

## **SELECT BOARD POLICY FIVE**

### **Select Board Meetings Public Comment Policy and Procedure**

All regular and special meetings of the Select Board shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Select Board desires residents of the town to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with town functions, operations, and programs. In addition, the Board welcomes information, concerns and ideas from the public. In order that all residents who wish to be heard before the Board have an opportunity to speak and to ensure the ability of the Board to conduct the town's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. Unless otherwise stated on the Select Board's agenda, at the start of each regularly scheduled Select Board meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address comments to the Select Board. The Chair shall determine the length of the public participation segment. The Board reserves the right to rearrange its agenda to accommodate scheduled presenters.
2. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding Chair may permit extension of this time limit.
3. Topics for discussion must be limited to those items listed on the Board's meeting agenda for that meeting or items within the purview or scope of responsibility of the Select Board.
4. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair of the meeting, and should not be addressed to individual Board members.
5. Speakers will state their names and street address for the record.
6. Speakers are encouraged to offer such objective criticisms of the town operations and programs as concern them, but are advised that under most

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circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.

7. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented to the Board before or after the meeting for the Board members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.

Reference:

**Mass. Gen. Laws, Chapter 30A: Section 20 (f). Regulation of participation by public in open meetings**

*Section 20 (f). No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the chair, and all persons shall, at the request of the chair, be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body. If, after clear warning from the chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting and if the person does not withdraw, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.*