

MODERATOR'S RULES FOR DELIBERATIVE SESSION

1. Meeting Purpose. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and debate the articles on the town warrant. However, because Rye has adopted the SB2 Deliberative Session form of government, this meeting may not exclude articles from the ballot. (*RSA 40:13, IV*). Up or down voting on an article only occurs at the March election. Nonetheless, this meeting may amend most articles to change how they appear on the ballot.

2. Moderator's Rules. By state law, the Moderator sets the rules and procedures of the meeting. I will not follow Robert's Rules of Order or any other complicated rules of parliamentary procedure. Instead, we will follow my rules. I cannot promise to run a perfect meeting, but I will do my best to run a fair meeting. Ultimately though, this is your meeting. By majority vote, you can change my rules, or overrule any decision I make. (*RSA 40:4, I*).

3. Procedure. I will read each article in the order it appears on the warrant, unless somebody moves to take an article out of order. After reading each article, I will ask for a motion to move it to the floor for debate. Like all motions, it must be seconded. I will then recognize the article's sponsor. After that, everyone here is invited to speak. If you wish to speak to an article, come to the microphone and introduce yourself by name and street address. I will recognize all people who wish to speak to an article before I permit someone to speak twice. You should address all your comments to me, not to other people here. I am not setting a strict time limit for speaking, but try to use your common sense. I will use my discretion to decide if speaker has said enough. Also, I remind you that we are here in the spirit of fair debate. I expect everybody to be civil and courteous, and to avoid bitterness. I will not permit personal attacks against people or their motives. When there is no further discussion on an article, I will order that it be placed on the ballot, either as written or as amended.

4. Amendments. Any registered voter can move to amend an article. Amendments should be submitted in writing, unless they are very simple. I will read the amendment, and then open the floor for discussion. When you are ready to vote, I will restate the amendment. There are five limits to amendments. First, warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law may not be amended. (*RSA 40:13, IV(a)*). Second, in order to avoid confusion, I will not permit amendments to amendments before the original amendment is voted on. Third, an amendment may not add a new subject. (*RSA 39:2*). Fourth, you cannot increase the overall budget recommended by the Budget Committee, including special warrant articles, by more than 10%. (*RSA 32:18*). Finally, amend-

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ments that would eliminate the subject matter of an article are prohibited. (*RSA 40:13, IV(c)*). However, amending an article to change its intent or purpose may be permissible. Also, an amendment that would change the dollar amount of an appropriation would not eliminate its subject matter.

5. Voting. If you haven't already done so, you need to check in at the clerk's table, get a colored voting card, and sign it. To vote, I will ask you to raise your card. However, we will vote by secret ballot if, before voting on an article, five voters present here sign a written request for a secret ballot on that article. (*RSA 40:4-a, I(a)*). I will only vote if my vote will break or create a tie.

6. Recounts / Questioning a Vote. A recount will be taken of non-secret ballot votes if seven voters, either orally or in writing, make such a request. Such recounts will be conducted by secret ballot. (*RSA 40:4-b*). The recount of a secret ballot will be taken on the request of five voters. (*RSA 40:4-a, I(b)*).

7. Reconsideration. Any voter can move to reconsider a vote. You do not need to have been in the majority to make such a motion. However, I will not permit multiple motions to reconsider.

8. Restricting Reconsideration. You may also move to restrict reconsideration of an article. Such a motion may be made after I order an article to be placed on the ballot. It is not debatable. If the motion carries, this meeting may not reconsider that article later. (*RSA 40:10, I; RSA 40:13, IV*).

9. Calling the Question. Calling the question is the same as moving to end debate. This motion is not debatable. It requires a two-thirds majority to pass. However, I will permit the person who is speaking to finish before I call for a vote.

10. Nonvoters Who Wish to Speak. Occasionally, someone who is not a registered Rye voter may wish to speak. I will ask if there is any objection. If nobody objects, I will permit that person to speak. If there is an objection, I will call for a vote. The will of the majority will prevail. However, I will let Town department heads who do not live in Rye speak to issues relating to their departments.

11. Your Meeting. I remind you that this is your meeting. You may appeal any ruling I make (*RSA 40:4, I*), and I will entertain any motion that is made.