

Peter Ashton

Mar 27 (2
days ago)

to me, Scott, Scott, Charles

Dear Allen:

I have just concluded a meeting with Town Counsel, Nina Pickering-Cook, and it is my understanding that you want further clarification of my position as moderator with regard to the rules of debate and procedures relating to Annual Town Meeting next week.

First, at your request we will be moving Article 27 up in order and it will be considered immediately preceding the town operating budget article. I will indicate this at the outset of the meeting, and therefore no motion will be necessary to move it out of order. In addition, Jo-Ann Berry, the temporary moderator will be moderating the debate on that article and I will be leaving the room so as to avoid any possible appearance of conflict.

Second, as part of my opening remarks I will be making a public apology to you (and others).

Third, I will allow public criticism of public officials as long as it is within the scope of the article/motion under debate.

Fourth, I will not permit the use of personal names during debate including those of public officials. This will be true regardless of whether the person is being criticized or praised. Rather one must use a title or other designation in referring to such official. Let me be clear that this is not intended to stifle criticism of public officials, but rather to retain some civility in the process of doing so.

I assume you will be coming to the pre-meeting tomorrow evening so you can discuss your article with Jo-Ann. I am happy to discuss this more, but I hope that this will make my position clear.

Regards,
Peter Ashton