

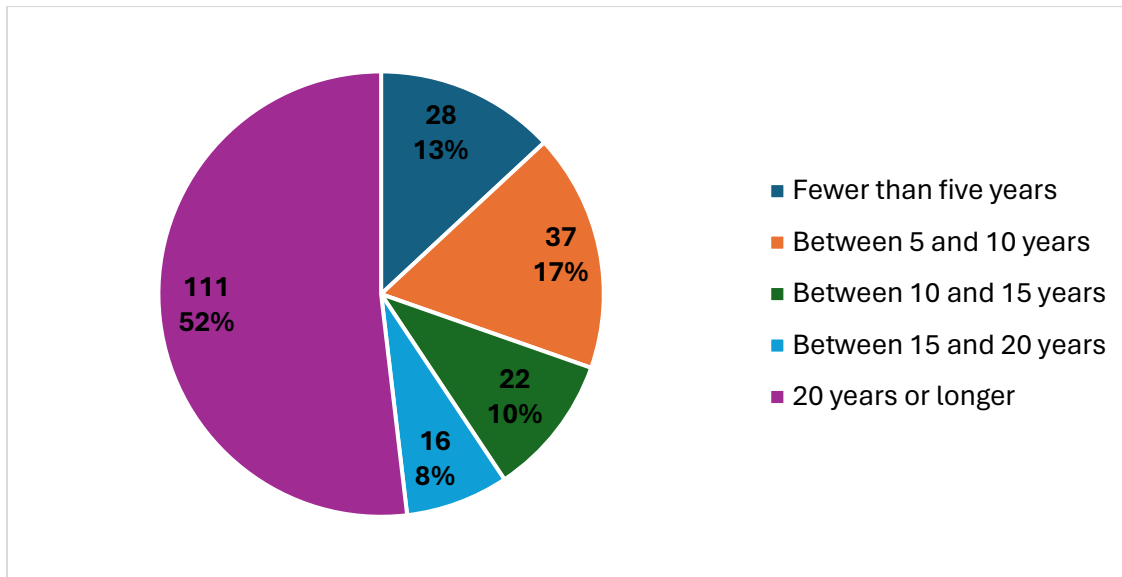
Town Meeting Day Survey Summary – All Responses

The survey, which went live February 1, 2024, was available online and publicized through Front Porch Forum, the Danville Chamber Facebook page, and posters with a QR code to the survey. Paper copies were available at the Town Hall and the libraries. Prior to Town Meeting Day, only a handful of paper copies were received. Paper copies were available at Town Meeting Day, and 72 handwritten responses were received and tabulated. In total, there were 217 responses, but not every respondent answered every question.

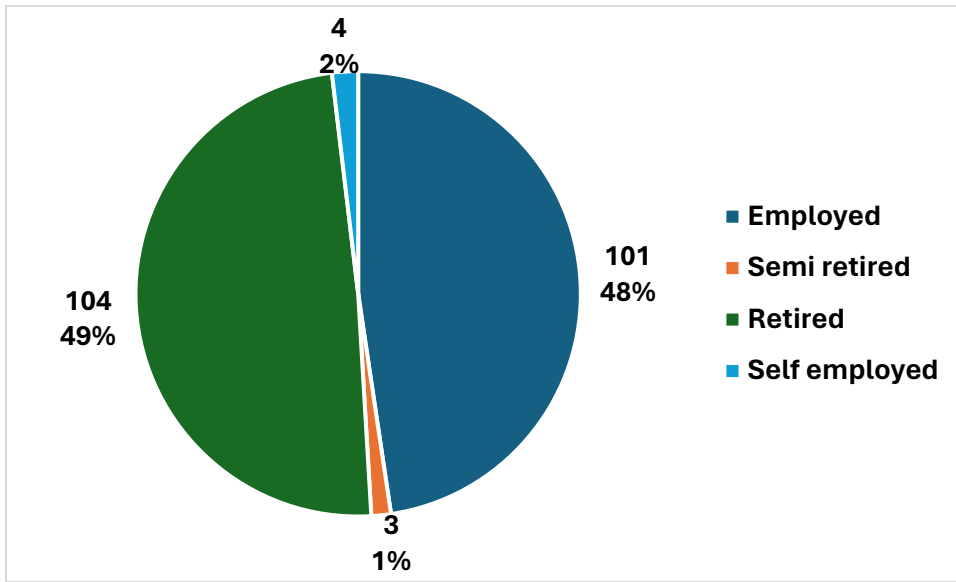
1. Are you a registered voter in Danville? (211 responses)

Yes: 209; No: 2

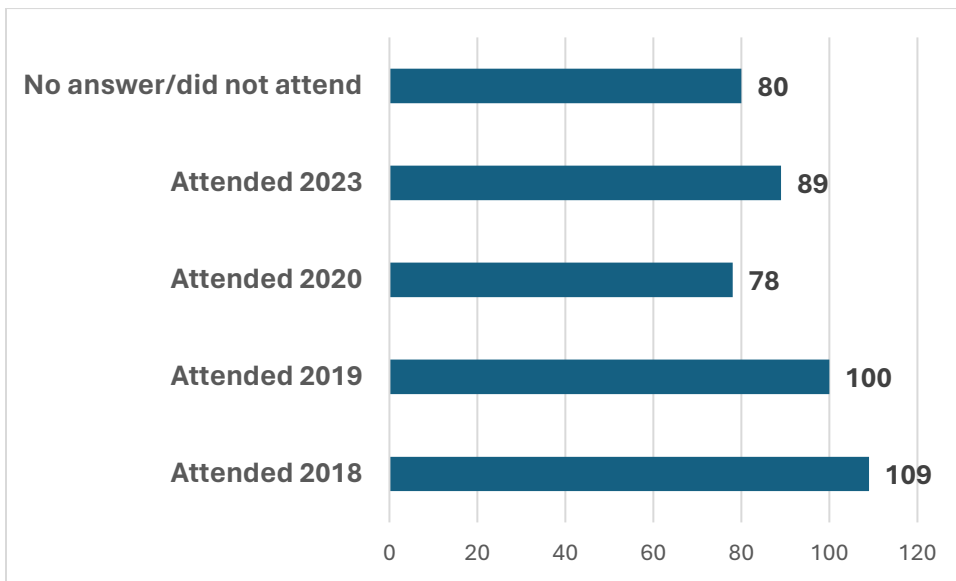
2. How long have you been a Danville resident? (214 responses)



3. Are you... (212 responses)



4. Did you attend Town Meeting Day in Danville in person?
(check all that apply)



5. Why or why not? (Open-ended)

Comments from those who attended ALL Town Meetings in person-- 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2023:

1. Tradition of local say in government. 2. Enjoy the social aspects of town meeting.

Always interesting and important to vote.

Attend: Local Democracy is Best

Believe in the importance of taking an active part in local government / decisions

CIVIC DUTY

Civic duty/responsibility

Civic obligation

I believe it is my civic responsibility. How do we have a town and support services, etc without people participating? How do we make sure the town officers are doing right by the town? Residents of the town need to be knowledgeable about how their town .

Community contact/discussion of articles

Community, information, hearing two sides, voting and a little laughter

Community, town legislative body

Curious and to see people

Democratic involvement of all citizens matters

Did not attend the first couple of years due to lack of babysitter

Enjoy the community and the chance to weigh in on the budget. Love Toby as moderator!

For discussions and social aspect

For Public discourse It is important for live debate and Q. & A.

Fun. If you don't vote, you can't complain

I believe in the institution. I think it is vital for town function

I feel it is important to participate, vote and learn about what is happening in Danville

I feel it's one way of being a responsible citizen - to vote, to listen to others' opinions, and to maintain connections within my community.

Years ago (when I was much younger) a 94 year old told me, "if you don't go to Town Meeting you have no right to talk about it afterwards." I've forever been happy she told me that. I enjoy going - in person..

I feel it is important to participate, vote and learn about what is happening in Danville.

To hear the discussions on issues and budgets

To vote (mentioned specifically twice.)

