

Bennington Selectboard Rules of Procedure
Adopted May 18, 2015
Revised September 12, 2016

I. **PURPOSE.** The Selectboard of the Town of Bennington 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 Bennington must be open to the public at all times, except as provided in 1 V.S.A. § 313. At such meetings, the public must be afforded reasonable opportunity to give its opinion on matters considered by the Selectboard so long as order is maintained. Such public comment is subject to the reasonable rules established by the Chair of the Selectboard. 1 V.S.A. § 312(g).

II. **APPLICATION.** This policy setting forth rules of procedure for Selectboard meetings shall apply to all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the Town of Bennington Selectboard.

III. **PROCEDURES.**

1. The Selectboard shall meet the second and fourth Monday of every month except when otherwise noted.
2. Officers of the Selectboard shall be Chair and Vice-Chair.
3. The Chair of the Selectboard, or in the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair, shall Chair all Selectboard meetings. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent, a member selected by the board shall Chair the meeting.
4. The Chair shall rule on all questions of order or procedure and shall enforce these rules as required by 1 V.S.A. § 312(h).
5. The current size of the Selectboard is seven (7) members. A majority of the members of the Selectboard shall constitute a quorum, a minimum of four (4) members. If a quorum of the members of the Selectboard is not present at a meeting, the only action that may be considered by the Selectboard is a motion to recess or adjourn the meeting.
6. No member shall act or otherwise participate in a board matter when he or she has a real or potential conflict of interest. If a member has such a conflict as determined by himself or herself or the board he or she shall be excused from that portion of the meeting when the subject matter where the conflict exists is deliberated. Said matters shall include a budget request from an organization on which the member sits, or his or her immediate family member sits, as a member of the Board of Directors of said organization. This limitation shall not apply to organizations wherein the board member's interest is limited to that of donor to, or membership in, or as an ex-officio select board representative to that organization.
7. At the beginning of each Selectboard meeting, there shall be fifteen (15) minutes afforded for open public participation and comment. By majority vote, the Selectboard may increase the time for citizen participation and open comment and may adjust the agenda items and times accordingly.
8. Each Selectboard meeting shall have an agenda, with time allotted for each item of business to be considered by the Selectboard. Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall contact the Selectboard Chair or Town Manager to request inclusion on the agenda. The Selectboard Chair shall determine the final content of the agenda. The Town Manager is responsible for posting the

agenda at least twenty-four (24) hours before the meeting-including being posted on the town website and in the town offices.

9. All business shall be conducted in the same order as it appears on the agenda, except that by majority vote of the Selectboard, the order of items to be considered and/or the time allotted may be modified.

10. Public comment on issues not on the agenda may be discussed during the open public comment period. Those wishing to speak will be allowed three (3) minutes, unless by majority vote, the Selectboard sets a different time limit. Speakers must introduce themselves and be acknowledged by the chair before speaking. All comments are to be directed to the board. In the event many participants wish to speak, a sign-up sheet will be required and participants may speak in the order they have signed up. A person may not speak a second time on an issue until everyone wishing to make comments has had an opportunity.

11. Public comment on agenda items shall be limited to three (3) minutes, unless by majority vote, the Selectboard sets a different time limit. Speakers must introduce themselves and be acknowledged by the chair before speaking. All comments are to be directed to the board. In the event many participants wish to speak, a sign-up sheet will be required and participants may speak in the order they have signed up. A person may not speak a second time on an issue until everyone wishing to make comments has had an opportunity.

12. Meetings may be recessed to a time and place certain.

13. Minutes of the Selectboard meetings shall be kept by the secretary and are matters of public record after five (5) days from the date of each meeting, the minutes shall be available for inspection by any person and posted on the Town Website.

14. These rules shall be made available at all meetings, and procedures for public comment shall be reviewed at the beginning of all meetings.

15. These rules may be amended by majority vote of the Selectboard, and must be readopted annually at the organizational meeting.

16. Board members are encouraged to use a disclaimer on personal social media sites such as: "The postings on this site are my own and do not reflect or represent the opinions of the Bennington Select Board of which I am a member." Unless authorized by the Select Board, a member shall not represent that he or she is speaking on behalf of the Board at any public or private event.