

Survey Results: Town Meeting

[Survey Info](#) - This survey was sent on behalf of the Town of Sudbury to the FlashVote community for Sudbury, MA.

These FlashVote results are shared with local officials

794

Total Participants

775 of 1348 initially invited (57%)
19 others
Margin of error: ± 4%

Applied Filter:
Locals only

Participants for filter:
701

Response Time (hours)



Started:
Apr 13, 2023 11:10am EDT

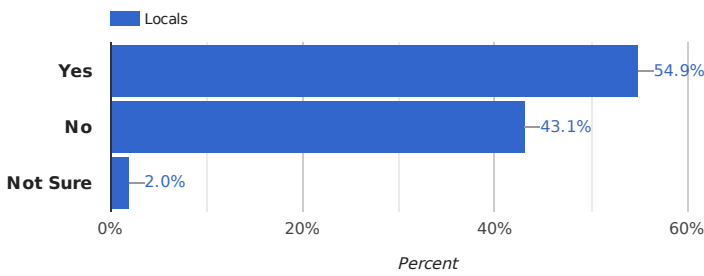
Ended:
Apr 15, 2023 11:00am EDT

Target Participants:
All Sudbury

Q1 The Town of Sudbury will have its Annual Town Meeting starting on Monday May 1, 2023 at 7:30pm at the Lincoln-Sudbury High School auditorium.

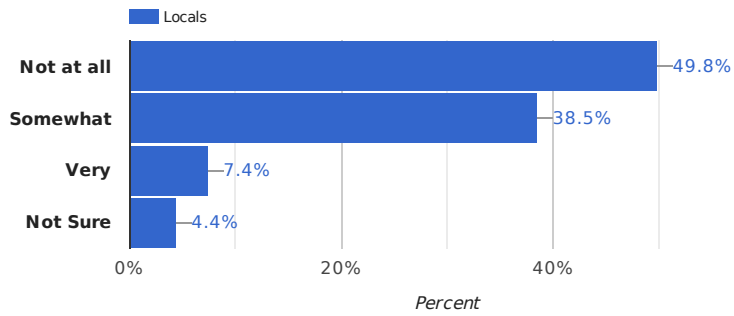
Have you attended a Sudbury Town Meeting in the past 5 years?
(701 responses by)

Options	Locals (701)
Yes	54.9% (385)
No	43.1% (302)
Not Sure	2.0% (14)



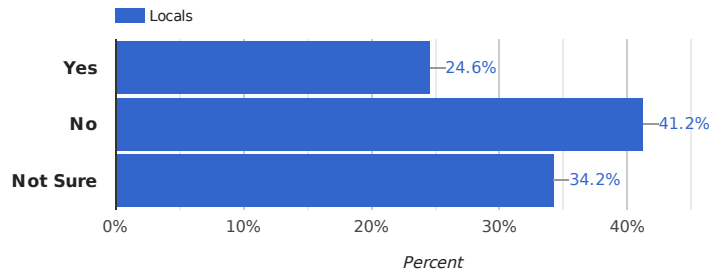
Q2 Right now, how familiar are you with the Warrant articles (agenda items) for the Town Meeting in May?
(689 responses by)

Options	Locals (689)
Not at all	49.8% (343)
Somewhat	38.5% (265)
Very	7.4% (51)
Not Sure	4.4% (30)



