

ARTICLE 2 LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

SECTION 2-1: TOWN MEETING

The legislative powers of the town shall continue to be exercised by a town meeting open to all voters.

SECTION 2-2: PRESIDING OFFICER

The moderator, elected as provided in section 3-3, shall preside at all sessions of the town meeting. Annually, at the first session of the spring town meeting, the moderator shall appoint a deputy moderator to serve as acting moderator in the event of the temporary absence or disability of the moderator. The appointment of a deputy moderator shall be subject to ratification by the town meeting.

The moderator, at town meetings, shall regulate the proceedings, decide all questions of order, make public declaration of all votes and may exercise such additional powers and duties as may be authorized by general law, by this charter by by-law or by other vote of the town meeting.

SECTION 2-3: COMMITTEES

- (a) In General** - Subject to the provisions of this charter and such by-laws or other town meeting votes regarding committees as may be provided, the moderator shall appoint for fixed terms the members of such committees of the town meeting, special or standing, as may from time to time be established. In addition to such specific powers, duties and responsibilities as may be provided to a town meeting committee by the by law or vote establishing it, each such committee when acting within the scope of its authority shall have a right to examine the pertinent records of any town agency and to consult with, at reasonable times, any town officer, employee or agent.
- (b) Finance Committee** - There shall be a finance committee, the members of which shall be appointed by the moderator. The number of members, the term of office and any other conditions of appointment or service as may be deemed necessary or desirable shall be established by by-law. The subject matter of all proposals to be submitted to a town meeting by warrant articles shall be referred to the finance committee by the board of selectmen at the earliest practicable time following their receipt by the board of selectmen. The finance committee shall report its recommendations on every article contained in a town meeting warrant, in writing, together with a brief statement of the reasons for each such recommendation. Before preparing its recommendations the finance committee shall hold one or more public hearings to permit public discussion of the subject matter of all articles contained in the warrant.

SECTION 2-4: TIME OF MEETING

The town meeting shall meet in regular session at least twice in each calendar year. The first such meeting, to be held during March, April or May, on a date fixed by by-law, shall be primarily

concerned with the determination of matters involving the expenditure of town funds, including, but not limited to the adoption of an annual operating budget for all town agencies, and for the purpose of electing officers and for the determination of all other matters to be decided by ballot of the voters and which shall be deemed to be the annual town meeting. The second such meeting, the powers of which shall also be deemed to be those of an annual town meeting, except that it shall not include the election of officers of the determination of other matters to be decided by ballots of voters, shall be held during the last four calendar months, on a date fixed by by-law.

SECTION 2-5: SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special town meetings may be held at the call of the board of selectmen at such times as they deem necessary, or desirable, in order to transact the legislative business of the town in an orderly manner. Special town meetings may also be held on the petition of two hundred or more voters, in the manner provided by general law.

SECTION 2-6: WARRANTS

Every town meeting shall be called by a warrant issued by the board of selectmen which shall state the time and place at which the meeting is to convene and, by separate articles, the subject matter to be acted upon. The publication of the warrant for every town meeting shall be in accordance with a town by-law governing such matters.

SECTION 2-7: INITIATION OF WARRANT ARTICLES

- (a) **Initiation** - The board of selectmen shall receive at any time all petitions addressed to it and which request the submission of any matter to the town meeting and which are filed by: (1) any elected town officer, (2) any multiple member body acting by a majority of its members, (3) any ten voters for a regular town meeting and any one hundred voters for a special town meeting.
- (b) **Referral** - Forthwith following receipt of any proposed warrant article the board of selectmen shall cause *a copy of the proposal be delivered to the office of the Finance Committee*, a copy to be posted on the town bulletin board and shall cause such other distribution to be made of each such proposal as may be required by by-law.
- (c) **Inclusion on Warrant** - The board of selectmen shall include on the warrant for a regular town meeting the subject matter of all petitions which have been received by it forty-five or more days prior to the date fixed by by-law for the town meeting to convene. Whenever a special town meeting is to be called the board of selectmen shall give notice by publication in a local newspaper of such intention and shall include in the warrant for such special town meeting the subject matter of *all petitions which are received at its office on or before the end of business hours on the fifth business day* following such publication.

SECTION 2-8: AVAILABILITY OF TOWN OFFICIALS AT TOWN MEETINGS

Every town officer, the chairperson of each multiple member body, the head of each department and the head of each division within the said departments shall attend all sessions of the town meeting for the purpose of providing the town meeting with information pertinent to matters appearing in the warrant.

In the event any town officer, chairperson of a multiple member body, department head or division head is to be absent due to illness or other reasonable cause, such person shall designate a deputy to attend to represent the office, multiple member body, department or division. If any person designated to attend the town meeting under this section is not a voter, such person shall, notwithstanding, have a right to address the meeting for the purpose of compliance with this section.

SECTION 2-9: CLERK OF THE MEETING

The town clerk shall serve as clerk of the town meeting, give notice of all adjourned sessions thereof, record its proceedings, and perform such additional duties in connection therewith as may be provided by general law, by this charter, by by-law or by other town meeting vote.

SECTION 2-10: RULES OF PROCEDURE

The town meeting may, by by-law, establish and from time to time amend, revise or repeal rules to govern the conduct of all town meetings.