

## STRAW POLL VOTE ON TOWN MEETING

(Sept., 2025)

The Vassalboro Selectboard wishes to hear from residents regarding their preference of voting.

Two of the most common types of annual town meetings are Open Town Meeting and Referendum (or Secret Ballot) Town Meeting. Vassalboro currently operates under an Open Town Meeting, a traditional New England form of direct democracy where eligible voters gather in person to discuss, amend and vote on municipal issues and the annual municipal and school budgets.

The pros of an Open Town Meeting allow residents to hear from others and discuss the issues. Amendments can be made on the spot. The cons include physical attendance, which limits participation and can be time-consuming.

Secret ballot voting has its advantages, including generally larger voter turnouts and the availability of absentee voting which allows a private voting process, but it also requires more careful planning and a much longer lead time (at least 60 days), among other things. There are no real-time amendments to articles and there is less opportunity for community discussion or explanation.

Which do you prefer? (Check or place an X next to the following)

\_\_\_\_\_ Open Town Meeting

\_\_\_\_\_ Referendum Town Meeting

Any comments you wish to share: \_\_\_\_\_

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