

## Memorandum

**To:** Mayor Lott and City Council  
**From:** Jessie Baker, City Manager  
Carol Barrett, City Clerk  
**Date:** January 15, 2021  
**Re:** Town Meeting Day 2021 – Voting

As we prepare for Town Meeting Day 2021 we recommend maintaining past practices as much as possible for consistency for residents. However, we also recommend a direct mailing to every address in the City to clearly communicate options. This would enable us to get out information to those registered to vote and those not registered to vote. This would include the following key points:

- Voting options
  - Request an absentee ballot by calling the City Clerk's Office at 655-6419 or emailing [clerk@winooski.vt.gov](mailto:clerk@winooski.vt.gov)
  - Vote early at the City Clerk's Office Monday – Friday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
  - Vote on Election Day, Tuesday March 2, 2021 – 7 AM to 7 PM at Senior Center
- Who can vote?
  - All registered Winooski voters
  - Non-citizens cannot yet vote in Winooski elections. The Legislature needs to take action to allow this.
- How to register to vote?
- What will be on the ballot?
  - Mayor and City Councilors
  - School Trustees
  - City budget
  - School budget
  - Other ballot items (via weblink)
- Translated statement about calling with elections questions.

We will also be sure the School Liaisons and our community partners have extra copies of this postcard to assist with translation. We anticipate that the cost of this mailing will be approximately \$1,600. The Pool bond postcard mailing was mailed out on August 31, 2018 and the cost was \$1,546.15.

We do anticipate that the Legislature will approve and the Governor will sign a bill similar or exactly as how drafted [in H.48](#). This bill, as proposed, does give you additional options if you so choose. We are also hearing that the Governor is considering a mandate to mail ballots to every voter.

Mailing ballots to every voter in the City will be challenging for staff, given that ballots won't be ready until 20 days before election. This will provide a very narrow window for voters to respond. Postcards can go out more quickly. Additionally, by mailing ballots to every registered voter, we are not able to directly communicate to those not registered or to non-citizens about the Charter change.



We did want to provide a bit of history. On Town Meeting Days 2017, 2018 and 2019 (not the Presidential Primary years) the average turnout was 19.5% or 975 voters.

If we choose to send postcards out to all residents, the cost would be approximately \$1,600. If we were to receive 975 absentee request, the cost to mail and return ballots would be \$1,150 for a total of \$2,750.

If we choose to mail out ballots to every registered voter, approximately 5,000, the cost would be \$5,750. To mail out is \$0.65 and the return is \$0.50. This would be paid by the Secretary of State's Office, however, this does not reflect the time required of the Clerk's office to process nor the mailing of a postcard.

