

TOWN OF BECKET

Minutes Town Meeting ByLaw Review Committee 5/5/14 APPROVED 6/1/15

Members Present: Bruce Garlow (Chair), Ann Krawet, Jeanne Pryor

The meeting began at 1:10 p.m. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of 4/7/14 and the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee discussed the proposed amended Town Meeting Bylaw and it was noted that the bylaw has not yet been submitted to the Attorney General. Bruce noted that, at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting, he, as Moderator, will go by the amended Town Meeting Bylaw that was approved at the Special Town Meeting in April.

The Town Meeting Handbook was discussed. The following changes to the Glossary of Town Meeting and Municipal Finance Terms were reviewed and agreed to by the Committee:

The term "**Abatement**" will be added.

Excess Levy Capacity was changed as follows:

The difference between the **tax** levy limit and the amount of real and personal property taxes actually levied in a given year.

Overlay account was changed as follows:

Overlay account (Overlay Reserve or Allowance for Abatements and Exemptions) -- An account established annually to fund anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions and uncollected taxes in that year. The overlay **account/reserve** is not established by the normal appropriation process, but rather is raised on the tax rate recapitulation sheet, the annual report by the assessors detailing the town's sources of funding.

Proposition 2 ½ was changed to omit italics:

Proposition 2 ½ -- A state law approved by voters in 1981 that limits the amount of property taxes a city or town can levy. It allows voters at ballot elections to exceed these limits through overrides and capital and debt exclusions. See definitions of these above.

Quantum of vote was changed to omit italics:

Quantum of vote -- The required percentage of vote at a town meeting to take action on a specific article. In most cases it's a simple majority. Some votes require "super" majorities. For example, incurring debt and approving a zoning

bylaw takes a two-thirds vote. For approving at an annual town meeting an expenditure incurred in a previous fiscal year it's a four-fifths vote and for approving at a special town meeting an expenditure incurred in a previous fiscal year it's a nine-tenths vote.

The Committee agreed that the Handbook should be consistent in its use of capitalization.

A period "." should be added at the end of the terms **Bylaw** and **Chapter 70 School Aid**.

The next meeting was scheduled for June 2, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne W. Pryor

List of documents discussed and/or distributed at meeting:

1. Town Meeting ByLaw Review Committee Minutes 4/7/14
2. Glossary of Town Meeting and Municipal Finance Terms