

Arlington Special Town Meeting — Motion to Amend

ARTICLE NO. 13

Dated: Nov 12 2020

I, Adam Auster, Precinct 3, do hereby submit the following Motion to Amend the Recommended Vote under Article 13

VOTED:

To amend the motion so that it would provide for majority ranked-choice voting, as follows:

A) Definitions: delete definition (4), “Election threshold,” definition (10), “Surplus fraction,” and definition (11), “Transfer value,” and renumber the definitions accordingly.

B) Amend §(b) by deleting the word “single seat” in the first sentence “in any single-seat election,” so that the section begins “In any election....”

C) Replace §(c) with the following:

In any multi-seat election, each round begins by following the procedures of §b above to fill one of the available seats by a majority of those votes.

If any seats are unfilled after that, the same procedure is used to fill the next seat up for election, with a this additional rule: votes previously cast for candidates who have been elected are transferred to the highest-ranked candidates remaining on their respective ballots.

Respectfully Submitted,



Adam Auster, Precinct 3

Rationale:

This amendment would provide that those elections be decided by a majority vote instead. By contrast, the recommended proposal would introduce *proportional representation* for multi-seat elections.

For a more detailed explanation, see <https://rb.gy/pi0bns>.

Proportional representation elects people from voting blocks of less than a majority. It has virtues for legislative bodies such as city councils. However, it is not right for an executive board such as our Select Board.

First, Arlington’s collective executive works best when accountable to all of the voters, not just a preferential subset of them. Second, unity and, sometimes, unanimity are important in some Select Board actions, including competitive grants.

A single dissent could have jeopardized the \$6M grant to rebuild Mass. Ave., which was needed and supported by most Arlington residents. That would be an undemocratic consequence that gives too much power to a minority.

Date Voted: _____

Action Taken: _____