



TOWN OF WAITSFIELD SELECTBOARD RULES OF PROCEDURE

Section I: Purpose

These Rules are adopted to ensure consistent and fair treatment of individuals or organizations with matters before the Board, orderly and efficient public proceedings, and compliance with state and federal law. These Rules of Procedure are intended to complement the Vermont Municipal Code of Ethics Sec. 22. 24 V.S.A.

Section II: Officers and Duties

A. The Board shall consist of five members. At the first meeting after Town Meeting, or at other times throughout the year as needed, the Board shall hold an organizational meeting and elect by majority vote, a Chair and Vice Chair.

B. The Chair shall preside at all meetings, hearings, and other proceedings, decide all points of order or procedure, and appoint members to any committee of the Board. The Chair may administer oaths and may request the attendance of witnesses and the production of material germane to any issue under consideration. The Chair shall have the discretion to seek legal advice on matters relevant to the Board. The Chair may delegate the responsibility to seek legal advice to one or more members of the Board.

C. The Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair whenever the Chair is absent, or at the Chair's request.

D. No single Board member shall have authority to represent or act on behalf of the Selectboard unless, by majority vote, the Selectboard has delegated such authority for a specific matter at a duly noticed meeting and it is recorded in the minutes.

Section III: Meetings

E. Regular meetings shall be held in the Waitsfield Town Office at 6:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, or as warranted. Special meetings may be called by the Chair, provided at least 24 hours' notice is given to each member and the time and place of each special meeting is publicly announced at least 24 hours before the meeting.

F. 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. Whenever one or more members attend electronically, voting that is not unanimous must be done by roll call. If a quorum or more of the body attend a meeting (regular, special, or emergency) without being physically present at a designated meeting location, the agenda for the meeting shall designate at least one physical location when 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.

Emergency Meetings

Emergency meetings of the Selectboard may be held when immediate action is required and it is not possible to provide the standard public notice required for regular or special meetings. The following rules shall apply:

1. Calling an Emergency Meeting

An emergency meeting may be called by the Chair or by a majority of the Board when circumstances demand prompt action to protect public health, safety, or welfare, or to address urgent municipal matters.

2. Notice Requirements

Although 24-hour notice is not required, the Town shall provide as much public notice as possible prior to the meeting. This includes:

- Posting notice at the Town Office and on the Town website
- Notifying local media outlets
- Emailing interested parties when feasible

3. Public Access

Emergency meetings must remain open to the public. If held electronically, the meeting must include at least one physical location where the public can attend and participate, and at least one member or staff must be physically present at that location.

4. Documentation

The reason for calling the emergency meeting shall be clearly stated in the meeting minutes, along with a summary of the actions taken.

5. Limitations

Emergency meetings shall not be used to circumvent regular meeting procedures or public participation. They are reserved for situations where delay would result in harm or significant disruption to municipal operations.

G. E-mail communications among a quorum of Selectboard members may be used only for:

1. Scheduling and routine administrative matters; and
 2. Distributing documents that will be discussed at an upcoming meeting or otherwise made public.
- E-mail communications among a quorum of Selectboard members **may not be used for:**
3. Discussing or deliberating on town business; and
 4. Making decisions on town business.

E-mails between Selectboard members and Town personnel are public records per 1 V.S.A. § 317. Individual Selectboard members (not a quorum) may communicate directly with each other on Town business, but they must recognize that all written communications concerning town business are subject to public records law and may be subject to disclosure upon request. As a matter of practice, paper copies of e-mails exchanged by a quorum of the Selectboard will be shared as soon as possible with any Selectboard member who does not have access to e-mail.

H. There shall be an agenda for each meeting, with time allotted for each item or group of

items to be considered. Those who wish to be added to the agenda shall contact the Town Administrator to arrange for a convenient time. The Chair shall determine the content of the agenda after consultation with Town Administrator.

I. Agendas shall be limited to three hours, unless by majority vote, an additional 30 minutes is allowed. Exceptions may be allowed, such as for executive sessions or other time-sensitive matters that cannot be delayed.

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

K. At the beginning of each Selectboard meeting, there shall be five minutes afforded for open public comment. By majority vote, the Selectboard may increase the time for open public comment and may adjust the agenda items and times accordingly.

L. Public comment on issues discussed by the Selectboard, if not offered during the open public comment period, may be offered at other times during the meeting relevant to the agenda item, but only when recognized by the Chair.

M. The Chair shall rule on all questions of order or procedure and shall enforce these rules.

N. The Chair shall have the authority to call the question and cease discussion or debate on a matter.

O. The following rules shall apply to motions and voting on actions:

1. Motions shall be made in the affirmative;
2. The Chair has the same voting rights as other members and can make motions;
3. A second shall be required for a motion to have the floor;
4. All members present are expected to vote unless they have recused themselves or choose to abstain;
5. A member who recuses him or herself shall not sit with the Board during discussion of the matter and shall be considered "absent."
6. Abstentions shall not count towards either the majority or the minority; and
7. For a motion to pass, it must receive majority support of the Board (the same number required for a quorum).

P. Unless one or more members of the Board objects, the Chair may determine that agreement on simple matters has been reached by consensus, which shall be reflected in the meeting minutes.

Q. There is no limit to the number of times a Selectboard member can speak to a question. A member may speak or make a motion without being recognized by the Chair.

Section IV: Amendments and Adoption

R. These Rules may be amended at any regular or special meeting by a majority vote, and must be readopted annually at the organizational meeting.

Town of Waitsfield

Adopted:

This 10 day of July 2025.

Waitsfield Selectboard:









