

**TOWN OF BARRINGTON, RI**  
**BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE MEMBER**  
**INFORMATION PACKET**

Congratulations on your appointment to a Town of Barrington Board, Commission or Committee. You have made a positive step in being an active participant in the Town.

This handbook has been developed to provide guidance to newly appointed officials. Please use this handbook as a reference and as a guide to your dealings with other board/commission/committee members, constituents, the media, and others.

As a member of a town board, commission or committee," your participation and viewpoints will have both an immediate and long-term impact on the Town and our residents. We ask that as you hear proposals, and vote on outcomes, please remain conscious of how you see the future of Barrington and whether your decisions assist in achieving those goals.

Again, the Town of Barrington is grateful for your service and hope that you find your time on your board/commission/committee rewarding and know that you have made a difference in the lives of your friends, family, and neighbors.

## **BOARDS, COMMISSIONS and COMMITTEES**

The Town Council shall appoint members for and shall fill vacancies on boards and commissions in accordance with the Home Rule Charter of the Town of Barrington and/or as prescribed by the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island. All appointees shall be residents of the Town of Barrington. Elected officials shall not serve as members of any Town board or commission. The Town Council will designate liaisons to boards and commissions, who have no voting rights. Each board and commission shall annually elect a chairperson and a secretary; shall keep records of meetings and attendance; and shall submit an annual report to the Town Manager.

**BUDGET FORECASTING COMMITTEE:** The Budget Forecasting Committee is a committee of eight (8) members. They include two (2) members of the Committee on Appropriations; two (2) members of the Town Council; two (2) members of the School Committee; the Town Manager; the School Superintendent; the Municipal Business and Finance Director and the School Administration and Finance Director. The Committee meets to investigate new avenues to reduce costs and consolidate expenses, as well as, develop a 5-year budget projection for the school district and municipal government. A chair and scribe are chosen annually.

**BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW:** The Board of Assessment Review is comprised of three (3) residents of the Town of Barrington, plus one (1) alternate. Per the Town Charter, the Board must be comprised of a mix of political party members and cannot be all Democrat or Republican. The Town Council appoints members and the terms for Board members are staggered in three-year intervals. A majority of the members of the Board constitutes a quorum. The Board is aided by the Town Solicitor. The Assessor's Clerk sits as the Board Secretary. The Tax Assessor provides both technical answers and support for the current assessed valuation. The Board meets on an as-needed basis and the meetings are open to the public.

**BOARD OF CANVASSERS:** The Board of Canvassers is a bipartisan canvassing authority whose members are appointed by the Council to 6-year terms. The Town Council appoints three (3) bipartisan full members and two (2) alternates. The Board closely works with the Town Clerk to oversee the election process, meeting as needed to prepare for upcoming elections and the Financial Town Meeting.

**BRISTOL COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY:** The Barrington Town Council appoints three (3) appointees to the water authority board to a 3-year term; as does the Towns of Bristol and Warren.

**BUILDING BOARD OF REVIEW:** The Building Board of Review consists of 5 members appointed by the Town Council to a 5-year terms. The Board meets on an "as needed" basis. The Building Board of Review hears and renders decisions on requests for relief from the requirements of the State of Rhode Island Building Code.

**CEMETERY COMMISSION:** The Barrington Cemetery Commission was established in January 1909 when Frederick S. Peck, a Barrington State Legislator and prominent citizen, gave the Town of Barrington a \$10,000.00 endowment with the proviso that the citizens would elect five Commissioners, with 3-year staggered terms, to have all management and control of Barrington Town Cemeteries. The commission is scheduled to meet on the third Tuesday of the month. Since that time, no Town funds have been allocated for the care and maintenance of Barrington's six cemeteries. These include the two (2) active cemeteries (Princes Hill on County Road adjacent to the Town Hall and Forest Chapel on Nayatt Road) and Barrington's four (4) historic cemeteries (Allin Yard on Bay Spring Avenue, Tyler Point at the end of Jesse Davis Lane, Watson Yard at the end of Brick Pond Drive, and Knockum Hill which is accessed from New Meadow Road in Seekonk).

