



We are your elected officials. The Shutesbury Select Board serves as the leadership body for the community and as such, believes that community participation is vital to help us to be as informed and responsive as possible. This policy is designed to help the Select Board be better informed and to listen.

During its meetings, we will strive to find a balance between hearing from members of the community and conducting the required business. In order to achieve this, the following rules and procedures are established for Select Board meetings:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled Select Board meeting, individuals, or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee during the Public Comment period. We welcome the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public. Public Comment is the time for community members to bring up something not already on the agenda. In general, it is a time for us to listen, to acknowledge, to clarify, and, possibly, to direct your concern/issue to the appropriate place. It is not a time for lengthy discussion. The Chairperson will determine the length of the public comment period given the urgency and relevancy of the items raised the number of other speakers, and the number of items on the agenda.

2. The Chair of the Select Board shall preside over the meeting. In this role, s/he will acknowledge speakers from the public. S/he and will determine the length of time for public participation and insure that comments are appropriate. During any part of the meeting, the public may be recognized by the Chair to speak on an item before the Committee. All remarks will be addressed through the Chairperson of the meeting rather than directly to other participants.

3. Comments made by anyone at the meeting should at all times be respectful. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the Chairperson may rescind the individual's right to address the committee. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order.

4. Speakers may offer criticisms or concerns about town operations or decisions, but consistent with Open Meeting Law, the Select Board will not hear personnel complaints regarding town employees or volunteers in public session. Under most

circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving employees or volunteers.

5. The Select Board will provide information to the public at the meeting to help them participate in an informed manner. This will include providing copies of the agenda and materials to be discussed. Since not all materials are easily reproduced and public attendance will vary, the number of documents provided for the public should be reasonable. Minutes of the meetings shall be maintained as required and available to the public.