

CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD RULES OF PROCEDURE

Approved March 7, 2016; amended & readopted March 7, 2019; readopted March 5, 2020; readopted March 4, 2021; amended & readopted May 27, 2021; readopted March 7, 2022; readopted March 14, 2023, amended and readopted March 14, 2024, amended and readopted March 24, 2025.

A. PURPOSE.

The Selectboard of the Town of Charlotte is required by law to conduct its meetings in accordance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law. 1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314. Meetings of the Selectboard of the Town of Charlotte must be open to the public at all times, except as provided in 1 V.S.A. § 313.

B. APPLICATION.

This policy setting forth rules of procedure shall apply to the Selectboard of the Town of Charlotte, which is referred to below as “the body.” These rules shall apply to all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the body.

C. ORGANIZATION.

1. The body shall annually elect a chair and a vice-chair. The chair of the body or, in the chair’s absence, the vice-chair shall preside over all meetings. If both the chair and the vice-chair are absent, a member selected by the body shall act as chair for that meeting.
2. The chair shall preserve order in the meeting and shall regulate its proceedings by applying these rules and making determinations about all questions of order or procedure.
3. A majority of the members of the body shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum of the members of the body is not present at a meeting, no meeting shall take place.
4. No single member of the body shall have authority to represent or act on behalf of the body unless, by majority vote, the body has delegated such authority for a specific matter at a duly-noticed meeting and such delegation is recorded in the meeting minutes.
5. Motions made by members of the body require a second. The chair of the body may make motions and may vote on all questions before the body. A motion will only pass if it receives the votes of a majority of the total membership of the body.
6. There is no limit to the number of times a member of the body may speak to a question. A member may speak or make a motion without being recognized by the chair. Motions to close or limit debate will be entertained.
7. Any member of the body may request a roll call vote.
8. Recognizing that serving on two separate boards presents multiple opportunities for the appearance of, as well as actual, ~~conflicts of interest~~undue influence, no member of the body will hold membership on another standing town board, commission or committee while serving on the body, with the exception of: the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge, Thompson’s Point Wastewater Advisory Committee, and the Executive Committee of Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services, Inc. (recognizing CVFRS is a private not-for-profit, and not a town board, commission or committee).
9. Meetings may be recessed to a time and place certain.

Commented [NB1]: Feedback from JD – Consider including Working Groups, Emergency Management Coordinator/Director, or other applicable Committees/Commissions/Boards

10. These rules may be amended by majority vote of the body, and must be readopted annually.

D. AGENDAS.

1. Each regular and special meeting of the body shall have an agenda, with time allotted for each item of business to be considered by the body. Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall complete the Town of Charlotte Agenda Request form to request inclusion on the agenda. The Selectboard Chair shall determine the final content of the agenda.
2. 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: the Post Office and the Old Brick Store or Spear's Corner Store. At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall also be posted on the Town's website: www.charlottevt.org. The agenda must also be made available to any person who requests such agenda prior to the meeting.
3. All business shall be conducted in the same order as it appears on the noticed agenda, except that any addition to or deletion from the noticed agenda must be made as the first act of business at the meeting. No additions to or deletions from the agenda shall be considered once the first act of business at the meeting has commenced. Any other adjustment to the noticed agenda, for example, changing the order of business, postponing or tabling actions, may be made by majority vote of the body.

4. Consent agendas may be included as part of the regular meeting agenda, or as a separate agenda document.

At the start of the meeting, the Selectboard Chair shall ask if any Selectboard member(s) want to discuss any of the items listed on the consent agenda. Any item may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any one Selectboard member, and discussed individually during the meeting. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda, or placed later on the agenda, at the discretion of the Selectboard Chair. Once the Selectboard Chair determines that all items on the consent agenda do not require further discussion, items not removed may be adopted by vote of the Selectboard without debate. All items contained within the consent agenda must be adopted by a unanimous vote of the Selectboard. Items contained on the consent agenda may include, but are not limited to:

a. Routine contract renewals.

b. Meeting minutes.

c. Event applications.

d. Other "noncontroversial items" as determined by the Selectboard Chair in conjunction with the Town Administrator.

