

# An Open Letter From The Tiverton Financial Town Meeting Changes Advisory Committee

To All Those Who Contributed To The FTR Effort:

The Financial Town Meeting Changes Advisory Committee would like to thank all who contributed to the Financial Town Referendum (FTR) effort. Your input was invaluable in our committee's efforts to address questions or concerns, and resulted in a Recommendation Tracking Sheet of 132 items addressed by us as we moved forward with the FTR proposal.

We are excited that on July 25, 2011, the Town Council voted 5 to 2 (Edward Roderick and Brett Pelletier voting against) to allow the Tiverton voters to have the chance to decide whether they want to replace the current FTM with our recommended FTR when they vote in the special election this November. This is in sharp contrast to the 2008 Town Council which voted 5-1 to deny voters the chance to adopt a referendum based FTM replacement. The Tiverton voters, in 2006, voted to have an alternative sought for the FTM, and this will be the first time the voters have been presented with the option of a Financial Town Referendum.

Our position remains that the Financial Town Referendum is a significant improvement over the existing Financial Town Meeting. Voters will be able to cast private votes without the intimidation present at the FTM at polling places open all day or by absentee ballots. Voters will have an equal opportunity to participate, regardless of health issues, child-care issues, work issues. All the FTM procedural matters (Robert's Rules, etc.) will be eliminated. Electors will still have access to the ballot with 50 signatures, and vote count will be accurate. Voters will have a chance to discover all implications of budget/tax options on the ballot, the Budget Committee's recommendations, and other alternative budget recommendations, at the Financial Town Hearing two weeks prior, insuring a more informed voter decision. Voters can vote on a budget with much less commitment of time. And the town's budget and tax-levy will be both adopted by a majority and final at the Financial Town Referendum.

Your contributions were very important in helping to put the realization of all these benefits in the voters' hands at this November 8 special election. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Financial Town Meeting Changes Advisory Committee

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