Per the Town Charter, the Commissioners of Cemeteries and Burial Grounds have full control and management of all cemeteries and burial grounds belonging to the Town. The Commission has the right to sell and dispose of burial lots belonging to the Town. For more information, see the [Town Charter](#).

**COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS:** The Barrington Committee on Appropriations is responsible to present the budget to the town residents at the Financial Town Meeting. The Committee meets regularly on Tuesday evenings in the months of February, March and April and May and as needed. The Committee reviews the budgets presented by the Town Council and School Committee. The Committee on Appropriations meets with the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools to examine their budgets in detail. There is a budget hearing, two weeks prior to the Financial Town Meeting, where the Appropriations Committee presents their preliminary budget proposal to the public for comment. As with all government meetings, these are open to the public. Detailed information about this committee can be found in the [Town Charter](#), sections 6-4-5, 6-4-6 and 7-2.

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION:** Conservation Commission members are appointed to 3-year staggered terms and serve as an advisory commission under the authority of the Town Council meeting the second Tuesday of the month.

The Commission will:

- formulate and recommend to the Town Council and other town boards and agencies, programs relating to the conservation of the Town's natural resources;
- review zoning applications related to Chapter 185, Article XXV-Wetlands Overlay District (185-169 to 185-179 and Chapter 185, Article XII (185-22-Setback from Wetlands and Water Bodies) and submit recommendations to the Zoning Board;
- review planning applications related to Chapter 200-Land Development and Subdivision Regulations and submit recommendations to the Planning Board on any and all conservation, environmental, or other issues related to the town's natural resources subject to any required revisions, if any, of Chapter 200;
- review all private and public excavation, digging, or any construction work that removed 20 cubic yards or more of soil or surface material including utilities,

- road construction or maintenance, or any work that require a RI pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) Stormwater Construction permit;
- provide recommendations on all such projects;
  - develop proposals and seek funding through the Town Council and Financial Town Meeting for acquisition of conservation lands and conservation management programs;
  - facilitate Town acceptance of gifts of lands, leases or easement for conservation purposes;
  - provide conservation related input into town development programs;
  - participate in the development, approval, and periodic revision of the Recreation, Conservation, and Open Space components of the Comprehensive Plan;
  - review and provide input on all maintenance or other plans for Recreation, Conservation, and Open Space areas owned by the Town of Barrington;
  - participate in the Stormwater Management Committee to provide public education programs and review of annual report.

The Commission also functions as the Tree Commission, meeting quarterly with the Barrington Tree Warden.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION:** The Economic Development Commission is charged with studying ways in which the Town can better serve local businesses and promote Barrington as a business-friendly community. The commission consists of 4 members from the business community and 3 members from the general community each serving 3-year staggered terms and is scheduled to meet on the third Thursday of the month.

**RESILIENCE AND ENERGY COMMITTEE:** The Committee advises the Barrington Town Council on short- and long-term strategies to promote energy efficiency, creating savings and reducing the environmental impact of town energy usage through conservation and the use of sustainable energy resources. The Committee provides education outreach and assistance to the citizens of Barrington in attaining these objectives. The 9-member committee serves 3-year staggered terms and is scheduled to meet on the fourth Monday of the month.

The Committee will:

- Coordinate goals and measures of the Barrington Strategic Energy Plan to increase the community's energy resilience. Monitor town and school energy consumption on an annual basis and make recommendations about opportunities to invest in efficiency and renewable energy.
- Assist with implementation of the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) to reduce risks and hazards to infrastructure and property in Barrington that may be caused by coastal erosion, storms, and sea level rise. Work with town officials and relevant Boards and Committees to develop and refine HMP strategies to address these risks.
- Educate and raise awareness among Barrington residents and businesses regarding Barrington's sustainability and resilience.

- Review and provide recommendations regarding capital project funding and other proposals put before the Town Council and Town Meeting which affect Barrington's sustainability and resilience.
- Coordinate with other relevant Boards and Committees on Resilience and Energy related issues to enhance effectiveness and avoid redundancy.

Committee members shall be identified with the goal of selecting members with the following skills and experience:

- Build environment technical expertise including buildings and energy systems.
- Environmental science related to wetlands, coastal systems, climate change, etc.
- Engineering fields related to erosion control, coastal infrastructure, etc.

