

**APPENDIX B: TOWN OF IPSWICH SURVEY FOR RESIDENTS:
MANAGEMENT OF GROWTH AND PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE (2012)**

Brief Overview of Findings

As part of the update to the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Open Space Committee solicited public input through a survey conducted in May of 2012. Over 570 responses were counted, representing a town-meeting-size level of participation. A review of demographic data collected in the survey (age, home location, organizational affiliations, etc.) shows that a relative diversity of persons took part.

The survey results helped identify the plan’s goals and objectives. A vast majority of respondents indicated that it was “very important” to “preserve open space, provide recreational opportunities, and protect and manage public open lands in Ipswich.” Those responding that such goals were “somewhat important” or “not important” were far fewer in number. Responses also showed strong support for protecting water supplies and wildlife habitat through land conservation. On the other hand, respondents heavily supported developing land for active recreation, such as soccer, softball, and other field sports.

When asked to prioritize conservation and recreation needs over the next seven years, respondents showed the most interest in caring for and maintaining existing resources. Specifically, the answers “Protect and maintain existing conservation land” and “Maintain existing active recreation facilities” garnered the largest number of responses.

Survey Analysis – Process

The Open Space Committee issued an on-line survey using [Survey Monkey](#) in May of 2012. The survey was open for nearly two months, being made available before Town Meeting on May 14 and running until closed on June 30, 2012.

Town residents were notified of the survey in the following ways:

- Hand-outs with information on where to find the survey were distributed and announced at Town Meeting on May 14, 2012.
- Posters were put up in Town Hall, the Senior Center, the Public Library, and various retail locations downtown. Assistance was secured at the Library and Senior Center for people without computers or who did not know how to access the survey.
- A notice was placed in the newspaper.
- Access to the survey was placed in a prominent location on the Town’s homepage.
- OSC members also conducted outreach via email to various constituencies, including through associations with conservation groups, athletic teams, and friends.

Who Responded?

Overall, 572 people responded to the survey. They answered questions for themselves and, in some cases, for all residents of their households as appropriate. The OSC survey response is nearly a quarter larger than average attendance at Annual Town Meeting, and nearly 90% larger

than average attendance at Special Town Meeting. (see Endnote) There was not a perfect match with age categories between the 2010 U.S. Census and the survey, but they are fairly comparable.

