

Setting the date of Annual Town Meeting in Shutesbury: A Brief Explainer

By Town Clerk Grace Bannasch, 3/8/22

Shutesbury has a bylaw, passed at a Special Town Meeting in December 2019, that sets the date for our Annual Town Meeting on the last Saturday of April. The Selectboard has the authority to vote to delay Annual Town Meeting, as long as Annual Town Meeting happens before June 30th. This authority is outlined in the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 39, Section 9, which says:

"a town, by the vote of its board of selectmen or town council may delay the annual town meeting"

If you read the text of MGL Ch 39 S 9, you will notice that there are two main paragraphs that are largely, but not entirely, identical. The first paragraph is the version of the statute as it was before Covid-era changes, the second paragraph is the version of the statute as it was after Covid-era changes.

The portion of the statute that gives the Selectboard the authority to delay Annual Town Meeting to May 21st (the text in quotes above) is unchanged between the two versions.

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter39/Section9>