TOWN OF NEW LONDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

RULES OF PROCEDURE

SECTION I. PURPOSE

These Rules of Procedure describe the duties and methods of procedure of the New London Board of Selectmen.

SECTION II. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Meeting Location
   1) Most regular meetings of the New London Board of Selectmen shall be held in the Sydney Crook Conference Room, located on the second floor of the Town Office Building, 375 Main Street, New London. The Board may select an alternate meeting location as needed; such place will be properly noticed on the town website and bulletin boards.

B. Meeting Time
   1) Meetings of the New London Board of Selectmen shall be held on the first and third Mondays of every month and begin at 6:00pm, unless otherwise noticed, or continued to a specific time and date. Meetings will be limited to two (2) hours unless extended by majority vote of the Board.

C. Meetings open to the public
   1) All meetings of the New London Board of Selectmen and Committee thereof shall be open to the public, except as provided by RSA 91-A:3. Members of the public are encouraged to attend meetings of the New London Board of Selectmen.
   2) A public comments session shall be allowed at each public meeting.

D. Election of Chair/Ex-officio appointments
   1) Procedures for electing officers:
      i. Annually, at the first meeting of the Select Board after Town elections, the members thereof shall choose, by majority vote of the members, a Chair and a Vice Chair.

ii. In addition to the powers conferred upon Chair and Vice Chair, he/she shall continue to have all the rights, privileges and immunities of a Board Member.

iii. During the year the Board by majority vote may change the officers.

Ex-officio appointments to the Planning Board and Budget Committee, and any other Board or Committee that the Selectman may deem appropriate, will be made by majority vote of the Board.

E. Chairman (Chair)

1) The Chair of the Board shall preside at all meetings of the Select Board and shall be recognized as the Head of the Town for all ceremonial purposes.
2) The Chair of the Board has no regular administrative or executive duties. In the case of the Chairman's absence or temporary disability, the Vice Chair shall act as Chair during the continuance of the absence.
3) The Chair shall preserve order and decorum, shall recognize persons wishing to speak and shall decide all questions of order or procedure, subject to appeal to the full Board.

F. Duties and Privileges of Select Board

1) Selectmen shall address the Board, staff or the public in attendance, upon recognition of the Chair.
2) Comment and debate shall be confined to the subject matter of the issue on the floor for discussion.
3) No Board Member shall be interrupted while speaking, except for a point of order.

G. Selectmen Appointments to Town Boards and Committees

1) Prior to appointing any individual to a position on a Town board or committee (other than a temporary or ad hoc committee), the Town Administrator shall solicit interest from the public and nominations from current committee members.
2) At least one Selectman shall interview each candidate for a position and recommend one or more individuals for appointment.
3) Appointments shall be made by majority vote of the Selectmen.

H. Meeting Agenda

1) The Town Administrator, any Selectman or member of the public may place an item on the agenda by contacting the Town Administrator by noon on the Thursday prior to the meeting.
2) The Town Administrator shall arrange a list of such items according to the order of business outlined in part H, and the Town Administrator shall prepare an agenda for the Board.
3) Information to be placed on the agenda must be submitted to the Town Administrator by 12pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting.

4) A copy of the agenda and supporting materials shall be prepared for all Selectmen by the Friday prior to the scheduled meeting of the Board. The agenda shall be posted to the town website.
5) Discussion of agenda items will be called by the Chair in the following order: Selectmen; Department Heads; Citizens/Residents; Nonresidents.
6) The Chair shall call for a vote for all decisions of the Board; such vote shall be recorded in the minutes and indicate how each Member voted.
7) The Chair may allow, but is not required to allow, public participation during discussion of the Board at times other than public hearings and public comment. Any comments by the public on agenda items shall be limited to five (5) minutes per speaker and shall be limited to comments on the agenda issue under consideration. The Chairman may extend the time in his/her discretion subject to an override of the Board. That Chairman may also limit the number of speakers on a topic if in his/her opinion there is repetition, or a lack of additional relevant information being presented.

I. Order of Business
1) Call to order
2) Public Hearing if scheduled
3) Appointments
4) Public Comments
5) Old Business
6) New Business
7) Town Administrator Report
8) Committee Reports
9) Review of Minutes
10) Confirm upcoming meetings
11) Other business
12) Sign vouchers/permits
13) Nonpublic Session if needed
14) Adjournment

J. Town Administrator
1) The Town Administrator shall normally attend meetings of the New London Board of Selectmen.
2) The Town Administrator may take part in the discussion on all matters on the agenda, and all other matters concerning the welfare of the Town.

