

NH Presidential Primary – Bedford Voting 2020 – Part One

With the holiday season behind us, it is time to wish everyone a Happy Presidential Election Year!

While it's hard to miss the plethora of national political and election information, Bedford's own municipal governance activities are currently in full swing as well, with budgetary meetings for School and Town on-going, followed by our deliberative meetings and elections. Please make an effort to attend our local hearings or follow them on Bedford CTV. The School District Annual Deliberative Session is scheduled for Tuesday evening February 4th, followed by the Town and School Voting day on Tuesday, March 10th and the Town Budgetary Meeting on Wednesday March 11th.

The biggest date on our 2020 political calendar is unquestionably the 100th First in the Nation New Hampshire Presidential Primary on Tuesday, February 11th. As your Moderator, along with what might just be the Best of the Best election teams anywhere, I am charged with running these elections and meetings in Bedford. Our goal has always been to make every effort possible to provide our voters with a positive voting experience. Over the next few weeks I will share some information and hints that I hope will help our voters. Please check out the Town Clerk's Website for a wealth of additional information. (bedfordnh.org)

Due to the anticipated large voter turnout, I want to share some recommendations that might help you have a pleasant voting experience this year. The busiest times at the polls are typically between the hours of 7:00 – 8:30 AM, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, and 4:30 – 7:00 PM. If you arrive during these time periods, you should realistically expect the greatest potential total time to vote. This includes the time it takes to drive in and out of the High School parking lot, as well as the time to check-in and cast your ballot. Especially if you need to register to vote, I highly recommend you avoid these times. Please do what you can to plan for your own smooth voting experience. We urge voters to go to the polls at "off peak times." You can register to vote at the Town Hall up until 10 days prior to an election. Absentee ballots are available at the Town Hall prior to Election Day, or printable from the "Election Information" section on the Town Clerk's website for those who will be unable to get to the polls. There are complete instructions there, and we urge you to carefully complete and properly sign as instructed. We want to count your vote! If the National Weather Service issues a significant winter storm, ice storm, or blizzard warning for election day in Bedford, Absentee Ballots will available at the Town Clerk's Office on the Monday immediately prior to an election.

Voters currently registered as Democrat or Republican will receive their own party's ballot. ONLY undeclared voters can select the "ballot of their choice" at the polls. Undeclared voters are then registered in that party, and if they so desire, must file for a change back to undeclared upon exiting the polling place, or sometime after the elections. Party changes cannot be made within 90 days of a Primary Elections. Yes, that means it is too late now.

My following posts or articles will focus on other aspects of how to facilitate and vote without hassles. Please continue reading articles posted here, on BCTV, Nixle and on the Bedford Town Website as we try to help you this election year.

We are looking for Bedford Voters who would like to join our Ballot Clerk Team. Most individuals work a half day in this official capacity. We provide snacks and a meal (lunch or dinner), and you can either volunteer, or receive hourly compensation (about \$7.25). There is some required training to insure you can properly assist voters as they check in on our election days. You will get to see a lot of your friends, meet new people and have some fun as you help Bedford! If interested, please call or email me, Bill Klein, Town Moderator at bklein52@comcast.net or 603-851-1907.

See you at our elections!

Bill Klein, Bedford Town and School District Moderator