

# TOWN MEETING CLICKERS

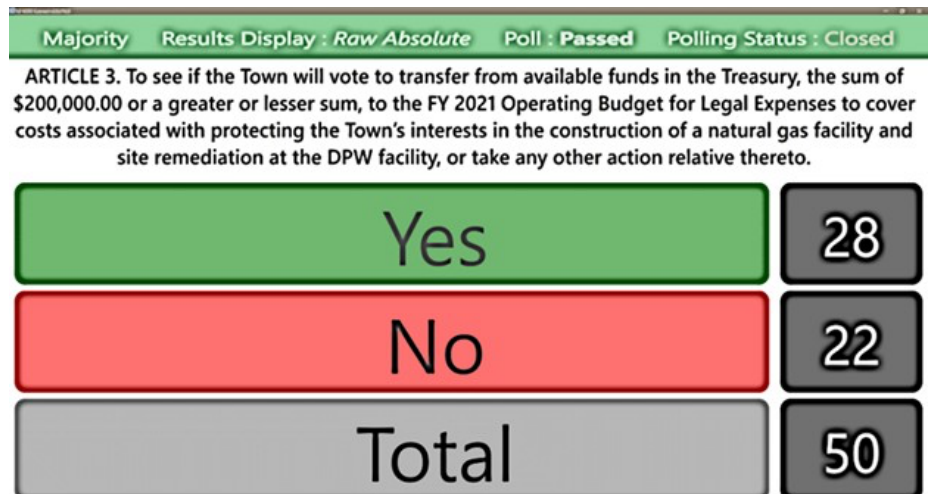
## What are Town Meeting clickers?



Town Meeting clickers are simple, secure, wireless, TV-remote style devices used to transmit each Town Meeting member's vote to a central computer for tabulation and display. Each clicker has buttons for voting Yes, No, and Abstaining. When each voter checks in at the registration table they are given their own unique clicker.

When the Moderator announces that voting is open on a motion, each member presses a button on his or her clicker (during the timed voting period) that submits their vote.

The signals are securely transmitted to a central computer that automatically calculates vote margins for a simple, 2/3, or any other majority. The computer can be connected to a projector to display the results after the voting period has closed.



The total time to launch and tabulate a vote taken by clicker can be as little as one minute.

## Why do towns decide to use clickers?

- **Accuracy.** Tabulating votes by computer reduces the possibility of erroneous vote counts and produces an auditable and transparent record of vote outcomes.
- **Privacy.** All votes by clicker are secret votes, helping to reduce the chance that voters might vote a certain way out of intimidation or embarrassment.
- **Efficiency.** Votes that require a count of hands can take 10–15 minutes and votes that require a paper ballot can take 30–45 minutes. A vote by clicker takes 1 minute.
- **Engagement.** Most towns that use clickers report that their voters enjoy using them and some have seen an increase in turn-out for Town Meetings after adopting the technology.

## Why do towns decide not to use clickers?

- **New technology.** Adopting new technologies can be confusing for some voters and might cause them to avoid Town Meeting or avoid voting.
- **Cost.** Some towns have decided not to pursue the use of clickers because of the cost of purchasing or renting the system.

## FAQ

### ***Are clickers secure?***

Clicker systems are closed “offline” systems that use one-to-one radio frequency broadcasting to communicate encrypted data between the clicker and the receiving computer. There is no connection to the internet so they cannot be hacked and data is not stored in the individual devices. This is the same technology used by the U. S. House of Representatives and Senate and the Massachusetts legislature.

### ***Do other towns currently use Town Meeting clickers?***

At least 70 other Massachusetts towns currently use clickers for voting at Town Meetings, including local communities such as Orange, Ware, Longmeadow, and Winchendon.

### ***How would I know if my vote was recorded correctly?***

With most systems, the computer transmits a confirmation of the vote back to the clicker for visual confirmation. You can see on your clicker what your vote is, and you can change your vote up until the moment voting officially closes on a question. In addition, you can see on the display screen that your device number’s signal was received by the computer.

### ***How are results displayed?***

With most systems, the total number of votes cast can be displayed live during the vote, but the breakdown of the Yes, No, and Abstain votes is typically not shown until after the vote closes. After voting closes, the vote breakdown can be displayed as either total numbers or by individual clicker number (a number known only to that individual voter).

### ***What happens if a clicker stops working?***

All the clickers undergo an accuracy diagnostic prior to the meeting’s start and a test vote can also be held at any time to ensure all units are functioning normally. If a clicker fails during the meeting, it can quickly be replaced with a new device at the registration table.

### ***Are the clickers dangerous?***

The radio energy emitted by a clicker is less than 1% that of a cell phone and is similar to the amount put out by a TV remote control. The clickers present no health risks to users.

Help us better understand Shutesbury voters’ thoughts about Town Meeting by completing the survey at:



[bit.ly/3W6OVRD](https://bit.ly/3W6OVRD)