



Town Committees Policy

Passed at the 4/22/24 Select Board Meeting to repeal and replace:

- Committee Protocol (Appointments & Resignations) Policy passed 5/10/11
- Policy for Meetings/Minutes passed 5/1/03
- Westport Island History Committee passed 3/9/15
- Westport Island Road Committee Maintenance & Improvement Plan Scope of 12/5/22
- Ad Hoc Wright Property Committee Policy passed 3/21/11

Amended at the 7/1/24 Select Board Meeting:

- Section 3.a: Add Harbor Committee to list of Committees formed by statute or ordinance
- Section 6.b.i. Add requirement for Select Board approval for changes to Committee pages on the website
- Section 7.a: Add 7/1 as the earliest date for Committees to elect officers
- Section 8.c: Add Select Board removal of Committee members for cause after notice and hearing
- Appendix: Remove Wright Landing, Town Hall Committee, Horticulture, Broadband & Technology, ad hoc Ordinance Review Committee, and Road Committee
- Appendix: Establish Town Property Maintenance Committee

Westport Island Town Committees Policy

1. Purpose: This policy is enacted to ensure the consistent and transparent operation of town business through our town Boards, Commissions, and Committees, and facilitate communication and cooperation with Town Officials and Staff.
2. Application: This policy applies to all Select Board-appointed boards, commissions, and committees, and any subcommittees thereof, which will be referred to as “Committees” for the remainder of this policy. This policy does not apply to the elected Select Board and RSU 12 Board of Director members.
3. Formation of Committees:
 - a. The Planning Board, Appeals Board, Harbor Committee, and Shellfish Committee are created by State statute and/or Town Ordinance.
 - b. All other committees are created by vote of the Select Board or Town Meeting.
 - c. Subcommittees may be formed by Committees and shall consist of Committee Members already appointed to the Committee by the Select Board.
 - d. Committee alternates, if any, shall be designated by number to specify the order in which they shall fill in for absent Committee members.
 - e. Appendix A to this policy contains descriptions of all current town committees, including purpose, end point if any, number and types of members, and terms of membership.
4. Appointments to Committees:
 - a. The Town Clerk will advertise all Committee vacancies on the Town website.
 - b. Residents interested in serving on a Committee shall submit a Committee Membership Application, which can be obtained on the Town Website or from the Town Clerk.
 - c. The Select Board will make all appointments to Committees, with input from Committee Chairs.
 - d. The Town Clerk will notify Committee Chairs of any new appointment to their Committee and will notify Appointees of their appointment.
 - e. Appointees shall appear before the Town Clerk during regular Town Office hours as soon as possible after their appointment to be sworn in, and before participating in any Committee meetings.
 - f. The Town Clerk and Committee Chairs shall maintain a contact list of their members.
5. Committee Membership Requirements:
 - a. Committee Members shall make a good faith effort at full participation in their Committees and shall not be absent from Committee meetings without giving reasonable cause to the Committee Chair.
 - b. Committee Members represent the Town of Westport and shall conduct themselves with decorum in all Committee-related matters.
 - c. Committee Members shall recuse themselves from all Committee matters in which they have an actual or possible perceived conflict of interest.
 - d. Committee Members shall be aware that all forms of communication relating to Committee business, regardless of whether the communication is on their own

Westport Island Town Committees Policy

personal device or account, are public information and subject to Freedom of Access Act requests.

- e. Committee Members shall be members of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) under the Town's MMA membership and are encouraged to make use of the manuals and other resources available through the MMA.
- f. Planning & Appeals Board Members and Alternates shall complete a Maine Municipal Association training for their respective positions within 6 months of their initial appointment, to be paid for by the Town, and provide a Certificate of Completion to the Town Clerk.
- g. Planning Board Members and Alternates shall complete a Freedom of Access Act training within 6 months of their appointment or reappointment as required by State Law and provide a Certificate of Completion to the Town Clerk.

