

Rules of Order for Monson Select Board Meetings

The Select Board is elected by the citizens of Monson to perform the town's business, including but not limited to the oversight of town finances and property, protection of the health, safety and welfare of town residents, and facilitation of appropriate relationships with the public, service providers and external agencies, and other government entities.

The purpose of these rules is to provide a procedure to ensure that Board meetings are conducted in an effective and efficient manner, and in a fashion which exhibits and promotes order, collegiality, respect, and civility. These rules shall govern the Board's practices and procedures except as otherwise provided by law.

1. Meetings:

- A. Regular Board Meetings: The Board shall meet in regular session in the meeting room at the Municipal Building at 6:00pm on the second Thursday of each month, or any other location and time which has been designated with the requisite advance notice.
- If business remains to be transacted at the scheduled adjournment time, the Board may vote to adjourn to another time to complete the business. The unfinished business shall appear on the agenda of the next meeting under old business.
 - A meeting may be postponed provided all available members of the Board are polled by telephone or otherwise personally contacted and a majority indicates agreement.
 - From time to time, the Select Board may conduct additional meetings or workshops as deemed necessary.
 - Board meetings may be held remotely in accordance with the town's Remote Participation Policy.
- B. Special meetings: Special Select Board meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chairperson or upon the request of a majority of the Board. Except in emergencies, written notice and agenda of all special meetings shall be properly posted at least 24 hours before each meeting is to convene.
- C. Public hearings: A Public Hearing shall be called as required by law or on such other occasions, as a majority of the Board may deem appropriate. Notice of all such hearings shall be given as required by law and shall include the date, time and place of the hearing and a general description of the subject matter.
- D. Non-public meetings:
- Non-public proceedings - These proceedings which must be conducted confidentially by law, such as applications for general assistance and concealed weapons permits.
 - Executive Sessions - These proceedings are closed to the public due to the confidential nature of the topics, such as personnel matters, real estate and economic development negotiations, meetings between the municipal officials and town attorney, discussion of information contained in confidential records and content of examinations for licenses and permits or employment purposes, and consultations between the Select Board and Code Enforcement Officer regarding litigation. The purpose of an executive session is for discussion only, and no decision can be made by the board at these sessions; the board must reconvene in a public meeting to make a motion and vote on a final decision.

2. Notice of meetings: Notice of all Board meetings (except non-public meetings) shall be given as required by law, and all such meetings shall be open to the public except as otherwise provided by law.
3. Board Meeting Agenda:
 - A. The format for all meetings shall be organized as follows.
 - Call to Order by Chairperson
 - Public Comment
 - Signing of warrants
 - Town Manager reports
 - Select board reports
 - Town committee reports
 - Old business
 - New business
 - Adjournment
 - B. The Board reserves, in their sole discretion and in accordance with law, the right to amend the format of Board meetings from time to time.
 - C. If a member of the public would like an issue placed on the Select Board meeting agenda for discussion, such a request should be made either by contacting the Chairperson or Town Manager at least a week in advance on the meeting.
4. Voting:
 - A. Any action of the Board shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of its membership present unless otherwise provided by law. If a motion results in a tie vote, another vote shall be taken to try to obtain a definitive decision. If a tie vote is not broken, it will be treated as having the same effect as a vote to defeat the motion.
 - B. No member may participate or vote in any matter in which the member has a conflict of interest or other disqualification as defined by law. Any question of whether a member has such a conflict of interest or other disqualification shall be decided by majority vote of the remaining members.
 - C. Board members who miss one or more board meetings at which substantive discussions of an application, license or approval occur may participate in the decision-making process if the board member takes steps to educate him/herself about the substance of the meeting that was missed and makes a statement as part of the official record documenting educational steps that were taken.
 - D. All members who are present and not disqualified as provided herein shall vote in every matter to be voted upon or may declare they are abstaining to vote on the particular motion before the Board.
5. Public Participation: The Board recognizes and welcomes public input about municipal issues. The public is provided with an opportunity for input during Select Board meetings (with the exception of non-public meetings) during the *Public Comment* part of the agenda. In order to permit fair and orderly expression of such, the following guidelines will be followed to ensure that the Board has time to conduct its business in a professional and timely manner.
 - A. The Public Comment segment is to consider all town issues, except personnel matters.
 - B. Any member of the public who wishes to speak shall wait until recognized by the Chair.
 - C. If a person wishes to speak on a matter listed on the agenda, they will be asked to wait until that item is discussed.

- D. The public comment period is not intended to provide a forum for debate between members of the public nor between the public and the board.
- E. Comments should be civil and courteous.
- Profanity, disorderly language or gestures at meetings are prohibited.
 - No public comment will be allowed that defames, embarrasses or attacks an individual, town employee or official. Any concern about a town employee, official, or volunteer, is to be addressed outside of a public meeting and in private with the town manager.
 - The Chairperson has the right to require anyone who is rude, disruptive, intoxicated or threatening to leave the meeting.
- F. All comments should be addressed to the Chair.
- Questions and comments may not be directed to individual Board members.
 - The Chair may answer questions if information is readily available. Should the matter need further legal research or discussion, the question will be noted and reviewed during a future meeting.
 - The Chairperson has the right to cease accepting public comment if such becomes repetitive in nature.
- G. Residents wishing to speak during Public Comment shall register their name and topic(s) to be addressed prior to the start of the meeting.
- H. Non-residents wishing to speak during Public Comment shall register their name, town or city or residence and topic(s) to be addressed prior to the start of the meeting. Permission to speak shall be subject to a majority vote of board members present at the meeting.
- I. Each speaker shall be allotted two minutes for their comment. Additional speaking time shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson.
- J. The Chairperson has the discretion in allowing public comment or questions during other agenda items.
6. Meeting minutes: All public Board meetings will be recorded and available for viewing on the town's YouTube Channel. Meeting minutes will be posted on the town website, and available upon request of the Town Clerk.

November 15, 2023



Tyler Adkins



Susan F. Chase



J.D. Walker