

ARTICLE XXXIV.
Rules of Procedure for Norwood
Representative Town Meeting

I. GENERAL: The proceedings of the representative town meeting shall be governed by the parliamentary motions contained in this by-law, as the same may be revised from time to time, unless another provision is made by statute or by these by-laws. When not otherwise specified by this by-law it shall be the duty of the Moderator, as provided by law, to regulate the proceedings of the meeting.

2. NOTIFICATION: The town clerk shall, after election of town meeting members notify the newly elected members of their election and the need to be sworn.

The Clerk shall also distribute to each such member a copy of the following:

Chapter 197, Acts of 1914 as amended, so called "Town Charter".

Chapter 541, Acts of 1947 as amended, Representative Town Meeting Act.

By-Laws of the Town of Norwood, as amended.

3. MEETING DATES AND TIMES: The Annual Town Meeting shall be called by the Selectmen for the second Monday in May of each year. All subsequent sessions of the Annual and all Special Meetings shall be held on a Monday or Thursday. No session of a town meeting shall continue past the hour of 10:30 o'clock p.m., unless in the Moderator's judgement it appears that the meeting may be able to complete its business and dissolve the same evening with a reasonable extension of time.

4. PHYSICAL CONDITIONS: It is the duty of the Selectmen to designate the date, time, and place of the meeting, and therefore to provide adequate space and equipment. The selectmen shall also appoint an appropriate number of constables or police officers to assist the Moderator in preserving decorum and to see that only town meeting members have access to the voting area.

The Moderator should arrange to have the hall divided so that the elected town meeting members are seated in a separate section or voting area, as well as for the seating of other town officials. He should have in mind the divisions of aisles to facilitate counting by tellers, access to the podium, public address system, projection equipment, etc.

The Town Clerk shall appoint checkers to record the attendance of town meeting representatives and to determine the presence of a quorum.

The Town Clerk shall provide an identification badge to each member. The badge will contain the members picture, name, and district number. Badges shall be distributed to town meeting members when they sign in and returned at the end of each session. Badges must be conspicuously displayed by the town meeting members in order to be seated and vote.

5. QUORUM: As required by the Representative Town Meeting Act, Chapter 541, Acts of 1947, a majority of the town meeting members shall constitute a quorum for doing business; but a less number may organize temporarily and may adjourn from time to time. If a quorum is not reached within thirty minutes of the time for which the meeting was scheduled to convene no action may be taken other than to adjourn to a time certain.

6. DEBATE: All registered voters of the town have a right to speak, whether or not a town meeting member. Any person wishing to address the town meeting must have permission from the Moderator which is obtained by first raising ones hand to be recognized. Only Town meeting members may offer motions and vote.

Once recognized by the Moderator, a member shall identify themselves by name and district number. Others speakers shall state their name and residence.

All speakers who may be spokesman (retained, paid or otherwise) for any group or individual affected by the article, must so state when identifying themselves.

No member speaking on an issue may close by making a motion to move the question.

The Moderator shall first recognize the sponsor of an article. The Finance Commission shall be recognized first for the article in the Annual Town Meeting or any Special Town Meeting calling for the appropriation of funds. The Moderator shall recognize the chairman of any board or commission who is required to give a recommendation on any matter immediately following the presentation by the sponsor of an article.

7. LIMITS ON DEBATE: The sponsor or initial proponent of a motion shall be limited in time to ten minutes. Presentations by groups shall be coordinated in advance with the Moderator and limited to a total of twenty minutes. Subsequent speakers shall be limited to five minutes.

Any speaker may be granted an extension of time by the meeting however no person shall receive more than one extension on any pending motion. The extension shall be for whatever length of time voted by the meeting.

The Moderator shall make a conscious effort to recognize an individual who wishes to speak for the first time, over those who have previously spoken to the issue. Procedural motions subject to debate and motions to amend are considered separate issues.

Nothing herein shall restrict the sponsor of a motion or any other person from addressing the town meeting as often as necessary to answer questions addressed to them by other speakers.

8. PRESENTATIONS: Persons or groups intending to refer to printed materials during debate should have said materials mailed to each town meeting member at least seven (7) days before the meeting.

The Selectmen or any other Board or Commission having responsibility over any negotiated contract to be voted upon, or for which money is to be appropriated, should, if at all possible, mail a summary of said contract to each town meeting member at least seven (7) days before the meeting at which the action will be requested.

