

TOWN OF MADBURY

BOARD OF SELECTMEN GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

Adopted by Town of Madbury BoS on 3 July 2023

(Updated by BoS on 18 March 2024)

Purpose

The Madbury Board of Selectmen (BoS) hereby adopts these operational guidelines and procedures for BoS operations. Their purpose is to facilitate the expeditious and fair conduct of meetings and general business. They may be amended by a vote of the Board.

Primary Duties

The Board of Selectmen consists of three equal members who shall operate by majority vote to serve as the governing body of the Town. Individual Selectmen have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the Town or to take any action as a Town Official except upon majority vote of the Board or as otherwise allowed by law.

The Board's primary duty per RSA 41:8 is to "manage the prudential affairs of the Town and perform duties by law proscribed." While the BoS delegates many of the details of its responsibilities, it retains final decision-making authority for all its responsibilities.

Officers

A Chairperson shall be elected annually by the full BoS. This shall be done at the first regular BoS meeting following the Friday following Town Meeting.¹

The Chair shall preside over all meetings and public hearings and shall affix his/her signature in the name of the BoS as required. The Chair shall represent the BoS in official and ceremonial matters and serve as the primary spokesperson. The Chair may delegate specific duties to other Board members.

In the Chair's absence the senior member, as determined by current terms of office, shall act in their stead.

The BoS shall also appoint a Planning Board ex officio, Police and Fire Liaisons, and any other Ad-Hoc Representatives as may be deemed necessary. Their duties shall include regular updates to the Board.

Quorum

Two members shall constitute a quorum. However, unless immediate action is required, the Board should delay action until all three members are available. In the absence of a quorum, no formal actions shall be taken.

Meeting Schedules

The BoS, in coordination with the Town Administrator, shall establish and publish a schedule of regular meetings. This schedule shall include a mix of day and evening meetings to facilitate resident and others participation.² The Board shall also include additional meetings as needed to conduct BoS business in a timely manner. This schedule shall be established as soon as possible following Town Meeting and shall be updated as required throughout the year.

¹ Revised 18 Mar 24: Clarified the date of the first regular meeting.

² Revised 18 Mar 24: Deleted specific requirement to hold Monday evening meetings. Added requirement to hold a mix of day and evening meetings.

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Special meetings may be called by the Chair, in coordination with the Town Administrator, with at least 24 hours' notice. Such meetings should only be called to address issues that cannot wait for regularly scheduled meetings.

Emergency meetings may also be called by the Chair per RSA 91-A:2, "when immediate undelayed action is deemed to be imperative by the Chair".

All meetings shall be noticed per RSA 91-A:2. Notices shall be posted on the Town Website and information kiosk outside Town Hall.

All meetings shall be held at Madbury Town Hall unless noticed otherwise.

All meetings shall be open to the public, except as provided for by RSA 91-A:3.

Meeting Agendas

An agenda shall be developed by the Town Administrator in coordination with the Chair. Any Board Member may request an item be placed on the agenda.

The agenda should be available 24 hours before a meeting. Basic agenda items should include:

- Public Comments
- Accounts Payable / Payroll
- Correspondence
- Review of Minutes
- Board/Committee Updates
- Liaison Updates
- New Business
- Old Business

Meeting Procedures

The Chair shall preside over all meetings and shall maintain order and decorum. The Chair shall resolve any issues of procedure for the meetings and ensure that informal parliamentary procedures are followed.

The Chair shall set the order of business and may modify the agenda (e.g., for time, order of discussion, or items deferred) as needed during the meeting.

All Board members shall follow commonly accepted rules of courtesy and shall actively participate in discussions and decision-making. The Chair shall ensure all items are thoroughly discussed and that all members have the chance to speak and ask questions.

Decisions of the Board shall be made by a majority. A motion, second and vote shall be required on actions by the Board. At times when a motion is not required, the Chair shall ask if there is consensus on an issue and, if there is no dissent, the Chair may declare that to be the consensus of the Board. In either case the Board shall ensure its decisions are clearly documented.

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Public Comment

Public comment periods may be provided during public meetings and must be provided during public hearings. The Chair may call for such comments during a general comment period and or during individual agenda items. The Chair may impose limits on the length and repetition of comments.

Members of the public wishing to speak must first be recognized by the Chair. They must identify themselves and provide their address before speaking. The public shall address comments only to the Board and not to other members of the public or persons providing information to the Board.

Board members may ask questions of the public. Such questions are limited to a response to the specific questions and are not an invitation to the public to engage in the Boards' deliberations.

Public Hearing Procedures

Public Hearings are a specific subset of public meetings and are required from time to time (e.g., unanticipated funds over \$10,000, budget approval for the warrant, bonding, laying out highways/lands, etc.).

Public hearings shall be noticed per applicable RSAs. Notices shall be posted on the Town Website and information kiosk outside Town Hall and when required by RSA in the local newspaper.

The procedures for a public hearing are as follows:

1. The Chair opens the public hearing and explains that the purpose is to gain input from the public.
2. The Chair reads the official public notice.
3. The Chair or designee presents the matter for consideration. Members may ask questions or provide clarifying information.
4. The Chair opens the floor for public comment. Public comments shall be conducted per the "Public Comments" section of these rules.
5. The Chair reads written comments into the record.
6. When all parties/issues have been heard, the Chair closes the public hearing and no further public testimony may be heard. If all parties/issues have not been heard, then the public hearing may be continued to a time and place certain.

After the Public hearing is closed, the BoS will deliberate and vote on the matter.

Records

The BoS shall keep a record of its proceedings, including minutes of each meeting per RSA 91-A:2.

The minutes shall include the date, time, location, members present, a summary of discussions, actions taken, and any votes held.

Draft minutes shall be made available to the public within five working days.

BoS will designate a note taker to record and draft minutes.