

**Town of Plymouth, Massachusetts Advisory & Finance Committee**  
**STANDING RULES OF THE COMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Chapter 6, Section 1 of the Town Charter, the Advisory & Finance Committee hereby promulgates the Standing Rules of the Committee. Said Standing Rules were formally adopted, as amended, November 16, 2022. All prior versions of the Standing Rules should be considered null and void.

**1. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE**

- 1.1. Pursuant to Chapter 2, Section 12 of the Town Charter, and Chapter 9, Section 1 of the Bylaws of the Town of Plymouth, an Advisory & Finance Committee of fifteen members shall be appointed by the Town Moderator for three year overlapping terms. There shall be no more than three members from any precinct of the Town.
- 1.2. Appointment to the Committee shall be made by the Town Moderator within thirty calendar days prior to the end of the Fiscal Year and within thirty calendar days after a vacancy occurs during the year.

**2. ORGANIZATION DATE**

- 2.1. Definition: Organization constitutes the election of the officers.
- 2.2. Pursuant to Chapter 9, Section 3 of the Bylaws of the Town of Plymouth, the Advisory & Finance Committee shall meet for the purposes of organization each year no later than July 31st of any fiscal year.
- 2.3. In the event the chairperson is unable to complete his/her term, the Vice-Chairperson shall call a meeting to reorganize.
- 2.4. The committee may reorganize at any time during the fiscal year, at any meeting of the Committee, by a majority vote of members present and voting in the affirmative calling for such reorganization.

**3. OFFICERS**

- 3.1. Election of Officers for Chair and Vice-Chair  
Officer positions are to be elected by Committee members. If any of the members currently holding those positions are running for re-election, the election shall be conducted by the most senior member of the Committee not running for office if he/she is willing to serve as a temporary chair for that purpose. If he/she intends to be a candidate, he/she shall decline to preside over the election, and the next senior member, willing to serve, shall be asked.
- 3.2. Chairperson  
The Committee shall choose its own Chairperson from among its' members.

### 3.3. Vice-Chairperson

The Committee shall elect two Vice-Chairpersons from among its' members.

## 4. MEETINGS

### 4.1. Regularly Scheduled Meetings

The Advisory & Finance Committee shall meet on the third Wednesday of each month in the Town Office Building, beginning at 7:00 p.m. If no agenda items are scheduled to come before the Advisory & Finance Committee eight (8) calendar days before the regular scheduled meeting, the Chairperson may cancel the regular scheduled meeting. Any meeting of the Committee shall begin as soon as a quorum is present, and the posted starting time has been reached.

### 4.2. Extended Meeting Hours

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present shall be required to take up any new agenda item after the hour of 10:00 p.m.

### 4.3. Special Meeting Dates

The Advisory & Finance Committee Chairperson may schedule any such meetings other than its regularly scheduled meetings at such times and places as he/she deems appropriate provided that the requirements stated in Section 5 are met.

### 4.4. Budget and Article Hearings

The Advisory & Finance Committee Chairperson may schedule such Budget and Articles Hearings at such times and places as he/she deems appropriate provided that the requirements stated in Section 5 are met.

### 4.5. Right to Alter, Change, Postpone Meetings or Hearings

Once a meeting is in session the Advisory & Finance Committee shall have the right to alter, change, or postpone any scheduled meeting, special meeting, hearing, budget, or article presentation by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting on the issue.

### 4.6. Order of Business at Meetings

The order of business shall be determined by the Chairperson prior to the meeting, and shall be governed by the items on the posted agenda during the meeting. Specific times will be assigned to each item, if requested or required.

### 4.7. New Business

An agenda item to discuss "new business" may be requested by any member of the Committee by contacting the Secretary of the Committee to request agenda time.

### 4.8. Guidelines for Providing and Presenting Information and Documentation

Information regarding any request for transfer of funds or Town Meeting article shall be provided to the Advisory & Finance Committee eight (8) calendar days in advance of the meeting where that transfer request or Town Meeting article is scheduled to be heard by

the Committee in order to give the Committee members sufficient time for reading, reviewing, and fact gathering. Presenters/petitioners shall notify the Secretary of the Committee in advance of the meeting with the number and identity of presenters. A maximum of ten (10) minutes shall be allowed for the primary presenter of an article, and a maximum of five (5) minutes for secondary presenters. Additional time may be allowed if a member of the Committee makes a motion to extend these times, and the motion is approved by a majority vote. Others shall be allowed five (5) minutes, but the Committee reserves the right to limit repetitious or overlapping commentary.

