

This is a list of topics that were raised in our previous working group meeting. It is important to note a couple of things:

- 1) We never took a “formal” or “informal” vote on any of these topics.
- 2) All perspectives on these topics did not get fully flushed out or heard.
- 3) We did not have full participation of the working group membership at all of the meetings.
- 4) We will make decisions on whether and how these items are included in the report at a later meeting.

The goal of the next series of meetings is that we will use this document to lead and structure our conversation as we develop recommendations for policy guidance and/or statutory changes for the Legislature, and the creation of the best practices guide and resources for communities.

Please review this chart, note down your thoughts, and email your responses to Kelly.Pajala@vermont.gov by Thursday, October 2nd (or as soon as possible, if more time is needed). In doing so, please note:

- 1) You do not need to fill in every field. Some columns may not be relevant to every topic, and we all bring different experiences and expertise to each topic.**
- 2) Please add any additional topics that you think should be included as recommendations in the report.**
- 3) All participants’ comments are welcome. Final decisions about recommendations will be made by Working Group members, as set forth in Act 133.**
- 4) All documents produced or acquired by the Secretary of State’s Office are public records under Vermont’s Public Records Act and must be made available upon request, unless an exemption in statute applies.**

DEFINITION SECTION: What terms need definition in either the Act 133 Report or the Best Practices Guide?

Topics Raised	Applies to either/both?		Does this belong in the Best Practices Guide?	Would this be policy guidance, resource collection, and/or recommendation for statutory change?	Is this no cost, low cost, or high cost? Would state support be needed?	Considerations	Should the Group recommend this in the report? 1= Significant support 2= Support with hesitations 3= Significant concerns
	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
Universal Design Space – physical and virtual	IT platforms – Standardized across the state, if yes, who approves?						
	Training on best practice for universal design in hybrid meetings						
	Hybrid meetings for all local meetings statewide						
	Share existing resources on universal design						
	More hearing accessible spaces in the state						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
Spaces – physical and virtual need to clearly state what accessibility features are offered							

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
Universal Design Technology	Websites for all municipalities						
	Accessibility audits to include hybrid meetings not just physical buildings						
	Websites/towns designate contact person for ADA requests						
	State grant to help increase hybrid meeting resources for municipalities						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
Universal Design - Logistics	Name all the tasks in a hybrid meeting that need a person to be responsible for them						
	Include universal design items on all agendas (accommodation request contact, parking info, when materials are shared,						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
	where materials can be found)						
Universal Design-General	Democracy Committee						
	DEI/Accommodations Committee						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
	Translation of materials if the population of a community is over X percent?						
Training	Training on what reasonable accommodations mean under the law						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
Facilitation training							
	Training on cultural competency for municipal officials						
	Training on best practice for universal design in hybrid meetings						
	Training on curbside voting						
Resources	Share existing resources with municipal officials for things like						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
	translation and interpretation						
	Providing on-call resource options to fulfill requests for accommodations						
	State-provided language services						
	Share VSARA resources for archiving meetings						
	Share meeting platform info document – with specific features of different platforms						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					
Technology (that is not universal design, per se)	Seek opportunities to scale up for efficiency, consistency						
	Archive meeting content in full, with metadata attached, for longer period of time						

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	Open Meeting Law (meetings of public bodies)	Annual Meetings (meetings of the voters)					

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics				
Topics	Subtopics discussed at Group meetings	Considerations or concerns	Would this be policy guidance, resource collection, and/or recommendation for statutory change?	Should the Group address this in the report? If so, what should the Group recommend? 1= significant support, 2= support with hesitations, 3= significant concerns
General considerations	Length of town meeting			
	Who has access to the meeting – language,			

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics

Topics	Subtopics discussed at Group meetings	Considerations or concerns	Would this be policy guidance, resource collection, and/or recommendation for statutory change?	<i>Should the Group address this in the report? If so, what should the Group recommend? 1= significant support, 2= support with hesitations, 3= significant concerns</i>
	disability, working, childcare, etc.			
	Two-part meetings			
	Need to define terms: Town Hall Annual Meeting Pre-meeting Selectboard			
	Paid leave for voting			
	How do we move to hybrid Town Meeting with voting			
	Complexities of changing town charter			