Vote and be informed (mentioned specifically three times)

To understand better what is going on in town, to vote, and to see folks.

To be informed To meet townfolk. Exchange ideas

To try and make a difference in how the town operates and how our tax dollars are spent.

To learn about town affairs.

To know what's happening in my town and keep Vermont tradition

To have a say in town governance, to promote a sense of community, to know my fellow citizens and support my neighbors. If I don't do my part, I have no right to complain about what is or isn't being done.

Provides knowledge about the needs of the people around you.

To elect selectboard.

To be informed and to be involved.

Opportunity to be informed ; I view it as a responsibility of citizenship.

Obligations

I feel that it is important to attend to understand the workings of the town & school district and to voice my opinion by voting.

I like discussing town business with my neighbors. It's the most basic form of democracy.

I like taking an active role in my town's activities.

I love it. It's a cocktail party without booze. Seeing friends and neighbors is priceless. The lunch is great. (later - I'll go no matter what!)

I want to hear any and all explanations before voting - and I don't attend the night meetings either in the Village or in North Danville.

Important to hear details / tradition!

Important to keep involved.

information & to be involved.

Interest in town and school affairs.

It allows people in the village to voice concerns and provides information on the state of the town.

It behooves me to know what's happening in our town and to have input. It also keeps me abreast of what other residents' needs might be. To be of service to the community.

It is a critical part of New England History that is dying around us. I like candidates to positions be able to stand up, answer questions and speak their opinions. I like seeing our elected officials answering questions. I love being able to attend a community event that I have been going to since a teenager.

It is important for everyone to meet and greet and decide things in person and have discussions in person and truly feel that everyone's voice counts and everyone's opinion is valued.

Comments from those who attended some – but not all – Town Meetings in person from 2018 to 2023:

Civic responsibility

Communicable disease spread.

Get town info.

Had to travel for work during Town Meeting Day for 2019 and 2020.

Had meetings I couldn't miss nor reschedule for work in 2023.

I'm working and can't make it to the meeting.

Scheduling conflicts.

To be better informed before voting.

To participate in town decisions.

To vote for someone. Often we are away since it's school vacation too.

Work obligations make it difficult to attend town meeting.

Meet people, vote.

To vote on town matters.

Typically unable due to work requirements.

Civic responsibility

Community; Hear discussion on issues; Learn more about my town -- information tables

Concerning issues

Good to talk face to face

I did because of my role on BCA. I have to take the day as vacation from work and it is not convenient.

I doubt again - all items passed by 100 people totally unfair!

I generally attend when there is an issue I feel is important to be present and vote on.

I love the engagement of folks & hearing different perspectives.

It's an important civic responsibility and an opportunity to connect with the community.

Love the interaction.

Responsibility to form of govt. Personal interest in topics.

To know what's going on in town.

To see and participate in Town Meeting.

To vote.

Want to be informed about what is happening in the town.

Wanted to see the experience.

Believe in informed deliberation before voting.

Can't get the day off.

Couldn't make it work with my work schedule.

I always did until I went back to work and now don't have enough leave time to attend.

I appreciate the ability to have dialogue regarding our town and the opportunity for voice voting as well as ballot voting in person. I also like seeing people I haven't seen in a while.

When I have not attended, outside of COVID, it's because I do not automatically have the work day off and have forgotten to request a vacation day to do so. I think it should be a state "holiday".

I like the face to face meeting. Tradition!

To be part of the community.

To find out how people feel about issues through discussions voting.

To find out what's going on.

To get the information about the town and school.

Vote for folks deserving of elected posts. Socialize. Be a part of our community.

We usually winter in Arizona but if we are home we attend to support the select board and school board and to listen to opinions of others regarding what's happening in the community.

I like to vote and know what's going on.

Civic duty, and interacting with neighbors and others I rarely see.

I always try to attend and vote during town meeting as an invested citizen. However, it is difficult for my spouse and I to both attend because we have an autistic child that is anxious about going places that also needs around the clock supervision and care. My husband and I try to rotate who goes to which part, but it is a juggle every year.

I like to know what's going on in town. I also like to know where my tax money is going.

It is important to be involved in local affairs but there are sometimes other obligations that conflict with TMD.

It's a unique experience to observe our town's government in action, in person.

Personal connections, listening to other's ideas and responses.

Timing and interest have a lot to do with my attendance. I find that the town report gives enough information to make informed decisions. I often attend for the school part of the meeting.

To keep informed and find them interesting. When I moved to Danville it was the first time I ever attended a town meeting.

To see my neighbors, to heard those running for positions state their cases.

Vote, see everyone, belong.

It's an opportunity for the collective community voice to be heard.

Kids, other stuff going on, sometimes tried to go at least for key votes but my timing was off.

To learn more about the issues facing the town and cast my vote.

I want to participate, I want to have a say and i want to know what others are thinking and doing.

To be a part of my local community, see people I like, hear differing opinions, have the world I want.

Good government matters and we should all support it.

I believe it is important for the community to meet at least once a year to politely discuss town politics and vote for new Selectboard and School Board members.

I consider it a civic responsibility to be informed voters.

To hear conversations about what we are voting on.

Want to be informed and enjoy seeing neighbors.

"I can't remember, but if I'm in town, I always come." Originally from NY State, I had no experience with direct democracy before moving to VT. In fact, the very concept seemed extinct, and being committed to the experiment of self-governance, how can I not participate? Plus, being a quiet, socially introverted individual with no children in the school district, this is an attractive opportunity to gather w/ neighbors and other people in the town, to hear concerns, and to further get to know the community leaders who so diligently serve our town.

I like to learn more about our town (school and town).

To be educated in the use of our tax dollars.

Comments from respondents who did not indicate attending any Town Meeting in person from 2018 to 2023:

I don't understand enough about any of the issues/topics so as to contribute in an intellectual and contributing manner.

("can't remember" regarding previous question) Enjoy local control.

Because I believe all votes should be Australian ballot, it's no one else's business how someone votes.

Civic engagement, knowing where my taxes go.

Conflicts.

Did not attend because I had to work.

Did not attend due to work.

Do not attend. Always working.

Generally out of state.

Had to work.

Happen during working hours and cannot get the time off.

Have to work that day.

Health, muddy roads.

Hearing

I am unable to attend as i need to be at work.

I am unable to attend town meeting day because of work a don't understand why they voted on getting rid of absentee ballots when the people that work couldn't be there to vote.

I am working that day.

I can obtain most of my info from the town report or by following the minutes of the various board meetings.

I didn't really know or understand about it.

I didn't while working . I don't now because there is ample information provided prior to the meeting to allow me to cast my votes.

I don't due to work hours.

I have to work.

I have to work and can't come.

I own property in Danville and I attend Town Meeting if virtual.

I was working.

I work and don't take the day off.

I work during the days.

I would like to attend to engage with my community on civic issues and decisions.

I would rather paper ballot on items.

I'M AN OLD YANKEE. THE FACE TO FACE DECISION MAKING OF COMMUNITIES IS IMPORTANT TO ME!!

In regard to property taxes this year. In the past it felt like everything passed. Now we need to discuss.

Just moved to Town and getting to know what it is like.

Lost interest once the vote went to Australian ballot.

My work schedule does not allow me to attend the meeting. I always stop in to vote after work.

Not here.

Other obligations.

Out of town during town meeting day.

Out of town on vacation.

Prefer to vote by mail-in ballot and to read paperwork at home.

Retired in spring 2023. Previous years I was working out of town on town meeting day.

Since covid no large gatherings and prior just the time and travel.

time of meeting, childcare

To be an active member of the town of Danville.

To be part of community, see neighbors and friends and debate important issues.

To have my voice heard.

To know what is happening town, what money is being spent on.

To participate in local democracy, contribute to my community, be an active change agent. When I do not, it is because I am working or out of town on town meeting day.

To see what's up!!

Too much info in too little time. I need to make an effort to go to budget sessions in advance to understand more and have more relevant input.

We moved here in late 2021. I was sick last year, but my husband attended.

