

## ARTICLE V. TOWN BOARD MEETINGS

### Sec. 2-51. Open meetings policy.

In recognition of the fact that a representative government of the American type is dependent upon an informed electorate, it is declared to be the policy of this town that the public is entitled to the fullest and most complete information regarding the affairs of the town as is compatible with the conduct of town business. All persons interested in the affairs of the town are encouraged to attend public meetings of the town.

### Sec. 2-52. Types of meetings and related rules.

(a) “*Regular meeting*” means the annual schedule for town board meetings regularly scheduled on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the town hall.

(b) “*Special meeting*” means a meeting called by the town chairperson at a different time from the regular meetings of the town board.

(c) “*Closed session*” means a part of a regular or special meeting that is closed to the public in accordance with law. Only members of the town board and other authorized guests may attend a closed session. Separate minutes shall be prepared, approved, and preserved in accordance with law.

(d) “*Public hearing*” means a meeting of the town board for the purpose of receiving testimony from the public on a specified item(s) of business. A public hearing may be a stand-alone meeting, or it may be held before, during, or after a regular or special meeting. No final action of the board is permitted at a public hearing.

(e) “*Work session*” means a meeting of the board for the purpose of an in-depth review and analysis of issues prior to consideration at a regular or special meeting. Formal action on agenda items at a work session is not permitted. Items considered at a work session must be

placed on the agenda of a regular or special meeting for formal action.

### Sec. 2-53. Setting the agenda.

(a) *Agenda.* For each meeting the chairperson or designee shall prepare an agenda of specific items to be considered. The agenda and supporting documents for agenda items should be submitted to the chairperson by 9:00 a.m. on the 7th calendar day prior to the meeting. Agenda items received after the deadline may be added to the agenda at the decision of the chairperson.

(b) *Order of business.* The usual order of business for the agenda shall be as follows, although special meeting items or issues may require exceptions for a specific meeting:

1. Call to order.
2. Pledge of allegiance, but only required for regular and special meetings.
3. Roll call; verification of public notice; approval of agenda.
4. Review, correction, and approval of minutes. All minutes of town board meetings shall be approved at the next regular meeting.
5. Special order of business (optional). This may occur at any designated time on the agenda.
6. Reports of town officers. No formal action may be taken, but issues may be referred to a committee or placed on a future meeting agenda of the board.
7. Reports of other public officials, other than town officials. No formal action may be taken, but issues may be referred to a committee or placed on a future meeting agenda of the board.
8. Public comments.

9. Specific matters for discussion and possible action.
10. Future meeting schedule and suggested agenda items.
11. Adjournment.

- (c) *Public hearing.* A public hearing may be scheduled on the agenda, subject to sec. 2-52
- (d).

**Sec. 2-54. Notice of meetings.**

(a) *Notice of meetings to members.* Not later than the 5th calendar day prior to a meeting, the town clerk shall mail the agenda and supporting documents for agenda items to each member of the board.

(b) *Notice of meetings to public.* The town clerk shall provide public notice of the meeting as follows:

- (1) A copy of the agenda shall be transmitted to news media who have requested to be notified of meetings of the town pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 19.84.
- (2) The meeting agenda shall be posted on each of the town's 3 bulletin boards located at the town hall, fire hall, and the Stop-A-Sec convenience store.
- (3) The meeting agenda shall be posted on the town's web-site.
- (4) The name of the meeting, date, time and location shall be published in the Northwoods Shopper, including notice that the detailed agenda is available from the town clerk or on the town's web-site.

(c) *Public access.* The agenda and supporting documents for agenda items shall be available to the public, except any documents related to agenda items to be considered in closed session may be withheld. Copies may be obtained from the town clerk.

**Sec. 2-55. Conduct of town board meetings.**

(a) *Presiding officer.* The town chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the town board. In the absence of the chairperson, the chairperson shall designate a town supervisor to act as the presiding officer.

(b) *Call to order.* The chairperson or designee shall call the meeting to order at the hour designated and proceed in the order of business stated in the agenda.

(c) *Withdrawal of agenda items.* Subsequent to agenda publication and prior to approval of the agenda, an item may be withdrawn from the agenda by a motion and second, approved by a majority of the members present.

(d) *Resolutions and ordinances.* All resolutions and ordinances shall be in writing and prepared as required by Article VII of this chapter.

