

The Berlin Sun

Dummer Voters to Decide ATV's on Roads

By William Carroll

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Note: At the 2022 Dummer Town Meeting, the residents voted to close the roads to ATVs 35 to 19.

DUMMER — An issue that created quite a bit of discussion in Dummer last year will come to a vote Tuesday during the town's annual meeting with voting scheduled from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Dummer Town Hall, 75 Hill Road.

In July of last year, Dummer residents came to town hall to discuss a variety of complaints residents had with all-terrain vehicle usage on town roads. About 50 residents and other interested parties attended the July meeting to discuss their positions both for and against the use of ATVs.

At that time no decision was made but town officials discussed putting the matter up for vote during the town's annual meeting.

Article 19 of the town's 2022 Warrant deals with ATV use on town roads and states: A "YES" vote will effectively ban the use of ATVs on all town roads. A "NO" vote will allow ATV use on all town roads to continue.

A majority of those voting will ultimately decide the issue.

Dummer Selectman Dave Dubey said the select board has remained neutral on the issue and is leaving the matter to the voters to decide. During the July meeting, the select board attempted to reach a consensus on the issue, but was unable to do so as supporters on both sides were strongly aligned to their positions.

The consensus of those who spoke in July against the use of ATVs was that those using ATVs on public roads were not being considerate of the residents living in the town.

Several residents referenced ATVs racing up and downtown roads with no regard for residents and creating dust and debris, while also disrespecting property owners by going through their properties on ATVs and a host of other issues.

Those in favor of allowing ATVs included residents who ride ATVs and business owners who said they have received positive responses from allowing ATVs to use town roads.

The discussion in July also referenced the possibility of getting ATVs off town roads in favor of strengthening the trail access to ATV riders. Representatives from local ATV clubs as well as the New Hampshire Bureau of Trails were on hand to discuss possible options to resolve issues relating to ATVs on town roads.

The town also has a two articles, Article 2 and Article 5, relating to short-term rentals, an issue that has recently risen to one of statewide importance, especially in tourist areas of the state.

Dubey said there is also an article dealing with increasing the minimum building lot size from 2 acres to 5 acres, which is Article 7.