

Meeting Tips I

- Prepare to report information and updates.
- Know in advance what is expected of you.
- Keep objectives in mind, tie back to goals.
- Don't spring surprises on the committee.
- If you are unprepared, don't fake it.
- Work to reach agreements/decisions.
- Split votes are ok!
- Follow rules of order.
- Don't dominate discussions.

Meeting Tips II

- Avoid hidden agendas (say one thing, mean another).
- Avoid espousing personal philosophies at length.
- Attack problems, not personalities.
- Read the room, know when it is time to move on.
- Broaden your concerns, vote your conscience.
- All Public Comment goes through Chair.
- Do not debate issues with audience members.

Agenda/Work Plans

- Clearly define what needs to be done, who is accountable for results.
- Frame decisions, projects/policies within context and goals.
- Provide timeframe for each topic, ways to engage the community in the process and set communication plan.
- Create a plan to address issues promptly.
- Define Board/Committee/Department intersections and plan update process.
- Evaluate Board/Committee work (fall, winter, spring).

Contact Information

Town Clerk Office

Conference Room Reservations
Zoom Reservations
Agenda Questions & Posting

Phone: 978.526.2040

Email: townclerk@manchester.ma.us

Select Board Office

Board and Committee Membership

Phone: 978.526.2000

Email: powersd@manchester.ma.us



Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea Meeting Handbook

Guidelines for Running Public Meetings in Local Government

Boards & Committees

- Board/Committee members must share vision/ purpose.
- Communication is cornerstone to effective relationships.
- Clear roles + solid relationships=community confidence.
- Be responsive to constituents, sensitive to diverse needs/ideas, and advocate for all.

Ethics

- Teamwork: abide + carry out decisions.
- Represent the community.
- Clearly define policies and project plans.
- Official meeting action is binding (one member cannot bind committee).
- No statements/promises on how any vote will be cast.
- Share all pertinent info on town matters with committee.
- Make decisions after evaluation of all facts.

Elected Officials

- Public Official = Public Figure
- Take a stand, argue public policy, explain your actions.
- Talk to the people who elected you to represent them.
- Public service is challenging; open to higher criticism.
- Do not need to agree on all topics.
- Spirited dissent with respect is healthy.
- Discretion + teamwork drive public confidence.

Robert's Rules Of Order

Action	What to Say	Can Interrupt Speaker?	Need a Second?	Can be Debated?	Can be Amended?	Vote Needed
Introduce Main Motion	"I move to..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a Motion	"I move to amend the motion by... (add or strike words or both)"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Move Item to Committee	"I move that we refer the matter to committee."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Postpone Item	"I move that we postpone the matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
End Debate	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Object to Procedure	"Point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decision
Recess the Meeting	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Adjourn the Meeting	"I move to adjourn the meeting."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Request Information	"Point of information."	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote
Overrule the Chair's Ruling	"I move to overrule the Chair's ruling."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

*Source: Board Effect