



**TOWN OF BELMONT**  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
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The Town's website calendar is now Belmont's official legal posting location. The following is Belmont's current process to post meetings to be in compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

**POSTING PROCEDURE FOR ALL BELMONT BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES**

The Town Clerk Staff will extract and post meetings and minutes from [townclerk@belmont-ma.gov](mailto:townclerk@belmont-ma.gov) account at the following times:

- Mondays through Thursdays at 9 AM and 2 PM
- Fridays at 9 AM and 11 AM

If you are emailing a meeting agenda that must be posted the same day to comply with the 48-hour requirement, please call (617) 993-2603 to alert the Town Clerk's staff.

The Town Clerk's office has provided templates for meeting postings. These templates refer to the most recent legislation passed regarding the new remote and hybrid options for committee members and residents.

The 48-hour advance notice of the posting will be strictly followed. Weekends and holidays are not included in the 48 hours. (*Example: Monday meeting must be posted by Thursday before the time of the meeting*).

If a posting does not comply with the law, it will be rejected and returned to the originator. Per the Town's IT requirements, the Town Clerk's office only accepts **.pdf** or **.doc** formats. Any other file formats or links submitted will be REJECTED. The Town Clerk's staff will time stamp each accepted posting and will return a copy to the originator and send a copy to the committee's Town liaison for posting to the website meeting calendar.

Upon receipt, it is the committee's chair's responsibility to ensure the time stamped copy is posted to the town website meeting calendar. In Belmont, each committee has an appointed liaison to assist with the posting process. Once the Town Clerk's office has returned the time stamped agenda, the chair should verify their meeting was posted to the website calendar.

**MEETING AGENDA POSTING REQUIREMENTS**

The meeting posting must contain the following:

1. The full name of the governmental body should be listed at the top of the agenda. NO ABBREVIATIONS OR ACRONYMS (Applies to all Boards, Committees, Commissions, & Subcommittees).
2. Date, time, & location for the meeting.
3. Agenda, which must include specific items that the chairperson reasonably expects will be discussed.
  - a. "General Updates" or "New/Old Business" should not be included as they are too vague to comply with the law.
  - b. The list of topics must be sufficiently specific to reasonably inform the public of the issues to be discussed at the meeting. Anyone reviewing the posted agenda should be able to determine if there will be a topic of interest and whether or not they will observe the meeting.

**REVISIONS OF ACCEPTED MEETING POSTINGS**

Changes to a posted meeting must be marked "REVISED" at the top of the posting. If you are using the templates, add "REVISED" after the committee's name, otherwise add it to the header of the posting.

Any items removed from an agenda should be marked with a ~~strike through~~ and any additions or changes should be marked in **\*bold**.

## COMPLIANCE REMINDERS

- **SWEARING-IN:** Every elected or appointed member of Belmont's Boards, Committees, and Commissions must be sworn in at the Town Clerk's office before they can participate. Oaths are offered Mondays through Thursdays at 8:30 AM or 3:30 PM. At that time, the appointed or elected person will receive a copy of the Attorney General's Open Meeting Law Guide, information about Public Records Law and the Ethics/Conflict of Interest requirements. Each appointed or elected person is required to complete the Ethics training offered by the State within 30 days of swearing in and again every odd numbered year.
- **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** To hold a meeting in Executive Session, one of TEN VERY SPECIFIC CONDITIONS listed in the Open Meeting Law must be listed on the agenda. The body MUST first meet in public session, the chair must verbalize one of the ten legal reasons (actually reading from the law) and take a roll call vote to enter executive session. Before leaving open session, the chair should state whether or not they will return to open session.

Minutes must be taken during executive session; all votes in executive session must be roll call votes and recorded in the minutes. Periodically, the chair must review those minutes and determine if they should be released. Only if the purpose for executive session is ongoing may the chair keep minutes confidential, otherwise they should be released.

- **MEETING MINUTES:** All minutes must be created, approved, and filed with the Town Clerk "in a timely manner", which now is considered within 2 meetings and must include:
  1. full name of the committee (NO ACRONYMS OR ABBREVIATIONS),
  2. date and place of meeting,
  3. list of members attending and absent,
  4. summary of discussion on each subject, and
  5. decisions made and actions taken, including a record of all votes.

If a Public Records Request is made, the Open Meeting Law and Public Records Law require that minutes be made available to the public within 10 days upon receiving said request, whether they have been approved or remain in draft form.

- **EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS – WHAT'S PERMITTED / PROHIBITED:**
  1. Housekeeping items (agenda distribution, scheduling or reports to be discussed) are permitted.
  2. Substantive discussion of the specifics of upcoming agenda items is prohibited.

It is recommended that committee members refrain from sending emails that are not considered "housekeeping" items.

- **QUORUM:**

A quorum is considered as half of the number of members per the committee's charge plus one. A quorum of members is required to hold a public meeting.

  1. Any hybrid (remote + in-person) meeting that encounter a technology issue resulting in the loss of remote functionality may continue the meeting in-person if a quorum of members is physically present. If there is less than a quorum, the meeting must end.
  2. Attendance at a conference, social event, or a meeting of another municipal board is not considered to be a meeting if no intention to conduct business or deliberation occurs.

- **OPEN MEETING LAW VIOLATIONS:**

Complaints filed against committees, boards and commissions must be on the Attorney General's Complaint Form and must be sent to the chair and Town Clerk. Complaints not adequately addressed and corrected by the committee may then be filed directly with the Attorney General's Office. The Attorney General outlines the complaint process in Section 23 of the Open Meeting Law Guide.

Please feel free to contact the Town Clerk's office at [townclerk@belmont-ma.gov](mailto:townclerk@belmont-ma.gov) or call (617) 993-2603 with questions or concerns.

Thank you for your patience, effort and service to the Town of Belmont.