9. METHOD OF TAKING VOTES: Unless otherwise voted by the membership prior to the taking of a vote, all votes requiring a majority will be by voice, i.e.: "Aye" or "No"; or by a non-counted standing vote as decided by the Moderator. The Moderator's determination of the vote may be challenged by no less than seven (7) members, and such a challenge requires a standing count of the votes. A counted vote once declared by the Moderator may not be challenged.

If a two thirds, four fifths or nine tenths vote is required by statute, a count shall be taken, and the vote recorded by the clerk; but if the vote is unanimous, a count need not be taken, and the clerk shall record the vote as unanimous.

A Roll Call vote or a Secret Ballot vote may be demanded by the meeting in the following manner:

Roll Call: A properly made and seconded motion from the floor. Adoption by no less than a majority vote.

Secret Ballot: A properly made and seconded motion from the floor. Adoption by a two-thirds vote.

Motions for either a Roll Call vote or Secret Ballot vote are not subject to debate, nor may such a motion be reconsidered. There is no appeal from the outcome of either of these methods of voting.

Negative vs Affirmative Votes: Defeat of a negative motion is not sufficient to establish an affirmative action. If no member offers an affirmative motion the Moderator shall inform the body that unless an affirmative motion is made the meeting shall move on to the next action. If no motion is offered the Moderator will move to the next article and the Clerk shall record that no affirmative action was taken on the article.

10. MOTIONS: The Rules of Order contained in this by-law have been selected from recognized manuals of Parliamentary Procedure, and amended as deemed suitable for the transaction of local affairs at town meeting.

Motion Key: Vote Required, the motions contained herein shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting, M, unless otherwise noted.

Second Required,=SR

No Second Required,=NS

Debatable,=D

Not Debatable, =ND

Amendable,=A

Not Amendable,=NA

Only a Question of Privilege or a Point of Order may interrupt another speaker.

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS: Relate to the conduct of the meeting. They take priority over all other motions: RANK

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| 1. | To Dissolve: | M, SR, ND, NA |
| 2. | To Adjourn to a fixed time, or recess: | M, SR, D, A |
| 3. | A point of no quorum: | NO VOTE, NS, ND, NA |
| 4. | To fix the time at which to adjourn: | M, SR, D, A |
| 5. | A question of privilege: | NO VOTE, NS, ND, NA |

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS: Are intended to assist the body to handle pending business. Ordinarily they are applied to main motions for the purpose of disposing of them. Occasionally they may be intended to apply to the main motion in competition

with each other. When they compete their order of rank determines the order in which they will be considered. If the higher ranked subsidiary motion is adopted it disposes of all other pending action.

- 6. To move the question (stop all debate and vote) 2/3 VOTE, SR, ND, NA
- 7. To extend the limits of debate: M, SR, ND, NA
- 8. *To postpone to a time certain: M, SR, D, A
- 9. *To refer to committee: M, SR, D, A
- 10. *To Amend (or substitute): M, SR, D, A
- 11. *To indefinitely postpone: M, SR, D, A

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS: Relate to the conduct of the meeting with respect to the pending business. They arise out of other questions, and, thus are considered before the questions which give rise to them. With respect to all other motions they have the same rank as the motion out of which they arise. They have no rank among themselves, therefore when they compete for application to the same motion, as they arise.

- Point of order: NO VOTE, NS, ND, NA
- *Appeal: M, SR, ND, NA
- Division of a question: M, SR, D, A
- *Separate consideration: M, SR, D, A
- Fix the method of voting: *M, SR, D, A
 - *(secret ballot requires 2/3 VOTE)
- See 9. METHOD OF TAKING VOTES:
- Suspension of the rules: M, SR, ND, NA

MAIN MOTIONS: The motions that bring the business outlined in a warrant article before the town meeting. Main motions shall be presented to the Moderator in writing. A main motion need not be the same wording as the article, however, it may not exceed the scope of the article. Articles are intended to give a general notice of matters to be considered. They should be interpreted in a liberal manner. They may be made only when no other business is pending. They have no rank and therefore yield to all relevant subsidiary and incidental motions. They also yield to all privileged motions. The vote required depends on substantive law. Generally a majority of those present and voting, but there may be many instances in which a statute requires some other proportion, such as two thirds, four fifths, nine tenths.