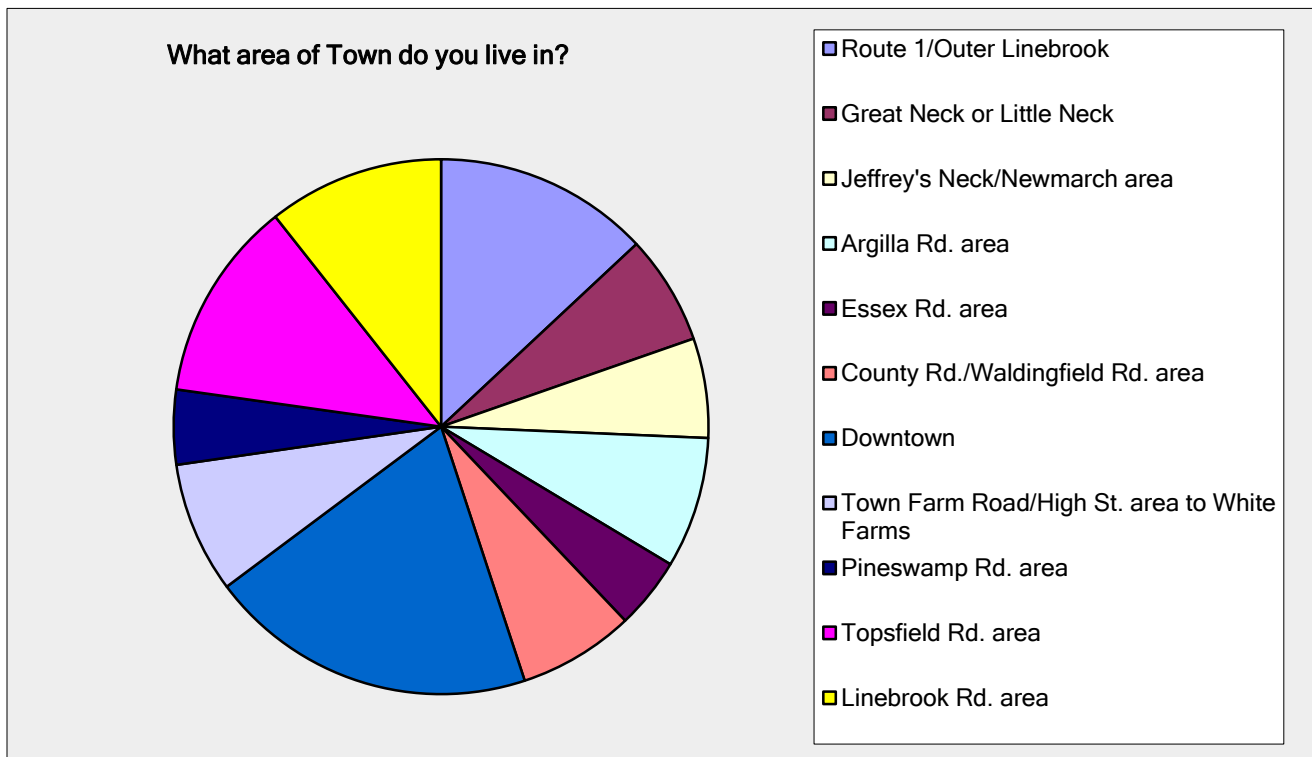
Age

- Responses were provided by people in all age groups. Those younger than 18 accounted for only 1% of responses, while making up 19% of the population in 2010. This should be no surprise since many are not yet involved in community activities.
- The 35-49 year old category was overrepresented with 54% of respondents, for a group that made up 22% of the population in 2010.
- 10% of the respondents were over 65, while they made up 18% of the population in 2010.
- Overall, responses to the survey were adequately distributed by age groups.

Location of Residence

- There was very even distribution of responses from the several areas of town defined for this survey. The pie chart below represents the even distribution. The response from downtown residents was the most numerous.

Chart 1: What Area of Town do you live in?



Length of Residence

- Responses covered many people who have lived in Ipswich for different durations. Table 1 summarizes information on length of residency.

Table 1: How long have you lived in Ipswich?

Answer Options	Response Percent
5 years or less	12%
6-10 years	17%
11-20 years	34%
Over 20 years	37%

N=531

Group Membership

The survey asked questions about participation in groups supporting active recreation programs (“sports organizations”) in town. We also inquired about membership in local and regional organizations that undertake land protection and that also may encourage passive recreation activities in the forest and fields that are protected. For shorthand, we have dubbed these “outdoor organizations.” The two tables below summarize the distribution of membership in those organizations.

Table 2, showing membership in sports organizations, indicates 36% of the respondents’ households had no members involved in any sports organization. By far the most popular membership sport is youth soccer with 34% of respondent households having a member participating in Youth Soccer and 26% of respondent households participating in travel soccer. Youth Lacrosse also holds a popular position in Ipswich households responding to the survey. Clearly, the 64% of families that had a participant in one active sport likely had several members participating in one or more activities, or one very active child. The 338 households that did have participation in sports organizations showed a total of 809 affiliations.

Table 2: Which of the following sports organizations do you or does someone in your family participate in? Please check all that apply. (N=530)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	36%	192
Adult Baseball	2%	12
Over-30 Softball League	5%	25
Babe Ruth Baseball	6%	31
Little League Baseball	19%	99
Travel Softball	7%	35
Youth Soccer	34%	181
Travel Soccer	26%	135
Adult Soccer	4%	21
Youth Football	9%	50

Youth Lacrosse	25%	132
Pick-up Basketball	13%	70
Ultimate Frisbee	3%	18

Table 3 below indicates membership of respondent households in outdoor organizations. Only 26% of respondent households are members of no outdoor organization. The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) garnered by far the most respondents indicating membership. This is impressive since Ipswich residents need only a town sticker to access Crane Beach and not a TTOR membership. Membership for many households would be most valuable to support the organization, or to participate in the Community Supported Agriculture program or the Thursday night summer concerts at Castle Hill. Essex County Greenbelt and Massachusetts Audubon Society also had high membership rates among the respondent households. All of the truly local and regional outdoors organizations showed at least a 20% membership rate among the respondents. This healthy response rate is a logical occurrence since open space and conservation issues are among the informing goals and priorities of these organizations.

