

Town of Unity
Budget Committee Ordinance

Last amended June 04, 2022

Section 1. Establishment

Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. Section 3001, a Budget Committee is hereby established for the Town of Unity, Maine.

Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of the Budget Committee is to provide constructive forum for thought and debate on any matter which is likely to have a financial impact on the townspeople. The Budget Committee shall have no power to enact Town policy or make financial decisions on its own, but will make recommendations to the Municipal Officer and the voters. The Committee may develop its own priorities for subjects of discussion, research, and debate, and will also be responsive to requests for assistance from the Municipal Officers.

Section 3. Composition of Committee; Member Qualifications; Terms; Vacancies

The Committee shall consist of 7 to 15 members who shall be appointed by the municipal officers and who shall be registered voters of the Town. Members shall serve for terms of 3 years, except that they shall continue in office until their successors are appointed. Vacancies which occur prior to the end of a member's term, and in effect leave the Committee with less than 7 members, shall be filled as soon as possible by appointment of the municipal officers for the remainder of the term that was vacated. Members shall familiarize themselves with the annual town report, the annual budget process, revenue streams, and the town meeting procedures. Municipal Officers and Administrative Assistant are expected to attend Budget Committee meetings.

Section 4. Officers; meetings; quorum; procedure

The Committee shall annually elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary from among its members. The Chair shall call meetings as necessary or when so requested by a majority of members or the Municipal Officers. Meetings shall be publicly announced by the Town Administrative Assistant, Clerk, or Town Manager as applicable. A quorum necessary to conduct business shall consist of at least a majority of members. The Chair or Vice Chair shall preside at all meetings. The Secretary shall maintain a record of all meetings. Meeting records shall be subject to the Maine Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S.A. Sections 401-410. The Committee may adopt rules of procedure not inconsistent with this ordinance.

Section 5. Conflict of Interest; Pecuniary Interest

Members may participate in discussion, but shall be disqualified from voting, on any matter which may constitute a conflict of interest. Members shall volunteer identification of such a conflict at the earliest possible time during discussion on the pertinent issue. Any question of whether a member shall be disqualified from voting on a particular matter shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present except the member whose potential conflict is under consideration.

The term *conflict of interest* shall be construed to mean direct or indirect pecuniary [financial] interest which shall include pecuniary benefit to any member of the person's immediate family (grandparent, spouse, child, grandchild, e.g) or to their employer or employer of a member of the person's immediate family.

Section 6. Powers and duties

The committee shall have the following powers and duties:

- a. To review and make recommendations on the annual operating budget as proposed by the municipal officers.
- b. To review and make recommendations on annual capital expenditures as proposed by the municipal officers.
- c. To review and make recommendations on any qualified citizen petition that may have a financial impact on the town.
- d. To review and make recommendations on supplemental appropriations and expenditures and other budgetary action whenever proposed by the municipal officers.
- e. To make such other recommendations on fiscal matters as it may from time to time deem advisable.
- f. Any recommendation on a matter requiring town meeting action shall be printed with the article in the warrant and/or on the ballot, if any.
- g. The municipal officers shall cooperate with and provide the Committee with such information as may be reasonably necessary and available to enable it to carry out its functions under this ordinance.