

**Town of Dracut  
Board of Selectmen  
By-Laws  
August 12, 2003**

**1. By-laws and Adoption**

1.1 These by-laws are intended to supplement and implement all other controlling statutes and laws, including, but not limited to, Massachusetts General Laws, Roberts Rules of Order, Town By-Laws and the Town Charter. Any direct conflict or contradiction that these by-laws create with controlling statutes and by-laws will be resolved by reference to the controlling statutes or laws.

1.2 These by-laws will take effect immediately upon their adoption by a super majority – a 4/5ths vote of the Board of Selectmen (Board). Any subsequent change will require a 4/5ths vote.

**2. Meetings**

2.1 Regularly scheduled meetings will be held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. By majority vote in advance, meetings may be eliminated from the schedule, particularly in the summer months.

2.2 Special meetings will be held (a) by majority vote of the Board at a regular meeting or (b) by mutual agreement of a majority of the Board, coordinated through the Board's Secretary. Special meetings will only take up those subjects that have been specifically identified as the purpose of the special meeting.

2.3 Open Meeting Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will be completely complied with regarding written notice (posting) of the meeting and public access to the meeting.

2.4 Emergency meetings – meetings that do not conform to normal notice requirements – will only be held in the case of an emergency. Emergency is defined as a situation where failing to act may create a significant threat to the life or physical well being of the citizens of Dracut, or a significant loss of property by the Town or its citizens.

### 3. **Agendas**

- 3.1 Agendas will be prepared in advance of all regular meetings by the Secretary with the advice and consent of the Chairperson. Agenda items may be requested by members through the Chair, or can be directed for a subsequent meeting by a majority vote. The cut off for agenda items for regular Tuesday meetings is the preceding Thursday at close-of-business.
- 3.2 Items brought up under New Business, and items that are both not on the agenda and have not been the subject of direct and recent discussion by the Board, may not be acted upon by Board vote unless there is no objection. A single member can raise an objection. Votes to table an item, schedule a special meeting to consider it, or place it on the agenda for a subsequent regular meeting are not considered “acting upon” an item for purposes of this paragraph and may be taken.
- 3.3 Community Input will be limited to three minutes per individual and fifteen minutes in total. Any individuals wishing to participate must sign up and list the topic for discussion with the Secretary in advance of the beginning of the meeting.

Only relevant topics dealing with Town issues may be discussed and absolutely no personal attacks or allegations of criminal misconduct may be discussed without the Board’s approval.<sup>1</sup>

### 4. **Organization**

- 4.1 An agenda item covering reorganization will be placed at or near the beginning of the first regular meeting following a Town Election. The then current Chairperson will start the meeting and take up this agenda item. Robert’s Rules will be followed for nomination and election of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Clerk.
- 4.2 The Vice Chairperson will take up the duties of the Chairperson only in the following circumstances: (a) during a meeting when requested by the Chairperson, (b) at a meeting when required to do so because of the absence of the Chairperson for all or part of the meeting, (c) outside of a meeting to set an agenda for a regular meeting if the Chairperson is out of state or incapacitated, or (d) outside of a meeting to set an agenda for a regular meeting if the Chairperson himself/herself indicates, through the Secretary, that he/she is not available and requests the Vice Chairperson to act in his/her stead.

---

<sup>1</sup> 3.3 As amended by the Board of Selectmen at their meeting April 10, 2012.

## 5. Committees and Subcommittees

5.1 There are three kinds of committees and subcommittees that the Board of Selectmen utilizes.

5.1.1. *Statutory Committees* required by state law or Town Charter. Examples are the Arts Council, Historical Commission and certain members of the Community Preservation Committee. These appointments can only be made by a majority vote of the Board during a regular meeting.

5.1.2. *Discretionary Standing Subcommittees* are committees that the Board has deemed fit to constitute for specific purposes where terms are indefinite. Examples are the Open Space Committee and the Public Safety Subcommittee. The exact makeup, charter and participants require a majority vote of the Board during a regular meeting.

5.1.3. *Discretionary Ad-Hoc Subcommittees* are committees consisting of Selectmen, Town Officials, private citizens, members of other elected or appointed boards, or any combination thereof, intended to address a short-term issue and reach a resolution. Recent examples include the subcommittee to study zoning by-law changes (with private citizens and members of the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals), the Joint Budget Task Force (with members of the School Committee and the Finance Committee) and various Selectmen Subcommittees to interview Town Accountant candidates and to study PILOT agreements, TIF agreements, and the like. The committees are limited to a six month duration and are constituted and appointed by the Chairperson at a regularly scheduled meeting. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees can also be formed by a majority vote of the Board. The six month time limit can be extended by a majority vote of the Board.

5.1.4. Discretionary subcommittees constituted under 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 must render a report to the Board as necessary, but at least once each calendar quarter and the end of their charters.

\* \* \* \* \*

Voted: 5-0 approval August 12, 2003