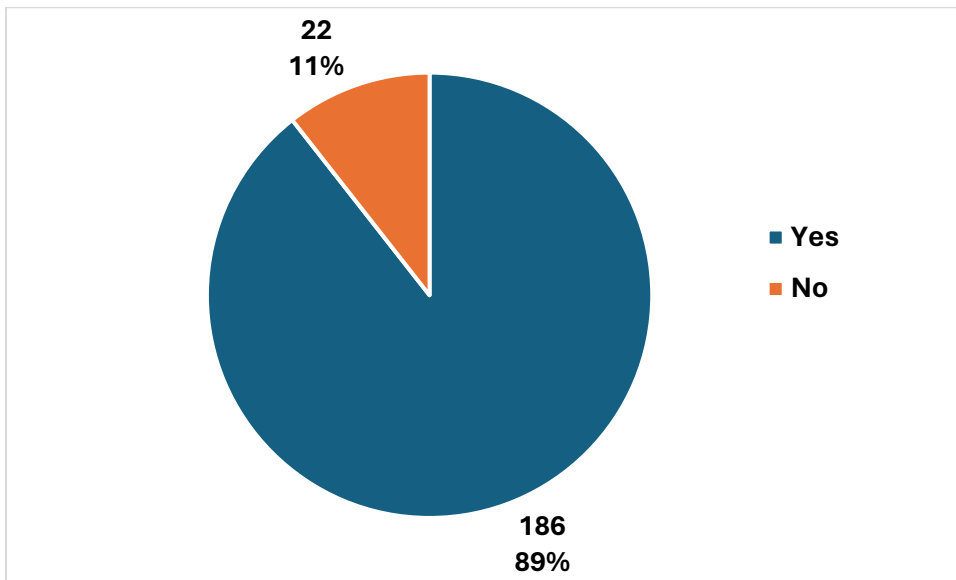
Work

Work conflicts

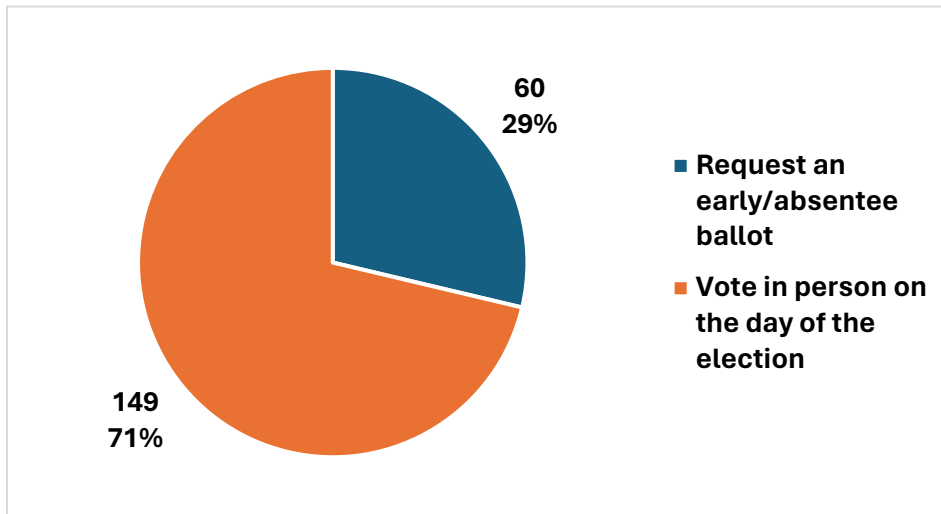
Work schedule interferes

Working

6. In 2021 and 2022, Danville conducted all Town Meeting business by Australian Ballot, mailed to each residence in advance. Did you vote?
(208 responses)



7. When voting in general elections, do you usually...(209 responses)



8. Have you attended a public meeting (other than Town Meeting) in Danville during the past year?

Selectboard: 52

Schoolboard: 26

Development Review Board: 8

Planning Commission: 5

Conservation Commission: 3

Danville Train Station Committee: 3

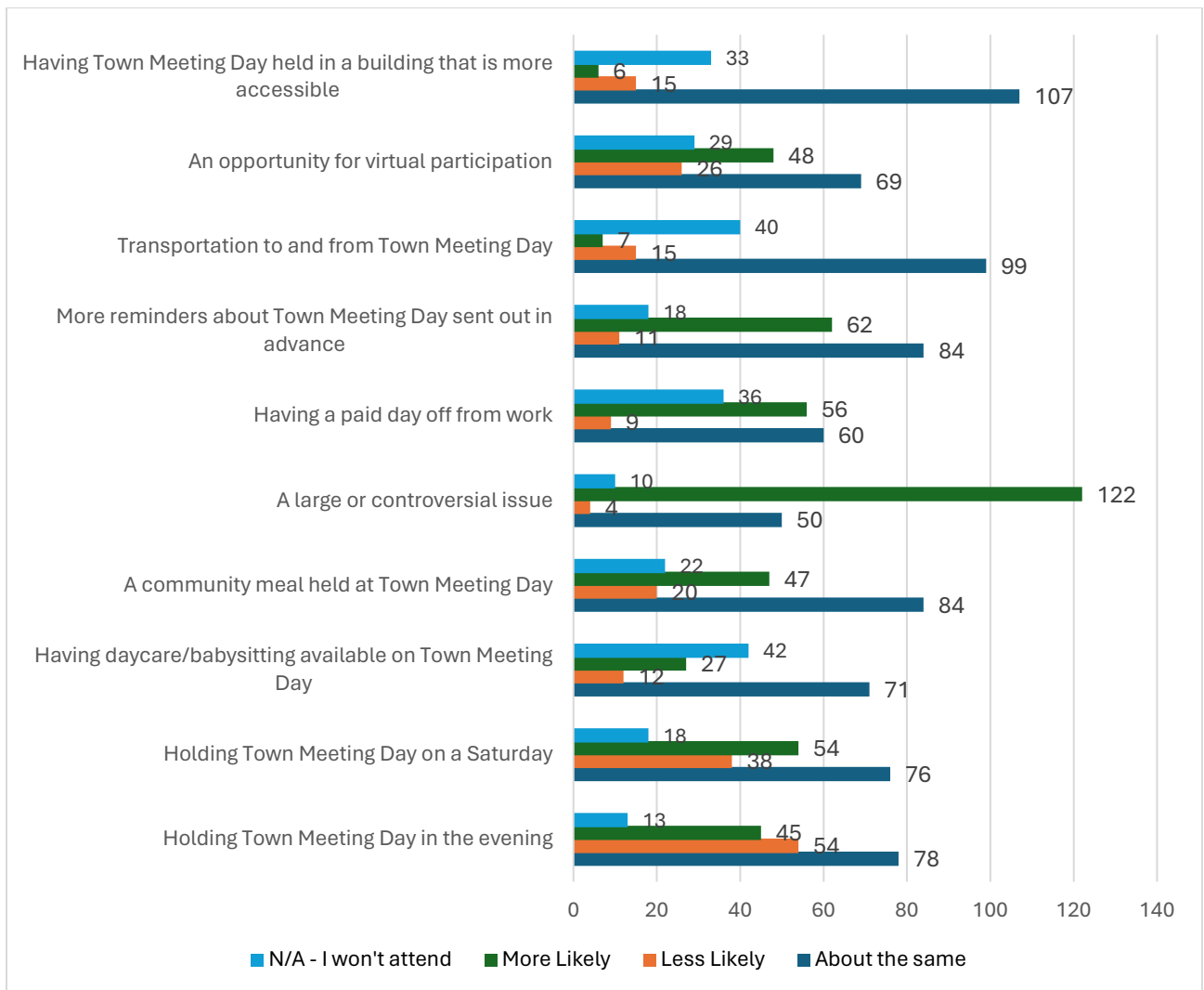
Others comments/mentions that appeared once: Board of Civil Authority; Dog Park; Caledonia County Republican Committee; School Building Committee; On You Tube; I read meeting notes sometimes; Don't drive after dark.

