

TOWN OF HUDSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE



DRAFT

MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE BYLAWS

Contents

Section I	Purpose.....	3
Section II	Organization	3
Section III	Vacancies	3
Section IV	Duties of Officers.....	3
Section V	Responsibilities and Duties of the Committee	4
Section VI	Forfeiture or Removal from Office	5
Section VII	Conduct of Meetings.....	5
Section VIII	Adoption and Amendment	9
Section IX	Severance	10
Section X	Email Communication	10

Section I Purpose

- A. The purpose of the Bylaws of the Budget Committee is to define the composition, terms of office, vacancies, functions and duties of the Committee.

Section II Organization

- A. Membership - The Committee shall comprise of the elected members at Large as determined by Town Meeting adoption of RSA 32, and those appointed by the Budget Committee (RSA 32:15 VII).
- B. Officers - Nominations of, and elections for, all Officers shall be by a majority vote of those present.
1. A Chairman, Vice Chairman, Clerk and Alternate Clerk shall be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting following Annual Town Meeting, but not later than April 30.
 2. In the case of a vacancy in the position of Chairman after such election, the Vice Chairman shall immediately succeed to the position of Chairman. The Clerk shall thereupon succeed to the position of Vice Chairman. The Alternate Clerk shall move up to Clerk. A new Alternate Clerk shall be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting after the Alternate Clerk's position becomes vacant.
 3. In the case of a vacancy in the position of Vice Chairman after such election, the Clerk shall immediately succeed to the position of Vice Chairman, the Alternate Clerk shall move up to Clerk. A new Alternate Clerk shall be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting after the Alternate Clerk's position becomes vacant.

Section III Vacancies

- A. A Member-at-large vacancy occurring during the year shall be filled by appointment by majority vote of the Budget Committee members-at-large as provided by RSA 32 within sixty (60) days. Persons so appointed shall serve as Member-at-large until the next annual town meeting when a successor shall be elected to fill the remaining unexpired term or start a new term as the case may be.

Section IV Duties of Officers

- A. Chairman
1. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Committee and perform such duties as required by Statute.

2. The Chairman shall schedule all meetings, assemble the agenda and related materials for all regular and special meetings of the committee, schedule meeting rooms and notify all members of said schedule.
3. The Chairman shall execute all documents requiring signature on behalf of the Committee, except as otherwise provided by Statute.
4. All correspondence from the committee will be copied to each member and signed by the chairman. Debate/discussion on correspondence will be held in open session and not via e-mail.
5. **Appoint Members at Large to serve on sub-committees as needed and also to serve as liaisons to citizen committees when appropriate (Clegg)**

B. Vice Chairman

1. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall preside over and assume all duties and responsibilities of the Chairman in addressing the business of any regularly scheduled or special meeting.
2. Assist the Chairman in scheduling and coordinating materials for all regularly scheduled and special meetings of the Committee.

C. Clerk

1. The Clerk is the custodian of the official minutes of meetings and shall sign same as revised and approved.
2. The Clerk is the custodian of all correspondence and other documents as may be forwarded to the Committee for review and/or action.
3. In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman, the Clerk shall preside over and assume all duties and responsibilities of the Chairman in addressing the business of any regularly scheduled or special meeting.

D. Alternate Clerk

1. In the absence of the Clerk, the Alternate Clerk shall become the custodian of the official minutes for the meeting.

Section V Responsibilities and Duties of the Committee

- A.** The Budget Committee shall review all requests for budgets and all revenue estimates and shall give consideration to all lawful requests for the ensuing fiscal year and to review expenditure reports periodically pursuant to RSA 32 as may be amended from time to time.

- B. The Budget Committee shall review any audit reports submitted on behalf of any auditor for the Town or School District as such report(s) become available. Audit reports shall be forwarded to the Chair of the Budget Committee by the Select Board and School Board upon their receipt.
- C. Attend Annual and Special Town and School District meeting.
- D. Duly appointed Committee Members-at-large may represent the Budget Committee on citizens' or other sub-committees as appointed by the Chairman.
- E. Members-at-large shall act collectively as a body unless authorization is given a member to act as representative and with specific instruction of that body to do so.
- F. It shall be the policy of the Municipal Budget Committee to require two (2) calendar days to review any warrant articles of the Town and School District that require Municipal Budget Committee signature. This policy may be waived at the discretion of the Municipal Budget Committee Chairman.