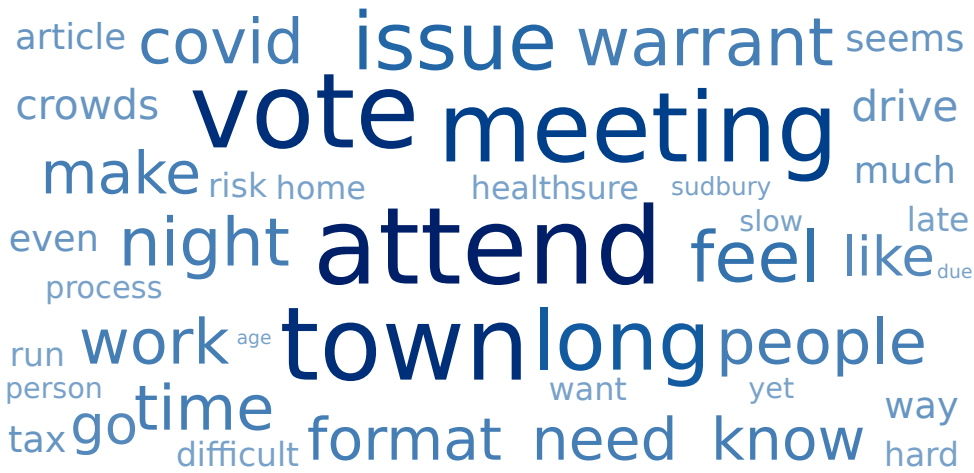
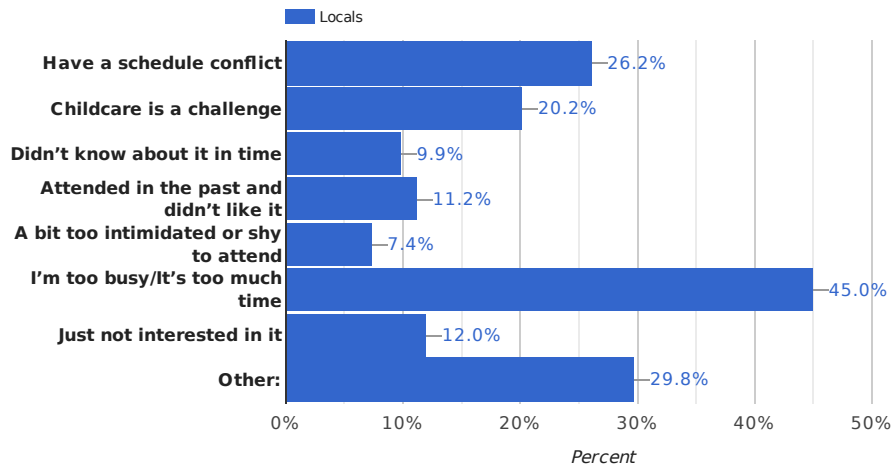
Q3 Are you currently planning to attend the upcoming Annual Town Meeting?
(691 responses by)

Options	Locals (691)
Yes	24.6% (170)
No	41.2% (285)
Not Sure	34.2% (236)



Q4 What are the main reasons you don't (or wouldn't) plan to attend this year? (You can choose up to FOUR, if any)
(484 responses by)

Options	Locals (484)
Have a schedule conflict	26.2% (127)
Childcare is a challenge	20.2% (98)
Didn't know about it in time	9.9% (48)
Attended in the past and didn't like it	11.2% (54)
A bit too intimidated or shy to attend	7.4% (36)
I'm too busy/It's too much time	45.0% (218)
Just not interested in it	12.0% (58)
Other:	29.8% (144)



too long and tiring

I have gone to many over the years. It is tedious and outdated. We should vote at the polls only.

Health reasons. Blind//Deaf

I would need to know what issues are on the warrant and would need to feel compelled to attend.

would want to know about COVID protocol

I feel the deck is stacked against anyone who doesn't support a warrant. Why bother?

Too old to get out these days, not driving at night

Too long. Too controlled by bully, busybody neighbors who want their way.

Do not see the need for physically attending a meeting when we have voted on the warrants

Meetings run too late at night. I would attend if we had weekend meetings as they do in Lincoln.

It seems the meetings go on and on (too long). Best if can be attended via Zoom or similar means

Need to understand what's planned to be covered

I am out of town

Town meetings are way too long.

Avoiding crowded places

Not sure what to expect (meeting format, attendance, etiquette, objectives)

I am working out of state that day.

Attending doesn't make a difference. (I've attending before just not within 5 years)

I am handicap and don't drive so I am hoursbound unless I can find someone to drive me.

Not back from work until late evening

I may not want to sit through some of the agenda because of transportation issues.

I have attended. The process is painful and boring. It is hard to pay attention.

it is an antiquated format that needs to be updated.

Find the format of the town meetings difficult to follow and speakers typically go on way too long.

I'm an immigrant, so not allowed to vote.

Away on vacation

It seems a majority of the town is in favor of constantly wasting money and raising taxes.

Age prevents me from attending.

An old style Town Meeting form of decision making is no longer appropriate for Sudbury.

Will be out of town

Poor form of govt vs representational. Imposes hurdles to participation, rewards loudest mouths.

I do not drive at night.

Work

No issue is grabbing me personally

Large groups come to vote on their article and then leave. That's annoying.