9. Have you ever attended a Town Meeting in another Town?

No: 118

Yes: 61 Towns mentioned: St. Johnsbury (9), Barnet (2) Johnson, Vershire, Kirby, Waterford, Walden, Kirby, Middlebury, Cabot, Greensboro, Sutton, Franklin (County?), Springfield, Ryegate

10. What would increase YOUR likelihood of attending Town Meeting Day in Danville? (Choose from the four options.)



11. Are there any other measures that would increase YOUR likelihood of participating in Town Meeting Day?

Getting my work schedule aligned!

Making it more available to those who work during the day.

Voting for someone special.

It's unfortunately a system that was great when we were mostly farmers. In the modern economy it doesn't work as well. I would attend if it were evening and shorter.

I will always go as long as I am physically and/or mentally able.

All issues decided by vote in meeting.

I attend anyway.

Evening or Saturday would be great!

Voting everything by Australian ballot.

I'm retiring this year, I'm planning on attending next year.

A more firm schedule of what will happen when.

Barring illness or family emergency, I'll always attend. Being older, night meetings are more difficult in winter.

Evening Town Meeting will help, with a Community Supper - it may require two nights, one focused on School, one on Town.

Taxes, development and services (e.g. broadband availability)

Mail ballots! Why not?

School and daycare staying open.

I have attended many Town Meetings since moving to Danville in 1991 and plan to continue to attend them.

I will be there regardless.

Zoom would not help as my work is hands on.

Knowing young people are involved; scouts, school chorus, something to get kids involved.

I already participate so these questions are hard to answer.

More Australian ballots.

Evening is a good idea.

I'll be there when ever, where ever.

Not here in winter,

Unlikely as I am usually out of state.

Time of day. In between farm chores. 11-4 would be ideal. Monday would be the best day.

Recording of pre-town meeting informational meeting with substitutive presentations and messaging from candidates posted on You Tube a week before TMD.

Always have topics discussed at meeting day before voting Also always have on person voting not by mail. If by mail make by request only. Too many people cheating.

More meaningful activities before or after actual town meeting.

I already participate (mentioned twice).

Ability to debate and amend budgets.

The virtual option would make the meeting much more accessible to families with children with special needs who are more home-bound than regular families. I always want to attend town meeting and wish I could do it in person for the overall experience, but given my limitations I would be delighted to attend virtually rather than having to stay home and wait to hear what happened from someone else.

Better access to information before the meeting. seems like things like budget are predetermined before I can vote.

All votes on money + people items should be voted by secret ballot!

Better sound system.

if it didn't happen when roads were likely to be muddy.

Not sure. Info meeting prior so it's not an all day affair. hard to say it's a whole day and some people are very busy.

(Re: paid day off: this is why I'm currently here--thanks to my employer, SJA); Re Virtual being less likely: the value for me is attending in person.)

I am just leaving Town Mtg 2024, I could not hear anything that anyone said except from the moderator or the selectboard. **DO something about microphone in the audience. There used to be a portable mic that was brought to the audience. Please, it is too bad not to be able to hear what people have to say!

Since we come every year, we would be coming to vote in person.

Shorter, better prepared public comments.

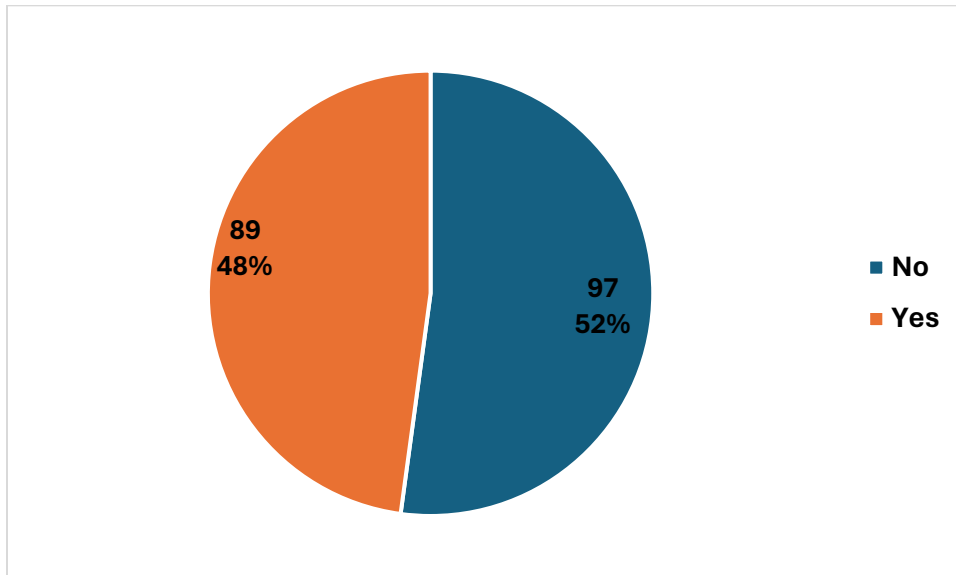
I liked my wife's idea of live streaming of the meeting. She could watch at work. I have attended every year, but am open to change. some people will not attend regardless.

We winter in Arizona Jan - April, meet in May?

I'm fine with it the way it is.

More pre-town meeting discussions.

12. Would you prefer Australian Ballot in place of an in-person floor meeting in the future? (186 responses)



13. Why or why not?

Why not? Comments from those who did NOT prefer Australian ballot in place of floor meeting in the future:

A floor meeting is more informative.

appreciate the opportunity to hear others' opinions while there's still time to make changes

Australian ballot does not allow for debate which is important when it comes to how our tax dollars are spent.

Australian ballot does not allow for debate which is important when it comes to how our tax dollars are spent.

Australian Ballot doesn't allow for in person conversations

can make amendments from the floor

Community and listening to each other

Dialogue is important.

Discussion can be important

Discussion important

FACE TO FACE DISCUSSION OF BUSINESS OF THE TOWN IS IMPORTANT!

Faster process to get results when voting from the floor. Allows for discussion and explanation.

Good participatory government matters.

Having lived with many meetings on zoom, rather than in person, for years, there is a great loss of the importance of our connectedness, our importance to each other. In a part of the world where much of the year brings isolation, we need events to bring us together. Our best lives depend on knowing and caring about each other and the systems we build to support us.

I believe Danville residents have a responsibility to attend Town Meetings. Employers should make it possible for employees to attend.

I believe in in-person town meeting.

I believe it is important to hear from the candidates at the meeting.

I believe that the exchange of ideas is important.

I believe that this would weaken a sense of community in Danville

I don't prefer one over the other

I find it beneficial that people who may not be that active in the town Learn about what is happening in their town and get to vote on issues that may be important to the whole community.

I grew up with town meeting. I think it contributes a huge amount to the community closeness in Danville and other towns. I think students should be taught civics in school so they understand how critical town participation is to a well run town. These towns don't run themselves and almost all of the people working on various boards and committees are giving their time as volunteers. They need to be supported and one way is to show up at town meeting.

I like hearing arguments for and against.

I like that the floor vote allows for a discussion around some things that may not have come up at the preparatory meetings. It also allows some explanation of budgets and how they got that way that a simple Australian ballot does not.

I like the lively comments! (And see above answer about why I attend).

I like to converse about the budget, and change it if needed.

I like to hear different views before voting.

I like to hear the opinions of other voters at the in person meetings. That said, I'm fine with Australian ballots as long as debate is still allowed at the town meeting.

I like to hear what people have to say

I like town meeting.

I look forward to audience discussion/participation.

I prefer direct (??) than the other one.

I think Australian ballots would lower the attendance at the town meeting and the opportunity to discuss the issues on the floor.

I think civil discourse is important, particularly in as polarized a political atmosphere as we face today. Town Meetings are part of what keeps Vermont Vermont, and my out-of-state friends are utterly intrigued by the fact that Vermont still holds Town Meetings!

I think discussion / disagreement is an important element - beyond reading opposing statements.

I think it is very important to have a floor vote and if we can make Town meeting as accessible as possible for as many residents as possible we can and should keep in person floor voted.

I think it's important to gather. People are more respectful in person.

