

Town Moderator's General Rules for Town Meetings

Time of Meeting: The meeting will be called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Structure of Meeting: After the Town Clerk presents the warrants and a vote is taken on them, the Town Council President introduces the Town Government budget and the School Committee Chairperson introduces the School Budget. Public discussion follows: To keep matters on track, there is no open discussion. Public participation is initiated by the presentation of a motion, by either a member of the Council or a voter. The motion must be duly seconded, at which point discussion on the motion may proceed as long as the discussion relates to the merits of the motion under consideration.

Motion and Amendments: Any motion may be amended, by a motion to amend duly seconded, but a motion to amend will not be entertained if it essentially negates the original motion or bears no relation to the original motion. Instead, further discussion and a vote on the original motion will be completed, and a new motion may then be made. Discussion on an amendment will take place, and a vote on the amendment will be taken, before discussion on the original motion may resume. If an amendment passes, the amended motion replaces the original

motion. If the amendment fails, the original motion is then voted upon.

Voting: By voice, hand, or standing count. If the Moderator cannot get a clear count by voice, the count will be performed by hand or standing vote, whichever the Moderator is more comfortable with.

Paper Ballots: Historically, each paper ballot vote takes between 1 and 1½ hours to process. For each paper ballot vote taken, all voters must approach the Board of Canvassers' table, identify themselves, have their names checked off, receive a paper ballot, sign and submit the ballot, and the paper ballots must then be tallied. One fifth of the voters must second a request for a paper ballot for it to carry.

Non-registered voters: Will be cordoned off in a separate area.

Speakers and Discussion: A person who wishes to be heard shall have three minutes to speak, with or without a microphone, before being asked to bring comments to a conclusion. All remarks will be confined to the motion/amendment pending, and addressed to the Town Council and the other voters. The Town Meeting does not present an opportunity for voters

to engage in debate and dialogue with other voters. This type of dialogue is appropriate for work sessions only. A motion to call a question and end further discussion is in violation of Rhode Island law, and will be denied.

Thank you for taking your time to review these guidelines before the Financial Town Meeting.

Pursuant to the Jamestown Town Charter, Sec. 1106, no motion which increases or reduces an appropriation recommended by the Town Council by \$10,000 or more, shall be in order at the Financial Town Meeting unless notice of intention to include such motion has been presented to the Town Clerk at least twenty (20) days prior to the date set for the meeting at which such motion is to be considered. The warrant of the Financial Town Meeting shall include notice of any such motion.

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