

PURPOSE

The purpose of these regulations is to fulfill the requirement under [Town Bylaw 2.9](#) Recording of Town Meetings which states: “The Select Board shall promulgate regulations pertaining to livestreaming and recorded video of meetings of elected and appointed public bodies; provided, however, that the regulations so adopted shall not infringe on an individual’s right to make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting of a public body, in accordance with the [Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20\(f\)](#).”

BACKGROUND

Recording and posting recordings of the meetings of elected and appointed bodies greatly enhances public access to local government and helps residents understand the decision-making process and the decisions that are made. Wellesley Media has invested heavily in equipping several rooms for recording meetings, and these locations are set out in Appendix B – Meeting Rooms. Wellesley Media strives to provide as much live coverage of government meetings as efficiently as possible and works to post meetings for viewing as quickly as possible on their website and through programming on local cable TV channels. In-person meetings can be recorded most efficiently when they are held in rooms that are already equipped for recording.

APPLICABILITY

These regulations apply to all elected and appointed boards, committees, and commissions of the Town of Wellesley, as depicted in the Town of Wellesley Government Organizational Chart (example included as Appendix A). Note: The Retirement Board, which does not appear on the Organizational Chart, is exempt due to its status as an independently regulated board under M.G.L. c. 32, § 20(4). However, the Retirement Board will occasionally record meetings with organizations such as the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC) or with consultants, at the discretion of the chair of the Retirement Board.

The following further exemptions apply:

1. **Audit Committee:** Exempt due to the financially sensitive and security related content of its meetings.
2. **West Suburban Veterans District:** Exempt as a regional body that is not subject to the Town Bylaw, with meetings held in various participating municipalities.
3. **Exempt Meeting Types:**
 - a. Site visit;
 - b. Executive session;
 - c. Meeting of staff-appointed working group exempt from Open Meeting Law;
 - d. Subcommittee meeting (unless otherwise specified by the appointing board);
 - e. Retreat/working meeting;
 - f. Meeting held immediately before Annual and Special Town Meeting.

Elected and appointed boards, committees, and commissions that are not specifically exempted above will be referred to in these regulations as “non-exempt bodies.”

REGULATIONS

1. Meeting Schedules and Locations:

- a. Boards and committees should establish a meeting schedule. A regular, predictable scheduled is preferred, as is scheduling meetings at least six weeks in advance.
- b. Wellesley Media staff shall reach out to chairs and staff of non-exempt bodies twice yearly to obtain a meeting schedule, with the understanding that meetings are subject to change. Chairs and staff shall work with Wellesley Media to arrange for their recording and posting of meetings. Non-exempt bodies shall share meeting schedules upon request and inform Wellesley Media whenever the schedule has changed.
- c. Whenever possible, in-person regular, emergency, or joint meetings of non-exempt bodies shall be scheduled in one of the following locations in order of priority:
 - i. Room equipped with Wellesley Media recording facilities;
 - ii. Room equipped with smart camera/Owl facilities;
 - iii. Room with a portable smart camera/Owl device available through departmental staff or through the IT Department when necessary.

2. Live Streaming Meetings:

- a. Whenever possible, meetings shall be scheduled so as not to conflict with Select Board and School Committee meetings in order to be broadcast on cable TV and live streamed on Wellesley Media.
- b. As a general matter, Select Board and School Committee meetings shall be prioritized for broadcasting and live streaming.
- c. Wellesley Media may choose to live stream meetings of public interest on the Wellesley Media YouTube channel.

3. Recording of Meetings

- a. Recording equipment shall be used whenever possible according to the priorities outlined in section 1c. of this policy..
- b. Recording shall conform to the following conditions:
 - i. A template for announcements regarding recording, to be made by the chair at the beginning of each meeting, is attached as Appendix C;
 - ii. The recording shall provide visual capture and identification of all Board members and speakers;
 - iii. Each speaker not introduced at the beginning of the meeting shall introduce him/her/themselves and, if applicable, his/her/their staff or board position in the Town before making comments;
 - iv. The recording shall provide clear and audible capture of all speakers' and board members' comments and all discussions.

4. Posting Recordings:

- a. Recordings of meetings that are broadcast on cable TV, live streamed, or recorded by Wellesley Media will be posted on the Wellesley Media website, Wellesley Media YouTube channel, Town website, or other similar platforms.

