BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION  
Policy and Procedures Committee Minutes  
Friday, September 27, 2019  
10:00 A.M.  
Gisborne Conference Room

Present  
Committee: Michael Mason, Jeff Ramer 

Others: Leslie Tarkington, BET Member 

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 A.M.

1. Acceptance of the BET Policy and Procedures Committee Minutes of June 13, 2018 

   Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Mr. Mason, the Committee voted 2-0 to approve the June 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes.

2. For consideration and vote to amend the BET Policy and Procedures to add a requirement of “germaneness” to the ability to add items to BET and committee agendas of regular and special meetings.

   Mr. Ramer presented four proposed edits to the “BET Reference Book 2018-2020” in the following sections:  
   - “Organization and Meetings”, “Special Meetings”, and “Rules of Procedure at Meetings”, both on Page 18  
   - “Meeting Process for BET Committees”, # 2., Page 25

   A copy of the affected pages showing the handwritten proposed amendments, is attached to these Minutes.

   Mr. Ramer moved, Mr. Mason seconded, a motion to approve the four submitted amendments to the BET Reference Book 2018-2020.

   Mr. Mason stressed the significance of the current process needed to add an agenda item. Four members of the BET, must submit the request to the Chair ten days prior to the meeting date. This provision provides adequate time for the Chair and members to discuss the item, review its legal order and merits. Mr. Mason pointed out that the proposed amendments may create the circumstance that if the Chair unilaterally decides that a proposed addition to the agenda is not germane, the Chair alone may then opt not to honor the addition, defeating the very purpose of the provision. Mr. Ramer and Mr. Mason agreed that further discussion is needed on the motion presented by Mr. Ramer.

   Mr. Ramer moved, and Mr. Mason seconded, a motion to postpone the consideration and vote on pending motion, to meet again after the election, and to report back to the BET at the November 18, 2019 meeting, with consideration of the motion not to be connected to the tone of the
September BET Meeting and/or impending election. The motion was approved by a vote of 2-0.

3. Adjournment

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mason, to adjourn at 10:28 A.M.

Elaine JV Brown, Recording Secretary

Jeffrey Ramer, BET Vice Committee Chair

Michael Mason, BET Vice Committee Chair
RELEVANT STATE STATUTES AND CHARTER PROVISIONS

I. POWERS & DUTIES

The Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) is established by Town Charter and derives its powers, duties, and responsibilities from that document. The BET’s powers, duties and responsibilities may be altered by state legislation or by home rule action as provided in the Charter. The BET’s ultimate responsibility is for the “proper administration of the financial affairs of the Town” (Sec. 1).

Members of the BET are also ex-officio members of the RTM (Sec. 168). A BET member also serves on The Nathaniel Witherell Building Committee (Sec. 57.1) and school building committees (Town Code 2-40).

Membership/Qualification
The BET shall consist of twelve electors nominated and elected at large. Members shall be sworn, and shall hold office for two years from January 1 following their election and until their successors shall be elected and shall have qualified (Sec. 2a). They shall hold no other elective office in Town government, and shall serve without pay (Sec. 2b).

Members of the Board of Selectmen shall be ex-officio members, without vote, of the BET.

Vacancies
The BET shall fill any vacancy that may occur provided the new member shall belong to the same political party as the member succeeded (Sec. 3).

Organization of the BET
The BET shall meet biennially in even numbered years to organize and elect a Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk of the Board (Clerk). The Chair and Vice Chair shall be from the political party receiving the most votes for all of its candidates to the BET in the last Town election (Sec. 4a).

The Chair shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the BET and shall have an additional vote for the purpose of dissolving a tie. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall succeed to the Chair’s powers and duties (Sec. 4b).

Meetings & Records
In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, the Chair shall call special meetings of the BET upon the request of any four members. At least 24-hour personal or written notice shall be provided to BET members (Sec. 5a). Electronic participation and voting shall be allowed at such special meetings, but not at regularly scheduled meetings. Electronic participation shall not be used to satisfy the quorum requirements.

The Clerk shall keep a detailed record of the minutes of all meetings and actions taken by the BET. They shall be kept as a permanent record of the Town and shall be available for public inspection at reasonable times. The signatures of the Chair and Clerk shall attest to their accuracy (Sec. 5b). The BET may adopt rules for its meetings that are not inconsistent with the law and Charter (Sec. 5c).

