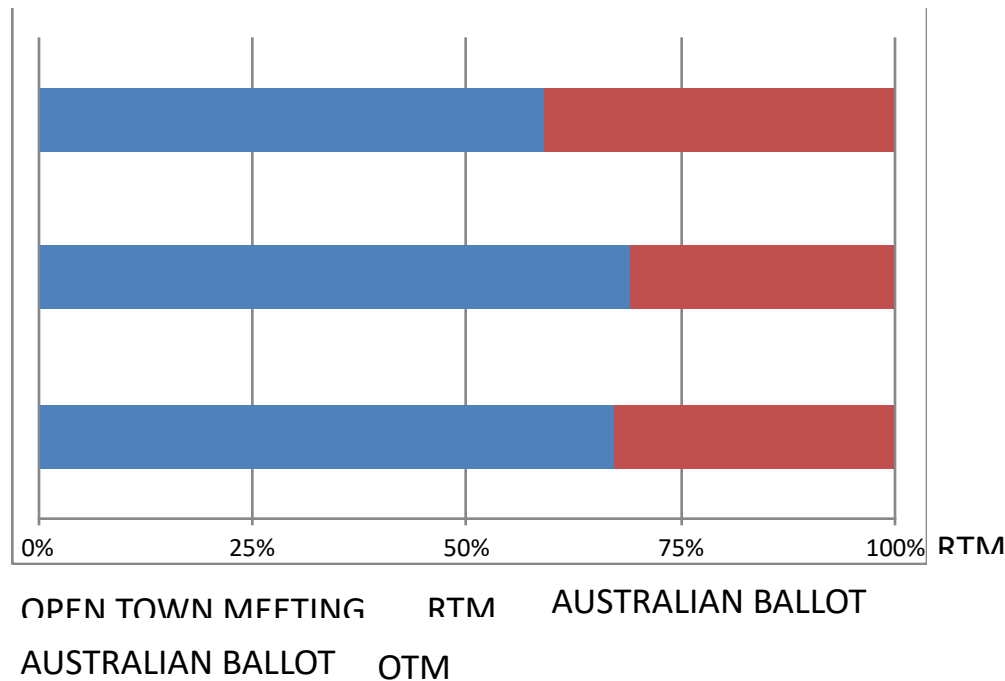


The results are in. By roughly a two to one margin Brattleboro would prefer either an open town meeting (67% to 33%) or Australian ballot (69% to 31%) to the current representative town meeting (RTM). The Australian ballot aced out the open town meeting by a smaller, but still significant margin (59% to 41%).



These results are from a web survey published by the Brattleboro Charter Review Commission. Between 253 and 257 Brattleboro residents responded to the town meeting preference questions. Notice of the survey was published on the Town's website, the Reformer, the Commons and on the Town's Facebook page. Several members of the public also encouraged citizens to participate through various means.

RTM might be in disfavor for a few reasons. It had one primary job at its March 22 meeting, to pass a budget, and it failed to do that. This led to four weeks of intensive work on the part of the Selectboard, Town staff, and many citizens who attended 8 Selectboard meetings. The net effect in terms of the budget was a slight reduction in the tax increase.

The RTM also had clear direction with regard to the allocation to non-Town human services. In response to an article on the March 4 Town Meeting Day ballot, 58% of the voters advised the RTM to set the human services funding at less than 2%. RTM set the human services allocation at 2% and then declined to pass a budget. This was set in stone and not up for consideration during the latest round of budget preparation.

