does the planning board read their minutes? One of the committees always has a really boring presentation.
Being a teacher and someone who has not always been overly interested or involved in politics, at times, I find the terminology of some of the articles hard to understand.
8. The same people get up and talk
Same people taking too much time.
And the same people speak for an extremely long period of time
certain members who get up over and over and over on every subject just to disrupt the proceedings and never have anything positive to offer
I dislike that the same individuals dominate the discussions
Individual speakers who monopolize the floor.
Orations by a handful of "regulars" Instead of widespread participation by TMM's.
Often a few speakers dominate the floor
Same old "Boys Club", same speakers, same "clicks", same old school mentality, same ideas same notion of "untouchables".
Sometimes cumbersome with some people speaking too often.
Sometimes discussions go on endlessly when the same people get up time and again and just repeat themselves/
The predictability of who will be going to the microphone and what they will have to say.
The same people getting up to complain !
When the same people get up and drone on and on - Some are always negative - But that's their right.

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9. Seating Comfort and Arrangement, parking
Pr. 6 never has been close behind Members/at/Large during so-called Precinct rotations
I don't have any dislikes other than the seats can become uncomfortable.
I wish there was a little more room, sometimes it is a little cramped (the seats).
Seating is uncomfortable during long sessions and a writing surface would be helpful. Parking is inadequate, particularly for late arrivals.
Seats are not comfortable
seating never rotates, always in the back
The chairs are rather uncomfortable.
The chairs are too close. Some of us, namely me, are wider than others.
and the uncomfortable seats.
The meeting room is crowded (like cattle in a pen) and often hot, and the chairs are hard to take after three hours. There must be a space/auditorium more comfortable for a long meeting.
The uncomfortable seats,
Uncomfortable chairs.
Parking
10. Voting method
During standing votes, some people will not vote either way, yet if vote goes to written vote, the outcome sometimes reverses the standing vote.
Silent vote would yield truer feelings and opinions.
The open voting system
The voting process
no privacy with your vote.
voice vote
Voice vote and the influence of others on their votes
Voice voting
voting procedure
voting procedure
11. No Dislikes
Nothing
nothing
nothing
Nothing
Nothing
nothing comes to mind.
I actually don't have complaints

12. Asking questions on articles
People not understanding that TM floor is NOT the place to ask questions.
WOULD LOVE TO BE ABLE TO ASK QUESTIONS
Members should be able to ask questions from their seats, without having to go up to the podium, unless they want to.
Town Meeting Members frequently ask for more information about particular warrant articles at Town Meetings, and the sponsors (or other seemingly knowledgeable town officials) sometimes do not provide answers during the relevant floor 'debate'... if the sponsors don't have the answers, perhaps the votes should get tabled more often (perhaps automatically) to facilitate real or more-thorough answers, before a vote is actually taken. If TMMs are only expected to rubber-stamp the sponsor's requests, we might as well dump TM all together... and stop wasting everyone's time and related Town expenses. Sometimes, town officials use prior public hearings as a crutch (say on zoning changes)... but, everyone knows that the various board/committee/commission meetings are normally not well attended by the public (for one reason or another). If the sponsors have to respond to 'stupid' or redundant questions by TMMs at TMs, they should be prepared to do so (with a smile). That and the phrase "a sum of money"... TMMs want a ballpark figure at the very least, because there's nothing worse than finding out the bill at the last minute, right before we're expected to authorize action. [If my mechanic acted that way, I'd be looking for a new mechanic... and maybe an attorney, too.]
When some gets up ask questions about an article. One thing to ask for point of clarification.
13. Content and clarity of visual presentations
Slides with print that is too small to read and too much information on one slide.
The visual displays, can't see what is being shown.
The visual displays, they are hard to see, especially the numbers and the zoning maps.
We could have some improvement with visual presentations. Forego putting something on the screen that's not readable by all TMMs.
Visual Presentations can be difficult to read from a distance
14. Being recognized to speak
Difficult to be recognized by moderator
and difficult for the moderator to hear us when we want to be recognized.
Lack of access to speak Some might call it controlled democracy
Moderator occasionally misses people raising their hand.
Question 25 -If needed, please elaborate on any of your answers for Question 22-24 by commenting below
Question 22. How early you are notified of the Town Meeting dates so that you may plan your schedule.
22. Would prefer 3 to 6 month advance notice.
I am often planning months in advance when I plan to travel and it would be very helpful if there were a fixed date for Town Meetings. When I miss Town Meetings it is because I am away and couldn't schedule my travel around Town Meeting, since I didn't know when it would be held.
I do not get a direct notice from the Selectmen or Clerk when a date is set, need to pick it up from a newspaper or on the Towns website.

