

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE DALTON TOWN MEETING
March 8, 2016

1. Rules for Debate

- a. Only registered voters may speak. An exception may be made for town officials.
- b. Those wishing to be recognized to speak should line up behind the audience microphone. Once the Moderator recognizes you, please state your name. The Moderator will give preference to voters who have not yet spoken before those who have already spoken. Town officials may be required to speak more frequently. If your view has been expressed by someone else, please refrain from repetitive comments.
- c. All speakers are expected to direct their comments to the Moderator, to be courteous, and to speak to the issue under discussion not to individuals. Conversation between individuals, personal attacks and inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- d. If any person behaves in a disorderly manner, and after notice from the Moderator, persists in such behavior, or shall in any way disturb the meeting, or willfully violate any rule of proceeding, the Moderator may have a police officer, or any legal voter of the town, remove such person from the meeting. (RSA 40:8)
- e. All speakers are requested to use the floor microphone so all can hear clearly.
- f. By majority vote, eligible voters can overrule any decision of the Moderator and any rule the Moderator establishes. A voter can raise such a request by Point of Order.
- g. Please silence cell phones.
- h. No flash pictures allowed.
- i. No cameras will be allowed between the Moderator and the town residents.

2. Voting on Articles, Amendments

- a. The Moderator will take the articles in the order listed on the town Warrant unless voters request and approve a specific change.
- b. The Moderator will determine the will of the majority normally by asking voters to display their colored voting card. All town residents who are registered voters should obtain this card by signing in with the Supervisors of the Checklist when they arrive for the meeting.
- c. Requests for a secret ballot must be submitted in advance of the vote, be in writing and requested by 5 voters who are present at the meeting and can be identified. The voting process for secret ballots will be through the use of yes/no ballots which will be distributed at the time of the vote. Voting will occur in an orderly fashion at the time announced. A reasonable allotment of time will be allowed for voters to cast their ballots. Special instructions will be given at the time of the vote. Votes will be tallied immediately.
- d. A recount of secret ballot votes is possible at the request of 5 voters present at the meeting. It will automatically occur if the winning vote margin is less than 10 % and will occur immediately after the vote total is announced.

e. Motions to “call the question” (which limit debate) require a two-thirds vote. The Moderator may not accept motions to “call the question” if, in her judgment, all have not had a fair opportunity to express their views. The Moderator will not accept motions to “pass over”, “table” or “indefinitely postpone” an article. If citizens want to dispose of an article, they should simply vote the article down. To make it easy for everyone to know how to express their views, all motions will be made in the positive or affirmative, that is, they are **for** some action and not against some action.

f. Motions to amend an article must be in writing, and seconded by another voter. They will be projected on the wall so all can see. We will only consider one amendment at a time. Amendments must be germane or relevant to the article.

g. Motions to restrict reconsideration may not be brought up prior to a vote. Motions to restrict reconsideration may be brought up any time after a vote is taken and, if the motion prevails, the item will not be reconsidered again during this meeting.

3. Seating Limitations

In order for registered voters to be able to participate easily in the meeting, it may be necessary to limit who can sit in the gym or even stand around the edge. Registered voters have priority. Others may be asked to leave if registered voters need to gain access to meeting space.

4. General format for consideration of a warrant article

- a. Warrant article is read in full by Moderator.
- b. Motion to approve and second the article is taken.
- c. Recognize the selectman or other spokesperson responsible for giving the town meeting the necessary background on the article under consideration.
- d. Open meeting for general discussion from the floor.
- e. After the discussion, the motion is re-stated for clarity.
- f. Vote is taken and outcome announced.