Quorum of the BET
Seven members physically present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a lesser number may adjourn to a later date (Sec. 6).

Finance Department
Section 7 of the Charter provides for a Finance Department under the BET’s direction and control. The BET is responsible for the conduct of all accounting and control, treasury, tax assessment, and tax
ORGANIZATION AND MEETINGS

Regular Meetings
The BET usually meets on the third Monday of each month in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 6:30 PM, except for the months of January, February, and September. In January, the regular meeting usually is held at the same time and place on the fourth Monday of the month, in February on the Tuesday following the third Monday of the month, and in September at a date to be set at the beginning of each calendar year. Seven members shall constitute a quorum for any meeting.

Special Meetings
Special meetings of the BET may be called by the Chair or at the request of four members. Electronic participation and voting shall be allowed at such special meetings, although not at regularly scheduled meetings. Seven members physically present shall constitute a quorum, and electronic participation shall not be used to satisfy the quorum requirements.

Organizational Meetings
Every even-numbered January, the BET shall meet no later than the second Monday following January 1 to elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk and appoint the Comptroller and Assessor.

Role of the Chair
The Chair shall preside at all BET meetings and hearings. The Chair shall have a vote on all items and in the event of a tie, the Chair shall have an additional vote for the purpose of dissolving a tie. The Chair, unless State Statute or the Town Charter requires the vote of a specified number of BET members, will be chosen from the party which has received the greatest number of votes at the last Town Election. The minority party may, but is not required to, designate a representative (minority spokesperson) to enhance communication among BET members.

Rules of Procedure at Meetings
All BET meetings, regular or special, shall be conducted in accordance with current parliamentary procedures as defined in "Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)" and by the requirements of state statutes governing Freedom of Information.

An agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by the Chair in advance of the meeting. It shall be stamped and posted in the Town Clerk's Office and distributed to each member (including ex officio members) at least 24 hours in advance of meetings and shall be available to the public at meetings. Items shall be added to the meeting agenda at the request of four members of the BET, communicated to the Chair at least ten business days prior to the meeting. In addition, the Chair shall review all requests for interim appropriations and, upon the recommendation of the Budget Committee, may designate some such requests for "routine" action. If so identified, the BET may consider and act upon all such items in a single motion, except that any member upon request shall be able to override such designation.

All applications or items will be called in turn by the Clerk of the Board.

Where appropriate, questions or comments will be received from individual BET members. The Chair, or members through the Chair, may discuss the issue and entertain comments from Town officials and, if deemed pertinent, from the public. At that point, a motion will be in order and, if presented, will be debated among the members only.

Voting on any motion will be by voice if unanimous, or by hand if not, and all such votes must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which they were taken.

Order of Business
July 17, 2018 – BET Reference Book
MEETING PROCESS FOR BET COMMITTEES

Setting Agendas
1. The Chair of the Committee, upon approval of a majority of the Committee members and in consultation with appropriate staff, shall establish the calendar for the committee meetings time and location.

2. The Chair of the Committee sets the agenda. He/she may do this in consultation with the members of the Committee, and/or with professional staff, or as he/she sees fit, and subject to inclusion of additional items to the agendas upon the request of at least one half of the members of the Committee.

3. Once drafted, the agenda is forwarded to the Finance Department Executive Assistant to be disseminated to the members of the Committee and other interested parties, and posted on the Town's web site as well as in the Town Clerk's Office.

Approving Minutes:
1. The minutes for Committee meetings are taken and presented as a first draft by the professional staff assigned to this task.

2. The first draft is then presented to the Chair of the Committee for review and comment. The Chair's comments are then incorporated into a second draft of the minutes.

3. The second draft of the minutes is then forwarded to the other members of the Committee for review and comment. Generally, comments from the other members are incorporated into the minutes which are now ready to be posted as Subject to Approval. The Executive Assistant will post the minutes to the Town's web site as well as the Town Clerk's Office.

4. At the next scheduled meeting of the Committee, any further changes may be discussed, and is amended; the minutes are then presented for approval. The approved final version is signed by the Chair and the Recording Secretary and then posted to the Town's web site as the Approved Minutes.