Background in public outreach and education

**HARBOR COMMISSION:** The Harbor Commission meets on the second Wednesday of the month and consists of 9 residents appointed by the Town Council and they serve a 3-year staggered term. The responsibilities of Harbor Commission include:

- Working with the Harbormaster on implementing the Harbor Management Plan.
- Reviewing applications pending before the Coastal Resources Management Council or the United States Army Corps of Engineers relating to the waters of the Town of Barrington.
- Hearing appeals of Harbormaster decisions.

**HOUSING BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** The Town Council established the Housing Board of Trustees on July 10, 2006. Members serve 3-year staggered terms meeting on the second Wednesday of the month. The Housing Board assists the Town with the implementation of the Affordable Housing Plan, which is incorporated in the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan. The Board provides recommendations to the Planning Board on applications that include Low-Moderate Income (LMI) housing units. The Board also is responsible for setting standards, policies, and goals for the affordable housing trust fund (see Chapter 39 of the Town Code of Ordinances).

**JUVENILE HEARING BOARD:** The Juvenile Hearing Board hears all cases referred to them by the Chief of Police involving residents who are under the age of eighteen (18) that are charged with violating the criminal laws of the State of Rhode Island or the Town of Barrington. The board consists of 5 full-time members and 2 alternates serving 3-year staggered terms meeting on an as needed basis. Board members have a minimum 3-year residency requirement.

**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** The Library Board of Trustees oversees the operation, care, maintenance and expenses of the Barrington Public Library. The members of the Library Trustees are appointed by the Town Council to 3-year staggered terms and meet on the third Thursday of the month.

**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION:** The Parks & Recreation Committee advises and recommends to the Town Council rules and regulations concerning the use and maintenance of all athletic fields, playgrounds, parks and recreational areas. The board consists of 7 full members and 1 alternate each serving 3-year staggered terms and are scheduled to meet on the fourth Thursday of the month.

**PLANNING BOARD:** The Planning Board members are appointed by the Town Council for a 3-year staggered term and meet on the first Tuesday of the month. The Planning Board reviews applications for a Development Plan for businesses as well as subdivision applications. The Planning Board can also serve as an advisory Board as directed by the Town Council or in commercial matters that require zoning relief. The Planning Board is responsible for revising the Town's Comprehensive Community Plan every 5 years. Each member of a planning board or commission shall participate in training and education classes concerning the effects of development in a flood plain and the effects of sea-level rise once every two (2) years. Each member shall complete two (2) hours of training in order to be certified for the two (2) years required by this subsection. Upon completion of the training, the planning board or commission member shall file with the municipal clerk a statement asserting that the training course has been completed (§45-22-7(j)).

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE:** The School Committee consists of 5 elected members serving 4-year staggered terms. The committee chair and vice chair are elected annually.

**SENIOR SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD:** The Senior Services Advisory Board advocates for the needs of elderly residents. The board consists of 7 full members and 2 alternates each serving a 3-year staggered term and regularly meets on the second Thursday of the month.

**TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE:** The Technical Review Committee (TRC), established in accordance with R.I.G.L., §45-23-56, meets on the second Thursday of each month. Membership consists of seven (7) full members: 5 members are appointed by the Planning Board and 2 Planning Board members are appointed by the Planning Board Chair. Members serve 3-year staggered terms. The TRC conducts technical reviews of Planning Board applications, approves sign applications, and provides guidance to an applicant regarding procedure, technical requirements, and overall project design. The board meets on the second Thursday of the month.

