

Response to Comments MADE AT THE JULY 6, 1993 TOWN MEETING

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7/15/93 w/

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At the Winchester annual town budget meeting on July 6, 1993 there were several comments from citizens that require rebuttal.

One citizen asserted that a minority of voters in Windsor held the budget process hostage and suggested that the Charter be changed to require a percent of all the registered voters to oppose a proposed budget in order to defeat it.

Other citizens applauded the statement that those who vote in the referendum are a "small majority whose views should not be allowed to vote over the rest of the town."

Yet another assertion was just as troubling. A citizen, who is also an elected official, concluded that the 5000 citizens who did not vote sent a message that they trust the decision of the elected officials. Never mind that the Charter explicitly

gives the power to adopt the annual budget to the Town Meeting and not to elected officials, this conclusion simply denies the reality of politics today as citizens increasingly voter their concerns over the actions of elected officials.

Instead of complaining about a small majority of citizens who do vote, it would be more useful to discuss why people do not vote on as important an issue as the town budget. Effective leadership would see to it that the numbers of voters increased by ensuring that they have the tools necessary to participate effectively rather than suggesting ways to discourage participation.

We should applaud all citizens whenever they advocate their position on important town issues and celebrate their participation.