Need to review warrant and investigate issues in advance so I can efficiently/effectively vote

It is run inefficiently. Most of the first night isn't even focused on the Warrant.

I recognize this is a historic way of gathering but we can do this online in 21st century

Have not yet received the Warrant so cannot comment.

too much pageantry, waiting in line, not getting to the point & drags on to its inevitable outcome.

Meetings are far far too long.

Haven't learned about the issues

As a full-time working person, it is challenging to attend Town Meeting on (multiple) weeknights.

It is a very slow and arduous process with many contentious people

Night time driving is a challenge

May be out of town

Avoiding crowds due to covid

I work at the library on two of the three nights

Do not drive at night nor in bad weather.

i'm disabled and unable to sit for extended periods

Takes too long - not user friendly

Didn't miss a session for many years. Am just kind of exhausted.

Meeting is fun inefficiently. Set up catered to people who have

My husband will attend. I don't feel like we both need to be there.

TAXES! In times like these Restraint should be the hallmark. Slow down spending!

Not in area until mid May.

Covid Risk

Frustrated it can't be done as online event/vote

I don't think a town should make decisions on things when only 5-10% of the residents show up.

dealing with an injury

I will be visiting family that month. Would love to have a remote option for attendance!

I would like to watch via Zoom

In the past my position on many of the issues was not in the majority (as an overtaxed senior)

Not sure what it's about

Husband attending; kids at home

busy, but also not yet going to crowded indoor spaces

I don't feel strongly about the issues either way.

dominated by citizens supporting an article, e.g. Sewataro

Depends on the articles

Due to health related concerns cannot be in a large group of people to risk exposure to COVID.

Not sure if the warrants are going to be hotly contested where voting on them will have impact

Town meetings end too late.

If there are no controversial or highly contested articles, I would consider staying home

Parking is a hassle

Will be out of town. It's time to enter the modern age and offer a means for virtual participation.

Out of town. I would attend if I could attend virtually and vote from afar.

takes too long. Put it on local TV to at least avoid commute, enable restroom breaks, etc

Don't know topics

Must look @ my calendar

Don't like the High School auditorium. Feels like a fire hazard with the log rows of seating

Chronic illness makes it difficult to attend

why can't we just vote on this stuff? I want to skip all the debates, and just vote

Spending 3 nights is far more of a commitment than I am willing to make for these decisions.

HEALTH

Only attend for really important votes

handicap hard to get around

Don't feel my option means much to others

it takes too long. people already know how they will vote, yet speaker after speaker drone on & on

No longer living in Sudbury

there should be a system where people can vote from home via a Zoom connection - more inclusive

mobility impaired.

This archaic process of voting is insulting to working parents.

Concerned re COVID-19

It is a zoo

Cannot be in crowded areas with unmasked people.

I'm uninformed of the town politics

Depends on the agenda

Seems futile. Spending continues and taxes keep going up.

The format of town meeting is for dinosaurs.

Frankly, I'm not motivated to get involved

Not sure yet if I care enough about the issues

Can't be in crowds

not always easy to get out in the evening

Babysitter

the commitment and length of the meeting are really hard to get through. So much process...

In person attendance of 3 nights/ 7-10pm during a work/school week does not work for our family.

Don't know when it is. I know I can look that up, but don't know off the top of my head.

I feel a core contingent in town puts through whatever a vocal minority wants.

health issue

Rather watch on TV

It was too long and crowded

Why should I have a second chance to vote against tax increases after already voting once???

Only one parent is able to attend, while the other cares for children.

I feel it is a futile effort in Sudbury. If something is for the children, the item will pass.

prefer virtual

waiting to see the articles being brought up at the meeting

don't feel like my vote matters

Meeting is not efficiently run and goes over time every time I've attended

I will be out of town

People just show up for their voting interest and then leave.

The warrants aren't relevant or the result is a foregone conclusion.

Age

Why are we still using this antiquated format that effectively disenfranchises busy people?

weekend better than weekday evening

Anxiety issues. Secure online voting would be more inclusive, fairer, and less vulnerable to egos.

Depends on what's being voted on

I have not received a copy of the warrant.

I am trying NOT to attend indoor meetings due to being overcautious about COVID spreading events.

Very slow process. Frustrating.

Mobility issues make it too hard.