I think it's more important to change the day/time to allow more people to attend than to keep it on Tuesday just for the sake of tradition. If it stays on Tuesdays, I'd rather have Australian ballot for everything so I could vote on the board members and appropriations as well as the budgets. But I would prefer to change the day/time and keep it an in-person meeting.

I think our town holds a sacred tradition. Would like to keep that.

I think public discourse is important.

I value the discussion (including the consideration of budgets) and amendments.

I would like a combination of both.

If you are unable to attend due to work etc. Australian Ballot allows for your participation.

In person floor meetings seem to encourage debate and discussion, and an open, (?) all - floor vote creates consensus in a community-building way. In addition, the outcomes of a floor meeting are immediately known, which is expedient and effective in creating a (unified) & informed citizenry.

In person gives more sense of the community that we live in. So many new residents!

In person meetings and the opportunity for face-to-face debate is important to the health of democracy. Human connections create meaning and civil communities. The value of this is immeasurable.

in person mtgs provide opp for sharing ideas to better informed. And, post Covid we need more person-person contact. Less isolation! Democracy thrives in an active hive.

It doesn't allow for acquiring information behind the decisions being made.

It increases the chance of an uninformed voter making an uninformed decision.

It would be sad to eliminate the opportunity for community dialogue.

It's important for the community to be together, making decisions together, in person. There is great importance in smiling at one another, greeting one another, being sociable. It brings community closer.

Keep the tradition of town meeting alive.

Like the community of in-person.

like the discussions.

Like the in person discussions.

Misinformation. Knee jerk responses worse without discussion.

More discussion.

No chance to talk about items with AB.

Not really sure. I lost interest in participating when I was told I couldn't participate in voting for candidates without having attended the meeting in the morning.

Personal Attendance and ability to see and question is important.

Prefer the community gathering!

Prevent cheaters.

Rather elect select board from the floor.

See Q. 5 above

Some items benefit from discussion and ability to amend and nominate from the floor.

The discussion is informative and helpful in making a decision.

The in person conversations are important!

The in person discussion of points of view are important in making decisions and provide information for making that decision.

Then you may as well not bother with having the in-person meeting.

Want to vote after discussion.

We CANNOT give up the history of Town Meeting, it continues to undermine the sense of Community and meeting others in person.

We need to come together and connect and discuss as a community.

Yes and no, yes because I think we'd get more voters and no because I like the community discussions that occur at meeting day.

Why? Comments from respondents who DID prefer Australian ballot in place of floor voting.

100 people should not vote for millions of dollars of spending.

A lot easier to participate in elections without sitting through another meeting.

Allows for people who can attend the meeting to vote.

Because while I think that substantive, in-person debate is important, indeed, that interacting with directly our neighbors and fellow citizens is bedrock of democracy, I also believe that when it comes down to brass tacks, I want as many people to participate as possible, and I believe a paper ballot is the best way to increase voter participation. That doesn't mean we should do away with the meeting or the debate. But maybe the actual votes don't need to be there.

Convenience

Depends on the issue. About the way it is done now is ok.

Each person has a known vote and I may say what my opinion is. The Floor should not decide how my money of taxes gets spend. Each person needs to vote.

Easier

Easier

Equal opportunity for all residents

Everyone should have an opportunity to have a say in who runs their town.

Filling out the ballot can be done at my own pace. Not under any time limits or pressure.

For working people to vote.

I am afforded the opportunity to vote by Australian Ballot - because I can vote after work.

I can think better alone.

I do like the in person floor meeting even though it is difficult to attend. But Australian ballot seems to be the more democratic way to give all citizens a true accessibility to their right to vote if they have obstacles preventing them from attending.

I feel it is adequate and that more residents participate and it's easy and doesn't require attendance at a meeting.

I like being able to offer a private vote.

I prefer secret ballots as you are not influenced by your neighbors at the meeting.

I prefer to keep my opinions to myself.

I think it would be better for folks who still have to work.

I think that this would increase participation for people who don't like attending the meeting in person or who may not have the time.

I want to become more active in town meeting, pre meetings so I need some more information prior to vote.

I would like to have my voice heard.

I would prefer to vote on budgets and officers (and other measures) by Australian ballot. The Middlebury town meeting model (meeting in evening w/ voting following day or Australian ballot) is a good compromise position & worked well for me.

I'm not always able to be there or can't be there all day.

if folks can mail in their votes for these items it may increase participation for those who can't make it to the meeting due to work or childcare or transportation issues. But if we are only to vote in person, then I'm happy to retain the floor vote system for some of the smaller items in the interest of saving time.

if it increases the number of voters!

If the details about issues to be voted on are made available in advance to all residents in a simple & clear way & in multiple formats, an Australian ballot would capture more votes than the in-person floor vote.

If you know the issues I don't see any benefit to sit all day listening to others voice their personal opinions. There are many opportunities throughout the year to personally attend numerous board/ committee meetings.

Increase voting

It would allow more people to have a voice.

like the anonymity.

More accessible than having to attend in person.

More convenient

More democratic.

More flexibility, less wasted time

More folks would vote.

More opportunity for more people to vote. It's about who you know now.qqb

more participation

More participation from a wider demographic of the Danville population. Floor meetings are biased toward more extroverted people sharing their opinions, their opinions seem more important as a result.

More people could participate

More people would participate.

More voices heard. Those that attend go for the social benefits (retired), which working people don't have the privilege of.

More voters would be able to vote.

My voice is not being heard by having town meeting during the day.

No point in attending because nothing ever gets accomplished really.

People have to work.

People that work can't be there not every one gets the day off.

Plenty of public information available to base my decisions on.

Privacy is huge.

So that all who are unable to attend can have the opportunity to vote. Which is many of us.

Why not? More participation.

With young kids it's less likely I can stay for the whole meeting.

Would like to vote on everything.

Yes because I have to work.

You may get more people voting that way.

Why or why not? These are comments from respondents who did not answer question #12 (indicating no preference.):

able to vote, but not be at meeting all day

Again, I don't know enough about the topic to answer adequately. My life is too busy to learn!

Either way is fine

I like having both options for those people who work and can't attend.

I love town meeting, and my preference would be to hold an informational meeting with Q&A/discussion on Town Meeting Day in the evening and vote.

by Australian ballot.

it's easier to participate, but would miss the discussion

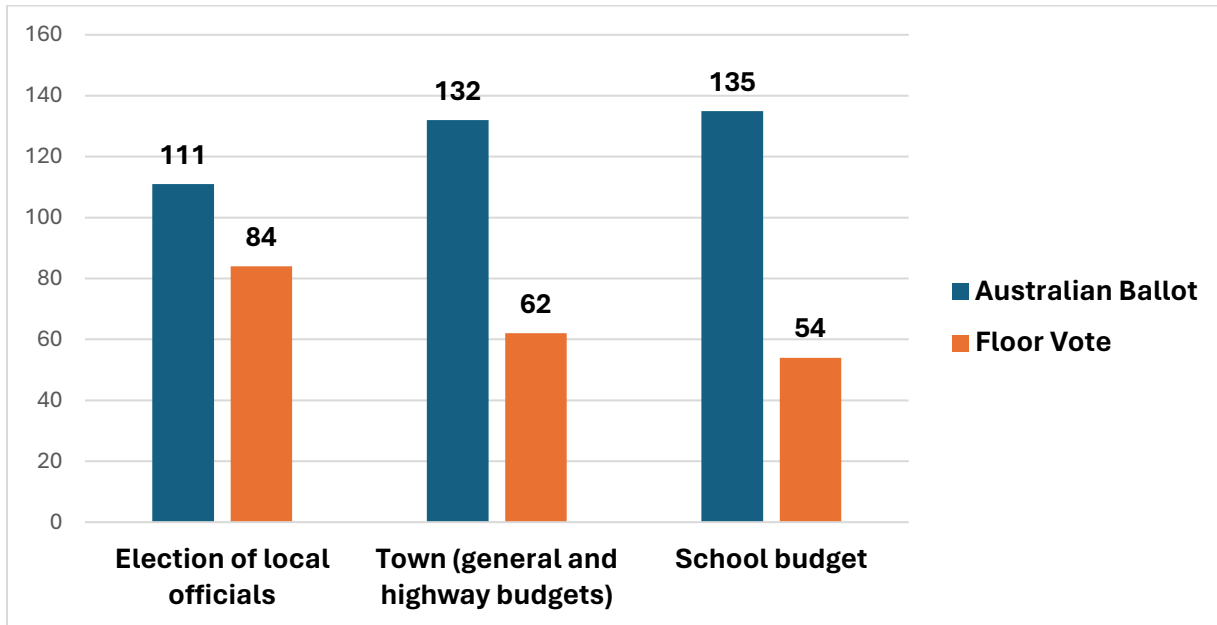
mixed. I think the answer to getting more participation from young working families is to move the time. I think there are real advantages to meeting in person.