## 5. POSTING OF MEETING NOTICES

### 5.1. Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Except in an emergency, a notice of every regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory & Finance Committee shall be filed with the Town Clerk, and the notice or a copy thereof shall be publicly posted in the office of the Town Clerk or on the Town's web-site at least forty-eight hours prior to such meeting, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays (MGL, Chapter 30A, Section 20). The notice shall be presented in easily readable type and shall contain the date, time, and place of such meeting. Such filing and posting shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Advisory & Finance Committee.

### 5.2. Special Scheduled Meetings

The agenda for any special scheduled meeting shall be filed with the Town Clerk at least forty-eight hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) before a meeting is to take place.

### 5.3. Budget and Article Hearings

Schedules for budget and article hearings shall be made at least one week in advance of said hearings. Such schedules shall be made available to members of the news media, and sent by email to all town meeting representatives, department heads, and the Town Manager within forty-eight hours of setting such schedule.

## 6. QUORUM

### 6.1. Eight (8) members being present shall constitute a quorum of the Advisory & Finance Committee, and said Committee shall take no action unless a quorum is present.

### 6.2. Should a quorum not be present by 7:30 p.m., the meeting shall be cancelled, and a new meeting shall be scheduled within seven calendar days in conformance with the provisions of these Standing Rules.

## 7. TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON

### 7.1. Absence of Chairperson

In the event the chairperson is not present when a meeting is scheduled to begin and a quorum is present, the vice-chairperson shall serve as chairperson. If more than one member has been designated as a vice-chairperson, the rank of the vice-chairperson will

constitute the order in which each would be requested to serve as chairperson.

#### 7.2. Absence of Chairman and All Vice-Chairpersons

If the Chairperson and all Vice-chairpersons are not present when a meeting is scheduled to be called, and a quorum is present, the most senior member of the Committee present shall call upon all members present beginning with him/herself, upon the basis of each member's seniority, asking if such member is willing to serve as Temporary Chairperson. The first member of the Committee accepting such request shall serve as Temporary Chairperson for said meeting. Should the Chairperson or any Vice-chairperson attend said meeting while it is in session, the Chairperson or Vice-chairperson shall assume the duties of the chair after the agenda item currently in process is completed.

### 8. PARLIAMENTARY RULES

#### 8.1. The rules contained in "Robert's Rules of Order" Revised shall govern the Advisory & Finance Committee in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Standing Rules of the Advisory & Finance Committee. Furthermore, the following actions of the Advisory & Finance Committee shall be deemed Order.

##### 8.2. Method of Voting

8.2.1. All votes by the Advisory & Finance Committee pertaining to warrant articles, transfers from the Finance Committee Reserve Account, or changes to our organization or structure will be by roll call. At the Chairperson's discretion, he/she may ask for a show of hands. If the vote is not unanimous, a roll call will be taken.

8.2.2. All other votes will be by a show of hands.

8.2.3. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present shall be required for passage of a motion, unless otherwise defined in another section of these Standing Rules.

8.2.4. Any member abstaining from a vote shall be considered as present.

8.2.5. A majority vote of the members present may overrule any ruling of the Chair.

##### 8.3. Recount

If any member of the Committee questions the vote, he/she must ask for a recount of the vote to be taken before the next order of business is begun.

##### 8.4. Abstention and Recusal

Any member of the Advisory & Finance Committee who abstains or recuses themselves from voting on any vote before the Committee must give his/her reason for abstention or

recusal.

#### 8.5. Reconsideration

In general practice, a motion for reconsideration can be made on any previous action taken by the Committee by any member voting on the prevailing side in the original vote. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting shall be required for passage of a motion to reconsider.

In the event reconsideration of a Town Meeting recommendation is proposed after the first Precinct Caucus or Presentation Forum for that Town Meeting has commenced, the motion to reconsider may only be taken up if a minimum quorum of two-thirds (2/3) of members are present. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting shall be required for passage of the motion to reconsider. As with all motions to reconsider, the motion must be made by a member voting on the prevailing side in the original vote.

#### 8.6. Voting by the Chairperson

The Chairperson may vote on all issues coming before the Advisory & Finance Committee. The Chairperson's vote will be counted last after all members present and voting have voted. The Chairperson's vote will only count in the event of a tie. The Chairperson's vote cannot cause a tie.

#### 8.7. Limiting Discussion to Committee Members

Once a motion has been made and seconded, discussion will be limited to members of the Advisory & Finance Committee. The Advisory & Finance Committee may by majority vote permit or allow anyone to speak or to clarify a previously stated point.