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics

Topics	Subtopics discussed at Group meetings	Considerations or concerns	Would this be policy guidance, resource collection, and/or recommendation for statutory change?	<i>Should the Group address this in the report? If so, what should the Group recommend? 1= significant support, 2= support with hesitations, 3= significant concerns</i>
Hybrid/Remote Voting and Meeting	Security generally			
	Is there a technology for electronic voting that is secure?			
	Maintaining privacy when doing a paper ballot			
	Maintaining order			

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics

Topics	Subtopics discussed at Group meetings	Considerations or concerns	Would this be policy guidance, resource collection, and/or recommendation for statutory change?	<i>Should the Group address this in the report? If so, what should the Group recommend? 1= significant support, 2= support with hesitations, 3= significant concerns</i>
	What happens when technology fails			
	Law is not clear and no case law			
Allowing for Hybrid voting on town meeting day (Cambridge model)	How does the paper ballot work?			
	Same building – different room			

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics				
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	Does it have to be in the same building?			
Have an empowered Town Meeting before Annual Meeting where Australian Ballot is used (Jericho Model)	3 meetings total (could be more) 1) Hybrid, fall, open engagement 2) January meeting like town meeting but allowed for amendments			

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics				
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	3) Town meeting, Australian ballot of January items			
	Required a lot of volunteers			
	Logistics of voting remotely at the January meeting			
	Need at least 45 days to prepare the ballot			
	Reduced concerns about voter security			
	New Hampshire – statewide Jericho model			

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics				
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Representative Town Meeting (Brattleboro)	Currently a legal pathway that provides a level of accessibility while retaining deliberation			
Middlesex (fully remote with volunteers)	Fully remote on request			
	How does moderator know voters are part of the town (in Middlesex the moderator met with them prior)			
Massachusetts	Working on a remote voting technology			
Voting by Clicker	Existing elections statutes are not clear			

Act 133 Annual Meeting Topics				
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	Solves privacy issues			
	Might be more efficient			
	Requirement that it be closed circuit? This reduces accessibility			

Type			Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
General	Goals for Best Practices Guide	Emphasize both democratic quantity and democratic quality				
		Make clear legal baselines for accessibility, best practice standards ride on top, do not conflate				
		Highlight/create choices, provide assortment of options, note what is crucial				
		Focus on universal design, with additional process for accommodating folks who have additional needs				
		May need to balance and navigate competing access needs. E.g. masks, screen sharing/seeing faces.				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
	Elevate the options for engagement modalities so that towns realize they have more options				
	Acknowledge tensions between effective and inclusive				
	Recognize community size				
	Acknowledge what is legally required				
	Acknowledge that democracy is inherently expensive and inefficient and yet is what we want				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns	
	Guiding Principles	Adopt inclusivity statement as baseline				
		Civic spaces should be free from discrimination and harassment as baseline				
		Protect third spaces				
		Create opportunities to participate in informal volunteerism, celebrating arts and culture				
		People who want to participate should be able to participate				
		Create culture of interest/inclusion, plus make interface easier				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
	Follow inclusive process to invite and incorporate community input into vision and goals for municipality				
	Create a committee dedicated to inclusion and accessibility				
	Have a town accessibility guide				
	Create a committee dedicated to democracy (quantity and quality)				
	VT Constitution"...indubitable, unalienable, and inalienable right, to reform or alter				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		government...including electing officers and being elected into office."			
		Be clear about official roles and responsibilities of all participants in public engagement			
	Resources/Tools	Town Users manual/Operating Guide			
		Universal access to decent broadband			
		Self-evaluate the effectiveness of community			

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
	engagement and public communication efforts (quality assurance standards)				
	Consider a variety of information sharing opportunities, channels of communication				
	Data Snapshot of Towns who use Floor vote				
	Training on and use of curbside voting				
	Town website				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
Meeting Preparation	Notice & Agenda	Notice that encourages people to show up			
		Have a point person for accessibility requests, whose contact info is on the notice and agenda			
		Provide childcare – don't use people who may wish to vote or participate in the meeting to provide the childcare			
		Provide transportation			
		Plan ahead to ensure input from a variety of sources. Invite participants whose input is needed. Ensure have right voices/diverse voices at table.			

