



## TOWN OF MEDFIELD

Scott F. McDermott

Town Moderator

### An Open Letter to Friends and Neighbors in Medfield

May 6, 2022

This is a note about *coming together*. As a town, and more importantly as a community, we have very important reasons to do just that. One reason to *come together* has immediacy, and the other reasons to *come together* are strategic to the future of Medfield.

On the 'immediate' front, this Monday evening, May 9, at 7:00PM, we need to *come together* as a quorum of voters to conduct our Annual Town Meeting. This is important. As you likely witnessed or heard, last Monday night we gathered in the high school gym and failed to reach the required quorum of 250 voters.

So we will try again on Monday night. Your participation is what makes our local government work. Much of the annual town meeting is about conducting the business of the town. *We come together*. We try to be efficient; we almost always complete our town's annual governance responsibilities in one evening. This Monday, I assure you, we will complete our 2022 annual business in a couple of hours. In that time we will address the town's FY 2023 operating and capital budgets, zoning articles, personnel matters, and certain financial appropriations and transfers. And, important to all, we will again address the process for the appointment of our next School Building Committee.

Please join us on Monday the 9th at 7:00PM at the high school gymnasium and cafeteria. I look forward to welcoming you and a quorum of our friends and neighbors. Please spread the word. Bring a friend. And come and enjoy the flavor of direct, participatory, democratic self-government.

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*Note: Covid health concerns continue. I believe the town has been highly effective over the last two years in the 'balancing tests' of managing through a pandemic. For Monday evening, the gymnasium will be 'mask optional' and the cafeteria will be 'mask required and socially distanced.'*

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On a 'strategic' dimension, we need to *come together* as well. In the long life of a town, not all times are equal. Not all times are as dynamic and strategically important as the moment we are in today. As early as next month, we will be making a decision regarding the development of a portion of the land we own at the site of the former Medfield State Hospital. And, after a somewhat bruising 2021, we know the time is now to pick ourselves up, *come together*, and re-focus on our elementary school building needs. These are big responsibilities for a community. We face decisions and actions of great opportunity and long term consequence. We will do better with these decisions and actions if we *come together* as a community.

In addition, we need to look at how we self-govern. How do we preserve the core values and virtues of an open town meeting? And how do we stimulate changes to maintain those values and virtues as we head deeper into the 21<sup>st</sup> century? I will recommend that we move quickly to appoint a citizen commission to consider these questions and help to advance civic engagement and volunteerism in the key activities of our local government.

Very truly yours,

*Scott F. McDermott*

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