

# TOWN OF WILLISTON

## SELECTBOARD RULES OF TRANSACTION

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Adopted: March 19, 2024

### Williston Selectboard

  
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**Abstract:**

The Selectboard Rules of Transaction is a policy approved by the Selectboard usually at their first organizational meeting following the March election as required by Town Charter. The Rules outline basic operational procedures for the Board.

Selectboard Rules of Transaction

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TOWN OF WILLISTON  
Selectboard Rules of Transaction

**1. GENERAL**

An organizational meeting shall be held each year within 14 days of the annual town meeting. At this meeting, the board shall adopt rules for the transaction of business (Town Charter: 14 (c) (1) (E) (i)). The Rules that follow are intended to serve as the rules of transaction until the annual town meeting following adoption of the rules.

**2. RULES OF ORDER**

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) and be guided by Robert’s Rules of Order.

**3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

3.1. Procedures for electing officers are as follows as provided for in the Town Charter (Section 14 (c) (1)): Within 14 days after the annual town meeting, the Selectboard shall meet to elect a chair and vice chair. In addition to the powers conferred upon him/her/they as Chair, he/she/they shall continue to have all the rights, privileges and immunities of a member of the Selectboard. If a vacancy occurs in the Office of Chair, the members of the Selectboard, at their next regular meeting shall select a Chair from among their number for the unexpired term.

3.2. A Vice-Chair shall also be elected in a like manner.

**4. CHAIR**

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Selectboard. The Chair has no regular administrative or executive duties. In case of the Chair's absence or temporary disability, the Vice-Chair shall act as Chair during the continuance of the absence. In case of the absence or temporary disability of the Chair and the Vice-Chair, a Temporary Vice-Chair selected by members of the Board shall act as Chair during the continuance of the absences or disabilities. The Chair or Vice-Chair is referred to as "Chair" from time to time in these Rules of Procedure.

**5. SELECTBOARD MEETINGS – PUBLIC ACCESS**

5.1. Definition - A meeting is generally defined as any gathering of a majority of Selectboard members where Selectboard business is discussed. Social gatherings

become meetings if Selectboard business is discussed by a majority of the Selectboard members.

- 5.2. Meeting Location - All meetings of the Selectboard shall be held at the Beckett/McGuire Meeting Room at Williston Town Hall unless otherwise specified. In all cases, meeting places must be designed to include members of the public. A hybrid meeting access and participation option will be offered using zoom if feasible.
- 5.3. Meeting Schedule - In general the Selectboard will meet on the dates and times as indicated in the Meeting Schedule included as Attachment A. Regular meetings and starting times may be subject to change as determined by the Selectboard. In addition, special meetings may be called, also as determined by the Selectboard. (1 V.S.A. § 312 (c)(1))
- 5.4. Agendas - Each Selectboard meeting shall have an agenda. Members who wish an issue to be added to the agenda shall notify the Chair or Manager. The Selectboard Chair shall determine, in consultation with the Manager, the final content of the agenda.
- 5.5. Posting of Agenda - 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 or near the municipal office and at the following designated public places in the municipality: Williston Post Office and at the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library. In addition, 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 official Town of Williston web site. The agenda must also be made available to any person who requests such agenda prior to the meeting.
- 5.6. Open to Public - All meetings of the Selectboard and of committees thereof shall be open to the public, except as provided for in State law. Meeting agendas shall be posted in accordance with state law.
- 5.7. Accessibility - The Town of Williston will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and make every reasonable effort to accommodate all individuals interested in participating in municipal activities.
- 5.8. Access to Public Records. Public records include any communication, regardless of form, relating to the conduct of agency business (1 V.S.A. § 316). Records should be made available for public inspection and copying during normal office hours.
- 5.9. Electronic Mail – Communications between Board members using electronic mail (email) could be subject to discovery as part of a lawsuit. A discussion of issues using email as a forum can be considered as an unscheduled and unwarned meeting of the

Selectboard. Email communication between board members should be limited to routine matters such as the scheduling of meetings.

- 5.10. Public Comment - There shall be reserved a period during each regular and special meeting of the Selectboard for public comment on any issue. This time and comment period may be subject to reasonable rules of the Chair including, but not limited to:
- 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.
  - Members of the public must be acknowledged by the Chair before speaking.
  - 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.
  - Public comment must be allowed prior to the Selectboard taking action.
  - Opportunities to express one's opinion outside of the "Comment Period" may be permitted during the meeting but reasonable limits may be placed by the Chair on the duration and frequency of participation. (1 V.S.A. § 312 (h))
- 5.11. Minutes – Minutes must contain a list of board members present; list of all active participants; all motions, proposals, and resolutions made, and what action taken or disposition was made; and the results of any votes, with a record of individual votes. A transcript of the minutes or a summary of discussion will not be kept for a meeting unless specifically requested at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. (1 V.S.A. §312 (b)(1))

## 6. QUORUMS AND VOTING

- 6.1. There are five (5) members of the Selectboard. At all meetings of the Selectboard, three members, who are present and eligible to vote, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A vote of three members is always required to take binding action.
- 6.2. In order to ensure the highest level of public trust in the deliberations and decisions of the Williston Selectboard, each member must follow the rules provided for in the Town Conflict of Interest Ordinance.
- 6.3. A Selectboard member need not withdraw from deliberations and action if his/her/their private interest is common to numerous persons in the community. In the event that a disqualified Selectboard member is the Chair of the Selectboard, the Vice-Chair shall preside over deliberations and actions in question. If the Vice-Chair is also disqualified, a majority of the remaining Selectboard members shall designate a temporary chair to preside during meetings and actions on the matter in question.