6. Committee Actions

a. Expenditures

- i. Committee expenditure requests shall be made by vote of the Committee, communicated to the Select Board by the Committee Chair, and be accompanied by evidence of investigation into the lowest price.
- ii. Expenditure requests must be approved by the Select Board before the expenditure is made.
- iii. Expenditures shall be made by the Town Treasurer upon approval by the Select Board.
- iv. Expenditures by Committee members should be avoided and reimbursement after the fact will be at the discretion of the Select Board.

b. External Communications

- i. Each Committee shall have a page on the town website to share their Committee activities. The Town Clerk shall draft the language for Committee webpages, with input from the Committee Chairs, subject to final approval by the Select Board.
- ii. Committees are not permitted to create and/or manage independent websites or social media account pages on behalf of the Committee and/or the Town.
- iii. Committee public communications and events other than meetings require prior approval by the Select Board.

7. Officers:

- a. All Committees shall elect a Chair and a Secretary from within their membership between July 1 and September 1 of each year, or within 1 month of formation.
 - i. The most senior member of the Committee not running for the officer position being elected shall conduct the election for that position.
 - ii. The newly elected Chair shall report the names and titles of the officers to the Town Clerk and Select Board in writing.
- b. Committees may elect any other officers they deem necessary.
- c. Officer duties:
 - i. Chairs shall:

Westport Island Town Committees Policy

1. Call meetings.
 2. Set agendas with input from other Committee Members and the Select Board
 3. Provide meeting dates and times and reserve public meeting locations through the Town Clerk at least one week ahead of meetings.
 4. Provide meeting agendas to the Select Board, copying the Town Clerk, at least two business days ahead of meetings.
 5. Facilitate meetings.
 6. Notify the Select Board and the Town Clerk of any resignations, removals, or changes in officers.
 7. Report any requested Committee expenditures, public communications and events, and new initiatives to the Select Board in writing for Select Board approval.
 8. Provide a proposed annual plan for the upcoming fiscal year's Committee activities to the Select Board by March 15 of each year.
 9. Provide an annual report on the past fiscal year's Committee activities, and any budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year's expenses, to the Town Clerk by April 15 of every year.
 - ii. Secretaries will be responsible for taking meeting minutes in accordance with section 6(d) of this policy and providing meeting minutes to the Town Clerk.
- d. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair if any, followed by the Secretary, followed by the Treasurer if any, followed by any other officers the Committee has elected, followed by the most senior member, shall serve as the Presiding Officer.
8. Resignations & Removals:
- a. Committee members may resign at any time by submitting a written statement of resignation to the Committee Chair, copying the Select Board and Town Clerk. Resignations must be accepted by the Select Board at a Select Board meeting.
 - b. An Officer may be removed from their officer position by a 2/3 vote of the Committee at a noticed meeting.
 - c. A Committee Member may be removed by a 2/3 vote of the Committee at a noticed meeting or by the Select Board for cause after notice and hearing (MRSA 30.A § 2601).
 - d. All removals shall be reported by the Presiding Officer to the Select Board, copying the Town Clerk.
9. Bylaws:
- a. Committees may adopt their own bylaws if their bylaws do not conflict with this policy.
 - b. In the event of conflicts, this policy will be controlling.
 - c. Committees shall provide their bylaws to the Select Board, copying the Town Clerk, within 1 month of adoption or any revisions.

