

# AMHERST, MONT VERNON, SOUHEGAN, and SAU39 POLICY

## **BEDDA – BOARD MEETING - RULES OF PROCEDURE & ORDER**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to help promote effective and efficient board meetings.

### **A. General Principles.**

1. Meeting rules should facilitate, rather than inhibit, the Board's deliberation and decision-making process. The rules should be readily understandable and help keep meetings free from procedural quagmires.
2. All board members have equal rights, privileges and obligations in the deliberative and decision-making process. Meeting rules should help assure that each member is able to participate in the debate, and that no single member is able to dominate discussion to the exclusion of other members.
3. Every board member, and the public in attendance, has the right to hear what is going on at all times.
4. A meeting can deal effectively with only one specific matter at a time.
5. Members have a right to know beforehand what they will be discussing and/or voting upon.
6. A school board meeting is a meeting at which the Board conducts its business. While board meetings are open to the public (except as provided under RSA 91-A:2 and 3), board meetings are not public hearings where the public has the right to speak. Public comment at board meetings shall be governed by Board Policy *{\*\*}BEDH*.

### **B. Meeting Rules.**

1. The Board Chair shall preside over all meetings of the Board. In the Chair's absence the Vice Chair will preside, followed by the most senior member then present.
2. By majority vote, the Board can overrule any ruling of the presiding officer regarding the application of these rules. A board member can raise such a request by a "Point of Order", followed by a motion with respect to the specific decision.
3. The presiding officer may make adjustments to the agenda with the consent of the majority, whether by vote or otherwise.
4. All speakers should be courteous and should speak on the issue then under discussion, not to the individuals raising them.
5. Each board member has the right to participate in discussion and debate if he/she wishes, before any other member may speak a second time.
6. No one may speak unless he or she has been recognized by the presiding officer. A board member may interrupt only to state a "Point of Order", "Point of Information" or "Point of Inquiry". The presiding officer will then recognize the member for the limited purpose of stating the point of order, etc..
7. The presiding officer may decide, on his/her own initiative, or upon request by a board member, to recognize a non-board member, to address the Board with respect to the matter then under discussion.
8. Agenda items requiring action by the Board should be preceded by a specific motion, clearly articulated, followed by a second. Motions should address only one issue or idea. If a motion is complex, or has conditions, the motion should be written out and read back by the Board's minute taker.

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9. If a motion does not receive a second, then the motion is treated as if it were not considered by the Board. Such a matter may be raised again at a later date in accordance with the Board's agenda policy and rules.
10. When a motion is on the floor, no new topics should be debated, and no new motions will be accepted, other than the following motions addressing the main motion or the meeting itself:
11. As provided under RSA 91-A:2, II for open sessions, and 91-A:3, III for non-public sessions, no vote may be taken by secret ballot.
12. The presiding officer should, in accordance with the duties of all board members, vote on every issue.
13. No item may be discussed or decided upon in non-public session except as provided under RSA 91-A:2 and 3.

<b>Motion</b>	<b>Debatable</b>	<b>Votes Required to Pass</b>
Amend Motion	Yes	51%
Limit Debate (e.g., time limits or # of times each member may address the motion)	Non-debatable	2/3 (67%)
Call the question/close debate	Non-debatable	2/3 (67%)
Refer to Committee/Admin Study	Yes	51%
Postpone to a Later Time (Diff. day)	Yes	51%
Postpone Indefinitely (Kill)	Yes	51%
For roll call* vote <i>*All votes in non-public must be by roll call</i>	No	2 members
Recess	Non-debatable	51%
Adjourn	Non-debatable	51%

14. Abstentions are noted and counted, but do not affect the outcome of the vote.

15. Motions for reconsideration are not favored except when new circumstances exist or a perceived error has been made. Motions for reconsideration may only be raised at the same meeting as the original decision by a person who voted in favor of the original motion. Motions for reconsideration at a later meeting may only be considered when approved by a 3/5 super-majority, and only when the proposed motion is posted with the agenda for the subsequent meeting. Only one motion for reconsideration on an issue may be made at a meeting later than the meeting at which the original decision was made, irrespective of whether the first motion for reconsideration is successful. This provision shall only apply to the Board as constituted as of the date of the original decision.

16. The presiding officer may rule any member or other person out of order if such person disrupts the orderly conduct of a meeting, behaves in a disorderly manner, makes unlawful threats, willfully violates any of the above rules of order/procedure, or engages in any unprotected speech. If the board member or other person continues such behavior after being ordered by the presiding officer to cease, the presiding officer is authorized to request that a police officer, warn and then remove such person from the meeting and meeting location.

Adopted: November 15, 2021 (Souhegan)