Travel

Long evening time is difficult on a weeknight

Covid concerns

Health issues

Seems irrelevant to me and I heard the meeting takes a very long time

I don't feel involved in this community and don't like to vote openly and risk to have backlash af

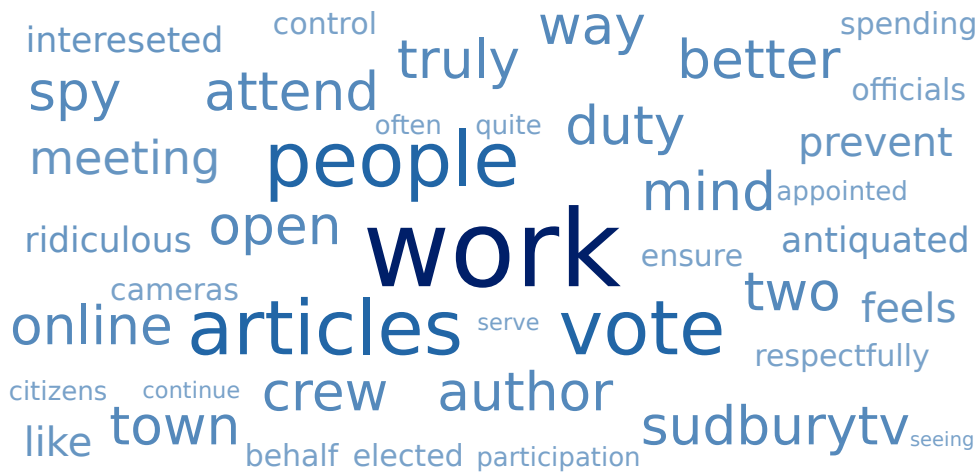
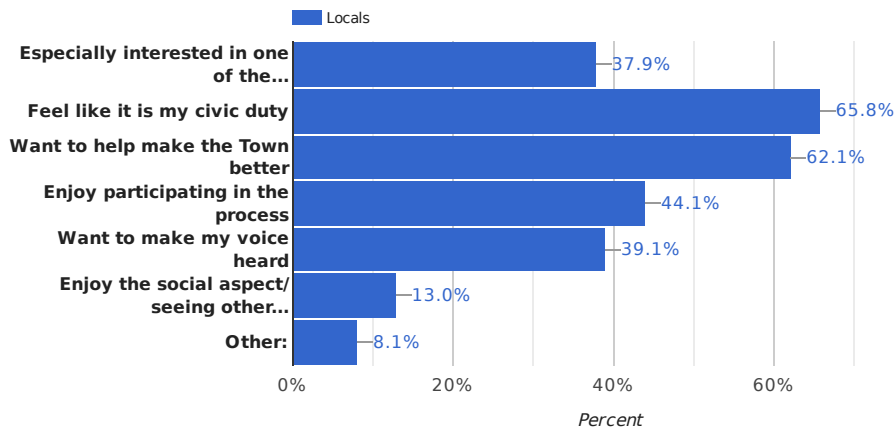
Slow, tedious, and wonder if I make a difference.

Bad communication- don't know when or subject matter- no comprehensive communication strategy

Not sure of the point if we then have to vote at the ballot box

Q5 What are the main reasons you plan to attend? (You can choose up to FOUR, if any)
(161 responses by)

Options	Locals (161)
Especially interested in one of the Warrant items	37.9% (61)
Feel like it is my civic duty	65.8% (106)
Want to help make the Town better	62.1% (100)
Enjoy participating in the process	44.1% (71)
Want to make my voice heard	39.1% (63)
Enjoy the social aspect/seeing other people there	13.0% (21)
Other:	8.1% (13)



Prevent spy cameras

It's the only way I can vote! No online voting-ridiculous that's it's so antiquated

I'm working the Town meeting

I like seeing how other people are thinking and what their opinions are.

I am the author of two articles

Respectfully, the spending feels out of control

I work as crew for SudburyTV

It's often quite entertaining

Participation ensure elected and appointed officials continue performing on behalf of all citizens

Duty. The more people who attend that have a truly open mind the better.

