

Fostering Connection between Community and Town Hall

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Citizen Participation Officer in Framingham

Paul Bockelman

Town Manager in Amherst

Mehreen Butt

Town Councillor in Wakefield

MMA ANNUAL MEETING 2020
January 2020

Citizen Participation in Framingham



1700-2018

Town VS City



2018-Present

Framingham Home Rule Charter – Citizen Participation Officer

“The mayor shall appoint a citizen participation officer to work with municipal departments and multiple-member bodies to develop and implement strategies to enhance public engagement using current communication and outreach practices, to process citizen complaints and inquiries, and ensure compliance with public notice requirements. The citizen participation officer shall maintain the municipal notification list. The citizen participation officer shall analyze data on citizen engagement, complaints and inquiries, and shall regularly submit reports as directed by the mayor.”

Community Participation in Amherst



1759-2018

Town VS City



2018-Present

Amherst Home Rule Charter – Community Participation Officer


“(d) Community Participation Officer: The Town Manager shall appoint a Community Participation Officer to increase participation in local government by diverse residents as described in Section 3.3(c). Such officer may be a current Town employee. The Community Participation Officer will:

- (i) Provide support for individuals interested in being involved in local government;
- (ii) Devise and implement strategies to enhance public engagement;
- (iii) Conduct community outreach efforts to increase participation by underrepresented residents in Town government;
- (iv) Aid in planning and conducting of District Meetings;
- (v) Analyze data on resident engagement;
- (vi) Regularly submit reports to the Town Manager and Town Council; and
- (vii) Carry out any other duties designated by the Town Manager.

Citizen Engagement



Wakefield New Initiatives




LUCIUS BEEBE MEMORIAL LIBRARY INVITES YOU TO

WAKEFIELD FROM THE INSIDE OUT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 10AM
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29 | 7 PM

The Library invites you to a presentation hosted by Town Clerk Betty Sheehan and Councilor Mehreen Butt, who will share information about how you can get involved in your town. Find out about a range of subjects, such as participating in Town Meeting, serving on committees and boards, and running for office. Registration is required. Sign up at wakefieldlibrary.org or call (781) 246-6334. Note: These are two identical programs, so that you can choose the date best for you.



Your City. Your Vote.

LOCAL ELECTIONS AFFECT OUR DAILY LIVES



BEFORE THE START OF
RAMADAN, PLEASE JOIN ME FOR:

Mehreen's Chai Chat

Friday, May 3rd
5-8pm
Americal Civics Center
(467 Main Street)
Wakefield, MA 01880



COUNCILOR MEHREEN BUTT'S OFFICE HOURS

TUESDAY, JULY 9TH FROM 5-8PM AT
THE BEEBE LIBRARY

SATURDAY, JULY 27TH FROM 9-1PM
AT THE FARMERS MARKET

Verizon 10:42 PM

Search Facebook



WAKEFIELD 101

THU, MAY 16, 2019 AT 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Wakefield 101: New Resident Open House

Lucius Beebe Memorial Library ·
Wakefield

Interested Going More

Your response is visible to the hosts and Friends



Framingham New Initiatives

Boards, Commissions, & Committees

- 286 Seats | 261 Occupied | 25 Vacancies
- User friendly application, new member guidebook, new onboarding process
- Annual check ins to discuss needs, challenges, goals
- Workshops/Trainings hosted by current and new members
- New boards - Youth Council (13-21 year olds), 2030 Council (21-35 year olds)

Framingham Government Academy

- 6-week educational program

Serving Framingham Campaign

- Highlighting board member experiences

2020 Pilot Programs and Initiatives

Mayor's Weekly Community Hour

Saturday Morning Coffee with the Mayor



How to Engage

- **Seek Advice**
 - Use Town Hall resources – Website, Facebook Page, Staff
 - Reach out to Chair or members of a board with questions/input
- **Participate in Meetings**
 - All Councils, Committees and Commissions must post meetings and agendas at least 48 hours prior to meeting
 - Public participation may be limited in time, scope and ability to dialogue with members
 - Find out the appropriate meeting and rules for public participation
- **Come to Town Meeting**
 - Attend and vote
 - Speak
 - Submit Warrant articles for consideration
- **Serve on Committee and Commissions**
 - January Call for Appointed Positions, March appointments
 - Periodic Openings
 - Annual April Elections – January through April campaigning
- **Advocate** through media, letter to the editor, organizing meetings/groups



- **Town Party Committees** – Wakefield has active Democratic and Republican Town Committees
- **VOTE.** Galvin Middle School, Absentee/Early Voting options

How to Engage: Staff Perspective

- **Understanding Your Community**
 - Identify community wide challenges and district/neighborhood specific challenges
 - Cultivate relationships with trusted community partners
 - Inventory existing methods for communication and identify gaps
- **Define Participation/Engagement**
 - Evaluate existing processes
 - Does participation mean attending a meeting? Responding to a survey? Calling the Mayor's Office?
 - Establish clear and consistent methods for participation, engagement, and involvement
- **Get Creative**
 - Work with what you have
 - Pilot programs