No preference.

Not here

Not sure and need to hear more from others.

14. Count of Currently, Danville votes on its Town and school budgets by Australian Ballot. All other business is conducted from a floor vote at Town Meeting Day. What is your preference for FUTURE Town Meetings in Danville?



15. Comments?

*Extra Appropriations by Australian Ballot - These may be helpful to some in town but not ALL people want to give to all these. If you want to give then you give to these items, not take from me to what I don't approve of.

A. Ballot only way to ensure all people get a vote

All 3 categories available to all registered voters.

As above.

Candidates should declare they are running before TMD and they should have to post their reasons for voting beforehand on the Town and School websites. They should attend the pre-town meeting informational meeting to introduce themselves to the electorate and to tell us why they are running and what their qualifications are. This should be recorded and posted on You Tube so people voting by absentee ballot or Australian ballot have time to become informed before they vote. When folks receive their absentee ballots, they should be informed of the date the recorded informational session will be posted to You Tube and encouraged to watch it before they cast their ballots. The informational meeting should address each of the items that is on the TMD warning to be voted upon. A virtual options should be offered as part of the informational meeting. After all the information has been presented and after candidates have had their opportunity to speak then the meeting should be opened up for questions from in person and online attendees that are registered voters. The Q&A part of the informational meeting may not need to be part of that posted to You Tube in case that would discourage folks from asking questions.

Election of local officials would require preposting of qualifications or resumes.

For those who are not already in the "in-group", it is very intimidating to make immediate decisions on candidates. It would be helpful to know about who is being considered/running in advance and to vote via Australian ballot to see the options and have "think-time"/research time before selecting candidates. It may also encourage more candidates to step forward.

I would not (underscored) want to replace in person meeting with all Australian balloting. I would like to add virtual participation option.

General business conducted every year should be on the Australian ballot. Issues specific to a particular year/meeting should be voted in person.

I don't think paper ballots need to be Australian. I think the point is to get more people to vote. I would favor the town publishing a list showing who voted for what - I think it's one of the great strengths of the current and age-old town meeting system: that people have to put a face to their vote and stand behind it. So the point, to me, is paper ballots, ideally after a traditional town meeting so there can be debate. After that, by all means make us take ownership of what we voted for.

I have limited leave time from work and to take a day for Town Meeting would be a sick/vacation day I would be sacrificing. Would really love to see an evening or weekend meeting so more people could attend. You could try it for a couple years and see if attendance improves.

I think this is the most fair way for people in the community to voice their opinions.

If all Australian - complete info must be part of all presentations - and introduction of candidates

Let us vote by ballot. What harm does it do?

More balloting means more people decide the issues. I don't think it's very fair that 5% decide everything.

None

really like the discussion and debate in-person. find a way to keep this opportunity AND Australian ballot

Same comment as above. I prefer Australian ballot, but only if clear & concise summaries of the issues / candidates are made available to all residents so everyone has the ability to be informed & vote.

Same reason as before. Making the voting available to all Danville residents regardless of ability to attend. I really enjoy seeing people from the town get together and hear their opinions. I think it would be nice to preserve the meeting but have all voting by Australian ballot. If a virtual option were available, that would be even more inclusive.

Thank you for caring for our democracy

Thanks to the Committee for putting in the time and effort!!

There are many reasons why people can't or don't attend town meeting. Allowing other options to vote should continue. Seems majority of people attending town meeting are senior citizens which doesn't reflect the entire demographics of the town.

unsure of my answers as this will be my first-ever town meeting, former PA resident

While the traditional town meeting is popular, many are left out. Time to get with the times.

Without floor meetings, it's a Town Meeting in name only

Would like to vote for all officials by Australian ballot.

You probably should define what an Australian Ballot is for those folks who may not know.

Again, I like to hear different point of view

Allows people who cannot tend to vote on budget

Continue pre meetings for budgets

I do hope we can keep Town Meeting alive and in person perhaps as a hybrid for those who need to stay virtual

I think it's important to keep Australian ballot for the budgets; if someone can't attend they can still vote on those

I understand some people cannot make it to TM, but please don't do away with it for those of us who are able to attend/participate in-person.

I'm old. I still think coming together with your neighbors and fellow townsfolk is crucial. Frankly the alternates we have now aren't showing us much in terms of being neighborly.

In person floor discussion gives me more info for that vote

Is both possible?

It's important for me to see and hear from candidates

only I agree we need a way to enable prospective voters who cannot miss work

Stop cheaters by this Australian vote

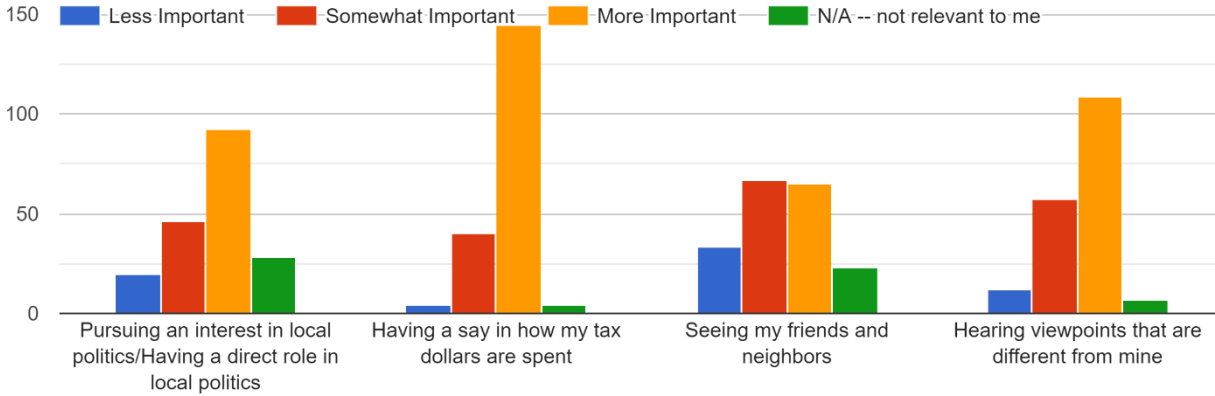
There are so few all-Community events, please do not take this one away. How would you replace a Community event that includes the opportunity for everyone to attend?

This format gives those residents who cannot attend (due to work commitments, etc.) the ability to participate in large, impactful budgetary items.

We need to reach out more to market town meeting it's important. The school should promote it more for young families.

I hope that this effort, to learn more and possibly change the meeting so more people can come will make a difference. There seem to be many new people moving into town. It might take them time to understand the significance of the opportunity town meeting presents.

16. What are YOUR motives for participating in Town Meeting Day? (Choose from four options)



17. What else motivates you to attend Town Meeting Day?

- civic duty
- Consider it civic duty.
- Civic duty!
- Sense of community
- School board elections.
- grass-roots democracy
- If there is a vote for school board and I have to be there, I might be likely to go. But again, we often go away
- Visiting neighbors
- Civic duty
- Strong sense of community
- Socialization. Local support for folks we know.
- It's a great feeling of community.
- I take my responsibility to be informed and vote seriously, but this is an outdated modality that disenfranchises 90% of the voters. If there is a way to make it work better great but I still think voting by ballot is important.
- If I wasn't needed at the dental office.
- I like seeing everyone else. I like having lunch with people I may not see regularly. It makes me proud to live in Danville,
- It is a right and responsibility

See townspeople

Getting to know who are the leaders in our town.