### 9. MEETING MINUTES

9.1. Meeting minutes shall be processed as required by state statute. However, the Committee shall have the right to direct the Secretary of the Committee to provide a more complete record of any issue brought before the Committee. Such direction shall be made at either (1) the close of discussion of the issue, or (2) the end of the meeting, and shall require an affirmative vote of the members present.

9.2. The Secretary of the Committee shall maintain a file and log of all pending and received reports filed with the Committee. Said file, log, and reports shall be made available to the Committee members upon request.

### 10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

10.1. The Advisory & Finance Committee shall operate in strict conformance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 21, as amended, when holding an executive session.

## 11. SUB-COMMITTEES

- 11.1. The Advisory & Finance Committee Chairperson, in consultation with the Vice-Chairpersons, shall create all sub-committees, and shall appoint all sub- committee chairpersons and members.
- 11.2. Sub-committee meetings shall be scheduled at times that do not conflict with any meeting of the Advisory & Finance Committee.
- 11.3. The Advisory & Finance Committee Chairperson may ask for volunteers, and assign to members of the Committee specific articles on the Town Meeting warrant that are to be reviewed for analysis and recommendation.
- 11.4. All sub-committee meeting shall be subject to the Open Meeting Law contained in M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 20.

## 12. ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

### 12.1. Finance Committee Members

Except where otherwise governed by general law, any Advisory & Finance Committee member who cannot attend a regularly scheduled meeting shall notify the Committee Chairperson and/or the Committee Secretary, in writing where practicable. The Advisory & Finance Committee Secretary shall notify the Town Moderator of their absence. If any Committee member misses three or more regularly scheduled meetings in one calendar year and fails to provide the required notice, or notice found by a majority vote by the remaining Committee Members to be insufficient, the Committee may petition the Town Moderator to remove such person from the Committee.

### 12.2. Reasons for Absence

For purposes of clarification the following reasons are deemed sufficient as explanation by committee members for absences - injury, illness, business, and other. In maintaining the attendance records, the Secretary of the Committee shall make note on the permanent attendance records of the reasons for absences using only the above categories.

### 12.3. Precinct Caucus Meetings and Representation

All members of the Advisory & Finance Committee shall be prepared to attend precinct caucus meetings to discuss pending warrant articles. At least two Committee members should be in attendance at each precinct caucus meeting.

### 12.4. Department Heads

Department Heads must comply with Standing Rule 4.8 and attend all Advisory & Finance Committee meetings of which they have been previously notified if they are scheduled for a request for transfer of funds, budget review, and/or article presentation(s) for either annual or special town meetings. If the Department Head is unable to comply with Standing Rule 4.8 and/or to attend said scheduled meeting, he/she shall notify the Secretary of the Advisory & Finance Committee as early as possible before the scheduled

meeting. The Department Head can recommend another representative of his/her department attend said meeting as the Department Head's designee. The Secretary of the Advisory & Finance Committee shall notify the Chairperson and the appropriate subcommittee Chairperson, if necessary, and they will have discretion to determine whether the proposed designee is an acceptable substitute. If the Department Head does not comply with Standing Rule 4.8, and/or does not attend the meeting, and/or does not get advance approval for a designee to attend the meeting in his/her place the Chairperson shall have discretion to determine that they have waived their right to be heard on the relevant agenda item(s), or to ask the Committee to take any other action the Committee may choose to take on the matter. If the Chairperson determines they have waived their right to be heard, the item will remain on the agenda as scheduled and the Chairperson shall explain his/her determination on the issue. The Committee can override the Chairperson's determination on this matter if two-thirds (2/3rds) of the Committee affirmatively votes to do so, at which time they can take any action the Committee determines to be appropriate.

#### 12.5. Petitioners

Petitioners, or their designee(s), must comply with Standing Rule 4.8 and attend any Advisory & Finance Committee meeting of which they have been previously notified at which their petitioned town meeting article shall be considered. If the petitioner, or his/her designee, is unable to comply with Standing Rule 4.8 and/or attend said hearing, he/she shall notify the Secretary of the Advisory & Finance Committee as early as possible before the scheduled meeting. The Secretary shall notify the Chairperson and the appropriate subcommittee Chairperson, if necessary, of this and they shall have discretion to determine that they have waived their right to be heard on the relevant agenda item(s), or to ask the Committee to take any other action the Committee may choose to take on the matter. If the Chairperson determines they have waived their right to be heard, the item will remain on the agenda as scheduled and the Chairperson shall explain his/her determination on the issue. The Committee can override the Chairperson's determination on this matter if two-thirds (2/3rds) of the Committee affirmatively votes to do so, at which time they can take any action the Committee determines to be appropriate.