Table 3: Which of the following outdoor organizations are you or is someone in your family a member? Do you participate in their activities and events? (N=530)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	26%	135
Essex County Greenbelt Association	37%	197
The Trustees of Reservations	65%	343
Massachusetts Audubon Society	35%	185
Essex County Trail Association	19%	103
Appalachian Mountain Club	15%	81
Ipswich River Watershed Association	22%	117
New England Mountain Bike Association	4%	21

What did Respondents Tell Us?

Respondents had much to say about recreation and open space issues in Town. They answered the questions in large numbers, and also elaborated when given the opportunity to provide answers in an open-ended format.

Table 4 summarizes perhaps the most important question on the survey – “What should priorities for conservation and recreation be over the next seven years? (Select Only Your Top 3).” The responses to the question show the respondents’ interest in caring for and maintaining what we have. “Protect and maintain existing conservation land” and “Maintain existing active recreation facilities” garnered priority responses from 50% and 44% respectively of respondents. New initiatives, all receiving support from about 35% of the respondents are “acquire and/or build additional active recreation facilities,” “Integrate outdoor recreation and local foods into the Ipswich schools,” and “Acquire new lands of conservation interest.” These responses suggest a careful review of maintenance needs and identification of activities and budgets to pursue necessary maintenance.

Table 4: What should Ipswich’s most important conservation/recreation priorities be for the next 7 years? (select only your top 3) (N=539)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Acquire and/or build additional active recreation facilities	37%	197
Maintain existing active recreation facilities	44%	239
Acquire new lands of conservation interest	34%	181
Acquire and develop more pond, river, and ocean access	20%	107
Protect and maintain existing conservation land	50%	267
Facilitate the creation and leasing of more agricultural land	15%	79
Integrate outdoor recreation and local foods into the Ipswich schools	35%	189
Complete the downtown Riverwalk from EBSCO back to the Choate Bridge	22%	118
Complete the Argilla Road trail	31%	165
Other (please specify)		37

The question also included an “Other” category inviting open-ended suggestions from respondents, 37 of whom provided responses. (Table 11) Top among these respondents’ wishes were non-athletic field parks such as for downtown beautification, or skating, picnicking, or a public pool. Another suggestion was development of new athletic fields, consistent with responses elsewhere. Bike trails and facilities, water access, additional open space, and an Argilla Road trail were the next most numerous topics (five or four), although not all Argilla Road responses were in favor (two of five were opposed). Other suggestions called for developing more trails, pool and camp recreation facilities, facilitating hunting, and those imploring the town to stop spending more money on conservation.

Table 12: ‘Other’ conservation/recreation priorities for the next 7 years. (N=37)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Parks: build, improve (skating, downtown, pool, picnic)	NA	6
More athletic fields	NA	5
Argilla Road trail: 3 for 2 against	NA	5
Bike trails/paths needed, signage	NA	5
Improve access to water ways	NA	5
Acquire or preserve more open space	NA	4
Stop acquiring and spending on open space	NA	2
Trails generic -- more of them	NA	2
Generic recreation -- camp and pool	NA	2
Facilitate hunting	NA	2
Nature center	NA	1
Organic practices	NA	1

In another question, respondents were asked how important it was to “preserve open space, provide recreational opportunities, and protect and manage public open lands in Ipswich.” Of all the 572 responses, 83% indicated that these goals were “very important” for the Town while another 14% indicated it was “somewhat important”. Only 10 respondents indicated it was not important. As might be expected, given comments made at public meetings in town and in commentary solicited by the survey, some of these respondents are concerned about the cost of land protection and maintenance, and development of athletic fields.

Respondents were then asked how important specific land protection activities were (**Table 5**). Survey Monkey averaged the answers for each option, giving a score of 1 for very important, 2 for somewhat important, and so on. These averages show clearly that land conservation for water supply protection is a broad-based priority, with 502 out of 560 respondents indicating it was very

Table 5: Please check how important you feel it is to preserve open space for the following purposes . (N=560)

Answer Options	very important	somewhat important	not important	Rating Average	Response Count
Drinking water supply	502	48	5	1.10	555
Wildlife habitat	413	122	19	1.29	554
Option to develop land for active recreation, such as soccer, softball, etc.	267	223	68	1.64	558
Vistas from roadways	166	271	116	1.91	553
Current or future agricultural use	319	198	37	1.49	554
Undeveloped areas for passive recreation	313	192	49	1.52	554
Scenic/natural features, such as hilltops, vernal pools	362	158	36	1.41	556
Buffer zones for wetlands, such as river corridors, marshes, etc.	367	145	42	1.41	554

important. Protection of wildlife habitat came next in priority, with others following at lesser levels of support. In all but two cases, at least half of the respondents considered the options for land protection to be very important. On “vistas from roadways” and “option to develop land for active recreation, such as soccer, softball, etc.,” fewer than half of the respondents indicated the option was “very important”.