Westport Island Town Committees Policy

10. Meetings:

- a. Committees are encouraged to meet frequently enough to fulfill their purpose, to establish a regular meeting schedule, and to meet at times conducive to Committee Member and public participation. Committees shall not meet on Federal Holidays or when area schools are closed due to weather or emergencies.
- b. Meetings may be called:
 - i. By the Committee Chair
 - ii. By request of 2/3 of the Committee members in writing to the Chair, copying the Select Board and Town Clerk.
 - iii. By request of the Select Board to the Chair
- c. All Committee meetings shall be held in public locations on Westport Island unless an exception is granted by the Select Board for unusual circumstances. To facilitate this, the Town Office Community Room, Town Office Conference Room, and Town Hall are available for Committees to reserve for their meetings through the Town Clerk.
- d. Committee meetings shall be publicly advertised by the Town Clerk through posting a notice in the public kiosk and on the town website calendar.
- e. Committee meetings require a majority of members present to constitute a quorum. Committee members should be mindful that unintentional meetings can result when a majority of members gather at any time or place and should not discuss Committee business unless all other requirements of this section have been met.
- f. Committee meetings shall be open to attendance and observation by the public. Public participation is at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer may cut off any commentary not germane, scurrilous, abusive, or not in accord with good order and decorum. Anyone who shall continue to violate these rules, after warning by the Presiding Officer, may be ejected for the rest of the meeting.
- g. Committee meetings may be held remotely via phone or online meeting platform only after the Committee adopts a Remote Meeting Participation Policy.
- h. Meeting minutes:
 - i. Committee Secretaries shall take typed notes of all meetings including:
 1. Meeting date, location, start time, and end time
 2. Members and guests present
 3. Discussion of agenda items
 4. All Motions and seconds and who made them
 5. The number of votes for and against motions, the number of abstentions, and the reasons for abstentions if given
 - ii. Committees shall approve the previous meeting's minutes at their next meeting.
 - iii. The final approved meeting minutes shall be provided by the Secretary to the Town Clerk, copying the Select Board, within one week of approval.
 - iv. The Town Clerk will post all Committee meeting minutes publicly on the town website.

Westport Island Town Committees Policy

Board of Appeals

- Type: Standing
- Purpose: Established pursuant to [MRSA Chapter 30-A Section 2691](#) and the [Building Code Ordinance Section H](#) to hear appeals from decisions by the Planning Board or Code Enforcement Officer related to land use.
- Membership: 5 members with 5-year staggered terms, and 2 alternates with 3-year staggered terms. Neither a municipal officer nor the spouse of a municipal officer may be a member or associate member of the board.

Cemetery Committee

- Type: Standing
- Purpose: Maintain the cemeteries of Westport Island.
- Membership: 11 members with 1-year terms

Conservation Commission

- Type: Standing
- Purpose: Established pursuant to [MRSA Chapter 30-A Section 3261](#) to research, catalog, and seek the conservation and environmental health of the open spaces of Westport Island.
- Membership: 7 members with 3-year staggered terms

Harbor Committee

- Type: Standing
- Purpose: Established pursuant to [Waterways & Harbor Ordinance Section XV.A.1](#) to advise the Harbor Master and Select Board on harbor and maritime related issues.
- Membership: 5 members with 3-year staggered terms and 2 alternates with 1-year terms.

History Committee

- Type: Standing
- Purpose: Pursue the preservation and promotion of Westport Island's history
- Membership: 7 members with 3-year staggered terms and unlimited non-voting associate members with 1-year terms.

Planning Board

- Type: Standing
- Purpose: Established pursuant to Building Code Ordinance 14.A.3 to oversee land use on Westport Island including drafting and revising land use related ordinances and handling specific non-conforming land use projects.
- [Planning Board Bylaws](#)
- Membership: 5 members with 3-year staggered terms and 2 alternates designated as First Alternate and Second Alternate with 1-year terms.

Shellfish Committee

- Type: Standing

Westport Island Town Committees Policy

- Purpose: Established pursuant to [MRSA Chapter 12, Section 6671](#) to administer Westport Island's Shellfish Conservation Ordinance.
- Membership: 5 members with staggered 3-year terms and 2 alternates with 1-year terms

Town Properties Maintenance Committee

- Type: Standing
- Purpose: Monitor the physical condition of Westport Island town-owned buildings and land; advise the Select Board on necessary repairs, maintenance, improvements, and beautification; and perform repairs, maintenance, improvements, and beautification when feasible at the request of the Select Board.
- Membership: 7 members with 1-year term