

VOTING METHOD

Section B: School Committee Governance and Operations	File: BEDF
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Open Meeting

Votes of the School Committee will be taken by voice vote or a hand count and shall be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded. No vote taken at an open session shall be by secret ballot.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. "Majority vote", when used in connection with a meeting of a multiple member body shall mean a majority of those present and voting, unless another provision is made by ordinance or by its own rules.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

A two-thirds vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.

Executive Session

A majority of the members of the School Committee must vote to enter into executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions. General Law provisions related to any vote to meet in "executive session" shall always require a majority of members of the body.

Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

Remote Participation and Voting:

The CITY COUNCIL of the City of Newburyport hereby authorizes remote participation in meetings held by all City of Newburyport public bodies subject to the Open Meeting Law and pursuant to 940 CMR 29.10. For the purposes of this order, remote participation shall be permitted under the following terms and conditions:

Media:

Telephone, internet, satellite enabled audio/video conferencing, or other similar technology may be used for remote participation provided that the participant and all in attendance can hear each other. If videoconferencing is used, the member participating remotely must be visible to all in attendance.

Quorum:

A quorum of the public body, including the chair or, in the chair's absence, the person authorized to chair the meeting, must be physically present at the meeting location before an absent member may participate remotely.

Votes:

If any member of the public body is participating remotely, all votes of the body, including those taken in open session, are required to be by roll call and the results of the roll must be recorded in the minutes.

Status:

A member participating remotely may vote, and is not deemed to be absent from the meeting, including for purposes of MGL Chapter 39 Section 23D.

Reasons:

Acceptable reasons for participating remotely include one or more of the following: personal illness, personal disability, emergency, and military service or geographic distance. A member cannot participate remotely for convenience.

Notification:

A member who will not be present at a meeting must notify the chair as far in advance as possible. The chair must announce at the beginning of the meeting the name of the person participating remotely and the reason. The categories listed above under Reasons may be used for this announcement such that a member's privacy rights are protected, especially with respect to illness or disability.

Technical Issues:

If technical issues arise with the media connection, the chair must decide how to address them. Deliberations shall be suspended while the difficulties are addressed. If the remote member is disconnected during the meeting, the minutes must reflect this fact.

Use of Plans and Other Visuals:

The chair or, in the chair's absence, the person authorized to chair the meeting, shall distribute to remote participants, in advance of the meeting, copies of all relevant documents, exhibits, and presentation materials used during the meeting. If a member of the public body is remotely participating in a public hearing relative to the issuance of any permit involving a site plan or architectural drawings, that member must utilize video conferencing such that all maps, plans or other presentation materials used or referenced during the meeting are visible. This requirement for video conferencing is not necessary where the member has already received a copy of all relevant maps, plans, or other presentation materials and no new materials are introduced during the meeting.

Executive Session:

There shall be no remote participation in any executive session including, but not limited to, any vote to go into or out of said executive session.

Actions Requiring Special Voting Treatment:

Contracts and Collective Bargaining: Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

Policy Formulation and Adoption: Adoption of new policies, or modification of existing policies, shall be the sole responsibility of the full School Committee. Policies will be adopted by affirmative vote of a majority of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting. Except under emergency conditions, proposed policies will be presented in two meetings, the first one of which is for information, discussion and redrafting purposes. The second meeting for discussion, adoption or rejection.

Retirement of Facilities: While considering the criteria, The School Committee realizes that no school may be closed and surrendered to the city without the affirmative vote of a majority of the school committee, and only after a public hearing has been held, and the parents of the students involved have been notified by mail by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at least two weeks prior to the date of the public hearing of the proposed closing.

Sources:

Newburyport City Charter

MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 3 30A:18-25; 71:42; 71:50

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised

Version Control

Action	Date
First Reading	7/22/2016
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