**RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE, TOWN OF RINDGE**

**July 31, 2018**

**SECTION I AUTHORITY**

These rules of procedure are adopted in order to provide for the orderly conduct of business and to establish duties for the officers and members.

**SECTION II MEMBERSHIP**

The Budget Advisory Committee shall consist of seven (7) members. The Selectmen shall designate one selectman as an ex-officio member with power to vote. Selection, qualification, term, removal of members, and filling of vacancies shall conform to Town Warrant 1974, Article 24, and RSA 32:15. Up to three (3) Alternate members may serve on the Budget Advisory Committee as authorized by Town Warrant 2011, Article 18 and RSA 32:15 VII. Each newly elected or appointed (including re-elected or re-appointed) member shall be sworn in and take an oath of office as required by RSA 42:1. The Budget Advisory Committee Chairperson shall forward to the town clerk for recording the appointment/election and expiration dates of the terms of each member of the Committee

**SECTION III OFFICERS**

**1. The officers** of the Committee shall be as follows:

**Chairperson**: The Chairperson shall preside over all meetings and hearings; shall prepare, with the assistance of the Committee, an annual report; and shall perform other duties customary to the office.

**Vice-Chairperson**: The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson and shall have the full powers of the Chairperson on matters that come before the Committee in the absence of the Chairperson.

*In the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, an Acting Chairperson shall be chosen by a majority of the Committee.*

**Secretary**:The Secretary shall be responsible for the Budget Committees minutes and records, these records will be posted on the Town’s web site, with agenda and other information as needed. Minutes of the Budget Advisory meetings shall be kept in accordance with provisions of RSA 91-A.

2. **The officers** of the Committee shall be elected annually at the first meeting following the Annual Town Meeting by majority vote of the Committee

**SECTION IV. DUTIES**

1. It shall be the duty of all members and alternates to be present at all meetings, and to read materials in preparation for meetings.

2. Shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson to confer with the governing body or bodies and with officers, department heads and other officials. (Provided by RSA 32: 15 II)

3. **Agendas:** It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson, assisted by the Secretary, to prepare an Agenda for each meeting of the Committee.

4. **Votes:** It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson, assisted by the Secretary to prepare a list of votes for each meeting of the Committee.

**SECTION V MEETINGS**

1. **The first meeting** following the Annual Town Meeting shall be a work meeting for the purpose of election of Officers, review of the Rules of Procedure and orientation of new members.

2. **Quorum**: A Quorum shall consist of a majority of elected members. If a quorum is not present an Alternate shall be appointed by the Chairperson until a majority is reached. Appointment of Alternates for absent members shall not exceed the number of elected members present. Appointed Alternates shall have all the powers and duties of a regular member.

If it is necessary to appoint an Alternate to sit in place of an absent member, such Alternate shall be selected by rotation. (Vacancies in the membership of the Committee shall be filled pursuant to the procedures set forth in RSA 32:15)

3. **Unseated Alternates:** Unseated alternates may participate with the Committee in a limited capacity. During a meeting, alternates may view documents, listen to opinions, and actively participate and interact with other Committee members. However, they shall not make or second a motion or vote.

4. **Disqualification**: If any member finds it necessary to be disqualified from sitting, she/he shall notify the Chairperson as soon as possible. The disqualification shall be announced by either the Chairperson or the member(s).

5. **Order of Business** shall be as follows:

1. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call by the Chairperson
3. Appointment of alternates, if necessary
4. Announcements and Communications
5. Approval of Minutes
6. Reports of Officers
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Other Business

6. No one shall speak without recognition of the Chairperson. To accomplish the goals of the Budget Advisory Committee, an atmosphere of open, honest and respectful exchange of ideas should exist.

Personal attacks are out of order.

**SECTION VI RECORDS**

**1**. **The records** of the Committee shall be kept by the Secretary and shall be filed with the Town Clerk.

**2**. **Minutes** of the meetings shall include the names of Committee members, persons appearing before the Committee and a brief description of the subject matter.