The next question changed from asking importance to inquiring about respondents’ top three priorities (**Table 6**). In that context, the average rating for “option to develop land for active recreation, such as soccer, softball, etc.” jumped to second priority place, while “drinking water supply” retained its priority ranking. It appears that even though development of active recreation was not considered as important as most of the other land protection options, it may still be viewed as a necessary component of an overall outdoor program and thereby jumped in importance when ranked against the other options. Most of the other options with a 2.1 to 2.23 rating average – generally clustered in rank. Again, “vistas from roadways” received the least attention as important or a priority, joined by “scenic/natural features, such as hilltops, vernal pools”.

Table 6: Please rank your top three choices in order of importance for protection from the list below. (N=541)

Answer Options	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Rating Average	Response Count
Drinking water supply	257	80	44	1.44	381
Wildlife habitat	60	137	96	2.12	293
Option to develop land for active recreation, such as soccer, softball, etc.	89	74	72	1.93	235
Vistas from roadways	2	15	13	2.37	30
Current or future agricultural use	21	63	76	2.34	160
Undeveloped areas for passive recreation	49	42	65	2.10	156
Scenic/natural features, such as hilltops, vernal pools	13	49	60	2.39	122
Buffer zones for wetlands, such as river corridors, marshes, etc.	46	65	94	2.23	205

Table 7 contains information on the active recreation in which residents of Ipswich participate. To begin, about half the households in Ipswich have no members that participate in baseball/softball, tennis, golf, skateboarding, and basketball. The highest participation is in soccer/football/lacrosse where almost half the respondents' households have at least one member participating once/week or more. While there are many that never play baseball/softball, the second largest participation rate on a weekly basis is for baseball/softball. This likely represents the league members that have regular weekly games. The next activity that is popular on a weekly basis is "play at playground". While this does not show as very high as a weekly activity, it is the lowest choice in the "never" option – many people use playground facilities at least on an occasional basis.

Table 7: Please indicate how often you or someone in your family participates in the following activities on land developed for active recreation in Ipswich. (N=545)

Answer Options	once a week	several times a month	once a month	occasionally	never	Response Count
Baseball/softball	132	18	4	66	264	484
Soccer/football/lacrosse	246	45	10	50	173	524
Play at playground	99	49	45	139	155	487
Tennis	39	21	31	147	245	483
Golf	33	32	24	101	288	478
Skateboarding	18	13	6	54	372	463
Basketball	41	30	28	115	260	474
Motorized Boating	69	59	26	97	233	484
Other	68	22	12	19	110	231
<i>Please specify what "Other" activity</i>						118

The open-ended "Other" responses generally did not clearly differentiate between active recreation on developed sites from use of undeveloped sites. There was a large response for running/walking/jogging/hiking – a total of 44 responses. It was not possible to identify how many respondents were using sidewalks and tracks for this, as opposed to using wooded trails. Other

responses for active recreation activities included skateboarding (1), volleyball and paddle ball (1), field hockey (1), roller blading (2), and frisbee (2).

Table 8 addresses the popularity of several outdoor activities. The most popular activity in both number of people who undertake the activity as well as frequency is “walking/hiking/snowshoeing,” with about half of the respondent family members engaging in hiking, etc. about once/week. Jogging and fitness training, and dog walking, are next in popularity and use levels. All of these activities can be undertaken on the extensive trail system in town. Horseback riding and geo-caching are in the lead for the activities least likely to be undertaken by respondents.

