

**Town of Stowe Selectboard**

**Chair: William W. Adams II**

**Meeting Protocol & Rules of Order, 2024**

**Regarding Public Participation: Legal Context**

**The Selectboard of the Town of Stowe is required by law to conduct its meetings in accordance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law: 1 VSA subchapter 310-314. Meetings of the Board must be open to the public at all times, except as provided in - 1 VSA subchapter 313.**

The Board welcomes valuable input from the public at appropriate times during the meeting with recognition from the Chair at his/her sole discretion. Such public comment is subject to the rules established by the Chair of the Selectboard: reference 1 VSA subchapter 312 (h).

The agenda for each of our regular Selectboard meetings includes a “Public to be Heard” item (listed at the end of the meeting, immediately following the Manager’s Report.)

This time is reserved for members of the public to address the Board on matters that are not related to any other Agenda item.

If a member of the public wishes to address the Board on a matter that is related to an Agenda item, the Chair will accept public comment and questions when that Agenda item is reached during the meeting.

All members of the public are encouraged to present their comments and questions in an orderly and civil manner without disruption to other speakers. All comments and questions will be addressed through the Selectboard Chair.

**The procedure for members of the public wishing to speak is as follows:**

Raise your hand if you are in the room, or if you are participating on Zoom, by using the raise hand function. Please wait to be recognized and called upon by the Chair.

**For members of the public attending in person:** Once you have been recognized and called upon by the Chair you will be asked to come to the podium, once at the podium, please state your first and last name for the record before asking your questions or making comment.

**For those attending via Zoom:** Please wait until you are recognized and called upon by the Chair, then again, please state your first and last name for the record before you make any comment or ask your questions.

The rule for approaching and speaking from the podium may be waived at the discretion of the Chair.

**Time Limit for Speakers:** The Chair will indicate if there is a time limit for speakers – this will be at the sole discretion of the Chair and may vary from meeting to meeting depending on the specifics of the agenda item.

The Chair will call upon those wishing to speak in an orderly manner. The total length of time allocated for public comment and questions will at the sole discretion of the Chair, and again may vary from meeting to meeting depending on the specifics of the agenda item.

**Board members, Town Manager & Staff:**

For members of the Board and Town Staff, including our Town Manager: Please signal to me or raise your hand if you wish to speak – please wait to be recognized and called upon by the Chair before speaking. I respectfully ask each of you to refrain from interrupting the person speaking, as they have been recognized and called upon by the Chair and therefore have the floor.

Again, all questions and comments or remarks shall be directed through the Chair. This rule applies equally to the Board, Town Manager, and staff.

**Interruptions and Disruptions:**

At no time may a member of the public interrupt any other speaker. The same rule applies to Board members and the Town Manger & staff.

The Chair may interrupt a speaker if a time limit has been set, or, if a need arises due to any unforeseen circumstance that warrants interruption. For example, if we have technical difficulties with Zoom or the microphone at the podium.

The meeting will be conducted in an orderly manner as determined by the Chair. Disruptions will not be tolerated. The Chair asks everyone to respect the speaker who has the floor.

There will be no cross talk nor debate between members of the public, nor cross talk and debate among Board members and the Town Manager & staff if they have not been formally recognized by the Chair. The Chair will issue a warning to anyone who interrupts the speaker. If the interruptions continue, the Chair may issue further warnings, or, if necessary, ask the person to leave the meeting.

**Noise Disruptions/Distractions:**

For those in the room, please silence your phones, to avoid disrupting the meeting.

For those on Zoom, we may need to ask you to mute yourselves if you have background noise that interrupts or disrupts the meeting. If those interruptions continue, we may have to mute you.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation - it will be appreciated by all.