

# Town Moderator

Rockport, Massachusetts 01966

September 26, 2020

Dear citizens:

As you may recall, when “spring” town meeting concluded on the morning of August 8th, I made the comment that I was never more proud to be a Rockporter than I was that day. By that I meant that I was so grateful that everybody in the community rose to the challenge of conducting a meeting during this pandemic. Many people spent numerous hours to prepare for a smooth meeting, DPW workers, IT staff, police officers, Town Hall and school employees, Board of Health and Selectmen representatives, the communications company we hired and many others worked tirelessly to come up with solutions “outside the box “ to create a safe and effective meeting.

The voters who attended also conducted themselves in an exemplary fashion. Everybody was courteous, succinct and contributed focused, relevant comments to enhance our discussions. The attendees were patient as we learned how to deal with our “vehicle attendees.”

We find ourselves operating under the same circumstances in September, and I have high expectations. There are those who think we are too conservative in our approach and believe we should conduct our meetings as we normally would. Others think it is unsafe for us to meet at all. To the extent people have criticized how we are conducting these pandemic meetings, I will accept all of that criticism as it is my reluctance to conduct “business as usual” that has led to these hybrid meetings with a truncated warrant. But I believe in my heart that we are doing the right thing and keeping folks as safe as possible while transacting the business we need to transact.

Monday is Yom Kippur, the most solemn day in the Jewish tradition. It is a time to reflect back on the previous year but also a time to look ahead to the following year. It is my hope and belief that our future will be bright and that we will soon be able to have our “normal” meetings. At the conclusion of a Passover Seder, which occurs around the time of the spring town meeting, it is traditional to end with the words “next year in Jerusalem.” I say to you, “next year in the gymnasium.”

With gratitude,

Bob

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