**TOWN COUNCIL:** The Barrington Town Council consists of 5 elected members serving 4-year staggered terms and meet on the first Monday of the month. They are guided by the Rules of Procedure which they adopted on October 7, 2013; as well as, the Town Charter of the Town of Barrington:

**2-1-1 POWERS:**

All legislative powers of the Town shall be vested in the Council except such powers as are or may be vested in the Financial Town Meeting by the State Constitution, by this Charter, and by laws enacted by the General Assembly in conformity with the powers reserved to the General Assembly. The Council may enact and amend ordinances relating to the Town's property, affairs and government not inconsistent with the State Constitution and laws enacted by the General Assembly in conformity with the powers reserved to the General Assembly. The Council shall have, under this Charter, and may exercise all such additional powers and authority as are consistent with this Charter and have now been granted or may hereafter be granted to it under the Constitution or Laws of the State or by the Financial Town Meeting. The Council, by ordinance, may create, change and abolish offices, departments, or agencies other than those established by this Charter. The Council, by ordinance, may assign additional functions or duties to officers, departments or agencies established by or under this Charter. Without limiting the generality<sup>[1]</sup> of the foregoing, the Council shall have and exercise the following specific powers, subject to the provisions of this Charter and all applicable provisions of general and special laws:

- a. To enact, amend or repeal ordinances for the preservation of the public peace, the health, safety, comfort and welfare of the inhabitants of the Town and for the protection of persons and property.
- b.** To provide reasonable penalties for the violation of any ordinance not to exceed imprisonment for thirty (30) days and a fine of Five Hundred (\$500.00) Dollars.
- c. To amend, after notice as prescribed by statute and public hearing, the Zoning Ordinance.<sup>[2]</sup>
- d. To adopt rules governing the conduct of its meetings and to appoint regular, standing or special committees.
- e. To appoint the Town Manager for an indefinite term and to remove the Town Manager at the discretion of the Council, by vote of a majority of all members of the Council, with a public hearing, as the Council in its discretion shall determine. There shall be no right of appeal from the decision of the Council.
- f. To take any action necessary to give effect to any vote of the Financial Town Meeting authorizing the issuance of bonds for any purpose and to complete all the details of the bond transaction in accordance with the General or Special Laws of the State.
- g. To provide by ordinance for a personnel classification system<sup>[3]</sup> not inconsistent with applicable General or Special Laws or the provisions of this Charter.

h. To have the powers and authority conferred upon it by General Laws and applicable Special Laws concerning the speed, management and control of all vessels on the public waters within the confines of the Town of Barrington, and to regulate the size, type, location and use of all anchorages and moorings, and collection of fees for the same, within the waters or harbors of the Town, provided, nevertheless, that the harbormaster shall be appointed by the Town Manager.

i. To provide for the audit at any time of the accounts of the Town or any of its departments and to provide for an annual audit as hereinafter prescribed.

j. In the event that the Town Manager shall at any time be absent or unable to perform the duties of office, for a period in excess of twenty one (21) consecutive calendar days, or in the event that the Town Manager shall resign or be removed from office, or if for any other reason a vacancy shall exist, to designate an officer of the Town, other than a Council member, to serve as Town Manager, with all the powers and duties of the Town Manager, until such absence or disability shall have terminated or until a successor Town Manager shall have assumed the duties of the office.

k. To fix the amount of the official bonds of all officers of the Town, who in its opinion should be bonded, the premium on such bonds to be paid by the Town.

l. To fix by ordinance, in accordance with a classification plan, the salary of the Town Manager and the compensation of all officers and employees of the Town, except the employees of the school department.<sup>[5]</sup> The Town Council shall conduct an annual performance review of the Town Manager to be completed no later than March 1.

m. To elect such numbers of constables to serve civil process as it shall from time to time determine, and to charge and collect for licenses issued to such constables such fees as the Council shall fix by ordinance.

n. To provide rules and regulations with respect to vacations of town officials and employees, except those of the school department.

o. To enact all ordinances which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested in the Council by this Charter, the Constitution and laws of the State of Rhode Island in the Town or any department, or officer thereof.

**ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW/APPEALS:** The Zoning Board consists of 5 full members and 2 alternate members, all of whom are appointed by the Town Council to 5-year staggered terms. The board meets on the third Thursday of the month. The Zoning Board of Review hears and makes decisions on the following matters:



- Requests for relief from dimensional requirements relating to lot area, frontage, building coverage, setback and building height, including nonconforming structures
- Applications for special use permits
- Relief from the merger requirements for substandard lots of record
- Other matters as directed by the Town Council
- Appeals of a decision of the Building/Zoning Official

Additionally, the Zoning Board of Review will sit as the Zoning Board of Appeals to hear an appeal of a decision of the Planning Board.