- b. Recordings of meetings that are recorded using Zoom or other similar remote/hybrid meeting software and are not recorded by Wellesley Media should be provided by the meeting host to Wellesley Media as soon as practicable following the meeting.
- c. The meeting host should provide Wellesley Media with an annotated agenda indicating the approximate time that each agenda item was discussed.

DEFINITIONS

- 1. **Site Visit:** An on-site inspection of a project or program during which there are no deliberations among participants (M.G.L. c. 30A, § 18).
- 2. **Executive Session:** Any part of a meeting of a public body closed to the public for deliberation of certain matters. (A public body may meet in executive session only for the purposes defined in M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21.)
- 3. **Quorum:** A simple majority of the members of the public body, unless otherwise provided in a general or special law, executive order, or other authorizing provision (M.G.L. c. 30A, § 18).
- 4. **Staff-Appointed Working Group:** A body appointed by a public official solely for the purpose of advising the official on a decision that individual could make alone.
- 5. **Subcommittee:** A subset of members of an elected or appointed body for which the follow apply:
 - a. The subcommittee does not constitute a quorum;
 - b. The subcommittee is assigned to conduct research or preparatory work on a specifically defined issue or area that will be deliberated on and decided by the elected or appointed body;
 - c. The subcommittee provides a report of their work and findings to the elected or appointed body.
- 6. **Retreat/Working Meeting:** An occasional meeting of an elected or appointed body that includes any of the following:
 - a. Administrative planning such as meeting schedule, work plan, project and liaison assignments, board reorganizations;
 - b. Board training which may be facilitated by a consultant;
 - c. Presentations by department heads in preparation for deliberation in a regular meeting;
 - d. Initial idea generation or brain-storming to prepare for deliberation in a regular meeting.

REGULATORY/STATUTORY REFERENCES

This policy is subject to the requirements set forth in: Town Bylaw 2.9 - Recording of Town Meetings; The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25; M.G.L. c. 32, § 20(4).

