

Town of Calais
Selectboard Rules of Procedure
Adopted March 11, 2024

PURPOSE

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

APPLICATION

This policy setting forth rules of procedure shall apply to the Town of Calais Selectboard, referred to below as “the board.” The chair of the board or, in the chair’s absence, the vice-chair shall preside over all meetings. These rules shall apply to all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the board.

ORGANIZATION

1. The board shall annually elect a chair and a vice-chair. The chair 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 board shall act as chair for that meeting.
2. The chair shall preserve order in the meeting and 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 board shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum of the members of the board is not present at a meeting, no meeting shall take place.
4. No single member of the board shall have authority to represent or act on behalf of the board unless, by majority vote, the board 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 board require a second. The chair of the board 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 board.
6. There is no limit to the number of times a member of the board may speak to a question. A member may speak or make a motion after being recognized by the chair. Motions to close or limit debate will be entertained.
7. Any member of the board may request a roll call vote. Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 312(a)(2), when one or more members attend a meeting electronically, a roll call vote is required for votes that are not unanimous.
8. Meetings may be recessed to a time and place certain. In this case, some public notice of the meeting shall be provided if possible.

9. These rules may be amended by majority vote of the board and must be readopted annually.

10. Board Point Person. The board may identify a point person (sometimes a team of two) from the board to serve as liaison to established committees, commissions, work groups and functions of town and/or board business. In the event the board identifies a point person(s), then the appointment shall be for no more than a one year period.

11. The board may similarly identify from the board a lead, or point person, for various items of particular interest to the town that frequently come before the board. The board's appointed lead serves for the ensuing year as a liaison or point person on behalf of the board. The purpose of the liaison(s) function is to authorize and empower each member of the board to develop a level of expertise on specific matters, provide a board point person to brainstorm and possibly resolve small issues, and to provide support and assistance to others in preparing for a presentation to the board or putting a question before the board.

12. Board subcommittees. The board may appoint some of its members or a group of citizens as a committee or subcommittee to study and make recommendations on a particular issue. All such committees and subcommittees are subject to the open meeting law and must follow all open meeting law notice and record keeping requirements.

AGENDAS

1. Each regular and special meeting of the board shall have an agenda, with a recommended amount of time allotted for each item of business to be considered by the board. Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall contact the relevant liaison, the town administrator or any member of the board to request inclusion on the agenda. The chair shall determine the final content of the agenda.

2. Requests for items on the agenda should include a statement of the action requested, the basis of the request, and background materials and shall be provided several days in advance.

3. The point person for a topic should provide periodic updates to the board and shall determine whether an item is ready for board discussion and decision.

4. Agenda items for future meetings shall be noted with a specific date of follow-up if possible.

5. 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 town website, East Calais Post Office or the East Calais General Store, Maple Corner Store, Adamant Coop, and online at Front Porch Forum.

6. 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 may be made as the first act of business at the meeting. During the meeting, adjustment to the noticed agenda, for example, changing the order of business, postponing or tabling actions, may be made by unanimous vote of the board.

7. Except in emergency situations, the board will conduct formal business only on items that were included in the noticed agenda. Whenever possible, the noticed agenda will include the time of the vote on an item and the board as a general matter will conduct its vote at the time provided in the noticed agenda.