## **MEETING CONDUCT**

Meetings must abide by and follow certain rules, procedures, and precedents. These come in the form of by-laws that pertain to the specific board, commission or committee, rules of order on how to open, conduct, and close a meeting, along with other useful guidance on meeting conduct (Robert's Rules of Order), and the Barrington Code of Ordinances.

Each board/commission/committee member should familiarize themselves with the ordinance specific to the Board/commission/ committee on which they serve.

### **BY-LAWS**

Typical by-laws will outline the purpose, make-up, and organization of the board/commission/committee, and may include location, date, and time of meetings, or any other provision that adds to the overall mission of the board.

### **PURPOSE**

Within the by-laws, the most important component is the purpose, or mission, of the board/commission/committee. This will specifically outline the reason why the board/commission/committee has been established and what is its mission. The purpose should clearly define why the board/commission/committee is in place.

### **RULES OF ORDER**

While there are other "rules of order" guidebooks, all meetings in Barrington are governed by Roberts Rules of Order. The chair of the board/commission/committee should be aware of these rules, such as, how to make a motion, how to second a motion, allowing discussion, calling for votes, recusals, abstentions, comments from the public, executive sessions, recording minutes, and other basic meeting procedures. These guides are available online, in local bookstores, and in the Town Hall, if you need a reference or clarification of the rules.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**ATTENDANCE:** All boards, commissions and committees are beholden to a "quorum." Without a quorum, the board/commission/committee cannot hold an official meeting, as there would not be enough voting members to constitute a majority. Without a quorum present, the board/commission/committee can do only a limited number of things, such as set the time and place for another meeting. Any substantive action taken in the absence of a quorum is invalid. It is vital to be an active member of your board/commission/committee. Board/commission/committee members, whether they are regular or alternate members, should notify the board/commission/committee chairman whenever they are unable to attend.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** No member shall take part in any process, hearing, opinion or decision of any application, preapplication or consultation in which the member has or appears to have a personal, professional or financial interest. In a situation where a conflict of interest arises, it shall be the responsibility of that member having the conflict of interest to disclose such conflict for the record. That member shall recuse themselves from proceedings during any and all discussions of the item presenting the conflict. A board member must recuse themselves from a vote in the case of a conflict of interest and fill out the necessary paperwork which is to be sent to the Ethics Commission.

**DEBATE/DISCUSSION** After the motion has been seconded, the chair of the board/commission/committee will restate the question/motion and ask if there is any debate/discussion. As stated above, the maker of the motion is the first to discuss, if they have anything to contribute to the discussion. If they do not have anything to debate/discuss, any other board/commission member may contribute to debate/discussion. Members can only speak twice on a motion and debate should be limited to ten minutes per person.

**MEETING:** A regular meeting time shall be set by a majority of all members of the board, commission or committee.

**MOTIONS:** Any member of a board, commission or committee can make a motion, so long as they "have the floor," meaning it is their turn to speak to the board or they have an opportunity to speak and there are currently no other questions or motions to the board/commission/committee. A motion is made as simply as stating, "I move that..." followed by the action that the board/commission/committee member seeks to address. After making a motion, the person making the motion has the first opportunity to speak in debate of the motion. Motions are, and should only be, the executable action desired by the person making the motion. Discussion on a motion is given during the "discussion" period of motions, as motions should not be preceded by a speech, but following a "second to the motion."

**SECONDS:** Once a motion is made, any board/commission/committee member should "second" the motion (seconding a motion does not necessarily mean that you agree with the motion). To "second" a motion, a board/commission/committee member simply needs to state, "I second the motion," "I second it," or, "Second." If there is no "second," the chair will make sure that all have heard the motion. If there is still no "second," the chair will so state and further state, "the motion is no longer before the board/commission/committee," immediately followed by, "the next item of business is..."

