

GUIDE FOR MEETING PROCEDURE **FOR THE WHITINGHAM SELECTBOARD**

A. PURPOSE.

The Selectboard of the Town of Whitingham is required by law to conduct its meetings in accordance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law. 1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314. Meetings of the Selectboard of the Town of Whitingham must be open to the public at all times, except as provided in 1 V.S.A. § 313.

B. APPLICATION.

This guide setting forth meeting procedure shall apply to the Selectboard of the Town of Whitingham which is referred to below as “the body.” This guide shall apply to all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the body.

C. ORGANIZATION.

1. The body shall annually elect a chair and a vice-chair. The chair of the body or, in the chair’s absence, the vice-chair shall preside over all meetings. If both the chair and the vice-chair are absent, a member selected by the body shall act as chair for that meeting.
2. The chair shall preserve order in the meeting and shall regulate its proceedings by applying these rules and making determinations about all questions of order or procedure.
3. A majority of the members of the body shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum of the members of the body is not present at a meeting, no meeting shall take place.
4. No single member of the body shall have authority to represent or act on behalf of the body unless, by majority vote, the body has delegated such authority for a specific matter at a duly-noticed meeting and such delegation is recorded in the meeting minutes.
5. Motions made by members of the body do require a second. The chair of the body may make motions and may vote on all questions before the body. A motion will only pass if it receives the votes of a majority of the membership of the body in attendance.
6. There is no limit to the number of times a member of the body may speak to a question. A member may speak or make a motion without being recognized by the chair. Motions to close or limit debate will be entertained.
7. Any member of the body may request a roll call vote.
8. Meetings may be recessed to a time and place certain.
9. This guide may be amended and must be readopted annually.

D. AGENDAS.

1. Each regular and special meeting of the body shall have an agenda with each item of business to be considered by the body. Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall contact the Selectboard Office to request inclusion on the agenda. The Office Administrator and/or Chair will determine the final content of the agenda.
2. At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be posted in the Town Clerk's office and at the following designated public places in the municipality: Jacksonville Post Office and municipal center hallway. At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be posted on the Town of Whitingham website (www.whitinghamvt.org or any domain address it may change to). The agenda must also be made available to any person who requests such agenda prior to the meeting.
3. All business shall be conducted in the same order as it appears on the noticed agenda, except that any addition to, change of order or deletion from the noticed agenda must be made as the first act of business at the meeting. No additions to or deletions from the agenda shall be considered once the first act of business at the meeting has commenced. Any other adjustment to the noticed agenda, for example, postponing or tabling actions, may be made by majority vote of the body in attendance.

E. MEETINGS.

1. Regular meetings shall take place every-other Wednesday at 6:30pm at the Whitingham Selectboard Office, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.
2. Special meetings shall be publicly announced at least 24 hours in advance by giving notice to all members of the body unless previously waived; and to any person who has requested notice of such meetings. In addition, notices shall be posted in the municipal clerk's office and at the following designated places in the municipality: Jacksonville Post Office, municipal center hallway and town website.
3. Emergency meetings may be held without public announcement, without posting of notices, and without 24-hour notice to members, provided some public notice thereof is given as soon as possible before any such meeting. Emergency meetings may be held only when necessary to respond to an unforeseen occurrence or condition requiring immediate attention by the public body.
4. A member of the body may attend a regular, special, or emergency meeting by electronic or other means without being physically present at a designated meeting location, so long as the member identifies him or herself when the meeting is convened, and is able to hear and be heard throughout the meeting. If a quorum or more of the body attend a meeting without being physically present at a designated meeting location, the following requirements shall be met:
 - a. At least 24 hours prior to the meeting, or as soon as practicable prior to an emergency meeting, the body shall publicly announce the meeting and post notice of the meeting in or near the municipal clerk's office, the Jacksonville Post Office, municipal center hallway and town website.
 - b. The public announcement and posted notice of the meeting shall designate at least one physical location where a member of the public can attend and participate in the meeting. At least one member of the body, or at least one staff or designee of the body, shall be physically present at each designated meeting location.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

1. All meetings of the body are meetings **in** the public, **not of** the public. Members of the public shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to express opinions about matters considered by the body, so long as order is maintained according to these rules.
2. At the conclusion of each agenda item, but before any action is taken by the public body at each meeting, there may be a few minutes afforded for open public comment. By majority vote, the body may increase the time for open public comment and its place on the agenda.
3. Comment by the public or members of the body must be addressed to the chair or to the body as a whole, and not to any individual member of the body or public.
4. Members of the public must be acknowledged by the chair before speaking.
5. If a member of the public has already spoken on a topic, he or she may not be recognized again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment.
6. Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting. Neither members of the body, nor the members of the public, shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the meeting or interrupt or disturb any member while speaking. Members of the body and members of the public are prohibited from making personal, impertinent, threatening, or profane remarks.
7. Members of the body and members of the public shall obey the orders of the chair or other presiding member. The chair should adhere to the following process to restore order and decorum of a meeting, but may bypass any or all steps when he or she determines in his or her sole discretion that deviation from the process is warranted:
 - a. Call the meeting to order and remind the members of the applicable rules of procedure.
 - b. Declare a recess or table the issue.
 - c. Adjourn the meeting until a time and date certain.
 - d. Order the removal of the disorderly person(s) from the meeting.

ADOPTED: AS A GUIDELINE BY THE WHITINGHAM SELECTBOARD
on March 25, 2020.