Table 8: Please indicate how often you or someone in your family participates in the following passive recreation activities on land in Ipswich that is NOT developed for active recreation, or only developed with trails. (N=545)

Answer Options	once a week	several times a month	once a month	occasionally	never	Response Count
Walking/hiking/snowshoeing	265	90	63	100	24	542
Mountain biking	68	27	52	163	209	519
Birdwatching/nature study	82	52	56	145	167	502
Horseback riding	29	9	3	35	416	492
Jogging or fitness training	171	78	25	109	131	514
Cross country skiing	42	43	33	175	213	506
Sledding	27	44	33	260	139	503
Picnicking	16	28	66	261	132	503
Fishing	33	46	45	153	224	501
Dog walking	162	54	14	74	217	521
Geo-caching	3	10	12	74	377	476
Non-motorized Boating	44	46	50	166	196	502

Ipswich residents generally are aware of the town’s open space and recreational offerings. One question asked, “Do you feel that you are aware of the complete range of Ipswich’s open space and recreational assets, including location?” Of the respondents, 61% felt they were aware of the assets, while 39% indicated they felt they were not. The fact that 61% felt they were aware of the resources is demonstrative of the availability of information and respondents’ attention to open space and recreation opportunities. On the other hand, efforts at providing more extensive and useful information for others is suggested, such as new maps distributed at wider locations and more information in general about all the resources available.

A total of 533 respondents answered the question: “Please check the top five additional recreational facilities you feel are needed in Ipswich.” **Table 9** shows that respondents placed a high priority on increasing water access and the number of playing fields in Ipswich. This is in keeping with an historical appreciation and high recreational use of Ipswich’s salt and freshwater water resources. Also, in recent years, with the rise in popularity of field sports among youth and adults alike, has grown a call for more athletic field facilities. Respondents also favor more trails for fitness and non-motorized vehicles like wheelchairs, strollers, and bicycles. Ice skating, community gardens, and neighborhood parks made up a third tier of most popular needs. Close behind were picnic areas, a dedicated dog park and outdoor pool.

Table 9: What are the top five additional recreational facilities needed? (*N* = 533)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Access to water Bodies	49%	259
Playing fields	47%	251
Fitness trails	37%	195
Paved trails for wheelchairs, strollers, bikes	34%	181
Ice skating facilities	29%	152
Community gardens	26%	139
Nature-based playgrounds	26%	136
Neighborhood parks	24%	130
Picnic areas	24%	128
Fenced dog park	23%	120
Outdoor pool	21%	109
Skateboard park	17%	91
Outdoor basketball	16%	87
Playgrounds	14%	72
Driving range	9%	48
Boccee courts/horseshoes	7%	38

Respondents were also offered an “Other” category for this question where they could suggest their own ideas for needs. As shown in **Table 10**, a tally of the 62 “Other” responses showed that self-contained, non-athletic field “parks” –whether for skateboarding, dogs, tennis, curling, Frisbee, volleyball, etc.—was the most popular theme voiced in the open answers. Because they were original wording of the respondents, and not multiple choice, the answers in table 10 had to be interpreted. Responses categorized under “Parks” either had the word “park” in it or suggested a circumscribed area not fitting the description of an athletic field, per se. These included: “more tennis courts,” “organic community gardens,” “Nature Center,” “dog-friendly walking areas.” The second most popular ideas under “Other” were answers calling for more athletic fields and biking facilities (trails, paths, and lanes), followed closely by “walking” as a theme.

Table 10: 'Other' categories suggested for needed recreational facilities. (*N* = 62)

Answer Themes	Response Percent	Response Count
Parks	30%	19
Athletic Fields	19%	12
Bike facilities (trails, lanes, track)	19%	12
Walking (trails, paths, sidewalks)	18%	11
Tennis Courts	6%	4
Dog walking areas	5%	3
Nature center/passive wildlife observance	5%	3
Waterways	5%	3
Hunting	3%	2
Frisbee golf	3%	2
Enough athletic fields!	3%	2
Motor vehicle trails	2%	1

Another question asked respondents to name a particular area of town or parcel of land they thought most important to save as open space. Since the written answers given provided both specific names and general land types, two sets of responses were considered. The first is by land type (**Table 13**). Survey respondents most frequently offered answers that included land associated with the Ipswich River, either to benefit wildlife habitat or water supply, but also as a way to preserve the beauty of the area (34 responses or 15% of the 229 total answers given). Overlapping, but different nonetheless, respondents also considered it a priority to preserve access to beach, river or tidal waters (29 responses or 13% of the total). Again, the athletic fields theme garnered a noteworthy percentage (11%) relative to other answer types. Farms and marshland also received more than a smattering of nominations, enough to list them among the most popular. A small set of answers championed maintaining existing open space and not spending more to acquire additional land.