Negative Main Motions: At times it may be desired by the maker of a motion to recommend that no action be taken under an article. This is accomplished by offering a motion of Indefinite Postponement. Normally a subsidiary motion, it may be a main motion at town meeting. It may be made if no other motion is pending. The effect being to dismiss the article. All suitable subsidiary, incidental, and all privileged motions apply to this motion. If passed it has the effect of a negative vote, which is an affirmative action. (see METHOD OF TAKING VOTES: Negative vs Affirmative Votes)

RECONSIDERATION: 2/3 Vote, Second is required, matter is Debatable, it is Not amendable. A vote to reconsider is not final but merely a vote to give further deliberation, and renewed attention to the action to be reconsidered. A motion for reconsideration may be offered at anytime when no other business is pending.

A motion to reconsider shall be placed on the table and a vote taken as the first order of business at the next adjourned session of the Town Meeting. If no adjourned session is ordered, pending motions for reconsideration shall be placed before the town meeting immediately prior to acceptance by the Moderator of a motion for dissolution. When motions to reconsider more than one action are made, they shall be considered in the order in which they were offered.

A motion for reconsideration of a subsection of a passed motion may be made, when the original motion is susceptible to division, without first reopening the main motion under the article.

A motion to reconsider, if carried, may not be raised again unless the original vote is amended or reversed. (example: the original vote was in favor; the vote is reconsidered and the resulting vote is against; the vote against may once more be reconsidered.)

If a motion to reconsider is defeated, it may not be made again unless the Moderator determines that the circumstances have changed enough, or enough time has elapsed to make it reasonable to suppose that additional facts for discussion are available.

*Postpone To A Time Certain: This motion would be used to postpone one article until after some other article has been acted upon. The subject may be postponed to an adjourned session of the same meeting, but may not be postponed to a different meeting.

*Refer to committee: When the meetings want a matter to be given further study before a decision is made it may refer it to

a committee. The committee may be one of the towns permanent boards or a special committee. If a special committee is formed the motion should state whom appoints it and when the committee should make a report, i.e. the next special or annual town meeting.

*Amend (or substitute): A motion to amend may be made orally, however when required by the Moderator or the meeting, it shall be made in written form before a vote is taken. No more than two amendments may be entertained by the Moderator at any one time.

When the main motion and amendments differ only in figures, the Moderator shall arrange them in order and take the votes by starting with the largest sum. Once one of the figures receives a majority vote the other figures shall be dismissed.

When a motion to amend is passed, the main motion as amended, is still before the body and subject to debate, further amendment, and a new vote. A motion to amend requires only a majority vote, but an amended main motion requires the same quantum of vote required by the original main motion.

*Indefinitely Postpone: **As a Subsidiary Motion.** After the main motion is made the only way to suppress it is to indefinitely postpone it. If a motion to indefinitely postpone is lost, there is still an opportunity for defeating the main motion. As the lowest ranking subsidiary motion it may only be made while the main motion is pending. It may be made after an amendment has been acted upon, and the main motion, as amended, is still before the meeting (see negative main motion).

*Appeal: This motion recognizes that it is the duty of the Moderator to first decide questions concerning enforcement of the rules and the order of the meeting, but that is the privilege of any member to appeal from the decision. An appeal from the ruling of a decision of the Moderator must be preceded by a point of order. An appeal must be taken at the time the decision is made. If the appeal is seconded the maker states the basis for the appeal. The Moderator then explains the reason for the decision and puts the question, "Shall the decision of the Moderator be reversed?" A majority is needed to reverse the ruling of the Moderator, a tie sustains the Moderator.

*Division of a Question: If a motion is susceptible of division, meaning that each part makes sense and can stand on its own, then it shall be divided and the questions put separately upon each part by vote of the meeting.

*Separate Consideration: A motion for separate consideration may be made by a member, or in the judgement of the Moderator, when the separate parts of a motion will not stand alone, but the separation of the sections will promote orderliness to the debate. After separate considerations of the sections, the entire proposition is open to amendment. No action on any part is final until action is taken on the whole proposition at the end.

11. RULES COMMITTEE: The Moderator shall appoint a TOWN MEETING RULES COMMITTEE after the close of the Annual Town Meeting each year. Said committee shall consist of one member from each town meeting district who shall serve until their successors are appointed. The committee shall meet on its own initiative or on petition of any town meeting member or town official, for the purpose of reviewing the provisions of this by-law. They shall make recommendations for changes in the by-law when they believe said changes will assist in the orderly transaction of municipal business at town meeting.

12. SEVERABILITY: The provisions of this by-law are hereby declared to be severable, if any such provision or application of any such provision is held invalid, illegal or unconstitutional, such invalidity, illegality or constitutionality shall not be construed to affect any of the remaining provisions of said by-law.

(Special Town Meeting, May 14, 1990, Article 12)