MEETINGS

1. Regular meetings shall take place on the second and fourth Mondays of each month, generally starting at 6:00pm, at the Calais Town Hall. In circumstances where a meeting over Zoom or other virtual format is consistent with the open meeting law and other relevant provisions of law, the meeting may occur via virtual interface.
2. The time, place, and purpose of a special meeting shall be warned pursuant to #5 under Agendas above. In addition, notice shall be given, either orally or in writing, to each member of the Selectboard at least 24 hours before the meeting, except that a member may waive notice of a special meeting.
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 board.
4. A member of the board 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 that is not unanimous must be done by roll call. If a quorum or more of the board attend a meeting (regular, special, or emergency) without being physically present at a designated meeting location, the agenda for 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 board, or at least one staff or designee of the body, shall be physically present at each designated meeting location.
5. For each item on the meeting agenda, the chair will facilitate the discussion using the following format:
 - a. Briefly introduce the presenter and the topic and remind the group of the time allotted for the item.
 - b. Invite the presenter to summarize the materials the board already received and present the request to the board (which the board received in advance).
 - c. Where a vote of the Board would be required, a motion should be rendered and seconded at this point prior to discussion. The board member liaison generally makes the motion. Another member of the board seconds.
 - d. Invite each member of the board, in turn, to ask questions and seek clarification before allowing members of the public to weigh in/ask questions etc.

e. Ask any questions the chair has.

f. As a general matter, the chair will recognize members of the public for questions or input only after each member of the board has had opportunity to ask questions and provide input.

g. After public input and questions, if any, the chair will invite final questions and/or comment from the board.

h. The chair will invite the board member liaison to restate the motion and the chair will call for the vote.

i. The chair and/or the board member liaison will note for the minutes specific items for follow-up meetings, and the date for the future agenda.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. All meetings of the board are meetings in the public, not of the public. Members of the public shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to express opinions about matters considered by the board, so long as order is maintained according to these rules.

2. At each meeting there will be at least 15 minutes allotted for public comment on items not on the agenda. Items requiring more than 15 minutes may be scheduled as an agenda item for a future meeting. To account for the possibility that there will be no public comment, or that the entire allotted 15 minutes will not be used, each agenda will include the following note, to allow the agenda to move forward expeditiously: Agenda items may be taken up earlier than noted if the 15 minutes set aside for public comment is not used, or if other items are completed more quickly than anticipated.

3. The board will entertain public comment on agenda items, but the board retains the authority to impose a time limit on public comment. The chair will not acknowledge or invite comment from members of the public on agenda items until all members of the board have completed their comments and questions on an item.

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, he or she may not be recognized again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment.

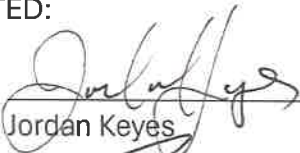
6. Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting. Neither members of the board, nor the members of the public, shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the meeting or interrupt or disturb any member while speaking. Members of the board and members of the public are prohibited from making personal, impertinent, threatening, or profane remarks.

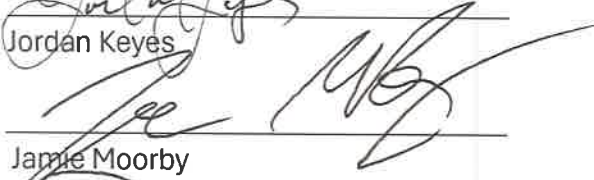
7. Members of the board and members of the public shall obey the orders of the chair or other presiding member. The chair should adhere to the following process to restore order and decorum

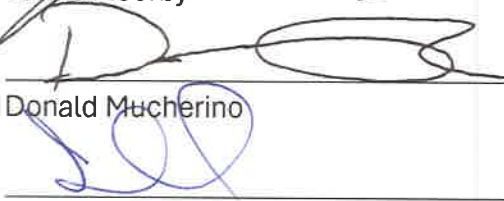
of a meeting, but may bypass any or all steps when he or she determines in his or her sole discretion that deviation from the process is warranted:

- Call the meeting to order and remind the members of the applicable rules of procedure.
- Remind members and the public that the agenda is a timed agenda, and the chair will enforce time allotments.
- Declare a recess or table the issue.
- Adjourn the meeting until a time and date certain.
- Order the constable to remove disorderly person(s) from the meeting.

ADOPTED:


Jordan Keyes


Jamie Moorby


Donald Mucherino

Anne Toolan


Anne Winchester

04/22/2024
Date

Last Revision Date: January 8, 2024

Next Review Due: March 2025