

TOWN OF BECKET

Minutes
Town Meeting ByLaw Review Committee
5/6/2013
(APPROVED 6/3/13)

Members Present: Bruce Garlow (Chair), Rob Gorden, Ann Krawet, Jeanne Pryor

The meeting began at 1:00 p.m. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of 4/1/13 and the motion passed unanimously.

The first draft of the proposed amended town meeting bylaw, prepared by Bruce, was reviewed and discussed. It was agreed to use a consistent, unisex, style of personal pronoun (he/she, him/her). The committee discussed the need for a review of all Town Bylaws.

The following changes were made to the proposed amended town meeting bylaw:

SECTION 1. The Annual Town Meeting shall be held on the second Saturday in May at the Becket ~~Town Hall~~ Washington School or elsewhere as determined by the Board of Selectmen.

Be consistent in capitalization: warrant not Warrant; Town not town; Town Meeting not town meeting; all officers' titles and specific board names should be capitalized; Annual Report not annual report.

SECTION 13. Deputy Moderator. This will require a separate article as it pertains to appointed officials covered in the Town Charter. It was suggested that the title may be changed to Assistant Moderator.

SECTION 5A. (2) Each petition shall include boxes for the gathering of signatures, with residence, street and number, of registered voters of the Town on the front and/or the back of the petition. All signatures submitted for certification must appear on the petition pages containing with the text of the subject to be inserted in the warrant. Separate signature pages without such text shall not be accepted for filing, nor shall they be stapled or otherwise attached to a petition. The petitioner(s) may submit as many petition s pages as necessary to meet the required number of signatures.

SECTION 5C. Look at punctuation (; : ,)

SECTION 5D. The warrant for ~~that part of~~ the Annual Town Meeting for the ~~transaction of business~~ shall close for the acceptance of petitioned Articles on the

3rd Wednesday in March April 1, and for all other articles as determined by the Board of Selectmen.

SECTION 7. All informational materials relating to articles on the warrant and other information of interest to voters shall be placed on a table or other suitable location outside of the meeting hall. Copies of the warrant ~~–s–~~ and town reports may be placed at the registration table.

SECTION 8A.

1-A motion to "take no action" on an article contained in the warrant shall not be entertained ~~until~~ unless a motion incorporating the substance of said article is before the meeting and at least one voter has spoken in favor thereof ; ~~unless if~~, after a reasonable opportunity to do so, no voter makes such motion or speaks in favor thereof such motion may be entertained. A motion to "take no action" shall be debatable as to its merits, but not to the merits of the article itself. [Quantum? 2/3?] This motion shall be approved by 2/3 vote. [Bruce will work on language.]

SECTION 9. (second paragraph)

No person's vote shall be counted unless the voter occupies a seat, provided that the tellers, under the direction of the Moderator, ~~may~~ shall count the ~~voters~~ voters votes of those who are unable to obtain seats.

SECTION 12. The Moderator shall hold no other elective or appointive Town office except for serving on an ad hoc or special purpose committee.

Any person having a monetary or equitable interest in any matter under discussion at any Town Meeting and any person employed by another having such an interest shall disclose the fact of his interest or employment before speaking thereon

[No changes but Bruce stated that the Moderator will not have policing authority over this section.]

SECTION 14. No Annual or Special Town Meeting shall be dissolved until all of the Articles contained in the warrant for such meeting shall have been considered.

Town meetings may be adjourned to a date certain from time to time without the presence of a quorum.

The Citizens' Petition for Warrant Article form was reviewed and discussed. The following changes were suggested:

Increase type size in MGL section.

Provide contact information (phone #, email) for Town Administrator.

Petitions must be filed by the third Wednesday in March...

The Parliamentary Guide will be discussed at the next meeting. Halifax, Brookline, Mansfield examples should be reviewed. Other examples suggested were Middleton, Orange, Ipswich, Wareham. A glossary will also be developed.

The Baby Town Meeting and Candidate Forum were discussed and committee members thought it went well for a first effort. The best date for the next such meeting was discussed briefly.

Rob reported that he had no response from his contacts with Girl or Boy Scouts concerning babysitting or their participation at town meetings. Ann will prepare a notice for the town public notice/web page regarding the availability of rides to town meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne W. Pryor

List of documents discussed and/or distributed at meeting:

1. DRAFT REVISED TOWN MEETING BYLAW, MAY 6, 2013
2. Citizens' Petition for Warrant Article form