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## [CE SBAC] Fwd: Scheduling referenda elections

1 message

**Mary Ann Lynch** <maryannlynch5788@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 15, 2023 at 8:43 PM

To: cesbac@capeelizabethschools.org

Please see my research below, shared with the TC in connection with scheduling the affordable housing referendum last year, regarding the respective turnouts in primary vs general elections. The trend continued in 2022: turnout in the June primary was 17% while turnout in November was 71%. There is no question that voter participation in a November general election greatly exceeds the primary election. Scheduling a school bond referendum in June 2024 would be a disservice to the voters in Cape Elizabeth.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and service to the community.

Mary Ann Lynch

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Mary Ann Lynch <maryannlynch5788@gmail.com>

**Date:** December 8, 2021 at 8:23:10 PM EST

**To:** cetowncouncil@capeelizabeth.org

**Subject:** Scheduling referenda elections

Dear Town Councilors:

Last week I urged you to consider scheduling the affordable housing zoning ordinance referendum for the November election. There are three reasons for my suggestion: First, since there is no longer an actual project, there is no urgency. Second, a November election will allow the town council to complete its study regarding this issue, and voters will be able to consider that additional information prior to casting a vote. Third, the larger turnout in November will assure that this important issue will be decided by the most voters. I write to you tonight to provide statistical information on the significant difference in turnout between the June primary and the November general election.

I have gathered the following information from the town web page regarding voter turnout at the June and November elections for the past 10 years.

Year	June	November
2012	25%	80%
2013	13%	32%
2014	13%	71%
2015	11%	33%
2016	13%	80%
2017	13%	44%
2018	47%	69%
2019	8%	19%
2020	44%	81%
2021	5%	49%

As you can readily see, voter participation in June is often less than half, or even only a third of voter

participation in November of the same year. Strikingly, voter participation in June has always been less than 47% and has been as low as 5%! On average, the June voter participation is 20% while in November the average is 56% voter participation. The median voter turnout for June is 13% while the November median is 69%. Any way you look at the issue, voter participation in the June election is far lower than the November.

If you really want a consensus of community opinion, if you want confidence that the result really reflects the desires of the community then you ought to schedule this election in November. In 2022, looking at the last two gubernatorial election years, we can expect a very high level of voter participation, on the order of 70%.

Some argued at the public hearing last week, that a quick election will end the divisiveness. I suggest that the best way to end divisiveness is to schedule the election at a time when we expect the highest level of voter participation. A high voter turnout will give us all confidence that the result reflects the values of the larger community. On the flip side, given these statistics, one must ask, why would you ever schedule an important referendum at any time other than the November general election?

As always, I am grateful for your service to the community. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Matt, can you please make sure the 2 incoming councilors receive a copy of this letter.

Mary Ann Lynch  
232-1048  
[2 Olde Colony Lane](#)

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