Town meeting dates should be easier to find on the town web page. I looked today and could not find when the spring meeting will be held. An email with the date ("save the date") would also be helpful
Would like earlier and multiple notifications of town meeting.
I usually need to ask someone in the Town Hall when the Town Meeting will be held.
Receiving the information via email would be more efficient and more timely.
They should be email waste of stamps and they will arrive faster.
22. The week of the May and October Town Meetings should be established in January to afford Members sufficient notice to plan their personal schedules around those dates.
Question 23. Materials you receive for the meeting arrive in sufficient time for you to review and prepare.
As stated earlier I do not like to have articles found on the chair the night of the meeting.
I believe we have to get better at letting town meeting members know what is available for review on the web site.
It has been a great advantage to have the information about the articles well in advance
It works great! Sometimes the mail arrives late!
More time is need before town meeting
Nothing to elaborate on. I feel I get them well enough in advance.
The last time I did not receive the mail it was addressed to a different address
the town clerk is doing an excellent job
timelines are set by MGL, and delayed by last minute changes by Boards/Committees that want to mail out their reports with the Warrant which delays the mailing of the warrant until last minute
I'd like things via email except I can't reference them on my tablet during a meeting. I would like to rid of paper and pencil personally, but understand that others like that method. I world not like to be scrutinized if allowed to use electronic.
SOMETIMES BECAUSE OF THE STATURE OF THE WRITING OF INFORMATION TO ADHERE TO PROPER LAW GUIDELINES, IT IS NOT UNDERSTANDABLE TO THE AVERAGE PERSON
Sometimes the materials received are written such that the true message is lost in the jargon and rhetoric.
There needs to be more use of graphics explaining financial matters and maps for matters involving zoning matters
As said before, it would be helpful to provide a written statement the describes what happens if an article passes.
Getting the warrant from town clerk is redundant since fin comm report includes each article and a summary of the intent
Maybe a contact person can be identified if there are questions or clarification needed before the meeting.
If you watch the committee meetings and read the websites and papers, you should have a lot of info.
23. The Finance Committee report is thorough and is received in a timely manner. Planning Board, Personnel Board and School reports/materials are not provided in advance of the Town Meeting.

Question 24. Finance Committee Materials you receive are comprehensive and informative.
24. Finance committee report is clear. Additional materials are not always easy to understand. Would prefer to receive add'l materials with warrant. Slides often have too much small print, not enough graphic material, some presenters do not speak clearly, slowly or loud enough.
#24 I want to know the vote count on the articles, After all, there are 15 members on the committee. How did they vote?
F.C. has a 5 yr. plan and we don't know what it is. It should come in the packet from the Finance Committee
Finance Committee materials are often full of information but it is not always relevant and/or clear to follow.
Finance Committee vote should be specified # for and against. Need detailed explanation of ALL reserves not just stabilization
Fin com could elaborate more on the pros and cons of their recommendations
I like watching Finance Committee meetings on TV.
I would like information that would allow me to figure out effect of voting for specific funding will affect the tax rate.
I would like the Fin Com report to include more discussion on how the various warrant articles fit into Milford's long term plans/goals. Also, I would like learn more about the Town's near- & long-term spending plans; more than *just* the Fire Dept.'s 10-year plan. It would be nice if TMMs (and the public, in general) could get a regular printout, slide show, or web posting of charts, showing the towns long-term spending plans (e.g., 10+ year capital plan, debt servicing, pension liabilities, etc.). Also, discussion about how good the town is at keeping to its projected plans, and what are we doing to eliminate/cut/prevent spending that hasn't been planned for normally; ideally, cutting last minute projects, in favor of good, stable, more-public, more-formalized fiscal policies.
If the Finance Committee can't provide in a timely manner information to a town meeting then reschedule the meeting.
In a Finance Committee vote 9-2...better explanation of the 2 vote.
Many members make their decisions based on the Fin Com summary provided and don't know the facts ahead of the meeting
More detail from Fin Com.
Sometimes the Finances seem like they could have a bit more info, but in general, what we get is good
The charter of the Fin Com is their work for the TM and Selectmen. They are by charter to present the pros and cons of each issue that comes before us. They never present the pros and cons of any issue.
The idea that the Finance Committee reports which are provided to the Town Meeting members are comprehensive and informative is rather curious. That report lists the articles and the texts with only the recommendation of the Finance Committee, there is no description and analysis. How many people know that they can access more comprehensive reports on the Town of Milford website is an open question.
The information provided can be inconsistent and incomplete from one article to the next. For each article on the warrant I would like to know the incremental costs to the town (initial costs and ongoing operating costs)
We have taken the steps to have review packages posted 1 month before town meeting, but this should also include information on every article, not just what goes before a long range capital committee

