



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, *Chairman*

Joseph Z. Shank, *Vice Chairman*

Theresa A. Morse, *Clerk*

R. Eric Slagle, *Town Administrator*

Sabrina Moore, *Administrative Assistant*

POLICY #01-2021

REPLACE POLICY: N/A

Purpose: The Board of Selectmen and Interim Town Administrator agree to establish a consistent process for all municipal Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

Policy: Meeting Decorum and Order for All Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Committees.

The presiding officer shall preserve decorum and decide all questions of order and procedure, subject to appeal to the Board. During Board meetings, Municipal Officers shall preserve order and decorum and shall neither by conversation or otherwise delay or interrupt the proceedings nor refuse to obey the order of the presiding officer or the rules of the Board.

The use of cell phones, laptops, and computers should be limited to meeting business only and all such devices should be muted/silenced while the meeting is in session. At no time should the meeting be disturbed by any device. Cell phones should never be used during a meeting unless the rest of the members have agreed to the use prior to the meeting.

Every Board Member desiring to speak shall address the Chair, and upon recognition by the presiding officer, shall confine comments to the question under debate and shall avoid all personalities and inflammatory language. A Board Member once recognized shall not be interrupted while speaking unless called to order by the presiding officer, unless a point of order is raised by another member or unless the speaker chooses to yield to questions from another member.

If a Board Member is called to order while speaking, the Board Member shall cease speaking immediately until the question of order is determined. If ruled to be in order, the speaker shall be permitted to proceed. If ruled to be not in order, the speaker shall remain silent or shall alter remarks so as to comply with rules of the Board.

All members of the Board shall accord the utmost courtesy with each other, to the Town; the speaker shall remain silent or shall alter remarks so as to comply with rules of the Board. All members of the Board shall accord the utmost courtesy with each other, to Town Employees and to the public appearing before the Board and shall refrain at all times from all rude and derogatory remarks, reflections, or abusive comments.

Board Members shall confine questions as to the particular matters before the assembly and in debate shall confine remarks to the issues before the Board. Members shall be removed from the meeting for failure to comply with decisions of the presiding officer or for continued violations of the rules of the Board. If the presiding officer fails to act, any member may move to require the enforcement of the rules and the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board shall require the presiding officer to act.

Members of the administrative staff and employees of the Town shall observe the same rules of procedure and decorum applicable to members of the Board. While the presiding officer shall have the authority to preserve decorum in meetings as far as staff members and Town employees are concerned, the Town Administrator also

shall be responsible for the orderly conduct and decorum of all Town employees. Any staff member or employees desiring to address the Board shall be recognized by the Chair, shall state name and address for the record, and shall limit remarks to the matter under discussion.

All remarks and questions addressed to the Board shall be addressed to the Board as a whole and not to any member thereof. No staff member other than the person with the floor, shall enter into any discussion either directly or indirect without the permission of the presiding officer.

Public members attending Board meetings also shall observe the same rules of propriety, decorum, and good conduct applicable to the members of the Board. Any person making personal impertinent and slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous while addressing the Board or those attending the Board meeting shall be removed from the room if so directed by the presiding officer. If this presiding officer should fail to act, any member of the Board may move to require the Chair to act to enforce the rules, and the affirmative vote of the majority of the Board shall require the presiding officer to act.

Any public member desiring to address the Board shall be recognized by the Chair, shall state name and address for the record, and shall limit remarks to the question under discussion. All remarks and questions addressed to the administration of the Town shall be addressed to the board or the Board of Municipal Officers through the Chair and not to any municipal Town Employee. No person other than members of the Board and the person having the floor shall enter into any discussion either directly or through a member of the Board without the permission of the presiding officer.


Approved: 02/20/2024



Chaz Sexton Diranian, Chairman



Joseph Z. Shank, Vice-Chairman



Theresa A. Morse, Clerk

Revised 02/06/2024

Revision adopted 02/20/2024