

—Slug:.....COMM-0854.opin.letter.a00_frantz
—Contributor..... Douglas Frantz
—Contributor email.....dougfrantz@hotmail.com
—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers
—Format.....Opinions - Letters to the Editor - Special
—Dateline.....Brattleboro
—Article Number:.....43147



Notes from editor (not for publication):

What a nicely written letter. I transposed the last two paragraphs, which seemed to land the ending better. Please let me know if you want to arm wrestle about the editing. —All the best, Jeff



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 RTM: a beautiful expression of that most messy
2 institution — democracy

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

3

####END SUBHED####

4 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

5 During the approximately 30 years that I served as a
6 member of Brattleboro Representative Town Meeting, there were
7 times when I was frustrated by exceedingly long discussions
8 about relatively minor matters. There were times when I was
9 angry about self-serving, narrow-minded speeches.

10 But I never thought that Representative Town Meeting
11 was not worth it. I think that RTM is a beautiful expression of that
12 most messy institution — democracy.

13 Each year I reviewed the Annual Town Report, read
14 opinion pieces and letters to the editor concerning matters to be
15 discussed at the upcoming meeting, attended information
16 sessions unless I was sick or needed to be out of town, and talked
17 with people in my district.

18 Thus, going into the RTM, I felt confident and clear about
19 how I would be voting on different issues.

20 And then, during the course of the meeting, an amazing
21 thing would sometimes happen.

22 Through the course of in-person debate, the sharing of
23 new information or a new point of view, hearing someone's
24 opposing viewpoint logically and clearly expressed, and group
25 consideration of short-term versus long-term goals and impacts, I
26 would sometimes change my mind and my vote!

27 There is another benefit of RTM: This gathering of
28 townspeople provides the opportunity to have a greater
29 familiarity with Brattleboro and its needs, and as a result, to
30 further serve the town on committees that play an important role
31 in our town's well-being.

32 I think that voters losing the ability to make critical
33 decisions within the context of a yearly RTM or an in-person
34 open Town Meeting would be a great loss for Brattleboro.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

35

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

36

0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

####BEGIN LINKS####

37

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

####BEGIN VIDEO####

38

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

39

####END LOGLINE####