The Fin Com has never not supported the Selectmen or a spending issue. They have become politicized and are of no value to the TM. They have no objectivity and quite frankly have no expertise in financial matters. Finance is a profession, a demonstrated skill. The skill is demonstrated by being a successful business person. Not one member meets that criteria. They were placed on the Fin Com because of their demonstrated skill to agree with the appointing authority (Selectmen) 100% of the time.
Comments not directly addressing questions 22 - 24
I just feel there should be an opportunity for Town meeting members to ask questions to clarify any questions they may have....before the meeting..so that each person's vote is based on a knowledgeable decision and not based on a desire to hastily vote to end the meeting in a more timely manner.
We could do better in educating newly elected town meeting members.
Would like to see these meeting start earlier and end earlier. 9 pm should be the designated time to complete the meeting. Also could we have the meetings on Thursday night or Friday night?
Everything is fine, Thank you.
Good survey. These questions are most appropriate in addressing town meeting reforms.
Question 45. Would you like to elaborate on any of your answers for Questions 37-44 by commenting below?
Question 37. How satisfied you are with the meeting beginning promptly at the designated time?
(NO COMMENTS)
Question 38. How satisfied are you with the meeting being run in an organized fashion?
I think the town moderator does a great job. My comment on how the meeting is run and organized relates to the way that some members take excessive time at the podium.
It is hard to get the moderators attention
LIKE PREVIOUSLY STATED, THE FORMALITY OF THE PROCEDURES AREN'T QUITE UNDERSTOOD AND IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO REPEAT THE LAWS/AMENDMENTS ETC EACH TIME
No, the potential procedure revisions listed on the prior page, capture what I would have suggested.
Question 39. How satisfied are you with the quality of the audio system?
Regarding the Audio system, there are some people who do not speak into the microphone and therefore can't be heard. The moderator should intervene when people are shouting for them to speak up.
I realize money was invested to improve the sound system, but it is still difficult to hear some members.
people do not adjust the microphone so that they talk into it
QUALITY OF AUDIO...SOMETIMES IT IS HARD TO HEAR SOME OF THE MEMBERS SPEAKING
Speakers to not use microphone properly - even after instruction - Some still don't get it!
When speaking, most people do not speak directly into the microphone, thus making it difficult to hear. Sound system is fine.

39. Sound is inadequate at the rear of the assembly. Consider distributed speakers. Some presenters at the podium speak too fast and do not speak into the microphone. Consider an IT person to assist in microphone positioning.
Question 40. How satisfied are you with the quality of the visual presentations?
Visual aids are difficult to see.
It is very hard to see visual presentations
Poor quality of slides and graphics
Some angles are not great for the slide presentations
The quality of the visual presentations varies widely depending on the issue presented and who is making the presentation (skills and resources available). These differences should not be determinative on the merits of the presentation.
The visual system in upper town hall needs to be upgraded so presentations are more visible to all
visuals are terrible
Visuals, such as power points and maps, are often crammed with too much information-making it hard to get information from the presentations. Budget is one of those "over-crammed" presentations-even displayed on larger screen, font is too small and presentation too fast.
40. Slides. especially those with an abundance of numbers or voluminous text are difficult to read at the rear of the assembly. Consider large screen video monitor or distributed monitors. Adjust ambient lighting accordingly. Make a computer available for flash drive presentations and consider IT person at the meeting to assist.
Question 41. How satisfied are you with the voting process (standing to vote, voice votes, etc)?
I think votes would be more honest if done electronically.
The voting process can be automated
Just feel an opportunity to become better informed about the topics to be voted on would be most helpful and lead to a more expeditious voting process
41. Comments have been made that the gallery sometimes chimes in on a voice vote. Needs evaluation.
Question 42. How satisfied are you with the process to make amendments to motions at Town Meeting?
Not having had the experience of some members, it is difficult to think quickly enough to write out a motion, then get recognized.
Stress to town meeting members if wish to present an article, and or make a motion/article to see the Town Moderator for guidance/ advice.
Somewhat still troubled that a motion on an article was made then discussion then someone made a motion which was acted upon but original motion was not completed nor withdrawn

Question 43. How satisfied are you with the way in which the Town Budget is presented, Discussed, and approved
I suspect that if one surveyed random TM members concerning the budget, one might find a significant lack of understanding.
I don't need extra stuff, but for those big finances, it would be nice.
42. Fewer slides with a lot of numbers and more charts and graphs for current year and previous 5 yrs. (to show trends). Include 5 yr. Capital Plan, Debt Schedule, Unfunded Liabilities etc. In short, what does the fiscal big picture look like?
44. How satisfied are you with the way in which Zoning and Land Articles are presented, discussed, and approved
I would like to more about land & zoning articles, including maps or other visual aids. Also, some discussion about the purpose of such articles in a report beforehand would be nice, too.
Zoning and land articles use terminology that is not familiar to many members
Half the time I am befuddled about zoning and land articles due to difficulty seeing the map and trouble figuring out the geography in relation to the rest of the town.
The land articles often have a display up front - I think having these in the back of the room where you could look at them as you enter would be more useful. Also - the graphics used are often hard to follow. I often have a hard time knowing where in town the street in question is located (and I consider myself to have good map skills/sense of direction)
The Planning Board gives very little information, except to say that they held the required hearing and what the vote was. Not really informative or letting Town Meeting Members know why the articles are deemed necessary.
The Planning Board seems to present their reports/articles poorly.
The Planning Board's preamble could be shortened as time, date and attendance is not, to me, vital data.
Street acceptance description of location.
When they discuss land and zoning changes, I want to know exactly where they are located. We shouldn't have to do research to find out where the area is.
I feel that some of the difficulties I have are my lack of knowledge and understanding.
44. Zoning Text Changes: In addition to the required public hearing report, explain in plain language the purpose and major elements of the changes. Zoning Map Changes: Posters in the hall are inadequate for 150 to 240 members to review prior to the start of the meeting. Provide slides to illustrate the locus and the proposed from/to changes. Land acquisition articles: Provide slides to illustrate the locus, property lines, and bordering abutter lots.
Comments not directly addressing Questions 37-44
I think everyone does a very good job. I like getting stuff in the mail so I don't have to print them on my home computer, but email would be okay....
I will think more on these subjects, and hope my opinion would count if I think of substantial comment
Reports from the various committees are never thoroughly reviewed and digested by Town Meeting members.
The presentations are never at an executive level., but at a rudimentary level usually reflective of the ability of the presenter.

