TOWN AND SCSHOOL MEETING
MODERATOR'S RULES of PROCEDURE

As provided by RSA 40:4, the Moderator may establish the rules to be used at Town and School Meetings. The general rules or any specific rule or ruling made by the Moderator during the meeting may be overruled by a vote of the townspeople. A voter may raise such a request by calling a <u>Point of Order</u>. A <u>Point of Order</u> takes precedence over all other discussion and <u>may be called at any time</u>.

Robert's Rules will not be used; rather the following rules are established for the Town of Croydon Town and School District meetings. The main objective is to avoid getting bogged down in procedural quagmires and to encourage free, open and adequate debate. Without rules there is chaos.

The Articles will be considered in the order that they appear on the Warrant. The Moderator or the voters may elect to change the order if doing so will make good sense in the discussion.

The Articles will be considered as follows:

- The Article number will be announced and the text will be presented in full.
- The Moderator will seek a person to move and second the consideration of the Article.
- Upon being properly moved and seconded, a person, usually a Selectman or the Petitioner will be recognized to explain and defend the Article. Presentation should be to the point and as short as possible to convey the required information.
- The Article will be placed on the floor for debate and final vote.

Only voters at the meeting and nonresidents providing information will be allowed to speak at the meeting. Other non-voters and nonresidents will be allowed to speak only at the discretion of the Moderator or upon agreement of the Croydon residents. The following rules will apply to all speakers:

1. No one shall speak unless recognized by the Moderator. Only one speaker will be recognized at a time and those who have not spoken on the Article will be given preference. The audience shall maintain decorum so that the speaker may be heard by all.
2. Each speaker shall use the microphone and provide his/her name and address and Town of residence. Persons with physical limitations will not be required to use the microphone.
3. Speakers should be concise and not repeat information already presented. A speaker may speak only with respect to the Article on the floor, except

    a) a motion to amend the Article on the floor may be made, or
    b) a motion to Call the Question may be made.
    c) A Point of Order which may be made at any time.

4. Motions made to amend an Article, unless it is a dollar amount change, must be made in writing before the end of debate.
5. Only one motion to amend will be allowed on the floor at a time.
6. Motions must be worded in a positive sense. Motions which require a "NO" vote to take a positive action will not be allowed. For example: "I move that the budget not be adopted." is unacceptable.

7. Call for Question motions to limit debate shall require 2/3 or more of those voting to pass. A motion to end debate is subject to the following limitations:
   a) persons standing in wait at the microphone or those who have been recognized as in line to speak will be allowed to speak before the Call for Question vote is taken or
   b) if the Moderator is of the opinion that the voters have not had adequate opportunity to discuss an issue, a Call for Question may be refused.

8. Speakers shall maintain respect for all others and shall address only the Article and not direct comments, other than questions, to other individuals. The Moderator <u>may</u> choose to allow a person to respond to a question raised from the floor. Speakers who are repeating points previously made in the discussion or who are taking excessive time will be asked to end their presentation.

9. The Moderator may limit debate if deemed necessary.

10. If any person behaves in a disorderly manner or willfully violates any procedural rule and, after notice from the Moderator, persists in such behavior, that person shall be removed from the meeting. (RSA 40:8)

11. Numbered identification cards will be provided to each registered Croydon voter. Voters will signify their vote by raising their card until they have been counted by the Moderator or his designee. Votes will be registered either by a clear plurality or by counting each vote card. A majority (50% plus 1 vote) of those voting is required to pass an article; a tie vote fails. A vote that does not meet the required percentage after being rounded down, shall not pass. In order for an article to pass, the vote shall be at least the required percentage (at least 50% plus one vote for an article or at least 60% plus one for a bond).

   A secret "yes-no" ballot will be allowed provided that prior to the vote, at least five voters support the call in writing, or the call may be made by the Moderator. The names of those requesting the secret ballot shall be recorded.

   Any five voters may request a recount of a secret ballot if the margin is less than 10% of the total vote.

12. Any vote on a bond issue of $100,000 or more shall be made by secret ballot.

13. Motions to reconsider an Article may only be made <u>immediately</u> following the vote on the Article. The following limitations apply to reconsideration:

   a) Mandatory Reconsideration (RSA 33:8-a): If a motion to reconsider a vote on a bond issue for $100,000 or more passes, the Article may not be reconsidered until a reconvened Town Meeting for this purpose is held. The reconvened Town Meeting must be held not less than seven days after the original vote. This provision is automatic without the need for voter approval.
   b) Optional Reconsideration: Voters may postpone reconsideration of any Article by voting to restrict reconsideration in accordance with RSA 40:10. If the voters pass such a motion, then the Article may not be reconsidered until a reconvened Town Meeting for this purpose is held. The reconvened Town Meeting must be held not less than seven days after the original vote.
   c) Reminder: Any rule of the Moderator or a decision made by the voters may be modified at any time prior to the end of the Town or School District meeting. Therefore, it is not possible to absolutely prevent reconsideration of an Article.

The Moderator may vote on all Articles. However, the Moderator plans to vote only if it is necessary to break a tie or to force a tie vote on an Article that passes by one vote and which the Moderator opposes.

Bruce R. Jasper,   **March 2023**
Croydon Town and School Moderator