

Southeast Vermont Elderly & Disabled Committee Bylaws

General:

- The guiding missions of the Southeast Vermont Elderly & Persons with Disabilities Transportation Committee is to fill in existing gaps in transportation infrastructure and ensure access to much needed transportation for those who are elderly, have a disability and other transit dependent populations. The E&D Transportation program coordinates funding from several Federal, State, and local sources—including non-governmental sources—to make public transportation accessible, safe, responsive, reliable, convenient, and affordable for as many persons as possible
- The Committee exists under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, Section 5310 and are an arm of the Vermont Agency of Transportation intended to improve transportation access for transit dependent populations in Southeastern Vermont

Membership:

- The Committee consists of staff and representatives of Regional Planning Commissions serving Southeastern Vermont; the Mt. Ascutney Regional Commission and the Windham Regional Commissions, Transit Providers; Southeast Vermont Transit as well as other local transit organizations, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, Human Service Organizations, and other stakeholders in Southeastern Vermont.
- Appointment of Committee members and Chairs is by action of the Committee subject to approval by vote of the Committee.

Meetings:

- The Committee will meet on a regular, generally quarterly basis, unless otherwise decided by a vote of the full committee. In other instances, the Committee will meet periodically as appropriate and necessary. Committee Chairs and staff shall be mindful of commitment of time and effort, including meeting preparation and travel, and will structure meeting frequency, duration, and agendas with Committee effectiveness and efficiency in mind
- Meeting times and places vary, although generally meetings will be held at the Southeast Vermont Transit offices. Meeting times and frequency shall reflect Committee members' personal time constraints and the efficient use of staff resources.
- During the ongoing Coronavirus crisis, all meetings will be held virtually, through Zoom, with all Committee members as well as the general public

receiving the link to the Zoom meeting at least 24 hours prior to the time of the meeting.

- All Committee meetings are subject to Vermont's Open Meeting Law.
- A Meeting Notice and Agenda will be prepared and distributed to all current members prior to the meeting. Where advance written notice is not possible and special circumstances warrant, notice to members may be made by phone.
- All business shall be conducted in the same order as it 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. The reason for the addition shall be reflected in the minutes. 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 members in attendance.

Quorum:

- 1/3 of total current membership shall constitute a quorum.
- A roster of the current membership of any Committee shall be maintained in files of Southeast Vermont Transit
- In the event that a quorum is lacking at any scheduled meeting, the remaining members in attendance may meet however no action shall be taken without ratification by the Committee at a subsequent meeting when a quorum is present.

Decisions:

- The Chair 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.
- No single member of the Committees shall have authority to represent or act on behalf of the Committees unless, by majority vote, the Committees have delegated such authority for a specific matter at a duly-noticed meeting and such delegation is recorded in the meeting minutes
- All decisions of the Committee will be made by motion. Motions made by members require a second. The Chair of the Committee may vote on all questions before said Committee. A motion will only pass if it receives the votes of a majority of the members present.
- There is no limit to the number of times a member of the body may speak to a question.
- A member may speak or make a motion only after being recognized by the Chair.
- Motions to close or limit debate will be entertained.

- Any member may request a roll call vote.
- All Committee decisions shall be recorded in the Meeting Record. Any Committee member may ask that the Meeting Record reflect his or her dissent.

Public Participation:

- Comment by the public or members of the Committee must be addressed to the Chair or to the Committee as a whole, and not to any individual member or the public.
- Members of the public must be acknowledged by the Chair before speaking
- If a member of the public has already spoken on a topic, he or she may not be recognized again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment.
- Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting. Neither members of the Committee, nor the members of the public, shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the meeting or interrupt or disturb any member while speaking. Members of the Committee and members of the public are prohibited from making personal, impertinent, threatening, or profane remarks.
- Members of the Committee and members of the public shall obey the orders of the Chair or other presiding member. The Chair should adhere to the following process to maintain order and decorum of a meeting, but may bypass any or all steps when he or she determines in his or her sole discretion that deviation from the process is warranted:
 - Call the meeting to order and remind the members of the applicable rules of procedure.
 - Declare a recess or table the issue.
 - Adjourn the meeting until a time and date certain
 - Order the removal of any disorderly person from the meeting

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:

There may be instances when members of the public (non-Committee members) will attend a Committee meeting to raise an issue or discuss a matter that is not on the meeting agenda. The following procedure is intended to address this situation and ensure predictability and fairness for both the Committee and the general public. Members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings, and should be given the opportunity to provide comments.

- The Committee will adopt a standard time during the meeting (e.g., beginning, end) as to when public comment will be taken. Whatever time is adopted should be included as a standard item on each meeting agenda (hereafter referred to as the warned time).

- At the beginning of each meeting ask if there are any members of the public present and welcome them. Make sure they have signed the meeting sign-in sheet.
- Ask those members of the public present if they would like to provide comment and, if so, on what matter
- In the event a member of the public is in attendance at the meeting and would like to bring to the Committee's attention a matter that is not included on that meeting's agenda, the Committee will take those comments at the warned time
- If there are multiple members of the public present who would like to offer comment on nonagenda items, the Committee may establish a period of duration not to be exceeded by the commenter, e.g., 5 minutes.
- Following the comment, the Committee members may ask clarifying questions, but as the matter has not been warned, it should not be discussed
- The Committee may choose to add the matter to a future agenda for Committee discussion and possible action.

Conflict of Interests:

Conflict of Interest means any of the following:

- A direct or indirect personal or financial interest of a member, his or her spouse, household member, child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, aunt or uncle, brother- or sister-in-law, business associate, or employer or employee in the outcome of a cause, proceeding, application, or any other matter pending before the member or before the Committee

A "conflict of interest" does not arise in the case of votes or decisions on matters in which the member has a personal or financial interest in the outcome that is no greater than that of other persons generally affected by the decision.

Disclosure: A member who has reason to believe that he or she has or may have a conflict of interest in a particular matter shall, prior to participating in any official action on the matter, publicly disclose at a public meeting or public hearing that he or she has an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the matter under consideration and disclose the nature of the actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Recusal: The failure of a member to recuse himself or herself in spite of a conflict of interest may be grounds for discipline and/or reporting to the Office of the Attorney General.

Post-Recusal Procedure: A member of the Commission who has recused himself or herself from serving on a public body in a particular proceeding shall not sit with the public body, deliberate with the public body, or participate in that proceeding as a member of the public body in any capacity, though such member may still participate as a member of the public.

Reporting:

- A Meeting Record of each Committee meeting will be maintained by the Windham Regional Commission and/or Mt. Ascutney Regional Commission and must be in compliance with Vermont Open Meeting Law.

Responsibilities:

Members

- Attend Committee Meetings; participate in discussion and decisions
- Advise the Chair if attendance is not possible
- Review agenda material before meetings and consider the issues and possible options available
- Be aware of the views of riders, and the citizens of the Southeastern Vermont's towns, and the regional needs and perspective
- Use independent judgment in considering issues and taking positions

Chair

- Provide leadership in the conduct of the Committee's work.
- Call meetings and oversee the preparation of the Committee's work
- Insure the efficient and effective conduct of Committee meetings and the decision-making process.
- Ensure that all Committee members have an opportunity to express their views in Committee discussion.