

PUBLIC NOTICE

To all registered legal voters in the town of Belvidere.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, the Belvidere Selectboard is currently debating whether to vote to use the Australian Ballot format to conduct the 2021 Town Meeting, or to postpone the annual town meeting for 2021, if the Vermont Legislature, will enact a provision allowing towns to do so. We understand the proposed legislation will be brought to the Legislature upon convening January 6th.

It is the Belvidere Selectboard's consensus that most of our town's registered voters would prefer that we postpone the 2021 Town Meeting, if possible, preserving the dearly-held democratic process of active voter participation "from the floor." However, waiting for the Legislature to act before the Selectboard makes a final decision will bring us very close to the first of many important deadlines to be met, should we go with the Australian Ballot option.

THEREFORE, IN THE EVENT the proposed legislation allowing select boards to vote to postpone the 2021 Town Meeting to a date favorable for a safe in-person public gathering **does NOT pass**, the Select Board will resolve to hold Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 2, 2021, using Australian Ballot.

Should this happen, those individuals interested in running for any town office up for election in the 2021 Town Meeting would need to submit a "**Local Candidate Consent Form**" to the Belvidere Town Clerk for their name to appear on the ballot. The deadline for submitting the consent form would be 5:00 PM on Monday, January 25, 2021. Depositing the consent form in the drop box at the Town Clerk's Office would be the preferred method of delivery, and consent forms sent by mail would have to be received by the Town Clerk no later than January 25th. However, there would be space on the ballot for write-in candidates as well. The candidate consent form is available on the Vermont Secretary of State website by typing "Local Candidate Consent Form" in the search bar, or by contacting the Town Clerk at 644-6621 to arrange to pick up a copy of the form during normal business hours. **Please note that no candidacy petition would be necessary for this process under the special rules for 2021.**

The Select Board will be monitoring the Legislature's progress on rules for postponement, and will wait as long as possible before choosing the Australian Ballot option.

Thank you for your understanding during these unprecedented times.
Respectfully, Belvidere Select Board

Printed in January 7, 2021 issue of News + Citizen