- 6.4. Any person who perceives a conflict of interest should so indicate to the Selectboard in writing or on the record at a public meeting.
- 6.5. Any Selectboard member shall have the right to express dissent from or protest against any motion or resolution of the Selectboard at the time it is made and have the reason therefore entered in the minutes.

## 7. VOTING

- 7.1. The votes during all meetings of the Selectboard shall be transacted as follows: Unless otherwise provided for by statute, ordinance, or resolution, all votes shall be taken by voice, except that at the request of any Selectboard member, the Chair shall take a roll call vote. The Chair shall determine the roll call vote order.
- 7.2. Selectboard votes must be taken in warned, open meetings.
- 7.3. Motions shall be made in the affirmative whenever possible.

## 8. COMMITTEES

- 8.1. Appointed Non-Administrative Officials – For vacancies in positions identified in the Town Charter (Section 15), the Selectboard shall fill such vacancy by appointment. The vacancy shall be publicly announced at the Selectboard meeting immediately following the initial occurrence of the vacancy. Persons interested in being appointed to a vacant position, shall submit a letter of interest or complete an application using a form approved by the Town Manager’s Office and submitting letter or application to the Town Manager’s Office.
- 8.2. Interviews - The Selectboard may conduct interviews of the candidates. The Selectboard shall determine the format for the interviews with questions agreed upon by the Selectboard. The interviews shall be open to the public and the time and date of the interviews shall be publicly announced. Upon conclusion of the interview(s), the Selectboard shall vote in public.
- 8.3. Special Selectboard Study Committees - The Board or Chair may create special ad hoc study committees for a particular purpose, or when the issue is so complex and time consuming that it cannot be reasonably handled at a Selectboard meeting. Special ad hoc study committees shall consist of one or more Selectboard members and/or members of the public appointed by the Board. The Board may consider adopting a “charge” for the special ad hoc committees. Such charge should identify the purpose of the committee, membership, task deadlines, if any, and any other pertinent information. Each committee shall sunset at the end of their mission, but no later than

the end of each calendar year unless specifically continued by the Selectboard thereafter for a specified time period. Meetings of special study committees shall be duly warned to allow for public attendance.

- 8.4. Sub-Committees - All sub-committees advisory to the Selectboard shall report to the Selectboard.

## 9. RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS

- 9.1. Resolutions - An enacted resolution is a non-binding statement
- 9.2. Motions - An enacted motion is a form of action taken by the Selectboard to direct that a specific action be taken.
- 9.3. Policies – An enacted policy is a binding statement on an issue and may include specific procedures to be followed by staff or members of Boards and Committees.

## 10. SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

- 10.1. The Chair or any three members of the Selectboard may call a special meeting.
- 10.2. Notice of the special meeting shall be prepared in writing by the Town Manager's Office. The notice shall contain the following information about the meeting: time, place, and business to be transacted.
- 10.3. The only action that may be taken at a special meeting is that which is announced in the notice or agenda for the meeting.

## 11. TOWN MANAGER

- 11.1. The Town Manager shall attend all meetings of the Selectboard, unless excused by the Chair.
- 11.2. The Town Manager through the adoption of these Rules of Transaction, is authorized to sign grant applications and related documents and to accept funds from the Vermont Stormwater Impaired Waters Restoration Fund established by 10 V.S.A. § 1264(b). The Manager shall inform the Board of all applications submitted for funding.
- 11.3. The Town Manager's Office, under the direction of the Selectboard Chair, shall arrange a list of such matters according to the order of business and prepare an agenda for the Selectboard. A copy of the agenda and supporting materials shall be prepared for

Selectboard members and be posted in three (3) public locations at least 48 hours before a regular Selectboard meeting. The Selectboard shall have the option of deleting any item from the agenda or deferring an item on the agenda to a subsequent Selectboard meeting.

## **12. PUBLIC HEARING NOTICES**

Public Hearings shall be duly warned in the Williston Observer or the Burlington Free Press. (17 V.S.A. § 2641 (b))

## **13. EXAMINING AND ALLOWING CLAIMS**

- 13.1. The Selectboard is charged with the responsibility of examining and allowing claims against the town for town expenses and may draw orders for such claims to the party entitled to payment (24 V.S.A. § 1623).
- 13.2. Since requiring a majority of the Board to act in concurrence on the Claims, may result in delays in paying vendors, the state statutes provide for an alternative by enabling the Board to authorize one or more members of the Board to discharge this responsibility (24 V.S.A. § 1623).
- 13.3. At the Board's organization meeting each year, the Selectboard shall designate one Board member and one alternate who will be charged with the responsibility of examining and allowing claims against the town for town expenses and may sign the order to pay such claims (warrant) for all claims properly budgeted and approved by the Town at Town Meeting, unless otherwise provided for by law and shall serve as full authority to the treasurer to make the payments. Once signed, a record of orders drawn will be presented to the Selectboard.

## **14. RULE AMENDMENTS**

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

Adopted by the Board on March 19, 2024