

POLICY FOR PUBLIC INPUT AND PARTICIPATION AT SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

Purpose

The Barre Town Selectboard has for some time offered the public and opportunity to speak with them at their regularly scheduled meetings. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines ensuring members of the public can deliver their verbal message to the Selectboard, meetings are conducted civilly, and meeting time is not unnecessarily monopolized by a single subject.

Receive Guests

The Barre Town Selectboard's agenda item "Receive Guests" is reserved for members of the public to address the Board on an appropriate topic which is not listed on that meeting's agenda. For the public's convenience, "Receive Guests" will come near the beginning of the meeting.

Appropriate uses of the agenda item would be (but are not limited to): (1) asking questions about Town Policy(ies); (2) submitting requests for Town action, except for regular Town Activities (which are handled by calling the appropriate department of Town Manager's Office); (3) appealing action or inaction by the Town Manager or staff.

Speakers must address the Board of Selectmen, except with their permission the speaker may ask questions of other individuals. Only one person will speak at a time after being recognized by the Chairperson. Generally, five minutes will be allowed per topic. If a group of people attends a meeting for the same reason, they should designate a spokesperson. Speakers should not repeat their message.

The Chairperson (or in his absence the Vice-Chair) may rule a speaker or other individual out of order for using foul language, yelling, or for making insulting, demeaning, or degrading remarks.

Whenever possible members of the public should contact the Town Manager's Office before attending a meeting. The advance notice could facilitate discussion and decision-making at the meeting.

Agenda Items

Pursuant of the Vermont Open Meeting Law, members of the public will be given a reasonable opportunity to express their opinion on items listed on an agenda. The same guidelines as described above shall prevail for these topics. Because the Selectboard acts in many different ways on a multitude of issues ranging from simple to complex, the Chairperson or Vice-Chair will determine at what point(s) during the discussion the public may speak.

EFFECTIVE: June 28, 1993