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
	Well planned Agendas – able to get through all topics				
	Well organized. Think about what topics have public importance and priority when structuring				
	Clear: plain language, avoid jargon and acronyms				
	Post all materials ahead of time				
	Make clear purpose of meeting (decision-making, exploratory, etc.)				
	Ensure that you have appropriate translation of documents, if necessary				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		Proactive intentional inclusion of/engagement with marginalized communities: e.g., incarcerated community members, people using hotel vouchers			
		Post Warnings in locations beyond what the law requires to provide free access			
		Use of Town Newsletter or email listserv			
		Provide Town Report digitally and in multiple formats, materials for Town meeting should be accessible before the meeting			

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		Practice Tech before the meeting			
	Location	Accessible and welcoming location for in person meetings			
		Have plan in place for tech moderation and glitches			
		Have the correct technology in place			
		Have interpreters available, if necessary			
		Practice tech and use of physical space before meetings			
		Increase accessible parking, use valet parking			

Type			Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		Arrange seating with space for wheelchair mobility				
		Engagement should happen year round using many methods of communication and various locations, not just in meetings				
Format of Meeting	Format of Meeting	All meeting are hybrid				
		Match the purpose of the meeting with the process to be used.				
		Have point person for handling technology in use				
		Record all meetings for people who can't attend or need the tech assistance				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		Provide captioning			
	Meeting Structure and Community norms	Clear articulation of when/how long community members may speak at start of meeting.			
		Rules of the road/community standards should be articulated ahead of time and explained at meetings			
		Adjust public comment style, timing, time limits to suit topic.			

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
	Ask that duplicative comments be avoided.				
	Don't have public comment set for after decision is made.				
	Alternate ways to submit public comment				
	All body members do their homework.				
	Clear communication out for when a decision will be made				
	Address side chat protocol				
	Stay off non-essential tech during meeting				
	Meetings should end with each agenda item having resolution/decision, or				

Type			Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		potential solutions put on the table with next steps clear				
		Go on record at end of meeting saying discussion among members on business is closed until next meeting				
		People identify themselves when they speak				
		Translation and interpreter services should be made available and advertised.				

Type			Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
Hybrid Meetings	How to hold inclusive hybrid meetings	Make sure participants attending remotely know how to use their gear's technical functions				
		Technology needs are: closed captioning, screen reader capability, and keyboard navigation				
		Make sure everyone in room knows what tools are available and how to use them				
		Have and use effective technology for making familiar/intimate experience, e.g. making sure camera focuses on right place, multiple cameras, settings				
		Have microphones for all of the meeting, and require				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		use, including small breakout rooms			
		Have cameras off unless people remotely are talking			
		Don't share materials onscreen if possible			
		Have everyone introduce themselves before talking			
Post meeting		Create standards for minutes presentation			
		Minutes in standard form			

Type			Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
Training	Facilitation and Leadership	Leaders should know how/when to speak up when someone violates community standards, e.g. don't sit silent in face of blatant racism (free speech, but also...)				
		Best practices training for Hybrid meetings to connect together people in room and people on zoom, seamless experience, plus also those watching recording after.				
		Art of running meeting, not just legalities				
		Tracking who takes OML training				

Type			Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		Use of tech during meetings – both facilitator/town staff				
		Robert’s rules for facilitators				
	For all members	OML training				
		Robert’s rules for board members				
		Use of tech during meetings – both facilitator/town staff				
	For the public	Technology				
Resources created/provided	How to . . .	Interested in becoming an official				

Type		Existing Resources?	Needs to be created?	Considerations	Agreement Indicator 1= significant support 2 = support with hesitations 3= significant concerns
		new to participating in meetings (newly adult, New Americans, newly engaged)			
		Roberts Rules and meeting procedure			
		Town Operators Manual			
	Legal Guides	Open Meeting Law			
		Public Records			

