

Norwich Finance Committee - Rules of Procedure (2025)

1. Purpose The Norwich Finance Committee is an advisory body established by the Selectboard to provide non-binding recommendations and research related to:

- The annual budgets for the Town of Norwich, the Norwich School District, and the Dresden School District.
- Other financial matters as requested by the Selectboard.

The specific charge from the Selectboard was adopted in the April 9, 2025 Selectboard meeting:

“The Norwich Town Selectboard may invite the Finance Committee to advise on the creation of annual budgets for the Town of Norwich, Norwich School District, and together with the Hanover Finance Committee, on the Dresden School District budget. The Finance Committee may provide research into financial matters related to the budget as requested by the Norwich Town Selectboard and render non-binding advisory recommendations for action or non-action by the Norwich Town Selectboard.”

Requests for recommendations and research from the Selectboard to the Finance Committee should be made through a memo issued by the Selectboard Chair. Each memo should clearly outline the scope and details necessary for the committee to begin its work, along with guidance on how and where the Selectboard wishes to receive the committee’s findings and recommendations.

The Finance Committee may also, from time to time, propose areas of financial research or analysis it believes would benefit the Town. These proposals will be submitted to the Selectboard for consideration, and the committee will proceed only with Selectboard approval.

2. Membership and Terms

- The Committee shall consist of up to 5 Norwich residents plus the Town Treasurer.
- Members are appointed by the Selectboard to serve staggered 3-year terms.
- The Town Treasurer serves as a non-voting ex-officio member.
- Appointments shall follow the **Selectboard Appointment Policy** (Town of Norwich, 2019).

3. Officers and Duties

- At the first meeting each year, members shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair. A Secretary may also be elected or assigned.
- **Chair:** Schedules and facilitates meetings, coordinates with the Selectboard or staff.
- **Vice-Chair:** Acts as Chair when the Chair is absent.

- **Secretary** (optional): Keeps minutes and distributes agendas unless this is handled by staff or as a rotating position.

4. Meetings

- Meetings are open to the public and must comply with Vermont's Open Meeting Law (Vermont Secretary of State, n.d.). It is recommended but not required that Committee Members review Open Meeting Law training (Vermont Secretary of State, n.d.) and Frequently Asked Questions (Vermont Secretary of State, Vermont League of Cities & Towns, and Vermont School Boards Association, 2024).
- A minimum of 48 hours' notice must be given for regular meetings. The Committee Chair shall ensure agendas are publicly posted online and in at least 3 public places. The agenda must include electronic meeting information if requested by a Committee Member or member of the public at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.
- The Committee may meet in person, remotely, or in a hybrid format. When meeting in person, the Committee Chair shall liaise with the Town Managers office to ensure public access is available.
- Meetings must comply with the **Digital Media Policy** (Town of Norwich, 2020) if using Town digital platforms.

5. Quorum and Voting

- A quorum is required to conduct business:
 - A quorum shall consist of a majority of currently appointed voting members. A motion passes with a simple majority of voting members present.

6. Basic Decision-Making Process (Simplified Procedure)

- Any member may make a suggestion by saying: "I motion that we..."
- Another member must say: "Second" to move forward with discussion.
- The Chair ensures that everyone has a chance to speak (once each, then again if needed).
- After the discussion, the Chair asks: "All in favor? All opposed?" and announces the result. When a meeting is being held remotely or in a hybrid format, a rollcall vote must be held.
- Amendments can be made by saying: "I propose a change to the motion..."

7. Ethics and Conduct

- All members must comply with the **Conflict of Interest Policy** (Town of Norwich, 2019).
- Members must treat each other and the public respectfully and avoid dominating discussions.

- Members shall act in line with the **Vision and Guiding Principles** (Town of Norwich, 2017) adopted by the Selectboard.

8. Minutes and Records

- Meeting minutes must be taken and posted publicly in a timely manner.
- If meetings are recorded (not required), recordings should be posted online for at least 30 days after minutes are approved.
- All public records and recordings must comply with the **Digital Media Policy** (Town of Norwich, 2020) and Vermont's Public Records Law.

10. Amendments to Rules of Procedure

- These rules may be amended by majority vote of the committee at any duly warned meeting.

References

Town of Norwich. (2017, May 24). *Vision and Guiding Principles*. Retrieved August 11, 2025, from Town of Norwich: <https://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/2017-Vision-and-Guiding-Principles.pdf>

Town of Norwich. (2019, February 2). *Conflict of Interest Policy*. Retrieved August 11, 2025, from Town of Norwich: <https://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ConflictOfInterestSigned27Feb2019.pdf>

Town of Norwich. (2019, March 13). *Selectboard Appointment Policy*. Retrieved August 11, 2025, from Town of Norwich: <https://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2019-03-13-Selectboard-Appointment-Policy.pdf>

Town of Norwich. (2020, April 8). *Digital Media Policy*. Retrieved August 11, 2025, from Town of Norwich: <https://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Digital-Media-Policy-04-08-2020.pdf>

Vermont Secretary of State. (n.d.). *Open Meetings*. Retrieved August 11, 2025, from Vermont Secretary of State: <https://sos.vermont.gov/municipal-division/open-meetings/>

Vermont Secretary of State, Vermont League of Cities & Towns, and Vermont School Boards Association. (2024, July). *Joint Guidance on 2024 Updates to Open Meeting Law (ACT 133) and Frequently Asked Questions*. Retrieved August 11, 2025, from State of Vermont:

https://outside.vermont.gov/dept/sos/Municipal%20Division/joint_vlct_vsba_sos_act133_s-55_final_v1-2_07-26-24.pdf