K. Recording Secretary
1) The Recording Secretary shall take minutes of meeting and perform such other and further duties as may be required by the Board of Selectmen or Town Administrator. In the event that the Recording Secretary is unable to attend a meeting, it shall be the responsibility of the Town Administrator to assign the duties to another staff person or take the minutes himself/herself.

SECTION III. ACTIONS FOR A PUBLIC HEARING

A. The procedures for a public hearing are as follows:
   1) At the outset of each public hearing the Chairman will announce the purpose of the public hearing and ask the parties wanting to speak to limit their comments to information within the scope of the matter that is subject to the public hearing.
   2) The Chairman may call upon the Town Administrator or other persons to describe the matter under consideration. This presentation shall not be under the five (5) minute limit but should be concise and to the point.
   3) Each speaker, for or against the matter for public hearing, shall identify himself/herself by name and address. Each speaker shall be limited to five (5) minutes. The Chairman has a right to forbid repetition among speakers and to require the speakers to speak to the matter. When everyone wanting to speak has had one opportunity to speak, the Chairman shall call for anyone wanting to speak for a second time. Second time speakers shall be limited to the time allowed by the Chairman, or as established by a majority vote of the Selectmen.
   4) Once all Town residents wanting to speak for a second time have spoken, the Chairman shall call for any nonresidents wanting to speak. These speakers shall be limited to five (5) minutes.
   5) During the hearing any Board Member shall be permitted to ask the speaker questions provided all questions are relevant to the matter that is subject to the public hearing. The Chairman shall retain the right to determine the relevancy of any question.
   6) The Chairman closes the public hearing.
   7) The Chairman shall then inquire if there is a motion by any Board Member. If a motion is made, it shall be in the form of an affirmative motion. Following the motion and its second, discussion occurs among the Board Members. The Chairman may call on an individual Board Member in the discussion. The Board may also delay a decision until a future meeting.

SECTION IV. CONDUCT WITH OTHER SELECTMEN, THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

A. The Board shall treat others with respect and respect the rights and opinions of the community despite differences of opinion. The Board expects to be treated the same.

B. The Board, when dealing with the Town Administrator and Town Staff, shall:
   1) Recognize the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside of the administration.
   2) Treat all staff as professionals and respect the abilities and integrity of each individual.
   3) Never as individuals publicly criticize an employee. Concerns of employee performance shall be handled with the Town Administrator or at the Board level, usually in nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3.
   4) Not give orders to any such officers or employees either publicly or privately except as a Board at a meeting.
   5) Direct questions or requests for information to the Town Administrator or directly to a Department Head.

6) Limit the request for staff support and insure that all requests go through the Town Administrator's Office.

C. The individual members of the Board in their relations with fellow members shall:
   1) Recognize that no member by their actions alone can bind the Board or the Town.
   2) No member, including the Chair or Vice-Chair, shall conduct any town business outside a regular scheduled meeting without the prior knowledge and approval of the Board at a meeting.
   3) Pursuant to RSA 91-A, uphold the intent of nonpublic sessions and not release or discuss items raised in nonpublic session.
   4) Refrain from communicating the position of the Town or Board to other entities (i.e. state and federal officials) unless the full Board has previously agreed on both the position and the language of the statement,
   5) Treat with respect the rights of all members of the Board despite difference of opinion.

D. As required by State Law, all business of the Town shall be handled in public session, with the exception of matters handled in nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3.

E. Any violation of this Section shall be reported to the Board within five (5) days of the occurrence.

F. Any discussion held, or action taken, within the closed session shall be considered closed to the public. Any person who reveals details of the closed session to the public is to be censured for their actions.

G. Members are deemed to understand the duties and obligations of their oath of office and the penalties for violation of that oath, as provided at RSA 42:1 and RSA 42:1-a.

H. Civil communication is exemplified by the following guidelines:
   1) Each member will listen with an open mind and with resilience;
   2) Each member will assume good intentions and motive from fellow participants;
   3) Each member will disagree with ideas, not about motives or personalities;
   4) As individual participations and as a group, each member will conduct a conversation that is respectful, fair, and kind;
   5) Each member will not interrupt, except to indicate that he/she cannot hear a speaker;

SECTION V. VALIDITY

The New London Board of Selectmen Rules of Procedures are guidelines and failure to follow the procedures contained herein shall not invalidate any action taken by the Board provided the action is taken is legally done.

SECTION VI. AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Amendments to these Rules of Procedures may be offered at any Board meeting but shall not be voted on until the next regularly scheduled meeting. All properly adopted amendments will be included in the Rules of Procedure and certified by signature of a majority of the Board.

SECTION VII. EFFECTIVE DATE

These Rules of Procedure shall take effect immediately following a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen at a regularly scheduled Selectmen's meeting.

Nancy L. Rollins

Janet R. Kidder

John A. Cannon

Date: April 19, 2021