**3.** **Recordings** of Budget Advisory Committee meetings conducted in accordance with state law are permitted. However, the Committee asks that the Secretary notify the chairperson at the start of the meeting of any such recording, as a courtesy to the audience.

**4**. **Secretary** may record Budget Advisory Committee meetings to assist in the transcribing of the official Meeting Minutes. However, the committee’s recordings or videos shall be deleted upon the approval of the corresponding minutes of the meetings.

**SECTION VII**

**JOINT MEETINGS WITH OTHER BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES**

1. The Budget Advisory Committee may hold joint meetings with other committees and boards.
2. The rules of procedure for joint meetings, the subject matter of which involves the Budget Advisory Committee, shall be the same as the rules of procedures as stated above except the order of business shall be as follows:
   1. Call to order by Chairperson
   2. Introduction of members of both Committee/Board by Chairperson
   3. Explanation of reason for joint meeting by Chairperson
   4. Business at hand
   5. Adjournment
3. Each Committee/Board involved in a joint public meeting shall make its own independent decisions.

**SECTION VI STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

1. **E-mail and Other Communications Between Meetings**

The purpose of this Section is:

1. to ensure compliance with the letter and spirit of the Right-to-Know Law, RSA 91-A,
2. to clarify Committee members’ ability, between meetings, to research issues and prepare motions or other potential Committee actions, thus promoting efficient use of meeting time, but only to the extent allowed by law; and
3. to clarify the role of electronic media such as E-mail in achieving these goals.

**2. Definitions:**

*Communication* - means a transfer of information, objective or subjective, from one person to another. It includes face-to-face or phone conversations, letters, memos, Emails, web sites, or any other medium, regardless of the location or ownership of any device or equipment used.

*Distribution* - is a one-way communication between meetings involving more than one Committee member where no between-meeting response (except acknowledgment of receipt) occurs or is expected. (in other words—no exchange, no dialogue)

*Exchange-* is a communication between meetings, or series of communications, involving more than one Committee member which includes a between-meeting response, or expectation of a response.

Individual Committee members may prepare drafts of motions or other potential Committee actions between Committee meetings. They may also research or investigate general or specific factual issues.

**3. Distributions**

A Distribution may be made to any number of Committee members, so long as it does not become an Exchange. Whenever a member makes a Distribution concerning a pending or future matters and it involves a quorum of the Committee (counting all senders and recipients):

**a**) a copy shall be forwarded to the Chairperson, who shall determine, under RSA 91-A or other applicable law, whether the Distribution is subject to public disclosure and shall place the copy in the appropriate file;

**b**) the member making the Distribution shall report on it, and its contents, at the meeting unless the information is exempt from disclosure under RSA 91-A; and,

**4. Exchanges**

Exchanges involving a quorum or more of the Committee are prohibited. Such Exchanges shall be considered deliberations and shall occur only at meetings noticed in accordance with RSA 91-A. An Exchange pertaining to any activity allowed under this paragraph is permitted if the number of Committee members involved is less than a quorum.

Information discussed in, or generated by, an Exchange between members shall not be subject to further Distribution and no Exchange shall include any vote or straw vote.

**5. Scheduling and Agenda**

Notwithstanding anything herein contained to the contrary, nothing in this policy prevents any Distributions, or Exchanges of communications which pertain solely to:

1. scheduling of meetings or hearings;
2. the determination or ordering of agenda items or topics to be taken up at meetings or hearings; or
3. general procedural requirements pertaining to such scheduling and agenda matters.

**SECTION IX**

AMENDMENT

These rules may be amended at any regular meeting by an affirmative vote of a quorum of the Committee, provided that such amendment(s) has been presented in writing to each member of the Committee, at least 15 days preceding the meeting at which the vote is taken, unless this 15-day requirement is waived by every member voting on the amendment(s).