I enjoy the social aspect and the community meal. It's a nice sense of community and good to remind people that we ARE a community. I like to hear the board candidates talk about their views on major issues before we vote on them.

No choice

No interest in participating in group setting.

Knowing that I'm fortunate to be able to take part in a democratic process

Participation in local community

Democracy, civic duty

Having a say in the kind of town I live in and how our tax dollars are spent

Exhibits, pledge of allegiance and the school band

Learning what is happening on many levels.

I am a State Employee and we get the day off to attend/ it's my civic duty.

Interest in local politics and our local representatives' feedback. First meeting I attended was in 2023, so I am trying to get to know the town and its philosophy better.

being part of community

tradition

Civic duty

My responsibility to civic engagement

Learning what is going on in town.

Participation

xoxoxo

I like being actively involved.

Issues

If I had the day off I would go

N/A

Obligation

Learn more about what's going on in the town.

It's one of the things that makes Vermont great!

Responsibility

Vermont tradition

Danville is a great place to live!

Civic duty/Civic Responsibility

Civil engagement

Community lunch was a fun time visiting with folks we don't usually see.

Reps that reach out to seek my input

sense of community.

Watch how my tax dollars are spent. And remove older politicians from office to prevent cheating

Sense of community and camaraderie

Nothing

The history and tradition

My responsibility to participate in a democracy.

I feel like it is a civic duty, but I don't know enough beforehand to participate.

To know more about the budget

curiosity

I will NOT attend town meeting!

a sense of civic duty

I like all the booths, sales, info

see who hates who (with a smiley face drawn)

I should take more time to learn and get perspective and hear other opinions on the matter.

meeting friends and new people in town

One of the cool things about Vermont

Development of "community feeling." Getting to know people and their needs, beliefs and interests.

Leads to less conflict if you are aware of your neighbors needs and beliefs. Builds an "understanding" of the people in your community.