Thought it was decided years ago to rotate Precinct seating. Done once!
people are not talking into the mike
Question 50. Would you like to elaborate on any of your answers for Questions 46-49 by commenting below?
Question 46. I come prepared for every meeting to vote on all articles presented
#46 I work full and part time. I am not available during Town Hall hours to explore questions, so I am dependent upon the warrants being thorough and clear.
I prepare as much as possible by reviewing the materials provided; however, often there is not enough information in advance. The placement of papers on seats the night of town meeting is a ridiculous practice that does not serve TM members well enough.
The largest issue is that information on many articles is not available. We have capital article information but not details on general articles to review before the town meeting
there is no pre meeting briefing that explains every article, what it does if voted yes, and pro/con about each warrant
We could be more prepared if more depts./boards/committees/commissions prepared reports, ideally prior to Town Meetings... especially when they are sponsoring articles or have large budgets.
Question 47. I feel comfortable participating and expressing my views
My comfort level is more to do with my personality than how the town meeting is run.
Need Privacy for my vote...seating next to neighbors and voting can be touchy if you disagree with their vote
By the last 45 min I feel I do not give the articles justice, I just want it over!
It becomes tedious when the same person gets up to oppose many, many articles. I understand freedom of speech, but feel like a hostage at most town meetings and see people leaving because of near standstill. I also doubt that there is really a quorum present for the last 20 or so articles. The meetings go too long believe because of grandstanding on the part of some.
It is difficult to get the moderator's attention when you want to speak
Question 48. I feel comfortable expressing an opposing or minority view at Town Meeting
#48 Because I am new as of 2016 with no prior experience, I didn't feel competent to voice my support of the MWRTA bus and why I support it.
I feel like decisions are made before Town Meeting. Many of the Town Meeting Members are town employees and are looking out for their personal interest....what repercussion might befall me for opposing raises, move and equipment, etc.
I no longer feel comfortable expressing an opposing view or asking for clarification given the hostility I have witnessed from individual members and general negative murmuring from the members.
If we had an anonymous voting system using electronic "clickers" the votes would be much faster and accurate but much more important the vote would reflect the TRUE OPINION of TMMs
Never had an opposing view @ my 2 meetings

Also, it is intimidating to speak before such a large body, but that's part of the job... not sure how to make that easier/more-comfortable to do, and perhaps it's not all bad to be somewhat reserved is such settings.
Question 49. I feel Town Meeting Members are respectful and listen to others' comments
#49 I see and hear too many people talking with others instead of listening to the speaker. I find it distracting and difficult to hear at times.
#49 I would go back to my response to question #5, sometimes members get tired of lengthy debates and call for the end of debate without hearing all debate. It's like they feel that if they hear everyone, the meeting will end too late or that we might have to come back for a second night. Let's give everyone a chance to speak before we vote.
#49 - Members need to be respectful when others come up to express their comments. It doesn't matter if you agree with the person or not, each member has the best interest of the town, so people should listen and not be rude.
49. When members speak too long, too softly, and/or mumble, it becomes difficult to maintain focus and listen.
Could an individual be allowed to stay in their seat and have the microphone brought to them when they want to comment.
For question 49 - I think people are respectful but some members take advantage of this politeness and speak well beyond what social etiquette would deem appropriate.
Give those who are not going up there 100X a chance to voice an opinion. Limit each precinct to present an opinion by same person. All members WILLING in a precinct must be recognized before same person speaks again unless Unanimously elected to do so!!!
I do not feel that most members are welcome to express their views whether for or against.
I hear grumbles in the crowd when a specific long time town meeting member gets up to talk. I find that rude as he has been dedicated to the town for many years and people should show respect
I do not feel TM Members are respectful and listen to others' comments. It seems the emphasis is on ending the meeting as soon as possible.
I think some members prefer to be argumentative just to be heard not truly to make a point.
Importance of being respectful.
It is hard for folks to remain respectful when a particular individual is allowed to go on for 20 minutes or when one individual seems to monopolize the proceedings. Otherwise, people are respectful and kind to others' efforts.
Nothing to elaborate on, my answer to #49 speaks for itself.
Overall Town Meeting is respectful but there have been a few occasions when respect and listening have been less than stellar. Motions to Move the Question seem to be directed at some speakers when there is a disagreement.
People are respectful and understand there are differences.
Having said that, there are definitely times when you can tell that the body doesn't seem to care for certain kinds of debate or the concerns of some particular people… perhaps, we need some mentors for newer TMMs and/or we might need some way to provide constructive criticism/guidance for members that need/want it.

