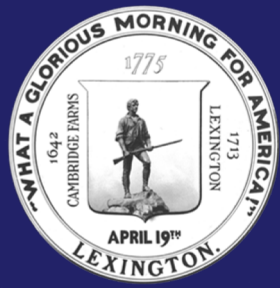


***Massachusetts Municipal Association  
ATFC Annual Meeting***

**Inspire Engagement with  
a Citizens Academy**



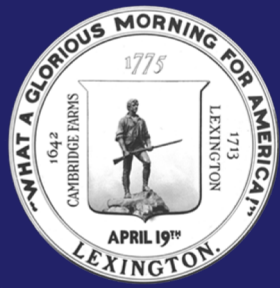
# Overview/Goals of Citizens Academy

- Annual Program Began in 2009
- Response to 20/20 Committee Recommendations:
  - Encourage New Volunteers; Previously Unengaged Residents
  - Community Outreach
  - Town Manager's Secret Motivation
- 10 Week Program, Two Hours Long, September - December
- Most Municipal Departments and School Department Participates
- Limit to 30 Participants
- Concludes with 'Graduation' at Selectmen's Meeting



# Promoting the Citizens Academy

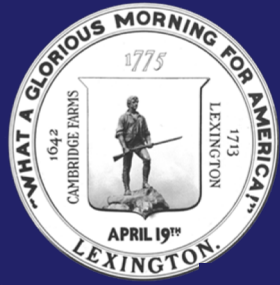
- Town Listserv
  - Lexington List/Town Meeting Members List
  - Lexington School System Parent Email List
- Lexington Community Center Digital Display Boards
- Lexington Minuteman Newspaper
- The Boston Globe
- Patch.com
- Flyers at Community Events
- Waitlist from Prior Years \*\*\*\*
- Word of Mouth (*date night*)
- Town Website
- Recreation Brochure
- Community Education Brochure
- Lexington Community Groups



# Program Announcement

## Example:

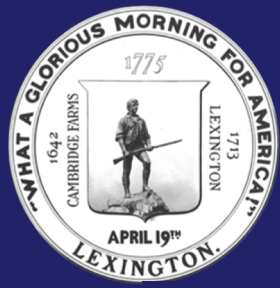
*This year marks a decade for the Lexington Citizens' Academy! Citizens' Academy begins its tenth year in September and runs through early December. The program is designed to expose residents to the various Town departments so they can gain a better understanding of how municipal government works. Through presentations, discussions, and visits to Town departments, participants have the opportunity to hear from various Directors and Managers and learn about the operations of Town programs and services. It is intended as a two-way dialogue between Town staff and residents. Participants discover new opportunities for public involvement and the role they can play in Town government. Topics include Fire and Emergency Services, Schools, Public Works, Police, and Human Services, the Town Budget, Recreation Programming, Library Services, and more. The Academy is an annual town program, held once a week in the evenings, and enrolls approximately 30-35 residents. If you are interested in participating, please contact Rajon Hudson in the Town Manager's Office at [rhudson@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:rhudson@lexingtonma.gov) or 781-698-4543.*



# Webpage Buzz

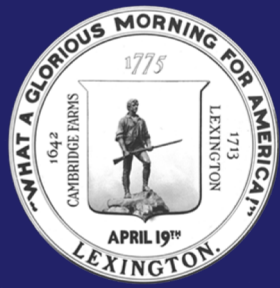
Have you ever wondered...

- What the evidence room at the Police Station looks like?
- What gets carried on a fire truck?
- How the Town sets the Fiscal Year budget?
- When you need a building permit?
- How many languages are spoken by students at the public schools?
- Who builds trails on Conservation lands?



# Staff Coordinator

- Assigned to Management Fellow
- Advertising
- Communicating with participants
- Scheduling each session and meeting locations
- Meeting with Department Managers prior to presentations
- Providing materials
- Conducting evaluation
- Evaluation feedback to Department Managers



# Time Dedicated to Citizens' Academy

## Recruitment and Programming\*

10-15 hours per week

Typically lasts for 5-8 weeks

Timing Consists of

- Development of the schedule for the year
- Recruitment for potential participants and development of the waitlist
- Sending advertisements for various community groups and media outlets

\*Recruitment and development of Citizens' Academy typically takes place during the spring and summer. More time is typically allotted during this period

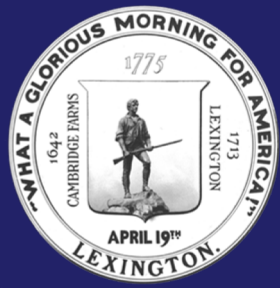
## Coordinating the Program

5-10 hours per week

Typically lasts for 10 weeks

Timing Consists of

- Weekly prep meetings with department managers and Town Staff
- Prep and set up for weekly sessions
- Attending and moderating each weekly session
- Sending notifications and updates to participants
- Receiving updates and following up on information for participants