Table 13: What area or parcel of land is most important to save as open space? Responses categorized by general land type. (N=229)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Ipswich River (all land associated with the river)	15%	34
Water Access (beach, tidal or river)	13%	29
Athletic Fields (all lands potentially for use as)	11%	25
Farms (responses associated with farming)	7%	17
Marsh (responses associated with marsh or salt marsh)	4%	9
Maintain Existing (keep what we have, don't buy more)	3%	8

Responses offering more specific parcels and areas of town named the Neck as the most important to save. Primarily, the answers specified the federally leased property on Great Neck that abuts an 85-acre parcel already acquired by the town for conservation. The property in question is a 48-acre tract leased by the U.S. Air Force and owned by the Proprietors of Great Neck. Also of importance to respondents were lands associated with Linebrook Road and the Sisters of Notre Dame property off Jeffreys Neck Road. A number of answers nominating Linebrook Road specified Marini Farms. Land in and around Willowdale State Forest also received among the higher number of responses, with Raymond Fields and Maplecroft Farm close behind. Maplecroft Farm was set aside for conservation in 2010, although some respondents expressed frustration with access to the property.

Table 14: What area or parcel of land is most important to save as open space? Responses categorized by named area. (N=229)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
The Neck	8%	19
Linebrook Road	6%	14
Sisters of Notre Dame	6%	14
Willowdale	5%	12
Raymond lands	4%	10
Argilla Road	3%	7

Crane Beach/Land	3%	7
Doyon School	3%	7
Appleton Farms	3%	6
Mile Lane	2%	5
Candlewood Road	2%	4
Pavillion Beach	1%	3

Responses to the question posed in **Table 15** supply the rationale (the “why”) and additional detail to the open ended responses listed in **Table 14**. In answer to the question “Why is it important to preserve that area,” according to the 198 responses given, the top reason people want to save open space is for the health of natural ecosystems and wildlife habitat. Also important to residents is the scenic beauty of the town and a commensurate concern for preventing over development. These three top reasons are related.

Table 15: Why is it important to preserve that area? (N = 288)

Answer Themes	Response Percent	Response Count
Wildlife and Habitat	16%	45
Protection from Development	12%	34
Scenic Vistas	10%	30
Water Quality	7%	21
Water Access	7%	21
Agriculture	7%	20
Athletic Fields	6%	17
Sports and Recreation	6%	17
Town Character	6%	17
Trails	5%	14
Linkage	5%	10
Youth and Kids	3%	9
Families	1%	4
Economic Benefit	1%	4
Stop Acquiring Open Space	1%	4
Unknown	8%	24

Since respondents were given carte blanche to offer suggestions in this question (as opposed to multiple choice), the categories given here were created by reviewing the responses and designating common or repeating themes interpreted in the wording. Fifteen categories were derived from key words found in the responses. Categories also were identified in common concepts suggested by the answers. An effort was made to create categories where a direct link to wording in the answer could be detected in order to avoid too much subjectivity in interpretation. For instance, the “wildlife and habitat” category either had the words ‘wildlife’ and ‘habitat’ in them or closely identifiable surrogates, such as “animals” or “wetlands”.

Endnote

The OSC survey response is nearly a quarter larger than average attendance at Annual Town Meeting, and nearly 90% larger than average attendance at Special Town Meeting.

Annual Town Meeting attendance 2006-2012 Avg. 460 (200 required for quorum)

Tuesday, May 8, 2012.	A quorum being present: (692)
Tuesday, May 10, 2011.	A quorum being present: (563)
Tuesday, May 11, 2010.	A quorum being present: (240)
Tuesday, May 12, 2009.	A quorum being present: (219)
Tuesday, May 13, 2008.	A quorum being present: (724)
Monday, April 2, 2007.	A quorum being present: (254)
Monday, April 3, 2006.	A quorum being present: (531)

Special Town Meeting attendance 2006-2011 Avg. 304 (200 required for quorum)

Monday, November 14, 2011.	A quorum being present (354)
Monday, October 17, 2011.	A quorum being present (262)
Monday, October 25, 2010.	A quorum being present (203)
Monday, October 19, 2009.	A quorum being present (601)
Monday, October 20, 2008.	A quorum being present (235)
Monday, October 15, 2007.	A quorum being present (241)
Monday, October 16, 2006.	A quorum being present (235)

Calculation: 572 = 112 units more than 460 and 112 = 24% of 460.

Calculation: 572 = 268 units more than 304 and 268 = 88% of 304.

Source: Town of Ipswich website, under 'Document Central'/Town Clerk/Town Meeting Results
http://www.town.ipswich.ma.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=409&Itemid=421