

Town of Thetford Restorative Justice Steering Committee

2025 Rules of Procedure

A. PURPOSE

The Restorative Justice Committee of the Town of Thetford is required by law to conduct its meetings in accordance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law (1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314). Meetings of the Town of Thetford must be open to the public at all times, except as provided in 1 V.S.A. § 313.

B. APPLICATION

This policy setting forth rules of procedure shall apply to the Restorative Justice Steering Committee of the Town of Thetford, which is referred to below as “the body”. These rules shall apply to all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the body.

C. ORGANIZATION

1. The body shall annually elect a Chair and a Co-chair. The Chair shall preside over all meetings, if the Chair is not in attendance, the Co-chair will preside. If neither chair is in attendance at a meeting, a member selected by the body shall act as chair for that meeting.
2. The presiding member shall preserve order in the meeting and shall regulate its proceedings by applying these rules and making determinations about all questions of order or procedure.
3. A majority of the members of the body shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum of the members of the body is not present at a meeting, no meeting shall take place.
4. No single member of the body shall have authority to represent or act on behalf of the body unless by majority vote, the body has delegated such authority for a specific matter at a duly noticed meeting and such delegation is recorded in the meeting minutes.
5. Motions made by members of the body do not require a second. The chair of the body may make motions and may vote on all questions before the body. A motion will only pass if it receives the votes of a majority of the total membership of the body.

6. There is no limit to the number of times a member of the body may speak to a question. Motions to close or limit debate will be entertained.
7. A roll call vote is required for votes that are not unanimous.
8. Meetings may be recessed to a certain time and place.
9. These rules may be amended by majority vote of the body and must be readopted annually.

D. AGENDAS

1. Each regular and special meeting of the body shall have an agenda. Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall contact the chair to request inclusion on the agenda. The chair shall determine the final content of the agenda.
2. At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be physically posted in or near the Municipal Office, at the Thetford Hill Post Office, and at Baker's Store in Post Mills.

Meeting agendas shall also be electronically posted on the Town website (thetfordvt.gov) and the Thetford Listserv. The agenda must also be made available to any person who requests an agenda prior to or during the meeting.

3. All business shall be conducted in the same order as appears on the noticed agenda, except that any addition to or deletion from the noticed agenda must be made as the first act of business at the meeting. No additions to or deletions from the agenda shall be considered once the first act of business at the meeting has commenced. Any other adjustment to the noticed agenda, for example, changing the order of business, postponing or tabling actions, may be made by majority vote of the body.

E. MEETINGS

1. Regular meetings shall take place on the fourth Friday of each month, beginning on October 25th, 2024, at 3:30 PM at the Town of Thetford Town Hall, 3910 Route 113, Thetford Center VT. If a regularly scheduled meeting falls on a recognized holiday, the meeting may be held on a prior or following Friday.

2. Special meetings shall be publicly announced at least 24 hours in advance by giving notice to all members of the body, and to any person who has requested notice of such meetings.

In addition, notices shall be posted in or near the Municipal Office and at the Thetford Hill Post Office, and electronically posted on the Town website (thetfordvt.gov) and the Thetford Listserv. The agenda must also be made available to any person who requests an agenda prior to or during the meeting.

3. Emergency meetings may be held without public announcement, without posting of notices, and without 24-hour notice to members, provided some public notice thereof is given as soon as possible before any such meeting. Emergency meetings may be held only when necessary to respond to an unforeseen occurrence or condition requiring immediate attention by the public body.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Meetings of the body are held in public but are not meetings of the public. 1 V.S.A. § 312(h) states: *At an open meeting, the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to express its opinion on matters considered by the public body during the meeting, as long as order is maintained. Public comment shall be subject to reasonable rules established by the chairperson. This subsection shall not apply to quasi-judicial proceedings.*

1. Members of the public may request permission to comment on an agenda item at any time by raising their hand.

2. Members of the public must be acknowledged by the presiding member before speaking.

3. Members of the public must identify themselves before commenting.

4. Comments by the public must be addressed to the body as a whole, and not to any individual member of the body or public.

5. If a member of the public has already commented on a topic, she or he may not be acknowledged again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment.

6. In the interest of maintaining the pace of the meeting, the presiding member may ask any member of the public who has already spoken to limit additional comments to new ideas or opinions.

7. In the interest of maintaining the pace of the meeting, members of the public may not comment for more than 3 (three) minutes at a time, unless granted more time by the presiding member or a majority vote of the body.

8. Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting. Neither members of the body nor public shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the pace of the meeting, or interrupt or disturb any member while speaking.

9. Members of the body and public are prohibited from making personal, impertinent, threatening, or profane remarks.

10. Members of the public who repeatedly violate these rules may be denied the right to comment. Members of the public who become disorderly may be asked to leave the meeting, or, failing to leave, may be removed from the meeting by law enforcement.