

Stow Town Meeting Information for Non-Voters

We encourage visitors to attend Stow Town Meetings, but please note a Town Meeting is a session of the town's legislature and not a traditional "open meeting" or "public forum". Most non-voters may only attend with permission of the Moderator.

- Everyone attending a Town Meeting must check in, usually done in the Hale school cafeteria.
- Anyone not registered to vote in the town of Stow is a non-voter. If you are in doubt about your status, the checkers will determine it during the check-in process.
- Non-voters will be initially seated outside of the auditorium, unless you fall into one of the categories listed below. If space is available in the auditorium after voters are seated, once the meeting is in progress the Moderator will normally allow non-voters to enter the auditorium.
- In the auditorium, nonvoters must sit in the non-voter area, normally at the front of the hall near the Finance Committee, unless prior arrangements are made with the Moderator. If attending at the request of a board or department, it is assumed you will sit with that board/department.
 - **If a non-voter wishes to be seated in the auditorium before the meeting starts** contact the Moderator or Town Clerk's office the week before the Town Meeting.
 - **Participating in debate and voting:** Non-voters are never eligible to vote, and cannot address the meeting without permission. If you wish to address the meeting, see below.
 - **Photography or video recording** during the meeting must be approved by the Moderator. Taking images of voters is never allowed during any vote or count.
 - **Press:** If you are a non-voter member of the press, you will normally be allowed to enter and sit in a "press" area before the meeting starts. Please review the separate document for press members, available from the checkers when you check in or on the town web site.
- **School and town employees:** If you are a non-voter town employee, school district employee, or school committee member and your presence has been requested by your board or department head, or you are otherwise authorized by the Moderator, you may be seated in the auditorium prior to the start of the meeting. You should notify the Moderator or Town Clerk the week before the meeting that you are attending and if you are available to speak on issues related to your department.
- **Consultants for departments, boards, or individual voters:** A voter, department, or board that wishes to have nonvoters attend to assist at a Town Meeting should contact the Moderator or Town Clerk's office the week before a Town Meeting, and provide the names, address, and affiliation of the consultants or other non-voter helpers. If the sponsor wishes to have the non-voters address the meeting, they must also list the article (s) they will assist with, and the reason they should address the meeting. At the start of the meeting, the Moderator will ask the meeting members if the consultant(s) can address the meeting.
- **Non-voters who wish to address the meeting on your own behalf:** If you are a non-voter and are not in one of the categories above, and you wish to address town meeting and be seated in the auditorium prior to the start of a Town Meeting session, you must contact the Moderator or the Town Clerk's office the week before the Town Meeting. You should provide your name, address, articles on which you wish to speak, and the reason for addressing the meeting. At the start of the meeting, the Moderator will ask the meeting members if you can address the meeting.
- **Note on non-voters addressing the meeting:** Non-voters are admitted (allowed to address) the meeting by a majority vote. If you are so admitted, you may participate in making presentations and asking and answering questions, but not vote or otherwise directly participate in debate. All questions should be addressed to the Moderator before being asked or answered by a non-voter.

David E. Walrath
Moderator, Town of Stow