(e) *Referral of items.* The town board may refer items to a committee for review and recommendation. The town board may, by majority vote, recall any matter referred to a committee and refer the matter to another committee or take other appropriate action thereon.

(f) *Conflict of interest.* If any member of the board has a conflict of interest regarding any matter coming before the board, the member shall immediately notify the presiding officer of the conflict and thereupon shall not participate in a discussion or vote or any action whatsoever with respect to the matter. The minutes shall record the name of the member declaring a conflict of interest.

(g) *Quorum.* No action may be taken at any meeting unless a quorum is present and votes.

**Sec. 2-56. Voting requirements.**

(a) *Fund appropriations, budget changes, and transfer of funds.* All resolutions requiring the transfer of funds, or a change in the purpose

of funds, or which call for a transfer from the general fund or the contingent fund, shall require a vote of two-thirds of the members elect.

(b) *New or expanded programs.* Any new or expanded program, service or contract, which requires the expenditure of funds, and such expenditure was not included in the annual budget, or any new employee position, except for those positions contained in the annual budget resolution, shall require a vote of two-thirds of the members elect.

(c) *Roll call.* The ayes and noes by roll call shall be recorded by the town clerk:

- (1) Upon request of a board member;
- (2) For resolutions or ordinances containing an appropriation of money;
- (3) For all other matters requiring greater than a majority vote for passage.

**Sec. 2-57. Parliamentary rules.**

(a) *Roberts Rules.* Rules not specifically covered by this Article shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.

(b) *Special rules of order.* The town board hereby adopts these special rules of order for the conduct of meetings of the board:

1. *Introduction of item without motion.* An item on the agenda for discussion and possible action may be introduced by a member of the board while no motion is pending for the purpose of presenting background information on the agenda item. A motion and second is required prior to proceeding into formal consideration and debate on the agenda item.
2. *Unanimous consent.* The chairperson may ask for unanimous consent of an agenda item without a formal vote. If there is an objection, then a motion, second and formal vote is required.

(c) *Main motion.* A main motion may be made only when no other motion is pending. A motion shall be stated in the positive so that when a vote is taken, yes means yes and no means no.

(d) *Subsidiary motions.* A subsidiary motion may be used to modify or dispose of a main motion and takes precedence over a main motion.

1. A main motion may be amended by a primary amendment, and the primary amendment by a secondary amendment. The amendments shall be voted on in reverse order.
2. Motions to table, to limit or extend debate, to postpone, to refer, or other subsidiary motions may be used to dispose of a main motion.

(e). *Privileged motions.* Privileged motions may be used to address matters of immediate importance not related to pending business.

(f). *Incidental motions.* Incidental motions may be used to change the procedure for handling the pending business but do not change what is being considered.

(h) *Motions to bring a question again before the board* shall be used to bring business already decided back before the board.

(i). *Chart of motions.* *Robert Rules of Order Newly Revised* are summarized in the chart attached to this Chapter as Appendix B and shall be referenced when ruling on the precedence of motions.

**Sec. 2-58. Public comment at meetings.**

(a) *Policy.* A public comment period shall be included on all regular and special committee agendas. Public comment at a work session of the board may be allowed by consent of the board.

- (b) *Public comment rules.*
- (1) *Speaker.* The chairperson shall first recognize the speaker. The speaker shall provide the town clerk with his/her name prior to speaking. Each speaker shall be limited to three minutes.
- (2) *Speaker limitations.* Speakers shall address the board and present comment on public issues, not individual persons. Repetitious comments are discouraged and may be stopped by the chairperson. Anyone making threatening remarks may be asked to leave the building.
- (3) *Public hearing items.* Public comment shall not be permitted with respect to any item that has been the subject of a previously noticed public hearing.
- (4) *Board deliberations.* Public comment will be ended prior to discussion on the topic by the town board. Deliberation or action on the topic is limited to the topic as noticed on the meeting agenda.

- (5) *Written comments.* Individuals may provide information to the town board by submitting a written communication to the town chairperson.

