



Millinocket

Maine's Biggest Small Town

Town of Millinocket

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Citizen Guide to Town Council Meetings

This is an overview of information related to Council Meetings. We hope it is helpful to understanding the process. Thank you for participating in our local government. The town meeting is a place where the public is encouraged to participate. Below are some of the terms:

- **Order** – Item of business to be proposed (motioned) to council for discussion and vote.
- **Motion** – A Councilor proposal to the whole Council for discussion and vote. This could include an Order, an Amendment, or other. Any councilor can make a motion at any point in time during a Town Council meeting, regardless of whether it is on the agenda or not.
- **Second** – A “second” is used when a councilor supports an order to be discussed and voted upon. Without a “second” an order or motion does not get discussed or voted on.
- **Amendment** – A change to an original order, which can be motioned by a councilor and approved or voted down by the whole council.
- **Minutes** – Summary of past meetings, including votes and discussion, that needs Council approval for officially entering the record.
- **Parliamentary Procedure**–This is the protocol used and questions go to the Council Chair. The Council follows Robert’s Rules of Order. The Council adopted additional procedures at the initial session of a new term.
- **Warrant** – a list of articles for items the Council may act on, which usually comes in the form of approving expenditures.
- **Mil Rate** – Tax rate. The tax rate determines what is paid in property taxes. It is stated in “so many dollars per thousand dollars of valuation.” Residential property owners may want to seek homestead exemptions or Veteran’s exemptions (for qualified veterans) to potentially lower their property tax rate, which may be done through the town’s Tax Assessor.
- **Two Minute Public Comment** – Typically the last agenda item provides any member of the public an opportunity to express general concerns, thoughts, or feedback publicly. The Council invites any and all people to speak. Each member of the public will be allowed to speak for a period of not more than two minutes and the Council shall not enter into a debate or a question-and-answer session unless the question can be answered in a brief statement without a debate. This will be at the discretion of the Council Chair.
- **Executive Sessions** – These are private meetings held by the Council when certain matters must be kept confidential to protect other parties, as required by US and/or Maine law, Town Charter, or by contract. This could include personnel issues, legal issues, economic development issues or

other. No Action by the Council can be taken in Executive Session—only in public Council meetings can any vote or decision be made by the Council.

- **To ask questions** or offer feedback during Town meetings, the public may do so within the public comment period of each order on the agenda. Any Councilor motion will be open to both the Council and the Public for discussion.

The public is asked to be respectful and orderly. It is of the Council Chairman's discretion to determine whether a public comment is disrespectful or inappropriate in nature, at which point the Chairman may request the ceasing of comment or removal of the public member.

Millinocket publishes the draft agendas on the website and Facebook prior to meetings. If you have questions, you may ask the manager and/or a Town Councilor before the meeting. The town website is www.millinocket.org.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INVOLVED? Come up and speak or submit a written statement to the Council Chairman and/or Town Manager. The Town Council is always seeking public input to ensure all perspectives, beliefs and desires of the public are considered.

Want to do more? Become an appointed member of a committee or board such as the Planning Board, Events Committee, or Board of Appeals. The Town publishes these openings on the website, Facebook, and local newspaper. You may also request to serve on an existing subcommittee by filling out a form on the town website at:

<https://millinocket.org/government/committees-andboards/>.