

BOARD OF SELECTMEN RULES OF PROCEDURE

Purpose

These Rules of Procedure describe the duties and methods of operation of the Amherst Board of Selectmen

Organization

Responsibilities of Members: (1.) All members shall make every effort to attend each scheduled meeting. (2.) Members of the Board have authority only when acting as a Board legally in session. The Board shall not be bound by any action or statement of any individual Board member, except when such statement or action is pursuant to instructions from the Board.

Officers: (1.) A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting following the swearing in of members elected at the annual Town Meeting. Election shall be by a majority vote of those present. (2.) The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board and perform all duties required by this office. (3.) In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall preside and assume all duties and responsibilities of the Chair.

Assignments of the Selectmen to Boards & Commissions: The Board shall choose their assignments at the first meeting following the elections. The term of all appointments of Liaisons, including the terms of any ex-officio members of the Board of Selectmen serving on local land use boards (i.e. Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Heritage Commission and Historic District Commission) shall be for one year or until the next Town Meeting, whichever is sooner.

Operation

Meetings: (1.) An organizational meeting to elect officers shall be held in accordance with the above. The Board may adopt the previous Board's policies and procedures, subject to amendment as provided in these Rules of Procedures. (2.) A regular meeting is a more formalized meeting of the Board generally conducted in accordance with the order of the "Agenda" contained herein. (3.) Non-Public meetings of the Board are held for town legal and personnel issues in accordance with RSA 91-A:3. (4.) Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson in accordance with RSA 91-A:2 II upon a request of three members of the Board; or at the request of the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator or his/her designee, shall notify each member in accordance with RSA 91-A:2 II. (5.) The Board shall meet the second and fourth Monday evening in a regular meeting. Each meeting shall be posted in accordance with RSA 91-A. During budget preparations, the Board will meet more frequently. (6.) Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted practices of order and decorum. In the event of a dispute regarding procedural matters, Robert's Rules

of Order shall serve as a guideline with a vote of the Board being the final deciding authority. (7.) Votes shall be by a show of hands, or by a roll call. The vote of each member present shall be recorded. No action shall be re-considered at a subsequent meeting except by majority vote of the members present and voting.

Rules of Order

(1.) A quorum shall consist of three members of the Board. (2.) An agenda shall be posted and included with the minutes. A suggested agenda shall include: Call to Order, Citizens' Forum, Appointments, Old Business, New Business, Approve & Sign, Other Business, Approval of Minutes and Non-Public Session, if necessary. It may be changed by the Chair or by vote of the Board. (3.) A motion for adjournment will usually not be in order until after the completion of the order of business, unless a motion has been made at the start of the meeting to adjourn at a specified time. (4.) Persons, including Selectmen, wishing to place an item on the agenda must notify the Town Administrator or his Assistant before the agenda setting deadline which is by close of business on the Thursday preceding the meeting. If the person is going to make a presentation, she/he must provide a copy of all presentation material and documentation to be included in each Selectman's packet which shall be available no later than noon on the Friday preceding the meeting. (5.) Only emergencies may be placed on the agenda for discussion at the meeting, after the agenda setting deadline has passed.

Duties of the Chairperson

(1.) To open the session at the time at which the Board is *to* meet by calling the members to order. (2.) To announce the business before the Board in the order in which it is to be acted upon. (3.) To recognize members entitled to the floor. (4.) To state and put to vote all the questions which are regularly called or necessarily arise in the course of the proceedings, and to announce the result of the vote. (5.) To protect the Board from annoyance. (6.) To assist in expediting all business in every way compatible with the rights of the members by:

(a.) Allowing remarks when non-debatable motions are pending; (b.) Calling a recess *to* permit restoration of order or clarification of an obscure point if she/he thinks it advisable; (c.) Guiding the members when engaged in a debate to stay within the rules of order; (d.) Ensuring on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members; (e.) Deciding all questions of order (subject to an appeal by any two members) unless she/he prefers to submit the question for the decision of the Board; (f.) Informing the Board on a point of order, or practice pertinent to pending business.

(7.) To authenticate by his/her signature, when necessary, all acts, orders and proceedings as directed by vote of the Board. (8.) The Chairperson shall vote as a member of the Board. (9.) Discussions which are not addressing the business before the Board, or which are conducted in a disorderly or disrespectful manner, shall be ruled out of order. The Chairperson shall take whatever action is necessary to achieve and maintain order, including ordering the removal of any person who continues disorderly conduct.

Procedures During Meetings

(1.) No person shall address a public meeting of the Board without leave of the Chairperson, per NH RSA 91-A:2. (2.) Petitioners will be limited to a five-minute presentation, unless permission to speak for a longer period is requested and granted by a majority vote of the Board. (3.) Visitors may be permitted to speak on any matter properly on the agenda before the Board, but only after each member of the Board who so desires, has spoken and permission is granted by the Chair. (4.) In cases where a member of the audience wishes to speak on a matter, the Chair may request said party to rise to be recognized, state said party's name, place of residence and/or purpose for addressing the Board. The Board may exercise an option to limit debate from the audience and the Chair may do so with majority consent of the Board. (5.) The public shall be given an opportunity to speak at each meeting in the Citizens' Forum section of each meeting limited to two minutes. (6.) Objective criticisms of Town operations and programs are encouraged, but in Public Session with no notice of the matter, the Board will not permit complaints directed at staff or volunteers. Such matters may be addressed at a scheduled session that will be public or non-public at the request of the person being criticized, and in their presence if they so desire per NH RSA 91-A:2 II c.

Minutes

(1.) The Executive Assistant, or his/her designee, shall be responsible for recording the minutes of the Board's meetings, and an official copy of the records is to be filed in the Selectmen's Office and open to inspection by any person at reasonable times. Said Assistant shall record the essentials, called "the minutes" of the proceedings as follows:

1. The kind of meetings – regular, special, or recessed
2. Time and place of meeting
3. The presence / absence of Board members and the Town Administrator
4. Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were approved or amended
5. A brief written record of the general topics discussed
6. All main motions and points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost and all other motions that were not lost or withdrawn
7. Record of any votes by the Board, including names of those Board members opposed if not unanimous
8. The hour of adjournment

Placement of Selectmen Recommendations on Warrant

The Board shall place a "Recommended" or "Not Recommended" notation on each warrant article submitted directly by the Board or through petition to any Town Meeting which contains an appropriation in accordance with RSA 32:5 V (a). In addition, the Board shall place a "Recommended" or "Not Recommended" notation on all non-appropriation warrant article submitted by the Board directly or through petition, except

when a majority of the Board vote specifically not to submit such a recommendation. All notations shall include the specific numerical vote of the Board.

Amendment Procedure

An amendment to these Rules of Procedure may be moved at a Board meeting but shall not be voted upon until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Effective Date

These Rules of Procedure shall take effect immediately following a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen at a regularly scheduled Selectmen's meeting.