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E. MEETINGS.

1. Regular meetings shall take place on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at ~~6:30~~ 7:00 p.m. at the Charlotte Town Hall.
2. Special meetings shall be publicly announced at least 24 hours in advance by giving notice to all members of the body unless previously waived; to an editor, publisher or news director, or radio station serving the area; and to any person who has requested notice of such meetings. In addition, notices shall be posted in or near the municipal clerk's office and at the following designated places in the municipality: the Post Office and the Old Brick Store or Spear's Corner Store.
3. Emergency meetings may be held without public announcement, without posting of notices, and without 24-hour notice to members, provided some public notice thereof is given as soon as possible before any such meeting. Emergency meetings may be held only when necessary to respond to an unforeseen occurrence or condition requiring immediate attention by the public body.

4. A member of the body may attend a regular, special, or emergency meeting by electronic or other means without being physically present at a designated meeting location, so long as the member identifies him or herself when the meeting is convened, and is able to hear and be heard throughout the meeting. Whenever one or more members attend electronically, voting must be done by roll call. If a quorum or more of the body attend a meeting without being physically present at a designated meeting location, the following requirements shall be met:
 - A. At least 24 hours prior to the meeting, or as soon as practicable prior to an emergency meeting, the body shall publicly announce the meeting and post notice of the meeting in or near the municipal clerk's office and the Old Brick Store and Spear's Corner Store.
 - B. The public announcement and posted notice of the meeting shall designate at least one physical location where a member of the public can attend and participate in the meeting. At least one member of the body, or at least one staff or designee of the body, shall be physically present at each designated meeting location.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

1. All meetings of the body are meetings in the public, not of the public. In accordance with Vermont Open Meeting Law 1 V.S.A. § 312(h), members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to express their opinion on matters considered by the public body during the meeting, as long as order is maintained. Public comment shall be subject to the rules established herein, and by those reasonable rules established by the chairperson. ~~Members of the public shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to express opinions about matters considered by the body, so long as order is maintained according to these rules.~~
2. ~~At each agenda item, b~~Before any action is taken by the public body, the chair shall determine whether members of the public wish to make an open comment. ~~at the discretion of the chair there may be Members of the public shall be afforded three minutes for open comment~~five minutes afforded for open public comment. ~~By majority vote, By general consent,~~ the body may increase the time for open public comment, and/or change its place on the agenda.
3. 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.
4. Members of the public must be acknowledged by the chair before speaking.
5. 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.
6. Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting. Neither members of the body, nor the members of the public, shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the meeting or interrupt or disturb any member while speaking. Members of the body and members of the public are prohibited from making personal, impertinent, threatening, or profane remarks.
7. Members of the body and members of the public shall obey the orders of the chair or other presiding member. The chair should adhere to the following process to restore order and decorum of a meeting, but may bypass any or all steps when they determines in their sole discretion that deviation from the process is warranted:
 - a. Call the meeting to order and remind the members of the applicable rules of procedure.
 - b. Declare a recess or table the issue.
 - c. Adjourn the meeting until a time and date certain.

Commented [NB2]: The highlighted section is a modification of the statutory language which states that "Public comment shall be subject to reasonable rules established by the chairperson."

The principal goal here is to recognize the rules established within the Selectboard's Rules of Procedure, while maintaining the Chair's authority to establish/enforce other reasonable rules as needed.

Commented [NB3]: Requiring public comment "(a)t each agenda item" may be cumbersome for the Selectboard. I've instead suggested that the chair determine whether the public wishes to make an open comment prior to any action being taken by the Board.

Commented [NB4]: No change has been made to the content of this section. This has been reformatted to be consistent with Section D(4) above.

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_____ d. Order the constable to remove disorderly person(s) from the meeting.

_____ **Re-adopted March 24, 2025 ~~November 18, 2024~~**

_____ Lee Krohn, Chair

_____ Frank Tenney, Vice Chair

_____ Lewis Mudge

_____ Natalie Kanner

_____ John-David Herlihy