# Budget Information

Estimated Budget for Citizens' Academy

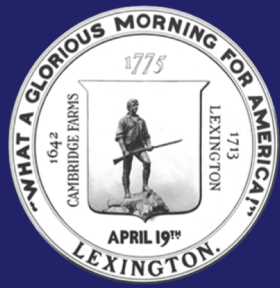
\$1,200 - \$1,500 Annual Budget\*

Costs include

- Food for participants | (estimated \$300 - \$400 for entire session)
- Gifts for graduates | (\$750 - \$800)
- Supplemental Materials (normally binders) | (\$150 - \$200)

\*Figures vary due to the number of participants each year

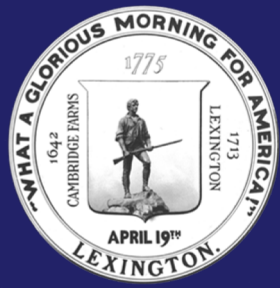




# 2018 Lexington Citizens' Academy

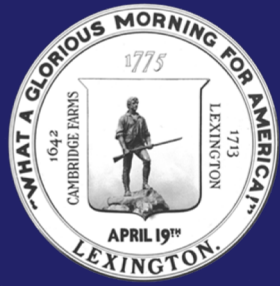


Date	Topic	Location
Thursday, September 20, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Introduction & Overview of the Town	Town Office Building Board of Selectmen Meeting Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Thursday, September 27, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Land Use, Health, Community and Economic Development	Town Office Building, Parker Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Thursday, October 4, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Town Meeting & Town Clerk	Town Office Building, Parker Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Thursday, October 11, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Town Financials + Tour	Cary Memorial Library, Large Meeting Room 1874 Massachusetts Avenue
Thursday, October 18, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Hot Topics Discussion w/ Board of Selectmen	Town Office Building Board of Selectmen Meeting Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Thursday, October 25, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Schools	School Administration Building, 146 Maple Street, Lower Level Conference Room #2
Thursday, November 1, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Emergency Services - Fire + Tour	Lexington Fire Station, 173 Bedford Street
Thursday, November 8, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Police & Human Services + Tour	Lexington Police Station, 1575 Massachusetts Avenue
Thursday, November 29, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Public Works & Public Facilities + Tour	Samuel Hadley Public Service Building, 201 Bedford Street, Cafeteria
Thursday, December 6, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Cary Memorial Library & Recreation and Community Programs + Tour	Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road, Room 237
Monday, December 17, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.	Board of Selectmen Meeting—Graduation!	Town Office Building, Board of Selectmen Meeting Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue



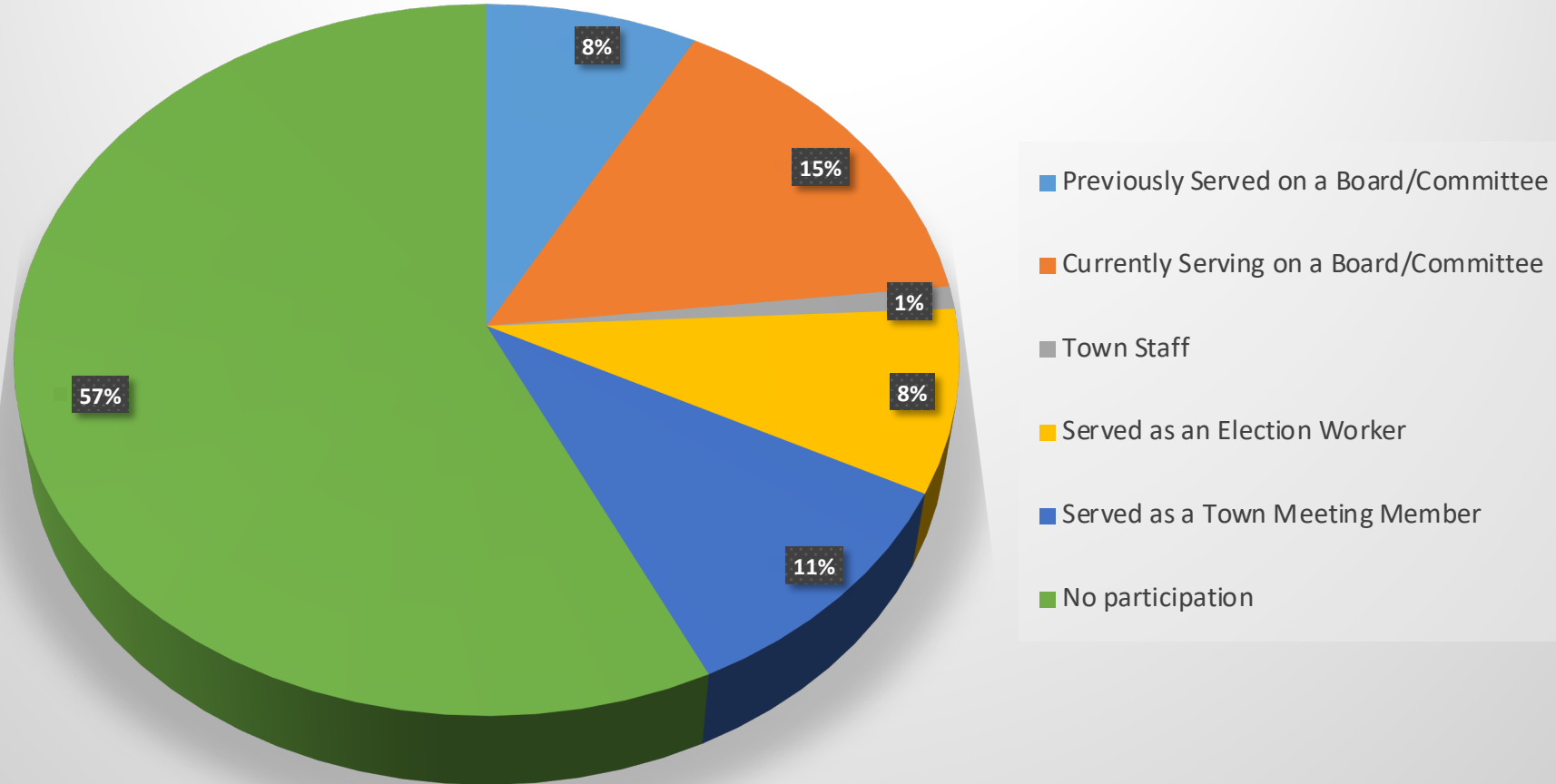
# Benefits of the Citizens Academy

- Generated interest in serving on Boards, Committees, Town Meeting
- Increased diversity of Town boards/committees
- A new 'favorite' activity of staff
- De-mystifies Town government
- Citizens became vocal supporters
- Word-of-mouth interest



# Participation from Enrollees

## Board/Committee Participation





# Session Evaluation

*Your response aids in the planning of future programs. Please feel free to attach a separate sheet for more detailed comments. Evaluation results will be reported in the aggregate and remain confidential.*

## SESSION EVALUATION

### **Session #1: Introduction & Overview of the Town**

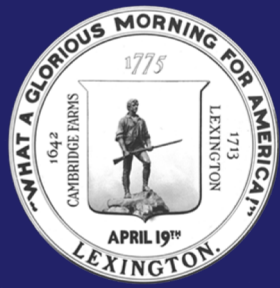
I did not attend this session

	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Overall rating				
Number of topics covered				
Depth of coverage of topics				

Do you feel you have a better understanding of Town Government after having attended this session?

Yes       No       Not sure

**Additional comments:**



# General Feedback Question

## GENERAL FEEDBACK

1. What was your favorite session and why? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long have you lived in Lexington? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How did you hear about the Citizens' Academy? Please check all that apply.  
 Notice with tax bill     *Colonial Times*     *Minuteman*     Lexington Community Education  
 Farmer's Market     TMMA e-mail list     Lexington List     Word of mouth  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did the Academy meet your expectations?
5. How would you rate your overall experience with the Citizens' Academy?  
 1 (*poor*)     2 (*fair*)     3 (*good*)     4 (*very good*)     5 (*excellent*)
6. How would you rate the number of sessions held?  
 1 (*too few*)     2     3 (*about right*)     4     5 (*too many*)
7. How would you rate the length of the sessions?  
 1 (*too short*)     2     3 (*about right*)     4     5 (*too long*)
8. Before the Academy, how would you rate your level of involvement with the Town?  
 1 (*not involved*)     2     3     4     5 (*very involved*)
9. After participating in the Academy, how do you think your level of involvement with the Town will change?  
 1 (*decrease*)     2 (*no change*)     3 (*increase*)     4 (*don't know*)

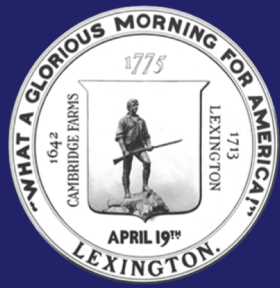


# Sample of Evaluation Comments

## Session 3: Land Use, Health, Community and Economic Development

- This was one of the best organized sessions! Terrific to have so many key people share their expertise, all well directed and controlled (including excellent use of the) by the Assistant Town Manager for Development – she was great!
- Perhaps least exciting presentation, but still very worthy
- Very interesting and provocative
- Great range of topics and helpful to see how all these department interact
- Should have been broken up into two sessions, lots of excellent info that was kind of rushed through in one session





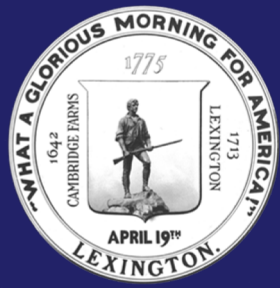
# Graduation !!



November 3, 2018

ATFC Annual Meeting

16



# Thank You!

Charlotte Rodgers  
Director of Human Services  
Town of Lexington

[crodgers@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:crodgers@lexingtonma.gov)

Rajon Hudson  
Management Analyst  
Town of Lexington

[rhudson@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:rhudson@lexingtonma.gov)

[www.lexingtonma.gov/town-manager/citizens-academy](http://www.lexingtonma.gov/town-manager/citizens-academy)