



Declaration of Continuance of the Andover Annual Town Meeting 2020

August 10, 2020

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 39, S10A, I declare on this day, August 10, 2020, that the Andover Annual Town Meeting originally posted for August 22, 2020 will be recessed and continued to September 12, 2020 at 9:30AM at the Andover High School Campus, Shawsheen Rd, Andover, MA. I make this declaration on the basis of my determination, following consultation with the Select Board, Town Manager, Town Clerk, Director of Public Health, Police Chief, and Fire Chief, that due to the public health and safety posed by the novel Coronavirus Covid-19, voters may be unable to attend the Town of Andover's Annual Town Meeting.

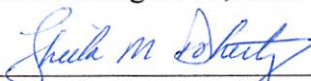
In making the Declaration, I note that Governor Charles D. Baker's Declaration of a State of Emergency in the Commonwealth made on March 10, 2020 remains in effect. Even though municipal legislative bodies (which include Town Meetings) are exempt from maximum numbers for gatherings, and the "Safer at Home" advisory is not mandatory, the public health determinations underlying the Governor's orders and advisory support, if not compel, a determination that there would be a health risk to Andover voters, particularly those over 65 years old and those with underlying health conditions, in attending Town Meeting on August 22, 2020. Equally as important, the March 23rd Declaration of Emergency of the Town of Andover, by which the Town of Andover Select Board and the Director of Public Health recognized the public health threat posed directly to the residents of the Town of Andover by the outbreak of COVID-19, also remains in effect.

In addition to the increasing number of residents who have reached out to me with their concerns about their health safety and the spread of the virus in Andover if the Town Meeting were held, I have reviewed guidance from the Mass Dept of Public Health, the Mass Attorney General's Office regarding the ability to require masks for all participants, US Center for Disease Control and Prevention as well as the Massachusetts Moderators Association directives. Given the ability of a rapid spread of the virus, the difficulty of containment, and the risk to vulnerable populations inherent in public gatherings, I have come to the conclusion that delaying the Annual Town Meeting, once again, is in the best interest of the Town of Andover and its citizens.

With this Declaration, the Annual Town Meeting is recessed, at this time, to September 12, 2020 at 9:30AM. Mass General Laws Chapter 39, Section 10A, does not give me the authority to continue the Annual Town Meeting for longer than 30 days from the posted date of August 22, 2020, but I do have the authority to issue further continuances, if appropriate. Further, after consultation with the Select Board, the Public Safety Officials, the Director of Public Health, the Town Manager Town Clerk, and other public officials, I hereby notice all that the Town of Andover Annual Town Meeting will take place on September 12, 2020. Although it is uncertain whether the COVID-19 emergency will have abated sufficiently by September 12, 2020 to alleviate the concerns of all our Town Residents, I believe the downward trends in the spread of the Covid 19 virus in Massachusetts, and change in anticipated weather conditions render the public health risk to voters low enough to hold the meeting at that time. At this time, I do not anticipate that it will be necessary to further continue the Town Meeting past the September 12, 2020 date, but I reserve the right to do so if necessary.

This determination shall be effective as of 9:00AM on Tuesday, August 11, 2020.

Signed and Issued in Andover, Massachusetts
At 9:00 PM on August 10, 2020.

BY:  _____
Sheila M. Doherty
Moderator
Town of Andover