

New Committee Member – Top 8 Things to Know

1 – Oath of Office, Conflict of Interest, Handbook. You need to be sworn in before you are a voting member of the public body and you need to file your certificate of completion with the Town Clerk, which certifies you completed the state’s ethics training. This information is on your appointment letter. The ethics training must be done every three years. Please also review the Board and Committee Handbook and the Open Meeting Law.

2 – Important information for Board/Committee Members. Visit Weston.org/Committees to find information on the Open Meeting Law and Public Records Law, which are applicable to you now that you are a member of a public body. The essentials follow.

3 – Meeting Post and Meeting Agenda. TWO (2) important and mandatory documents your committee must submit at least 48 hours in advance if a meeting is scheduled by the committee.

This 48-hour time frame does NOT include weekends or holidays and must allow for administration time to post. For example: A meeting to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday must be posted by the previous Friday; however:

- If the Monday is a federal holiday and Town Hall is closed, that Tuesday meeting must be posted on the previous Thursday
- Town Hall closes at 5:00 p.m. and staff is not available to post after closing. Please submit posts and agendas no later than 4:30 p.m.
- Please note, Town Hall closes at 2:30 p.m. on Fridays during the summer, which means that meeting posts and agendas need to be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m.

The 48-hour time period must be taken into account for daytime meetings; so, if that Tuesday meeting is 8:00 a.m., the post and agenda need to be submitted by the previous Thursday (barring a Monday holiday).

A Meeting Post template and a Meeting Agenda template are available on Weston.org/Committees or ask the Town Clerk’s office or the Town Manager’s office for the documents.

Submit the meeting post, meeting agenda, a Town Hall room request, and approved minutes to:
meetingpost@westonmass.org

4 – Be Careful of Committee Business in Emails and Social Media – emails and social media are public record. Do not deliberate in email or on social media (consider your quorum on social media). More information can be found in the “Open Meeting Law Guide” from Town Counsel at Weston.org/Committees

5 – Quorum – know what the number is for a deliberative body, which is one more than half. If your committee membership is 7, a quorum is 4. Remote participation is allowed (conference call) but a physical quorum must be present meaning the remote participant cannot count towards that quorum.

6 – Approving Minutes – When Meeting Minutes are drafted, they can be sent around via email to committee members for review before the next meeting but no commenting. The Open Meeting Law was recently updated to clarify when meeting minutes must be approved. Approval of open meeting minutes must now occur within the next three meetings or 30 days, whichever is later. Once minutes are approved by vote of the committee, they can be sent to meetingpost@westonmass.org to be posted on the Town’s website. Be sure to include supplemental information, e.g. presentation materials, if it is referenced in the minutes.

7 – Communication with the Public. The Town’s website and social media channels are available for committees to use to send out news and project information. A monthly e-newsletter and a quarterly tax bill insert are also

available to use. Please speak with Kara Fleming, Assistant to the Town Manager/Public Information Officer, for additional information at 781-786-5020.

8 – When in Doubt, Ask. Please call the Town Manager’s Office if you have any questions about committee business, conduct or process.