**Sec. 2-59. Minutes.**

- (a) The town clerk or designee shall prepare all minutes of meetings of the town board. When a closed session is held and the clerk is not included in the closed session, the chairperson shall designate a board member to record the minutes of the closed session.
- (b) Minutes are the official, legal record of the public meeting. It is the duty of each member of the board to read the minutes and offer corrections prior to adoption.
- (c) Records of minutes shall be retained permanently. Minutes of all open meetings are public records and shall be made accessible to the public.

## ARTICLE VI. ADVISORY COMMITTEES

### Sec. 2-61. Policy.

The Town of Wascott will conduct all town business in an atmosphere that is open and transparent with the goal of enhancing trust and understanding. The town board encourages the participation of all community members in activities of the town. Comments of community members will be received and given respectful and fair consideration as the board reaches decisions on issues under consideration.

### Sec. 2-62. Advisory committees.

(a) *Policy.* The town board hereby adopts a policy of establishing citizen advisory committees to assist the town board in the oversight of all town functions.

(b) *Application.* The town shall give public notice to the community inviting interested persons to submit a letter of application for service on an advisory committee of the town. Members shall be selected based on qualifications, prior experience and demonstrated commitment to the values of public integrity and best practices in local government. Members may be qualified electors or taxpayers of the town.

(c) *Appointment.* The town chairperson shall appoint members to advisory committees, subject to confirmation of the town board. Advisory committee members shall serve at-will and may be removed or reassigned by the town chairperson. Appointments shall expire upon the termination of the chairperson's term of office. Past members of a committee may be reappointed at the discretion of the succeeding chairperson.

(d) *Ex officio members.* Town supervisors not appointed to a committee shall be non-voting ex officio members of each advisory committee, but attendance is not required.

(e) *Committee duties.* The town board shall adopt written duties for each committee appointed by the chairperson.

(f) *Advisory recommendations.* All recommendations of an advisory committee are subject to final approval of the town board at a properly noticed regular or special meeting of the town board. Even though a quorum of town board supervisors may be present at an advisory committee meeting, final action is not permitted on items of business at the committee meeting.

(g) *Scope of authority.* A committee shall at all times be the agent of the town and while acting within the limits of their authority neither the committee nor any member thereof shall incur any liability by reason of anything done or left undone by the committee; provided however, that nothing contained in this section shall authorize or empower the committee to incur any debt, liability or obligation for which the town shall become liable without having previously obtained the consent of the town board.

(h) *Duties as public officials.* All members of advisory committees shall faithfully discharge their duties as public officials to the best of their abilities. Members are responsible for complying with the ordinances, resolutions and rules of the Town, and with the provisions of Wisconsin Statutes on: public records, code of ethics for local government officials, open meetings, misconduct in office, and private interests in public contracts. (Wis. Stats., §§ 19.21-19.39, 19.42, 19.58-19.59, 19.81-19.89, 946.12-946.13)

### Sec. 2-63. General committee rules.

(a) *Chairperson and clerk.* A town board supervisor shall serve as chairperson of an advisory committee. The chairperson shall appoint a committee clerk.

(b) *Attendance.* Members of committees are expected to be present at all meetings. Any unavoidable absence should be reported to the chairperson or clerk prior to a scheduled meeting.

(c) *Agenda and meeting notice.* A written agenda and meeting notice shall be prepared as required by sec. 2-53. Each committee shall

meet at least four times per year, with additional meetings at the call of the chairperson.

(d) *Public comment.* Every meeting agenda shall include a public comment period to allow members of the public to present comments to the committee.

(e) *Parliamentary procedure.* Parliamentary procedure shall apply to the conduct of all advisory committee meetings.

(f) *Compensation and expenses.* Members of advisory committees shall serve on a voluntary basis and shall not receive pay or mileage reimbursement to attend committee meetings. When authorized in advance by the town board, members may be reimbursed for business or training expenses.

(g) *Public records.* Written minutes of each meeting shall be prepared by the committee

clerk within 5 days of the meeting and filed with the town clerk. A copy of all handouts and written materials considered at the meeting shall be filed with the minutes.

**Sec. 2-64. Alternate members.**

(a) To avoid postponement of decisions due to absences, lack of a quorum, resignations or conflict of interest, alternate members may be appointed to an advisory committee or commission.

(b) An alternate member of a committee or commission may participate in discussions at meetings, but may only vote when the chairperson has designated the alternate member to temporarily act due to the absence or abstention of a regular member.

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