

Pownal hosting debate Tuesday

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POWNAL — Candidates for both the school and the select board will field questions from residents on Tuesday with an open forum presented by the town's Communications and Image Committee. The candidates will gather at the Pownal Elementary School at 7 p.m. to debate and discuss town issues.

Candidates to attend

"We did it last year and (Select Board Chairman) Nelson Brownell liked it so much that he sent me an e-mail asking to do it again," said Raymond Rodrigues of the committee.

The event will begin with all the candidates answering a general question about their candidacy and then the audience will have their chance to ask. Questions do not have to be directed at all of the candidates and if there the crowd runs out of questions, the committee has some extras prepared, said Rodrigues.

"We're hoping it won't go any longer than an hour and a half," said Rodrigues. "Each candidate will have no more than two minutes for each questions, so its not hard to fill the time."

A similar forum was held last year which attracted over 50 people with a lot of questions, said Rodrigues.

The event will be held in either the library or the gym depending on the weather. According to committee member Syd Smithers, all candidates were sent invitations to attend the event but were not required to RSVP so it is not known exactly which candidates will attend.

The Communications and Image Committee is a volunteer group that developed from the Vermont Council on Rural Development's 2006 visit and series of forums. The council sought input, studied the town and reported that there are four major areas for Pownal to develop and improve. These topics were addressed by the forming of committees. An economic growth committee, a communication and image committee, a recreation committee and an affordable housing committee were formed.

According to communications committee member Frank Giorandino, the group most recently finished a brochure, which features a map illustrating various town attractions and is beginning to meet again to decide on another project.

The group also developed the Pownal Wiki Web site, which lists upcoming events and hosts debate forums.