

Rules of Procedure

For The Pawlet Select Board

Purpose:

The Select Board of Pawlet, 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 Select Board of Pawlet must be open to the public at all times, except as provided in 1 V.S.A. § 313.

Application:

This policy setting forth rules of procedure shall apply to the Select Board of Pawlet, which is referred to below as, “the body”. These rules shall apply to all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the body.

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 the 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 total membership of the body.

6. There is no limit to the number of times a member 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 not be entertained.

7. Any member of the body may request a roll call vote. Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 312(a)(2), when one or more members attend a meeting electronically, a roll call vote is required for votes that are not unanimous.

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

9. These rules may be amended by unanimous vote of the body, and must be readopted annually.

Agendas:

1. Each regular and special meeting of the body shall have an agenda, with time allotted for each item of business to be considered by the body. Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall contact the Select Board's Assistant to request inclusion on the agenda. The chair shall determine the final content of the agenda.

2. At least 48 hours proper to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be posted in or near the municipal office and at the following designated public places in the municipality: Pawlet Post Office & West Pawlet Post Offices. 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 www.pawlet.vt.gov. The agenda must also be made available to any person who request 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 or selection 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 one the first act of business at the meeting has commenced. Any other adjustment to the noticed agenda, for example, changing the order of business, postponing or tabling actions, may be made by majority vote of the body.

Meetings:

1. Regular meetings shall take place every other Tuesday at 7:00pm at the Town Hall Conference Room unless otherwise posted and/or warned.

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; to an editor, publisher or news director, or radio station serving the area; 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: Pawlet Post Office & West Pawlet Post Office.

3. Emergency meetings may be held without public announcement, without posting of notices, and without 24 hour notice to member, 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 themselves 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 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.

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. During each agenda item, but before any action is taken by body at each meeting, there may be five (5) 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 requests to speak on a topic prior to a meeting via the Town Clerk and/or Assistant to the Selectboard, he/she/they will be afforded five (5) minutes to speak to their point. If a member of the public does not request to speak prior to a meeting, he/she/they will be afforded two (2) minutes to speak to their point during the, *Public Comment*, portion of the meeting. If an individual meets their time limit and wishes to continue their point, he/she/they must request an extension of time from the body.

6. If a member of the public has already spoken on a topic, they may not be recognized again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment.

7. Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting. Neither members of the body, nor 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.

8. 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 his or her sole discretion that deviation from the process is warranted:

8.1. Call the meeting to order and remind the members of the applicable rules of procedure.

8.2. Declare a recess or table the issue.

8.3. Adjourn the meeting until a time and date certain.

8.4. Order the constable to remove disorderly person(s) from the meeting.