Intereseted in many articles

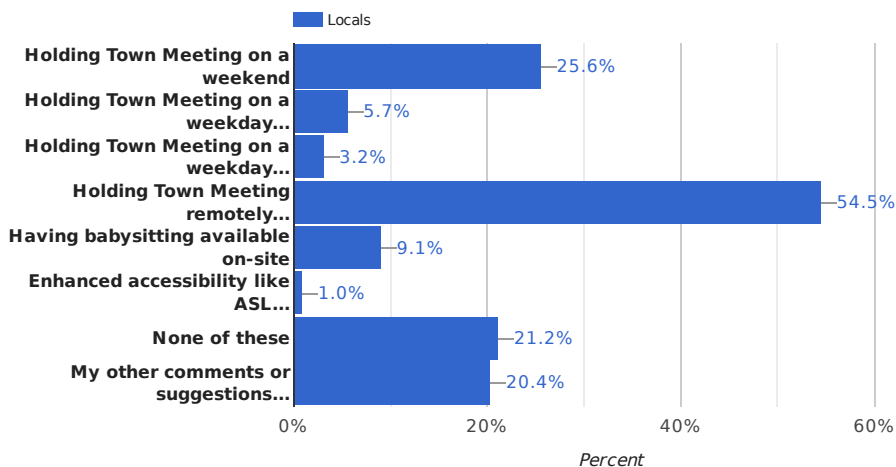
Work

Q6 Town Meeting begins on the first Monday in May at 7:30PM, as required by Sudbury Bylaws.

Which of the following would make it easier for you to attend, if any? (Choose all that apply)

(617 responses by)

Options	Locals (617)
Holding Town Meeting on a weekend	25.6% (158)
Holding Town Meeting on a weekday morning	5.7% (35)
Holding Town Meeting on a weekday afternoon	3.2% (20)
Holding Town Meeting remotely (Representative Town Meeting)	54.5% (336)
Having babysitting available on-site	9.1% (56)
Enhanced accessibility like ASL interpreter or other language (or add suggestion below)	1.0% (6)
None of these	21.2% (131)
My other comments or suggestions about Town Meeting are:	20.4% (126)



representative comment want
 mail make hold hybrid
 ballot remote attend need format
 enable like tm town via able late virtual change
 know way time allow discuss
 go long even work items
 person option
 held help participate agenda
 electronic governing day people zoom april
 archaic

Nothing. I rather just vote at the polls.

I've watched various meeting on the Cale Channing. The recording volume is never loud enough to be
 confused by question- how is holding Town Meeting Remotely the same as Representative Town Meeting?

Sudbury should NOT have a representative Town Meeting. Open Town Meeting is democracy at its best.

Virtual with encryption

Just happens that I have to be out of town that day. Next year, same meeting will be April 29

weekday evenings are convenient

Vote like a normal voting day. Not a several day meeting

Previously I never attended because I had a conflict on Monday evenings. Now I'm nervous about it.

No worries. Just conflicts

Clear agenda with tightly managed schedule

Keep as is. Do NOT change it to weekday morning/afternoon - is this even a serious consideration???

Town by-laws are out of date and do not accommodate current life styles and demands

Babysitting would have been helpful 35 years ago. There was babysitting at some point.

Committee/BOS/Town Manager presentations held separately and recorded

Allow hybrid (remote + in-person) TM

Headphones for hearing impaired

Allow those who cannot attend to submit comments to be read at meeting (but limit number of words)

I was able to participate more during the pandemic when events/meetings were virtual.

Online option

Have electronic voting

Have remote access for voting from home. Another option is satellite locations, e.g. Community Center

Hybrid option so some can participate remotely.

Don't have it. Or have anyone who wants to comment or discuss do so in writing prior to the meeting

Only if remote voting is also allowed

Shorter comment allowance 3 minutes

hybrid format with remote participation and voting

an earlier start time

Seems obstructive to have items pass the town vote AND the town meeting

Too long and lots of needless blathering. You need to make it more concise.

remains the same but I should hold my opinion due to age.

Change style of governing.

Having a hybrid model. Not entirely virtual or in-person, but both.

We should be able to stream the meeting live on SudburyTV and then vote remotely

Vote by mail or something that is more inclusive so that all residents can participate.

Offering the opportunity to register and attend hybrid environment. 100 zoom slots open pre regus

Switch to representational government

Go way faster

Start earlier, provide info sooner, allow voting on warrant items by ballot as we voted on 3/27.

While I understand the historical significance of the town meeting format I feel it's not inclusive

It lasts too long.

Childcare won't help because that is most kids bedtime unless they are older and can be left home

Does remotely mean voting virtually? Yes!

Holding the meeting in a hybrid format

too late in evening.

