

Electronic Voting Update

As resolved by last year's Annual Town Meeting, we will use electronic voting handsets to register our votes during the upcoming Annual Town Meeting that begins on April 4th at 7:30 pm in the High school Field House. In broad strokes, our use of electronic voting will be identical to previous Town Meeting sessions: you'll be issued a handset when you check in, and you'll vote *Yes* or *No* by pushing your handset's 1 or 2 buttons respectively during each 30-second voting window. We have, however, implemented two improvements in the process.

In the unlikely event that pushing your handset's 1 or 2 buttons during a vote does not produce a *Yes* or *No* on its display, simply raise your hand; the Moderator will direct personnel from the Help Desk to provide you with a paper ballot to record your vote, and you'll be issued a new handset.

The Teller Audit procedure invoked during one of last year's Annual Town Meeting sessions has been upgraded to a Random Audit. The Moderator can now conduct an audit by choosing any set of voters to present their handsets one-by-one to the Town Clerk, who will compare the vote shown on each handset with the vote reported by the electronic voting system as received from that handset. Note that the system records votes by handset identifier, not voter name, and that these records are cleared after each vote is declared final. If invoked, the few extra minutes this Random Audit procedure will take are justified by the confirmation of correct system operation and by the further increase in deterrence against tampering.

Electronic voting eliminates the need to shout out your vote, and provides accurate results without lengthy standing counts. Most importantly, its privacy enables every voter to exercise his or her best judgment without fear of consequences from friends, neighbors, or co-workers. If you haven't yet experienced Town Meeting with electronic voting, give it try!