Comments not directly addressing Questions 46-49
Yes. We have a small group of "hacks." Those that represent a political group, the Selectmen, the town employees, the school committee who are set up to influence the vote by those that control them i.e. One hack is always the one who moves the question to stop opposition.
I wouldn't mind seeing a time limit established for speaking on articles.
Members must not be allowed to vote on any article which they have a financial interest (landlord, school dept employees, town employees, anyone who has a salary interest)
Restrict speaker to one turn at podium and limit the speaking time.
Some members not always recognized or allowed to be heard
The Selectmen are supposed to help all the people not their relatives.
Too many times the same speakers get up - again sometimes to their own detriment.
52. If you have never or rarely spoken at Town Meeting, please explain why and provide any recommendation to improve Town Meeting to address your reason(s) for not speaking?
1. Others have spoken for my position
By the time I'm ready, there is usually someone that has already spoken and for my position
I am comfortable that my opinion has been stated by others speaking on the article,
I make sure someone has already voiced my concerns and/or opposition and do not see reason to voice it again.
I study the warrant and watch the meetings on cable tv and most often my concerns are explained by someone else asking the question, which have discussed with other TM members.
It is a rare occurrence that I disagree with Fin Com or the Selectmen's recommendation as to the disposition of the sponsor's article. When I do, there is usually a plethora of fellow Town Meeting Members presenting opinions that are much more insightful than an argument that I could advance. When I do disagree with the article, I vote accordingly.
Listening to the discussion and weighing the information is sufficient for me, however should a precinct constituent request me to speak on a matter I would certainly do so.
Most concerns are already addressed.. Don't feel the need to hammer an issue into the ground; either way.
most of the time it would be a redundant position that I can express with my vote
Most of the time someone has spoken already with my feelings
my opinion has been voiced by a prior speaker
my opinions and comments are usually spoken by someone else
and find that my opinions are voiced by others.
Other people have already voiced the same opinion.
Other people speaking
Previous speakers have shared my views.
Also my views are usually expressed by someone else so speaking would be repetitive
Some usually beats me to it
There is always someone else that gets up and expresses the same views, so I don't feel that I have to
To this point, other participants have expressed pretty much how I feel and what I am and am not opposed to.
Usually other people express my opinions so I don't need to
Usually others have made same points I would have made.

Usually someone has previously supported my position with a well-articulated argument.
2. Intimidating
I have been negatively approached by members after a meeting.
and often seeing an attitude of, "let's just move on and take the vote" on many faces.
and some members in the audience make comments about some of the speakers when they get up.
Intimidating process Make the meeting too long
It can be very Intimidating and when I would speak the discussion gets closed so fast so that a vote can take place
Public speaking is intimidating but its a necessity at town meeting.
There seems to always be the same few that speak and go on for such a time that it almost seems pointless to speak because you see and hear other Town Meeting Members rolling their eyes and making comments to stop talking.
They don't seem to give enough respect to the people that support or oppose an article. They seem to think it is a hassle.
3. Save time
Didn't want to extend time
and don't see the need to speak, and slow down the meeting.
I feel sometimes the same people are recognized and speak too long and the article is debated too long and interest is gone.
Very cognizant of wasted time hearing the same things repeated by many different people thereby lengthening the meeting
People often beat a dead horse so it's not worth exceeding the time already spent
Sometimes debate can get redundant. And in respect for the time and other items on the warrant we just need to move on.
Some people talk for every article (whether a controversial article or not). This drags the meeting out so that others pass on speaking to not drag out an already long meeting.
In spirit of moving the agenda there's no value having multiple folks express same points.
Too many other people speaking, perhaps limit to one per precinct.
4. Shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence
Anxiety walking up to front of the room. Would prefer a microphone and be able to stay in my prince the seated area
I am shy about speaking in front of others and would have to feel passionate about an issue before I would feel compelled to speak.
I don't have the confidence yet!
the reason has to do with my personality and confidence and not how the town meeting is run.
More timid in such a large gathering.
Time between last person speaking and voting too short. I'm too quiet, on the shy side. I prefer to listen.
to shy or uncomfortable
TOO NERVOUS AND IT SEEMS ALL ARTICLES ARE PRETTY MUCH DECIDED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