Sudbury has outgrown direct democracy. We need to graduate to representative democracy.

Please DO NOT consider holding town meeting during the work day. Totally discriminatory!

I wonder if Sudbury has out grown the approach to government decision making.

The meetings are long and go too late on a weeknight

via Zoom

Honestly, I wouldn't plan to attend. My husband is passionate about it and we agree on the issues.

Make it available on ZOOM. Enable a ap on zoom that can receive feedback on issues, yes or no

Shorter, it is generally way too long.

My attendance is based on content. If it's important I come.

Would like to know more about how remote town meeting would work.

Get rid of it altogether and just vote on this stuff. Makes zero sense anymore with technology

Change this process. It's completely archaic and only allows people without kids to attend

Only one parent in a family can attend

It is April 13, I have not received my Warrant yet, nor are their copies at the Library.

Town Meeting should never be remote participation.

i LOVED the Town Meeting that was held outdoors recently on a Saturday afternoon! Much more fun!

Holding Town Meeting in the evening so working professionals can attend

Presentations one day, votes the next

Works for me. Just will be on vacation

Have a set number of items on the agenda each night so people know better when to arrive for specif

Hold meeting outdoors or in room with lots of social distancing/mask wearing,

Move more motions to the consent calendar/reduce the number of individual votes

Making sure we get through agenda in time allotted

Saturday Town Meeting was both the easiest and most sociable.

Electronic voting

Waste of time. Town does what it wants to do anyway.

It seems antiquated and kind of stupid. Lets just have people vote using regular voting methods.

Allow voting by ballot for those who don't want to attend at all.

Representative TM or electronic voting

Go back to the early April town meeting held right after the election. I've seen no, ab

lottery for speakers pro and con - 3-4 speakers on each side per article

Weekend morning

I am getting older and do not have the time or energy to try to stop raising taxes for the schools.

Remote access via Zoom or similar.

Prefer it as is.

Shorten it with an expeditious moderator

Allow hybrid meetings with attendees able to vote remotely

I'm not sold yet on representative town meeting, but need to know more.

This form of govt is for farmers with no internet so it attracts only seniors. Undemocratic!!!

End meeting earlier. It runs too long and too late.

Vote on line

I would prefer daytime hours, but I believe that would exclude too many.

modernize it somehow. holding up index cards feels a bit old fashioned

A way for each individual to remotely view, submit comments, and vote. Include early voting.

too inefficient and time consuming. I'll vote at the ballot box when necessary.

We are too big to be a town. We should be a city.

limit comments when it can save time

have all the voting on one day

Once mail in ballots were approved, an in person town meeting is antiquated and not representative.

Some towns elect representatives, who then go and vote for their section of the town. (Belmont).

It might be time to move on from the town meeting platform.

Town meeting format no longer works! Meeting are too long. Another form of managing is needed.

on-site childcare doesn't help when meetings run so late into the evenings

Hold a meeting to modernize this archaic system to let people vote by mail...

is the meeting hybrid so can attend in person or virtual as well

Enable participation, including voting, via Zoom or similar

Stop it at an earlier hour with continuing evenings until done.

Hold on different evening like Thursday.

I pay my taxes. I should not have to sit in an in-person meeting to be able to vote.

Shorten and hold remotely / no working people have time to dedicate a night to a long event

make them virtual so we can attend remotely.

All participants, especially our significant elderly population, deserve to vote remotely.

If you can email this survey, then you can email the warrants. I don't pay attention to paper mail.

The consent calendar is great, but the meetings drag on too long.

Have it available on ZOOM.

Make it FUN to attract more people!

This is a major issue. My husband is attending, but I would also like to be there and vote.

Virtual but not representative

Don't do remote voting. Voting should not be a popularity contest.

Zoom

Allow internet voting for taxpayers

I wish there were some way to attend by zoom, but I don't know how voting would work.

Evening meetings are fine with me. But Saturdays are ok too - just not Sunday until after 1.

Make sure you have electronic voting

have virtual attendance and voting

Having a direct remote participation option for myself - NOT using elected representative

Remote voting but not representational voting

Evening is fine. I will be traveling on May 1st & 2nd. This is my only conflict

Make my attendance/interactions valuable.

Email notifications about meeting dates and times, as well as a list of items to be discussed.

So a better job of communicating with public to explain why important so they'll make time.

[Additional survey reports](#)