**VOTING:** After debate/discussion has been exhausted, the chair will "put the question/motion to vote." Board/commission/committee members will vote based on the typical voting style of the board/commission/committee, such as "ayes" and "nays". The chair will always call for the affirmative votes first, followed by the negative votes. The negative tally must always be called, regardless of how unanimous the affirmative votes appear. All voice votes are taken in the fashion: "All those in favor, say 'aye.'" "All those opposed, say 'nay.'" After the vote has been taken, the chair will announce, "the 'ayes' have it and the motion carries," or "the 'nays' have it and the motion is defeated." Each member of the commission, committee or board shall have one (1) vote. A member of a board, commission or committee may abstain from a vote in the case of a conflict of interest.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS:** The board, commission or committee shall hold all meetings open to the general public. Regular and special meetings of the board shall utilize the following order of business as appropriate:

1. Call to order by the Chairperson;
2. Roll call, or some means of introduction of members in attendance;
3. Reading, by request of any member, and amendment, if necessary, and acceptance of the minutes of previous meeting(s);
4. Committee or relevant reports (other than project review);
5. Special orders (matters previously assigned a special priority);
6. Unfinished business and general order (matters introduced in previous meetings);
7. New business (matters initiated in present meeting);
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment

**ORDINANCES:** Within the Code of Ordinances there are created boards, commissions and committees. The ordinances for same outline the membership, powers and duties and any other requirement pertaining to a board, commission or committee. All members of boards, commissions and committees should familiarize themselves with the ordinance specific to the board/commission/committee on which they serve.

**FULL VERSUS ALTERNATE MEMBER:** If you have been appointed to a board/commission/committee as a full member, it means that you immediately are a

voting member of the group. You will be called upon to be at all regular and special meetings. If you have been appointed to a board/commission/committee as an alternate member, it means that you are a "stand-by" member of the group. If, for whatever reason, a full member is not able to perform their duties, you may be called upon to vote. Alternate members should attend all regular meetings to stay informed of board/commission/committee decisions and how the group has reached their decisions.

**RESIGNATIONS:** If you are unable to meet the requirements of the board/commission/committee, you should speak with the chairman about your role and, if agreed upon, you should submit an original letter of resignation to the Town Clerk, with a copy to the board/commission/committee chair. The Town Clerk will place the letter of resignation on the next regular council meeting agenda for acceptance, after which the recruiting of a replacement will commence. Usually, the Town Council will accept the resignation with the understanding that the member's resignation is effective on the last day of the month of the acceptance.

**VOTING:** After debate/discussion has been exhausted, the chair will "put the question/motion to vote." Board/commission/committee members will vote based on the typical voting style of the board/commission/committee, such as "ayes" and "nays". The chair will always call for the affirmative votes first, followed by the negative votes. The negative tally must always be called, regardless of how unanimous the affirmative votes appear. All voice votes are taken in the fashion: "All those in favor, say 'aye.'" "All those opposed, say 'nay.'" After the vote has been taken, the chair will announce, "the 'ayes' have it and the motion carries," or "the 'nays' have it and the motion is defeated." Each member of the commission, committee or board shall have one (1) vote. A member of a board, commission or committee may abstain from a vote in the case of a conflict of interest.

**QUORUM:** Most of the whole number of members of the board, commission, or committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business unless otherwise specified by law.

## MEMBERSHIP

1. As authorized by the Town Council, the Town Clerk shall advertise the vacancy for the board, committee or commission on the Barrington website for at least 3 weeks prior to the appointment.
2. Applications for the various board, commission or committee shall be available at the Town Clerk's office and on the Barrington website.
3. Applications shall be completed and submitted to the Town Clerk no later than the advertised filing date.
4. Persons serving on boards, commissions and committees must be residents of the Town of Barrington.
5. Upon receipt of the application, the Town Clerk shall notify applicant by letter, email or phone call. The application shall remain on file for a period of one year from the date received and may be considered should a vacancy occur on a board, commission or committee.
6. The Town Clerk shall schedule an interview of the applicant with the Town Council.
7. All applications received shall be available for public review (private information shall be redacted) and will be used as part of an attachment with the Town Council agenda.
8. The Town Clerk shall notify individuals whose terms are about to expire, by letter, email or phone call to determine if that individual wishes to be considered for reappointment.
9. The Chairperson of each board, commission or committee shall submit a recommendation and an attendance record, to the Town Council via Town Clerk, for those individuals wishing to be considered for reappointment.
10. Any appointee who is absent without cause for three (3) consecutive meetings or 20% of all scheduled meetings of a board, commission or committee may be subject to removal by the Town Council. The Chairperson shall notify the Town Clerk, who shall in turn notify the Town Manager for direction. Should the Chairperson recognize any other attendance deficiencies, the Town Clerk shall be notified, who shall in turn notify the Town Manager.
11. A resident, with the permission of the Town Council, shall be able to serve on more than one board, commission or committee.
12. The applicant shall comply with all State Laws and Regulations as well as Ethics Commission requirements for appointees.
13. Chairs of a board/commission must attend the AG Open Government Summit (usually held in July/August) or must review the video ([www.riag.ri.gov](http://www.riag.ri.gov)). The Open Government Summit discusses the requirements of the Access to Public Records Act (APRA) and the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Additional information regarding the Open Meetings Act Checklist can be found at the <file:///H:/Town%20Clerk/Doc/Boards%20and%20Commissions%20Rules%20Reg/OGS2019Book.pdf>
14. Members will adhere to the Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy.