APPROVED BY THE SELECT BOARD

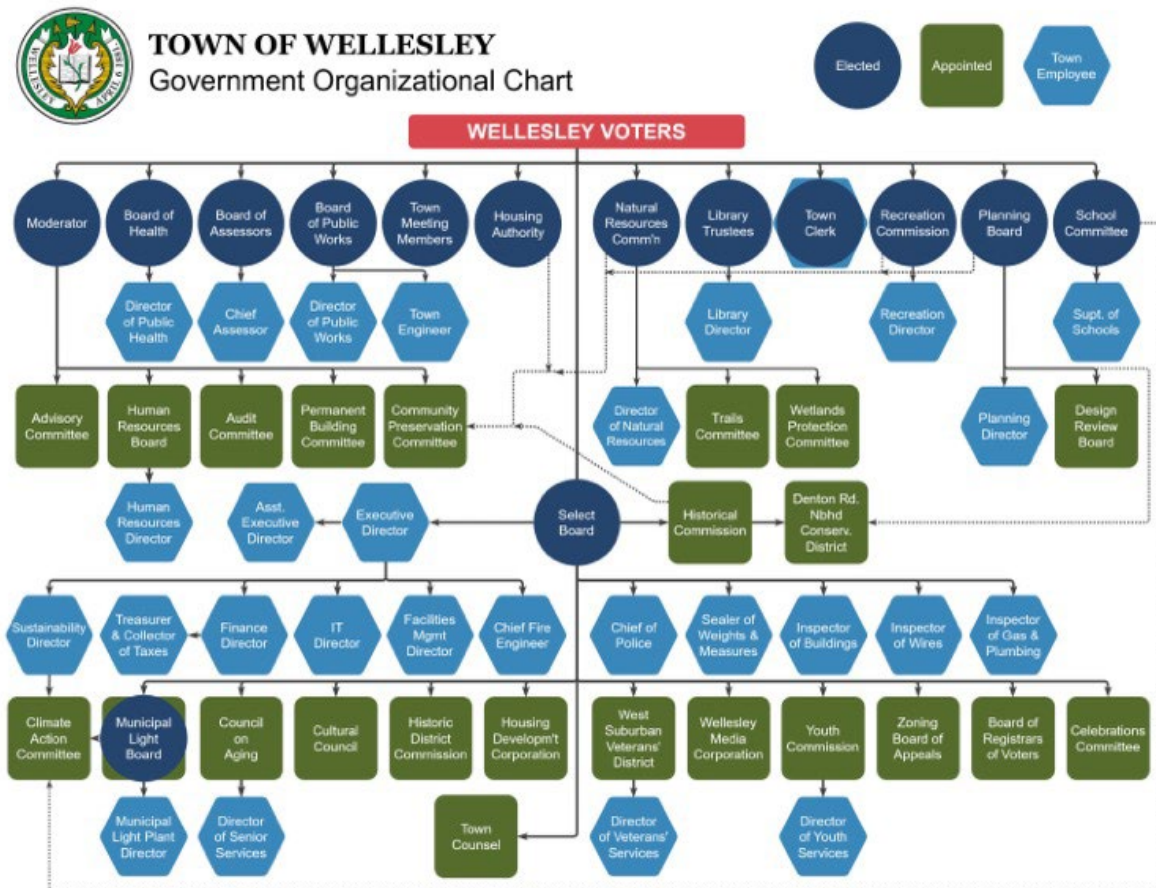
Original date: October 8, 2024

Regulations

Select Board RECORDING OF MEETINGS PROMULGATED – October 8, 2024

The Select Board reserves the right to amend this policy at will.

Appendix A
Town of Wellesley Government Organizational Chart
As of May 2024



Appendix B – Meeting Rooms**Rooms equipped with Wellesley Media recording facilities**

1. Great Hall	Wellesley Town Hall	525 Washington street
2. Juliani Room	Wellesley Town Hall	525 Washington street
3. Conference Room	Wellesley Town Hall	525 Washington street
4. Kingsbury Room	Wellesley Police Department	485 Washington Street
5. Schuler Room	Tolles Parsons Center	500 Washington Street
6. Wakelin Room	Wellesley Free Library	530 Washington street
7. Meeting Room 8	Warren Building	90 Washington Street

Rooms with access to portable smart camera/Owl facilities

1. Arnold Room	Wellesley Free Library	530 Washington Street
2. Conference Room	Wellesley FMD	888 Worcester Street
3. Conference Room	Wellesley Land Use	888 Worcester Street
4. Board Room	Wellesley DPW	20 Municipal Way
5. Training Room	Wellesley DPW	20 Municipal Way
6. Board Room	Wellesley MLP	4 Municipal Way
7. Training Room*	DPW Water & Sewer Building	20 Municipal Way
8. Various Rooms**	Warren Building	90 Washington Street

*Webcams and display is available for use in the Water & Sewer Building.

**IT Department has provided the Recreation Department with two rolling TV carts, webcams, and tablets for use in their hybrid programming in the Warren Building.

APPENDIX C

Statement Regarding Recording, Broadcasting, and Live Streaming to Be Made by the Chair at the Beginning of Each Meeting

1. **Suggested language when the meeting is just being recorded (not broadcast or live streamed), the chair should state:**

“This meeting is being recorded for subsequent viewing on wellesleymedia.org.”

2. **Suggested language when Wellesley Media is broadcasting an in-person meeting live on cable television, live streaming the meeting on wellesleymedia.org, and recording the meeting:**

“This meeting is being aired live by Wellesley Media on Verizon Channel [39-40] and Comcast Channel [8-9], live streamed on wellesleymedia.org, and recorded for subsequent viewing on wellesleymedia.org.” Before the meeting, the chair should find out from Wellesley Media which cable channel Wellesley Media is being used for the broadcast. They generally use Verizon Channel 40 and Comcast Channel 8 for government meetings.

3. **Suggested language when Wellesley Media is broadcasting a Zoom meeting live on cable television, live streaming the meeting on wellesleymedia.org, and recording the meeting:**

“This Zoom meeting is being aired live by Wellesley Media on Verizon Channel [39-40] and Comcast Channel [8-9], live streamed on wellesleymedia.org, and recorded for subsequent viewing on wellesleymedia.org. The following board/committee members are in attendance [name all board/committee members present or conduct a roll call].”

According to the Attorney General’s Office (see “Updated guidance on holding meetings pursuant to the Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures”), the chair must announce the names of the members who are participating remotely, at the beginning of the meeting.

All board/committee members should also use the Zoom naming feature to visually identify themselves to the viewer. For example, “Susan Smith, Planning Board Chair,” John Jones, NRC,” or “Erin Evans, Library Board.”