5. Nothing new to add
I do not feel like there are changes to be made. I would only speak if I felt there was something that needed to be added to the dialogue. That has not been the case recently.
I have always understood the question and had enough information to vote without a question.
I have not felt strongly enough about an issue to feel the need to speak, or my concerns/thoughts were already expressed by another member.
I prefer to listen to what others have to say. I have spoken only once, many years ago when I felt the need to. I am shy,
I would be comfortable making my voice heard if I felt that I could contribute something meaningful.
Issues are well debated/presented
There typically is not a need for me to speak unless I am providing clarification or an explanation.
I would be inclined to speak if I could offer additional significant information.
6. No Reason, Futile - everything passes
90% of matters at the Town Meeting are routine and not worthy of comment. For those that worthy of comment, a good portion of those commenting are only doing so because a microphone and audience are available.
I feel it is a lesson in futility. Everything passes.
I feel the decisions are already made prior to the meeting. The Town Meeting is just a formality.
No need
no need to
No reason
No reason at this point.
no reason, never felt strongly about any issue yet that I felt I needed to speak up
7. Not Comfortable speaking in public
don't like speaking in public
I am not a person who feels comfortable speaking in front of a large audience of people I don't really know.
I don't do well speaking in public
Not comfortable -
Not the type to get up in front of everyone.
and/or not feeling comfortable.
Uncomfortable with protocol
8. New member
As a new member I haven't felt comfortable enough with the process, but feel confident that in the future I will.
Coming in new last year, there was no instruction regarding process and procedure. I felt I had to sit back and observe in order to learn how everything works. Experience members told me I'd "pick it up." I think this is too important to rely on on-the-job training that in fact doesn't exist. I wanted to voice my support of the MWRTA bus but didn't feel that I knew the proper way to request acknowledgement

or address the participants. It was like facing a driving test without ever having been behind the wheel.
I have not been a member for very long, and would be comfortable speaking. After all, you are representing your precinct so shouldn't be a wallflower
I'm a new member. I will probably be speaking in the future. I have voted in favor of some articles, that I should have opposed. Mostly due to information I encountered after the fact. A subsequent vote on similar articles will be closely watched.
I'm a new town meeting member,
This has been my first year as a member, I feel I need to get a little more comfortable with the process.
Had no concerns with any of the articles/motions for the two meetings I've attended so far.
9. Not sufficiently knowledgeable
and I am less knowledgeable about the subject than that speaker.
See #50 -Same folks talk all the time, clicky appearing. Maybe being more knowledgeable would make me more able to speak.
There are always members present who know far more than I on a given article. No recommendation to improve Town Meeting to address reasons for not speaking.
Usually the presenters have the most knowledge about the article.
10. Speaking Locations
It would be helpful to be able to ask my question from my seat, instead having to go to the podium.
Make more microphones available and if necessary tv camera Town meeting members should. be addressing the moderator not the audience. Only approved guest speakers should address the body
Would be more receptive to commenting if microphones were more readily available and spread throughout the assembly.
11. Difficulty Being Recognized
It is difficult to be seen and/or heard when you are located farther away from the stage. Maybe the precinct captains could help people get recognized by the speaker by holding up a sign. I am sure it is difficult for him to see everyone from way up there!
It is hard to get the moderator's attention The town meeting handbook should include example(s) of good speaking practices that emphasis the importance of making a point or asking for a point of clarification. Many people are allowed to speak for too long without getting to their point. When this happens they should not be allowed to speak at subsequent meetings unless they agree to improve (maybe have a mandatory training class for frequent offenders?)
I am not a member of the Club just a resident/citizen of Milford. Give those who are not going up there 100X a chance to voice an opinion. Limit each precinct to present an opinion by same person. All members WILLING in a precinct must be recognized before same person speaks again unless Unanimously elected to do so!!!
Comments that did not address this question
I DON'T HAVE SPEAK AT TOWN MEETING
I really think the onus is on me, rather than the meeting
Refer to my previous comments

Same 5 people argue every time and they pass on the article before you can finish the argument.
Same members like to be seen & heard. Most just repeat what's already been said. "Move the question"
See some of my previous comments. I spoke once, but then could not really make out the response of the official.
some TMM's monopolize the floor
Question 56. Please provide any additional information that you feel would Improve Milford's Town Meeting.
1. Speaker time limits and speaker training
#54. Speaker time should be regulated but not limited. However, the presenter of the motion and his or her designee (e.g., consultant, expert, legal representative, etc.) should be allowed all the time required to fully describe the motion. During debate each speaker's time should be regulated to afford other Members an opportunity to speak. Repetitive regulated times would continue until all speakers have been heard or a Member moves the question.
1. New and existing members should have training on speaking to minimize length of time and irrelevant material.
A speaker's INDIVIDUAL times at the podium should be limited - but that SAME speaker should be allowed to speak more than once on the SAME article if time allows - call it the DANNY NIRO AMENDMENT
As long as speaker is addressing topic, there should not be an arbitrary time period set for discussion. Some articles require more discussion /thought than others.
better control on speakers who stray from article and who abuse the privilege of speaking at Town Meeting.
All officials should practice use of microphones if they are going to speak. Perhaps we all should if that could be arranged.
Every article discussed should be time limited. all articles should have the same max time for discussion.
for the most part I feel that most meeting move forward at a reasonable pace, but I think the time that is allotted should not go into 15-30 minutes for one speaker.
Give those who are not going up there 100X a chance to voice an opinion. Limit each precinct to present an opinion by same person. All members WILLING in a precinct must be recognized before same person speaks again unless Unanimously elected to do so!!!
I do enjoy being involved in town politics being a life time resident of Milford. I think sometimes the time given to individuals is too long and seems that these same people are being too negative.
Limit response times.
limit some of the speakers who ramble on
Limit speaking time and how many times you can speak
Limit speaking time.
Limit the number of times a member addresses one issue.
No repeaters until all members who want to speak are heard.
Number one priority for change is to limit the amount of time an individual can speak initially. After everyone else who wants has had a chance to speak, than an individual who has already spoken, can speak again.
Repeat members get up too long too often