Section VI Forfeiture or Removal from Office

- A. Pursuant to RSA 32:15 VI, any Member shall cease to hold office immediately upon missing four consecutive scheduled or announced meetings, of which that Member received reasonable notice, without being excused by the Chairman.
- B. Consideration shall be given to Members-at-large for absences under the circumstance of prolonged illness or other just cause.
- C. Barring unforeseen circumstances, notification of an absence shall be made to both the Chairman and Vice- Chairman by 5:00 p.m. the day of the meeting or it will be considered an unexcused absence.

Section VII Conduct of Meetings

- A. General Provisions
 - 1. Organizational Meeting - The date for an Organizational Meeting to elect officers shall be the Committee's first regularly scheduled meeting following the Town elections. All elected Members at Large are requested and required to participate in the Organizational Meeting. Said meeting shall be held no later than April 30.
 - 2. Regular Meetings - A schedule of regular meetings through March 31 of the following year shall be agreed upon by the last meeting in May. Said schedule shall be set by majority vote of the elected Members-at-large present and shall be effective through the conclusion of the next Annual

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- Town Meeting. Said schedule may be amended by a majority vote of the elected Members-at-large present at any duly noticed meeting.
3. Special Meetings - Special Meetings may be called by the Chairman or by three (3) elected Members of the Committee. The Member(s) calling the meeting shall notify all other Members forty eight (48) hours in advance of the Special Meeting. Said notice shall state the purpose of the Special Meeting. **Notice shall follow the procedure for public notices by an elected body representing the residents of Hudson.**
 4. Public Hearings - The recommended budgets shall be set by a majority vote of the Budget Committee Members-at-large and shall be subject to public hearing rules set forth in RSA 32 and as amended from time to time.
 5. Annual and Special Town and School District Meetings - The Chairman shall announce each budget request and the Committee's recommendation, explain the basis for such recommendation, and the results of the vote taken for such recommendation. The Chairman may ask for an explanation of the minority position if so requested.
 6. Sub-Committees - Meetings shall be called as required by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee. Written reports from Sub-Committees shall be entered into the minutes of the Budget Committee's meeting at which they are presented.
 7. Preliminary Budget Review-While reviewing a department's Preliminary Budget, any elected Member of the Committee at any time during the proceedings can request additional information. **Information shall be requested through the chair of the Budget Committee to avoid duplicate requests and to insure all members are recipients of the same information.**
- B. Quorum - A quorum shall consist of five voting members of the Budget Committee or a majority of the voting members currently sitting on the committee in the event the committee is not fully staffed. **A voting member is a member duly elected as a Member at Large or appointed to fill the seat of a duly elected Member-at-large.**
- C. Order of Business or Agenda is recommended as follows:
- a. Call to order
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance
 - c. Attendance
 - d. Public Input
 - e. Report of Committees
 - f. Acceptance of Minutes
 - g. Old Business
 - h. New Business – to include

1. From Sub-Committee(s)
2. From Members
3. From Members of the School Board, Selectmen, Department Heads and Citizens
- i. Other Business/Comments
- j. Adjournment

D. Role of the Chairman (and the Vice Chairman in the Chairman's absence)

1. Open the meeting at the prescribed time by a Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Announce the business before the Committee in the order in which it is to be acted upon and/or entertain motions to change such order.
3. Recognize Members and/or meeting attendees, entitling said Members and/or attendees to the floor.
4. State and put to vote all questions which are regularly called, or necessarily arise in the course of the proceedings and to announce the result of the vote.
5. Protect the Committee from annoyance **using discretion which allows the people of Hudson to vet their ideas, complaints, frustrations, and admirations if they so desire. A reasonable time limit may be placed upon speakers so that others may have time as well.**
6. Assist in expediting all business in every way compatible with the rights of the Members by allowing brief remarks when undebatable Motions are pending or by calling a brief recess to permit restoration of order or for clarification of an obscure point if the Chairman deems it advisable.
7. To maintain order between Members or Citizens and Members when engaged in public debate through use of the Rules of Order.
8. To enforce, on all occasions, the observance of order and decorum among the Members and Citizens alike, deciding all questions of Order . The Chair may submit the question for decision to the Committee. **Any ruling by the Chair may be reversed by an immediate and majority vote to the Members at Large present.**
8. To inform the Committee on a Point of Order or practice pertinent to pending business.
9. To authenticate by the Chairman's signature, when necessary, all acts, orders and proceedings of the Committee.

