



# **TOWN OF MOUNT DESERT**

## **Warrant Committee**

## **Rules of Procedure**

**Draft: February 1, 2020**

Statement of Purpose: October 22, 1997

Statement of Purpose: Amended January 2009

Changed to Rules of Procedure: Amended February 2020

### **Purpose:**

The Warrant Committee (the Committee) consists of at least twenty registered voters of the Town who review the articles of Town Meeting warrants and publish recommendations to the Town for action on them. Town Charter, 1.1.2.2. (See below)

### **Appointment:**

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Board of Selectmen for three-year terms, and no member of the Committee shall hold any elected Town office or be a full time Town employee.

### **Organization and Duties:**

The Committee chooses its own officers and rules of procedure.

At the first duly called meeting each year in advance of the Annual Town Meeting, the Committee shall elect a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary for the ensuing year. Other officers may be elected as deemed necessary by a majority of the Committee attending that meeting. The Chair may constitute and appoint members to sub-committees, ad hoc or standing committees approved by the Committee, and may also appoint one member of each such committee as the chair.

The Chair shall serve as Chief Spokesperson for the Committee and shall conduct all business to be acted upon at Committee meetings. Officers shall vote as members.

All meetings of the Committee shall be posted in advance and are open to the general public.

All actions of the Committee shall be conducted in an open and orderly manner and records of any votes and attendance shall be kept and be a public record. The public is invited to attend and voice their opinions in an orderly manner when recognized by the Chair. All actions of the Committee shall be governed by the Maine Moderator's Manual.

Members of the Committee are required to attend all meetings unless excused by the Chair. Members who have two or more unexcused absences in one year may be asked to resign. A minimum of fifty per cent (50%) of the members of the Committee not excused from attending a meeting must be present for the Committee to vote on a recommendation on a warrant article. If a quorum is not present, then it shall be published that there was an insufficient number of members present to vote on a recommendation.

During the initial organizational meeting, the Committee shall set the dates and times for subsequent meetings. The Committee shall establish as soon as practicable a schedule for individual Department representatives to attend meetings. There shall be separate meetings for separate entities. For example, one meeting will discuss the Administration/Tax Collector/Town Clerk/Treasurer. Another will discuss the Public Safety/ Police/Fire Department. Further meetings will cover Public Works/Marina, the Schools, Public Service Groups, Code Enforcement/Assessor/LUZO. The subject matter composition of individual meetings may be altered to suit current needs. Absent extenuating circumstances, prior to each meeting, the Members will be furnished an updated copy of the budget and/or warrant article information to be discussed at that meeting.

The Committee shall act as a Committee of the Whole when considering proposed Ordinances or changes to existing Ordinances (proposed by the Planning Board or the Board of Selectmen), and general financial items, including bonds and indebtedness, the County assessment, and personnel benefits (based upon previously determined wages and salaries).

A meeting will be held after the close of the warrant for final votes on recommendations by the Committee. The Committee shall vote on recommendations for each warrant article except those articles pertaining to the election of a moderator, the election of municipal officers. The vote count shall be recorded.

The Committee shall reconvene as necessary to consider and make recommendations regarding any special town Warrants that may be presented to the Town between Annual Town meetings.

*Section 1.1.2.2 Warrant Committee, of the Town of Mount Desert Charter, included here for reference, reads as follows:*

*Warrant Committee. A warrant committee consisting of at least twenty registered voters of the Town shall review the articles of the town-meeting warrant and publish recommendations to the Town for action on them. Unless otherwise provided by ordinance, the Board shall appoint members for three-year terms, and no member of the warrant committee shall hold any elected Town office or be a full town employee. The warrant committee shall choose its own officers and rules of procedure. The articles of the warrant shall be submitted to the warrant committee no later than forty-five days before annual town meeting, twenty-one days before a special town meeting.*