

TOWN OF BECKET

Minutes

Town Meeting ByLaw Review Committee

10/22/2012

(APPROVED 11/13/12)

Members Present: Bruce Garlow, Rob Gorden, Ann Krawet, Jeanne Pryor

The meeting began at 1 p.m. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of 9/27/12 and the motion passed unanimously. The committee briefly reviewed selected portions of Town Bylaws and Town Meeting Guides and indicated with a Y (yes) or N (no) as to whether or not the item is relevant to Becket and further study is needed. Jeanne prepared a list noting the wording for each bylaw to be reviewed that might be useful later. The list below notes the result of the reveiw and relevant comments in bold.

East Longmeadow Town Bylaw

- N 1- Emergency town meetings
- Y 2- Deadlines for petitioned article submission
- N 3- Handbills or other voter information restricted within 150 feet of entrance
- Y 4- Appoint/elect deputy moderator; succession procedure
- Y 5- Use *Town Meeting Time*
- ? 6- Moderator rulings may not be appealed (**see MGL 39:15; needs further discussion**)
- Y 7- Limits on number of times and length of remarks (**ie. the moderator may impose time limits**)
- N 8- Use of microphones (**does not need to be a bylaw**)
- N 9- No person shall be named, except when Moderator recognizes a speaker
- Y 10- Reduce all substantive motions and amendments to writing
- Y 11- Agents or attorneys paid for their appearances must identify themselves as such (**paid ?**)
- Y 12- Non-voters allowed to address meeting (**informational; perhaps not needed as bylaw**)
- Y 13- Allow reconsideration and under what circumstances (also see Manchester-by-the-Sea) (**room for moderator discretion; wording**)
- Y 14- No person's vote counted unless he/she is seated (**would make it easier to count**)
- N 15- Secret ballot if 2/3 request it or by Moderator's decision (**majority is enough**)
- N 16- Moderator shall not participate in discussion unless he/she steps down from podium

Manchester-by-the Sea Town Bylaw

- N 1- Adjourned meetings must be reposted and advertised (**suggestion that TM warrant should include statement about continuation to Town Election**)
- N 2- Moderator may require motions to be divided

- N 3- Once a motion is under debate, only certain additional motions are allowed
- N 4- No person, other than the FinCom chair, may speak more than once on a money article
- N 5- If 20 voters request, a vote must be by ballot
- N 6- No debt exceeding \$250,000 without ballot vote **(excluded from Prop 2 1/2, requires majority vote at election)**
- Y 7- Moderator may establish consent calendar **(put together 4 or 5 articles that are usually approved without debate in one article)**

Wareham Guide to Town Meeting

- Y 1- Reconsideration rules **(with proviso)**
- N 2- Details on points of order **(perhaps in guide)**
- N 3- Guide to petitioned articles and motions **(guide)**

Plainville Town Bylaw

- Y 1- Petitioned articles dealing with appropriations must first be filed with affected department **(create timeline and to whom it must go)**
- N 2- Duties of Moderator **(TMT; put in guide)**
- N 3- More on time limits for speaking

Leicester Town Bylaw

- Y 1- Manner of voting- show of hands is always done first **(Each vote shall be by raised card vote.)**
- N 2- If there's an appropriation over \$3,000 it must be by ballot unless endorsed by FinCom
- 3- More on reconsideration

Mansfield Town Bylaw

- N 1- The order of the articles, except town and school budget, shall be determined by lottery **(TMT allows vote to advance an article; put in guide grid on motions)**
- N 2- No seconds on motions are required unless the Moderator deems it necessary **(second needed per TMT)**
- N 3- After 11:00 pm no new article may be taken up; an adjournment to another day is necessary

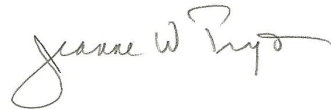
Bruce will review further bylaws including Brookline, Chatham, Uxbridge, and West Boylston and eliminate those agreed to be No at this meeting. Jeanne distributed her suggested bylaw items for review at the next meeting.

Ann reported that the school has recently purchased sound equipment and the principal agreed that it can be used at our town meetings and the custodian would set it up. Ann will follow up with details of their equipment. She also received quotes for equipment from Wood Bros. Music. Ann also indicated that the school cafeteria can hold 137, the gym 251, and the town hall community room 171.

The committee discussed ways of increasing town meeting participation. There was a suggestion that an informational “baby town meeting” to discuss important warrant articles be held 10 days before Town Meeting on a weekday night to include an invitation for all candidates to attend, make a brief statement and answer questions. Bruce asks for Select Board input before moving forward with this. Jeanne will relay to the Select Board that there is discussion of having an informal meeting and candidate night and have this added to a Select Board agenda for discussion.

The next meeting was scheduled for November 13, 2012, at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeanne W. Pryor".

Jeanne W. Pryor

List of documents used and/or distributed at meeting:

1. Bylaws from other towns talking points, Oct. 22, 2012
2. Edited Article 1 -- Town Meetings
3. Parliamentary Guide grid
4. Wood Bros. Music sound equipment quotes, Oct. 2, 2012
5. Jeanne's suggestions for changes to existing bylaw