COMMITMENT TO SMALL TOWN LOCAL DEMOCRACY

The FANTASTIC Meal

Not really motivated

Food, Social

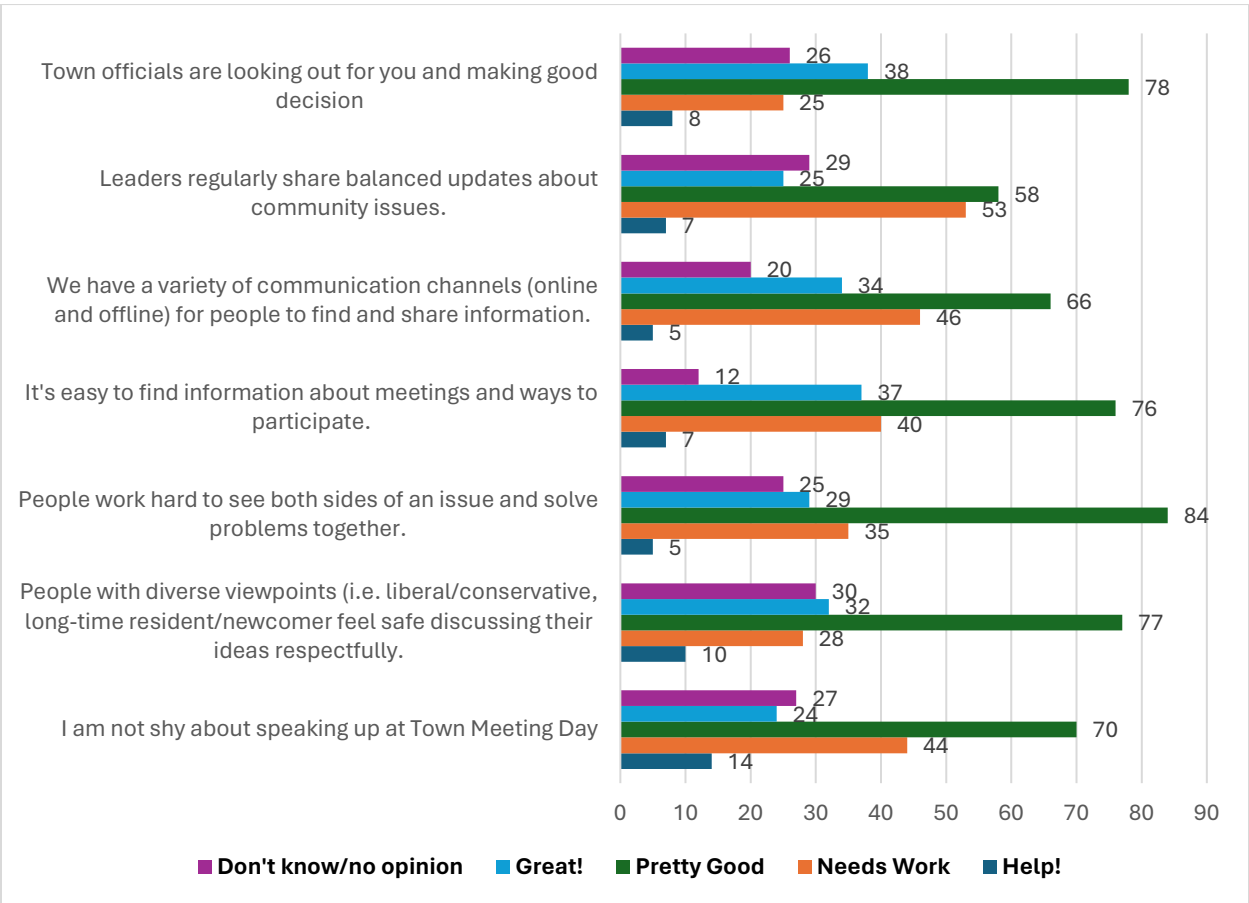
Being part of the community

Meeting new people, listening to other opinions

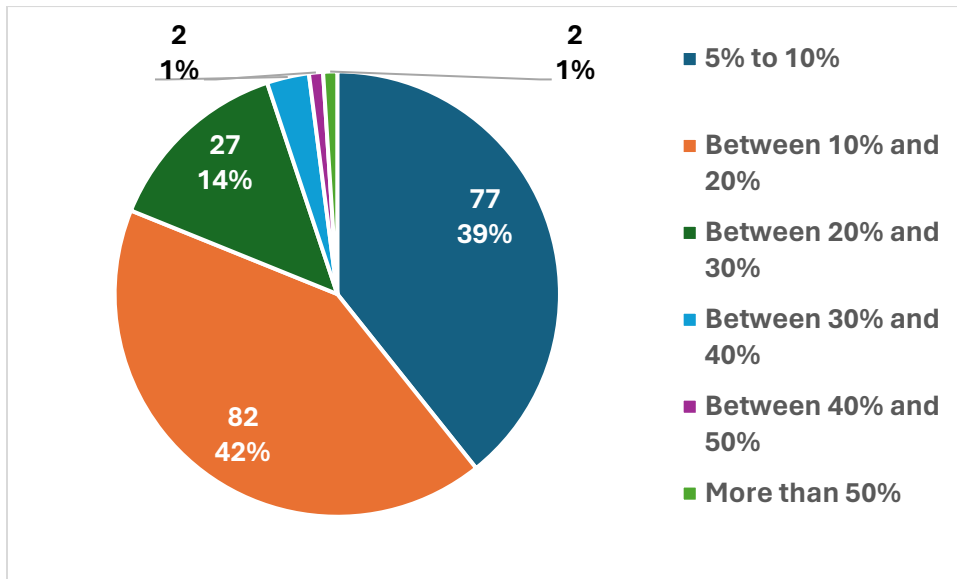
my right to vote

how tax dollars are spent

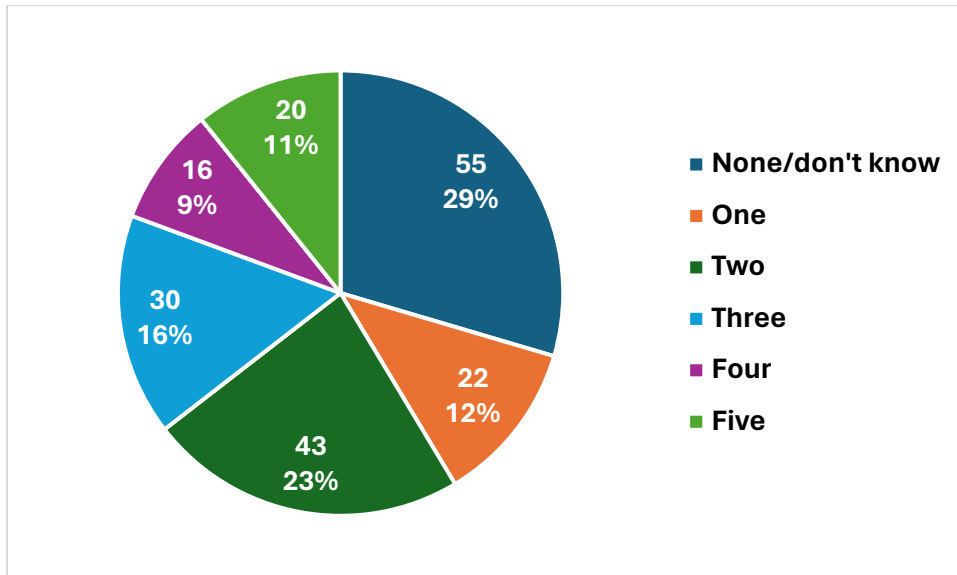
18. Please rate the following statements about local governance in Danville:



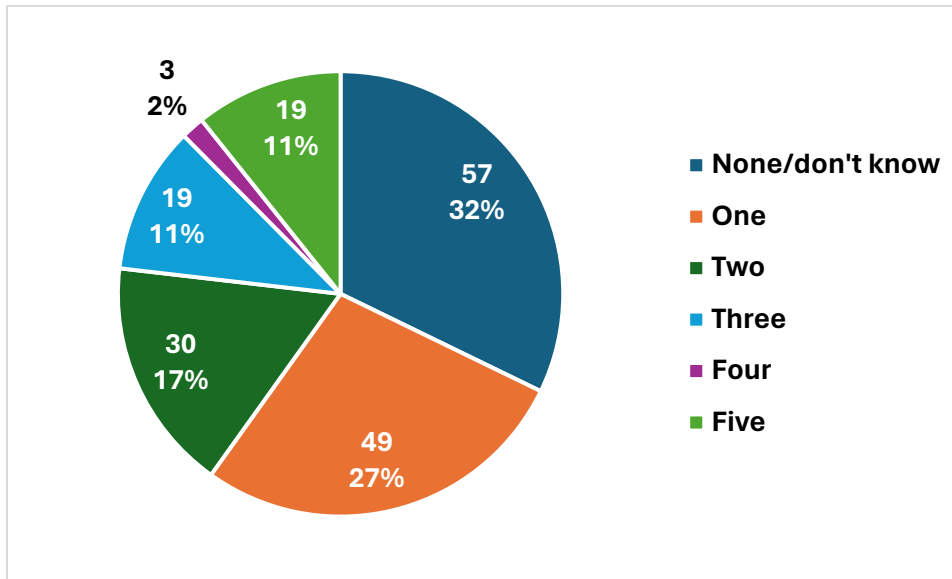
19. Of the approximately 1,800 registered voters in Danville, what percentage do you think normally attend Town Meeting?



20. How many members of the Select board do you know?



21. How many members of the School board do you know?



22. Is there anything else that we have forgotten to ask? Please share your comments and concerns!

Thanks for your hard work!

The elderly need to be allowed to have a voice even if they are unable to attend due to weather or disability.

Peoples lives are very busy, most working people can't get off work to attend an all day meeting. There should be as much information as possible available on line re: agendas and meeting notes from each board.

I am curious to see how Town Meeting goes, looking forward to it.

Reach the parents in the school!!! Reach out at church. Older folks don't do social media.

What are leaders doing to seriously reach out to younger folks who will lead Danville in the future? How do we make their voices heard?

I finished and submitted this survey already but want to add that evening meetings do not work for many seniors. We have trouble driving at night in particular and are tired by evening, not as sharp. As many who currently attend are seniors please don't shut us out doing it in the evening. Thank you.

Would like to see the results of this survey published! Thanks!

Providing a Zoom (remote) option for people to at least hear meetings would be helpful. Especially shut ins, people who cannot attend, for whatever reason, could have access to the information provided at the meeting. This includes all public meetings not just Town Meetings.

Having looked into attendance at town meetings options in other towns I believe we'll get about the same number of people attending Town Meeting and that will fluctuate each year no matter when the meeting is held. Saturdays would probably provide the most flexibility for increased attendance. The same people seem willing to give up their time regardless of when the meetings are held. People have to be willing to give up a few hours of their time to provide the best town environment in which to live.

While the School Gym has the space- the sound quality in there is designed for loud sporting events- it is extremely bad for older folks/hearing impaired.

Concerned about the increase in violent and drug-related crime in the state and specifically, in the NEK and Caledonia county. What can local government and citizens do to continue to keep the community peaceful and safe?

Why wouldn't we do mail ballots? Don't we have the right as a taxpayer?

Thank you for doing this work.

The five options question is very confusing- the rating options like "Needs~Help" and "great" make no sense with the statements. I could not answer this way.

I have heard many complaints about allowing voting for Appropriates together as one vote. It doesn't allow individuals to feel they really have a voice. That said, I'm not sure anyone would be comfortable questioning an appropriation for a local organization unless paper voting was called.

Maybe consider sending high school to choice.

I usually request an early/absentee ballot, just in case, but vote in-person if possible.

Thank you for this survey and for looking into how to engage more Danville residents in the town and school governance. Our nostalgic attachment to in person Town Meeting Day is not serving the greater need to facilitate more civic engagement in this town. Over the pandemic we had a number of new people move to town, I did my best to encourage them to attend, but they did not. Danville's self governance can evolve to bring these and others in. Postings to Front Porch Forum have helped broaden outreach to the electorate and residents. Recording meetings to post them is the next step in that process. The legislature dragged its feet on that and I think we can all agree we don't have time to drive to Montpelier to sit in cramped committee rooms to keep abreast of our state's governance, their posting of recordings has been a benefit to civic engagement. I think we can make more use of the pre-town meeting informational meeting by formalizing its presentation more, covering each of the ballot items voters are asked to vote on, clarifying common questions around each ballot measure. Making candidates write up their bio, their qualifications and why they are running ahead of voting and having them recorded telling us these things as part of the pre-town meeting informational meeting should be a goal. While the crafting of the budgets limit the ability to move the pre-town meeting up in time enough for those voting by absentee ballot to do so in an informed manner, information on the other ballot measures could be shared and recorded and posted in time for that. I will note that while I have not attended any of the Selectboard or School Board meetings in person in the last year, I have read through agendas and minutes from those meetings and read the town newsletter. Love the town newsletter idea, so thanks for piloting that!

e-mail blurb to voters, could send periodic info, giving the voters convenient access to town information, discussions, ...

The boards have there personal agendas and that's what the worry about most

Would really like to see a live video of Town Meeting so I can watch while I am working.

The state of the school physical plant and what to do with it is a very big concern.

Thank you for taking the time to conduct the survey.

Would like to see an income tax rather property tax.

consider getting announcements with agendas via email.

approximate attendance "disgraceful".

additional commentary across the "rate Danville " section: It's all hard. Not all of us are tech savvy, have internet, but a paper go out often, etc. Not sure what the answer is for all people to be in the know without having to really 'work' at finding out things.

It was very hard to hear today. (and I don't have any hearing impediments).

New to town look forward to learning more about town government & issues.

I wonder if a free BBQ would turn people out? (Paid for by the Danville Chamber and donations); no cost to the town.