

Howard A Raphaelson
119 Timber Drive
Storrs, CT 06268

June 11, 2012

Mansfield Town Council

Neither the Town Meeting nor a referendum solves the problem of properly representing the attitudes and intentions of a majority of our voters.

As some of you know, I am interested in the quality of life in Mansfield and have spoken to this body on a number of occasions. Over the years I have also spoken to a number of our citizens. Those who are involved in some way with town government have a good understanding of the connection between taxes and services, and know the process of drafting and passing a budget. In nearly every case, those who are not and have not been involved, have little understanding and less interest in the process. Generally, they like the way the town operates and expect that if they continue to ignore it, things will be the same as they have always been.

So far, they have been right. This could change of course, if a majority of the small voter turnout – either at the town meeting or at a referendum – takes action that results in change. If this is not the desire of the majority of our citizens, such a result would be contrary to our democratic process.

I do not have an answer. The town meeting gives a valuable opportunity to hear not only opinions, but the reasoning that led to them. The referendum is available to more people with less effort but is without an exchange of information and views. In the past, neither has attracted enough voters to give any assurance that it is a majority conclusion

November Election Data 2000 - 2012

Town of Mansfield

The chart below lists the total number of registered Mansfield voters for each year, the total number of voters who participated at the polls on election day, the total number of votes cast on referendum questions, and the percent these referendum votes represented of the total votes cast at each election. In other words, the percentage figure represents what percent of the participating voters cast a ballot on the referendum questions.

Year	Registered Voters	Voted at Polls	Votes on Referendum	Percent of Voters at Polls Who Voted on Referendum
2000	8,273	6,696	4,524	68%
2001	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available
2002	7,671	4,289	No Referendum	No Referendum
2003	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available
2004	10,086	7,891	No Referendum	No Referendum
2005	9,702	2,561	2,219	87%
2006	10,430	6,275	5,740	91%
2007	9,392	2,305	2,178	94%
2008	13,050	10,217	9,595	94%
2009	12,094	2,356	2,342	99%
2010	11,943	5,785	5,285	91%
2011	10,414	2,238	2,146	96%
2012	9,974			

State of CT Constitutional Referendum only - eliminate or keep sheriffs

A. H. Waring
revised
6/11/2012

A. H. Waring
6/11/2012 - revised