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11. The Chairman shall be the last Member to cast a vote on every issue.
- E. Role of the Clerk (and the Alternate Clerk in the Clerk's absence)
1. The Clerk shall be the recording official of the Committee and shall attend all meetings as scheduled.
 2. Transcribe and type minutes of the meeting and forward copies to each Member pursuant to RSA 91-A.
 3. Research such items as requested by the Chairman or any Member of the Committee.
 4. The draft and final approved minutes shall be forwarded to the Town of Hudson IT department for posting on the town website. Additionally, the final approved minutes shall be forwarded to the Town Clerk.
- F. Rules of Order
1. Meetings will be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*. (Trost)
 2. Votes - Shall be taken after discussion has reached a conclusion and shall be by raised hand.
 - a. Votes shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting as number for, number against, number abstaining, and a notation of any Members who may be absent from the Vote.
 - b. **A Roll Call Vote may be requested by any voting member. A request must be supported by 3 voting members.** Roll Call Votes shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting as (Yes) followed by Members' names; (No) followed by Members' names, and (Abstain) followed by Members names and a notation of any Members who may be absent from the Roll Call Vote. **When the absence of a member is excused the Member's non vote shall be noted as Excused.**
 - c. Any and all votes of the Hudson Municipal Budget Committee will be limited to the nine elected or duly appointed members-at-large.
 - d. Meeting Minutes will record the maker of each motion, as well as the person who seconded each motion. It is not necessary to record the details of discussions in the Minutes.

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3. Requests for Information
 - A. Members Requests - Any member's request is to be considered a request of the Committee after a favorable vote by the Committee.
 - B. It is recommended that members requesting information from SAU 81 or the Town forward their request to/through the Chairman. The Chairman will forward the request to the appropriate office/person, and will ask that all responses be received far enough in advance to allow distribution to all members well in advance of the next Budget Committee meeting (when practicable).
 - C. Nothing in these Bylaws will restrict Members from requesting information directly from the SAU or the Town.
 - D. Information Requests - Should it become apparent to the Chairman or a member in the interim between meetings that additional information relative to a specific budget item may be needed for Committee use at the next regularly scheduled meeting, a written request for this information may be submitted to the School Board or Selectmen's representative. Such information should be made available to the Committee prior to its regularly scheduled meeting.
 - G. Voting on Warrant Articles
 - a. *Removed*
 - b. Warrant articles will be voted on at the Budget Committee Public Hearing to allow for input and discussion from the public present to be taken into account. Votes will be taken by raised hand and announced aloud following the vote.
 - c. Following each Deliberative Session, the Budget Committee shall convene and vote for the final time on each warrant article. Votes will be taken by raised hand and announced aloud following the vote. This vote will be printed on the official ballots. No further votes will be made following the final vote after the deliberative session.
 - d. **The Chair of the Budget Committee shall give to the IT department of Hudson a copy of the official votes to be used to inform the citizens of Hudson**

Section VIII

Adoption and Amendment

- A. These Bylaws shall be known as the *Municipal Budget Committee Bylaws* of the Town of Hudson.
- B. These Bylaws shall become effective after adoption by majority vote of the elected/appointed Members at Large of the Budget Committee at a regular or special meeting.
- C. These Bylaws may be amended from time to time by the Budget Committee Members-at-large at a regular or special meeting.
- D. A copy of any amendment shall be submitted to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the town records.
- E. The Bylaws shall be reviewed, amended as necessary and adopted at the first budget committee following the town election each year. The annual adoption of the Bylaws shall not be subject to Section VIII, item D (above) and shall be voted upon in the same meeting. **Nothing in this section shall preclude the Members at Large from further amending these bylaws in the weeks following the initial meeting so long as they are complete before the end of the current Town of Hudson fiscal year.**

Section IX Severance

- A. If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of these Bylaws shall be declared invalid **by a court of competent jurisdiction**, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions thereof, which shall remain in full force and effect and to this end, the provisions of these Bylaws are hereby declared to be severable.

Section X Email Communication

- A. Email correspondence within the Budget Committee shall only be sent to the entire Budget Committee by the Chair or Vice Chair.
- B. When sending correspondence to the entire Committee, the Chair/Vice Chair shall only blind copy (bcc) all members of the Committee. **So as to limit the amount of email filling a members email box, please reply to Chair Vice Chair, and the original sender. Email sent to members are subject to RSA-91-a Right To Know. Please keep all email "business" email when communicating with members, town officials, other boards and the public. Remember the citizens have a right to see how we are conducting their business.**

Document History

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