#### 12.6. Others

The Advisory & Finance Committee, and the appropriate subcommittee, in the case of budget reviews and requests for transfer of funds, may also require that persons, other than Department Heads, attend any Advisory & Finance Committee meeting, or hearing of which they have been previously notified for participation in the discussion of any issue before the Advisory & Finance Committee. If such person is the proponent of a town meeting article, they will also be required to comply with Standing Rule 4.8. If such person(s) is unable to comply with Standing Rule 4.8 and/or attend said scheduled meeting, he/she shall notify the Secretary of the Advisory & Finance Committee as early as possible before the scheduled meeting. Such person(s) can recommend another person to serve as his/her designee. The Secretary of the Advisory & Finance Committee shall inform the Chairperson and appropriate subcommittee Chairperson, if necessary, and they shall determine if the designee is an acceptable substitute. If such person does not comply with Standing Rule 4.8, and/or does not attend the meeting, and/or does not get advance

approval for a designee to attend the meeting in his/her place the Chairperson shall have discretion to determine that they have waived their right to be heard on the relevant agenda item(s), or to ask the Committee to take any other action the Committee may choose to take on the matter. If the Chairperson determines they have waived their right to be heard, the item will remain on the agenda as scheduled and the Chairperson shall explain his/her determination on the issue. The Committee can override the Chairperson's determination on this matter if two-thirds (2/3rds) of the Committee affirmatively votes to do so, at which time they can take any action the Committee determines to be appropriate.

### **13. REQUESTFORTRANSFEROFFUNDS**

13.1. Approval of transfer of reserve funds shall require a majority vote of the full Advisory & Finance Committee. This is not meant to imply that the request must be heard by the full Committee, but that eight members must vote in favor of the request to transfer funds.

13.2. The Advisory & Finance Committee Chairperson's vote shall count for a transfer of funds from the reserve account.

13.3. The Advisory & Finance Committee Chairperson may require the applicable sub-committee to review and recommend a transfer of funds prior to the hearing of the Committee.

#### **13.4. Request for Transfer of Funds Form**

All requests for transfers will be on the latest version of the "Requests for Transfer Form". Requests for Transfer should have affixed all supporting documentation at the time of submission.

#### **13.5. Notification of the Advisory & Finance Committee**

All departments shall submit the original of the Request for Transfer of Funds to the Finance Director who shall review the request and forward it to the Town Manager. Once approved by the Town Manager, the original shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Advisory & Finance Committee.

If the Town Manager denies a Request for Transfer of Funds, he/she shall notify the Advisory & Finance Committee Secretary no later than eight (8) calendar days prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Advisory & Finance Committee.

#### **13.6. Time Requirements for Inclusion on Agenda**

Requests for Transfer of Funds shall be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting of the Advisory & Finance Committee which follows by at least eight (8) calendar days the receipt of said request by the Secretary of the Advisory & Finance Committee, as approved and submitted by the Town Manager.

#### **13.7. Request for Waiver of Time Requirement**

For action to be taken by the Advisory & Finance Committee, any Request for Transfer of Funds that does not meet the eight day waiting period, must meet the following conditions before consideration can be given:

- 13.7.1. A specific request by a Department Head or the Town Manager requesting immediate consideration
- 13.7.2. A recommendation for immediate consideration by the appropriate sub-committee in the form of a motion.
- 13.7.3. Such motion must receive an affirmative two-thirds (2/3rds) vote, or the Request for Transfer of Funds shall be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting of the Advisory & Finance Committee which follows by at least eight (8) calendar days the receipt of said request per Section 13.6 above.

## 14. PROCESS FOR SUSPENSION AND AMENDING THE STANDING RULES

### 14.1. Suspension of the Standing Rules

Any standing rule of the Advisory & Finance Committee may be suspended by an affirmative vote of a four-fifths (4/5) majority of the members present.

### 14.2. Amendment of the Standing Rules

The Standing Rules of the Advisory & Finance Committee may be amended only at a regularly scheduled meeting provided that:

- 14.2.1. Any proposed amendment must be presented to the Committee in written form at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- 14.2.2. A written copy of the proposed amendment must be received by the members of the Advisory & Finance Committee with the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- 14.2.3. Said proposed amendment received a two-thirds (2/3rds) affirmative vote of the members present and voting.