## **OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Being an officer on a board/commission/committee comes with a greater responsibility than regular members. You are looked to for guidance and leadership. In many cases, your opinion or concerns may carry more weight than others – whether that be real or perceived.

### **CHAIRMAN**

It is the chair's responsibility to be the "director" of the board/commission/committee. With that comes making sure there is quorum prior to the meeting, opening the meeting at the appropriate time, looking for motions and discussion on agenda items, directing debate/discussion on topics, and closing the meeting.

With regards to the topics to be discussed at any regular or special board/commission/committee meeting, it is up to the chair to set the agenda. An agenda may include:

- Call to order
- Approval of minutes of last meeting
- Discussions/Motions regarding old/new business
- Public Comments (While not required it is advised that as a public body you should allow for public comment.)
- Adjournment

Some boards/commissions/committees may need other items permanently on their agendas, such as reports or fiscal matters. These items will depend on the mission of the board/commission/committee. Items under "new business" or any new items that will be discussed must be listed on the agenda prior to the meeting to give citizens an understanding of what the meeting will entail and whether their presence is necessary. Please refer to your board/commission/committee by-laws for guidance on setting an agenda.

**IMPORTANT** – According to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), agendas for all regularly-scheduled meetings must be posted within 48 hours of the meeting, excluding weekends and holidays, in the Town Clerks office, on the Secretary of State's website and in 2 public places, such as the Town Hall and the Police Station.

\*As of January 1, 2018, the Open Meetings Act excludes weekends and state holidays from the calculation of the 48-hour notice requirement.

The board/commission/committee should select someone from among its members to record the proceedings, or the chair should make sure that someone is responsible for doing so, taking special care to record who made motions, who

seconded the motions, and how board members voted on agenda items. This is important, since pursuant to RIGL 42-46-7, all votes must be available to the public at the office of the public body within 2 weeks of the date of the vote. Minutes shall be available at the office of the public body within 35 days of the meeting or at the next regularly scheduled meeting, whichever is earlier. The board/commission/committee should also select someone from among its members to be the filer for the purpose of posting agendas and minutes on the Secretary of State's website. The filer can be the member who has been selected to record the proceedings. \*Once selected, the filer should send the draft/approved minutes to the Town Clerk's Office who will then post the recorded minutes to the Secretary of State's website.

Chairs of a board/commission must attend the AG Open Government Summit (usually held in July/August) or must review the video ([www.riag.ri.gov](http://www.riag.ri.gov)). The Open Government Summit discusses the requirements of the Access to Public Records Act (APRA) and the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Additional information regarding the Open Meetings Act Checklist can be found at the <file:///H:/Town%20Clerk/Doc/Boards%20and%20Commissions%20Rules%20Reg/OGS2019Book.pdf>

### **VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Vice Chair's sole responsibility, outside of being a regular voting member of the board/commission/committee, is to conduct the meeting in the absence of the chair. In this circumstance, upon assuming the role of chair, the vice chair should be well-versed in how to conduct a meeting, making sure the agenda has been developed and posted in the proper time frame, making sure there is a secretary for the meeting to take minutes, and that those minutes are properly posted with the Town Clerk in the proper amount of time.