Some speakers just go on and on - they need the moderator to cut them off - It's the same people all the time!!
Strange that you did not ask for elaboration re limiting speaker time or 'open' vote. The purpose of Town Meeting is to give voice to the residents and therefore not limited by an arbitrary rule. We have the ability to 'move a question' when an individual becomes overbearing. What's wrong with standing up to be counted? Electronic!? If you can't be 'seen' voting your belief, don't run!
The same person should be able to come up 3 to 4 times to discuss that same matter. At time is the same 5 people that talk.
The time someone speaks is fine and should not be limited however their topic maintenance and reduction of petty and sarcastic commentary is unacceptable.
There are a few members that have a lot to say and often there are back and forth between them and others. I think if they've gone up once to the podium that they can address / respond from their seat and save us all a lot of time.
Time per speaker should be limited to 5 minutes per speaker, per appearance. speakers should be allowed to alternate and return for another 3 minute stint after their initial remarks to an article.
More group talk to come up with decisions vote at the end.
2. Materials and information provided
2. Emails to every resident prior to town meeting with articles and include precinct members so residents can contact (TM) members in their districts with concerns to obtain what the taxpayers concerns are (not) Town Meeting Members personal concerns!!
Email the reports and info rather than mail them. I'm more likely to get it on time and it would save town money.
In general, the town meeting has served the town well. Sharpening up the individual response time allowed and having information on all articles available 3-4 weeks before the meeting would take the meeting to the next level
Timely backup materials for each article including modern graphics, maps, charts to clearly explain purpose and need for each article (responsibility of proponent)
Perhaps, more reports (either prior to or at the beginning of each meeting, when reports are supposed to be received).
That and the phrase "a sum of money"... TMMs want a ballpark figure at the very least, because there's nothing worse than finding out the bill at the last minute, right before we're expected to authorize action. [If my mechanic acted that way, I'd be looking for a new mechanic... and maybe an attorney, too.]
And, anything involving land, roads, or zoning areas should have a map, either in a report or on-line detail of the warrant articles under consideration.
Importance of Committee, sub-committee, as the proper forum to ask questions. Town Meeting will flow better.
It would be interesting if the new chairman of the Board of Selectmen would give a short "State of the Town" presentation at the beginning of the May town meeting.
I want to know "how much" per thousand (home evaluations) each item up for vote will cost tax payer.
Require the Fin Com to present the pros and cons of each substantive issue as required by their charter.

Require the Fin Com to reflect the votes of their members for each article not the majority vote i.e. 3 for 6 against with reasons for and against.
When watching board/cmte meetings on Milford TV in prep for TM, the audio quality is often poor and inconsistent - both live and replay. This discourages one from trying to follow presentations and discussions.
3. Number and duration of Town Meetings
#53. Meeting should be planned for 2 nights. By 10:30 p.m. some members are getting restless, attention is waning, and some leave early. A 3hr. meeting is long enough.
53. To qualify, if the meeting goes much beyond 10:30, it begins to feel too long. Starting at 7 PM may help.
Perhaps we could meet on two evenings.
I feel that with the information that is given to TM members, such as the Finance Committee Report, we do not need them telling us whether or not their vote was favorable or not for each article, we have their report telling us such, This adds more time to the meeting which is unnecessary. All boards or committees do the same thing, they get up and tell us that they had a meeting, We already know they had a meeting to discuss the article, otherwise they wouldn't be sponsoring the article. Tine consuming
Limit the length of each meeting. No longer than 3 hours. Controversial topics may need a separate meeting.
More Meetings with fewer articles is preferable to fewer meetings with many articles
Rather than have a meeting going on till all hours, break it up into two meetings so that everyone is refreshed and knows what they are voting on and uses good judgment
Since the town's business is supposed to be important there should be time to do our jobs Perhaps there should. be a time limit but no meeting should be longer than 2.5 hours The moderator should be allowed. to extend /adjourn with prior notice should the need arise
The Town Meeting is an important vehicle to honor the needs and wishes of our community. However, there has to be a better way for town meeting members to become more informed about the articles before the meeting rather than just through a letter or split the meeting up to 2 nights (7pm to 9pm) and divide the agenda items up evenly between the two night and thus provide the opportunity for more thorough discussion with less concern for time constraints.
Understandably, some of the meetings are long. But they are too long, especially for those of us who have worked a full day and are getting up early the next day. I would like to see us consider starting the meetings as early as possible, and setting time limits on member comments. I think everyone who wants to be heard should have the opportunity, but when people get up multiple times or arrive with a spiral bound notebook full of essays that they are going to read aloud, it needlessly extends the length of the meeting. Thank you so much for asking for feedback!
When meetings go late, many people leave, often making me wonder if we continue to have a quorum...yet the meeting always continues. Perhaps there should be a process in place to end all meetings at a certain time if it appears it will go longer than another 45 minutes. The second night of Town Meeting could be scheduled in advance so that TM members plan both nights, but if the warrant is covered in the first meeting, there is no second meeting.

3

4. Electronic Voting
Electronic voting should not be done.
Electronic voting would be a serious waste of money.
Having private voting would really help
Electronic voting would ensure an accurate vote and not one where someone may be intimidated by standing
Electronic voting would make the time spent tabulating votes more expeditious, thus the meetings would not be as lengthy.
The technology to enter individual electronic votes (sitting at a seat at a meeting) is available.
the town should invest in an electronic voting system especially for any "standing" votes
and anonymous electronic voting.
5. Location, seating, and audio/video
Again, I'm wide. Spread the seats out a bit. I get more elbow room flying coach.
I believe all the ways to improve the meeting were covered. I would like a little space between the seats so we have a little room.
I would prefer that Town Meeting be held at Milford High School. Much better seating and parking facilities.
seat cushions
The Selectmen should have the town meeting changed. The precincts not the Selectmen, to help their family, very-very disappointed.
improve the audio and video quality
Place microphones in each precinct so speakers could speak from there if they choose, too much time is wasted waiting for speakers to get to front.
Improved sound system
6. Miscellaneous Improvements
I don't have the answers. All I know is that I'm a female in my late 40's who feels like I'm walking into the men's barber shop when I walk in. They are all in their groups, and decisions/outcomes are already finalized. What does a the planning board really do? Plans for what? Do they look at all the neighborhoods? Do they give opinions on run down neighborhoods? There is no "personal" connection and maybe that's what a Town Meeting is about. I've introduced myself to the head of my precinct and he still never acknowledges me when I check in. I have to tell him to check me in.
as well as introductions not just job titles.
Acknowledging folks who are no longer with us, welcoming new folks by name not just by precinct.
Prohibiting town employees from participating.
Requiring the Fin Com to be composed of professional financial experts with demonstrated ability.
Time to scrap form of town meeting in total
Town Meeting Members frequently ask for more information about particular warrant articles at Town Meetings, and the sponsors (or other seemingly knowledgeable town officials) sometimes do not provide answers during the relevant floor 'debate'... if the sponsors don't have the answers, perhaps the votes should get tabled more often (perhaps automatically) to facilitate real or more-thorough answers, before a vote is actually taken. If TMMs are only expected to rubber-stamp the sponsor’s requests, we might as well dump TM all together... and stop wasting everyone's time and related Town

expenses. Sometimes, town officials use prior public hearings as a crutch (say on zoning changes)... but, everyone knows that the various board/committee/commission meetings are normally not well attended by the public (for one reason or another). If the sponsors have to respond to 'stupid' or redundant questions by TMMs at TMs, they should be prepared to do so (with a smile).
7. Pre-Town Meetings and Member Training
a meeting before town meeting to explain all warrants, what it means if the vote is yes, pro/con
Class on parliamentary procedures for new (and any) Town Meeting Members.
Training for new members. .
State your name and precinct when you get up to speak-even if you are well known to the town.
8. Member attendance
have all high important warrants for the end so members don't leave half way through the meeting
keep the sign in attendance and keep track of those who stayed for the end
A method of ensuring better attendance.
9. Recognition by the Moderator
Encourage the moderator to try to see if someone is trying to get his attention.
Moderator should recognize "new" faces not same as always-speakers.
10. Amendment Process
A little time should be given for someone who wants to write out a motion.
Sometimes the process needs to be slowed down a little to give people time to think in response to information that is provided.
11. Comments not directly addressing Question 56
been a Town Meeting Member 29 years
I have been a member for over 20 years and everything is alright.
I like the way Town Meetings are run.
I was unable to answer question 16 appropriately. That question should have allowed for multiple answers or been more clear with the answers given.
It is gratifying to be part of local Government.
None, Thank you for asking us.
Thank you for taking this survey! I look forward to any improvements that make the most sense.
Thank you for asking
Thank you to Amy and to Mike Noferi and others - you do a great job!
The Town Moderator does a good job.
This survey is an excellent tool and a welcome start to reform. Thank you to those responsible for this.