### **SECRETARY/CLERK**

The board/commission/committee should select someone from among its members to record the proceedings, or the chair should make sure that someone is responsible for doing so, taking special care to record who made motions, who seconded the motions, and how board members voted on agenda items. This is important, since pursuant to RIGL §42-46-7, all votes must be available to the public at the office of the public body within 2 weeks of the date of the vote. Minutes shall be available at the office of the public body within 35 days of the meeting or at the next regularly scheduled meeting, whichever is earlier. The secretary/clerk of the board will email the draft/approval minutes to the filer (Town Clerk's office) for the purpose of posting agendas and minutes on the Secretary of State's website, as required by the Open Meetings Act.



## **FORMATION OF BOARD, COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE**

1. Upon the formation of a newly appointed town board, commission or committee, an organizational meeting will be called to order at which time the board, commission or committee will elect a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary/Clerk.
2. The Chair will be the presiding officer at all meetings, hearings and workshops of the body of which he/she is Chairperson. In the temporary absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall exercise all the duties and prerogatives of the Chair.
3. The presiding officer shall propound all questions and motions in the order in which they are moved unless the subsequent motion be previous in nature. The presiding officer shall distinctly put every question to vote.
4. All boards, commissions and committees shall have a secretary/clerk at each meeting to record all action and vote.
5. Members of the audience may be recognized to speak briefly on any matter on the agenda that may be before and under discussion by the board, commission or committee. The member of the audience must state their name and address to the board, commission or committee for the record.
6. Members of the audience requesting permission to read a written statement or letter, shall first supply a copy of the same to the secretary/clerk for the record.
7. The agenda for all meetings of a board, commission or committee shall be posted at least 48 hours, excluding weekends and state holidays, prior to the time of such meeting unless it is decided by the Town Manager/Town Council that an emergency exists. Public notices shall contain the date, time, location and subject (agenda) of the meeting. It is required that the posting be placed on the website of the Secretary of State and in two public places (one being where the meeting will be held).
8. After the meeting, the secretary/clerk/Town Clerk must make available to the public all votes of the members of the board/commission/committee pursuant to RIGL 42- 46-7. After approval of the minutes by the board/commission/committee, the secretary (filer) must post said minutes to the Secretary of State's website.
9. All meetings shall be open and accessible to the public pursuant to Title 42, Chapter 46 of the Rhode Island General Laws.

10. Boards, commissions or committees may appoint subcommittees composed of its own members to further its charge but may not appoint any members from outside their respective board, commission or committee, unless specifically authorized by the Town Council.
  
11. The Chair of a board, commission or committee will be responsible for the preparation of an annual report of the activities of the board during the preceding calendar year, including, but not limited to, a record or catalogue of all decisions and opinions issued by the board regarding the granting or denial of all applications made, proposed and adopted rules of procedure and standards of review, the effect of the year's activities in the Town, the attendance of members, any training sessions attended by any of the membership, financial statements, future goals, requests for additional support and any other pertinent data. This report shall be distributed to the Town Council for its review no later than March 1 and shall be placed on file in the Town Clerk's office for public viewing within a reasonable timer period thereafter.

## **REMOVAL OF BOARD OR COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Members of any board, commission or committee may only be removed for cause. Causes for removal are as follows:

1. Failure to meet prescribed standards of morality and ethics to an extent that make an appointee unsuitable for any kind service on a city board or commission, including, but not limited to malfeasance and misfeasance.
2. Theft, misuse or destruction of city property.
3. Incompetency, inefficiency or negligence in the performance of duties.
4. Conviction of a criminal offense.
5. Disgraceful personal conduct.
6. Unauthorized and excessive absences.
7. Acceptance of any valuable consideration which was given with the expectation of influencing a member of the board in the performance of his or her duties.
8. Falsification of records or use of official position for personal advantage.

Board, commission or committee members shall first have been served with a written notice of the intention of the Council to impose such discipline. This notice shall contain the reasons for the discipline and will fix a time and place not less than ten days after the service of such notice, at which time he or she shall be given an opportunity to be heard in his or her defense.