



Town of Carlisle

MASSACHUSETTS 01741

Office of

TOWN CLERK

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Town Clerk
Town Clerk

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Agenda and Minutes Style Guide

Submitting Agendas and Minutes

To improve the efficiency and efficacy of the business of the Office of the Town Clerk, we request all Boards and Committees standardize their submissions for posting as described below.

For Agendas:

- **Naming the document:** Your group's name/abbreviation, followed by the date, and the word "agenda"
 - o Example: The Carlisle School Committee Meeting agenda for 1/1/2020 would be saved as "CSC 1.1.2020 Agenda"
- Save as a PDF document and send as an attachment to townclerk@carlislema.gov
- If the agenda is more than one page, please include page numbers, in the form of "Page x of y" where "x" is the current page and "y" is the total pages.
- Must be posted **48 hours** before the scheduled meeting time to comply with Open Meeting Law (only business days are counted). They should be submitted to townclerk@carlislema.gov **with appropriate time for the office to post**. Agendas are only a small part of the business of the Town Clerk and there are over 50 Committees and Boards submitting agendas.
 - o For a morning meeting, agendas need to be submitted before close of business (3:00pm) **three days** before the meeting. As the office doesn't open until 9:00am, we can't guarantee getting to your email and posting the meeting before the 48 hour deadline if the meeting is scheduled before 12:00pm.
 - Ex: Municipal Facilities Committee is meeting at 8am on Thursday. We need the agenda before 3pm on Monday, as we won't be in the office until after the 48 hour deadline.
 - Ex: School Committee is meeting 9:45am on Monday. We need the agenda before 3pm on Wednesday because we need enough time to get to the email submission and post it.
 - o For an evening meeting, agendas need to be submitted before close of business (3:00pm) two days before the scheduled meeting.
 - Ex: Finance Committee is meeting at 7pm on Tuesday. We need the agenda before 3pm on Friday.

Carlisle Office of the Town Clerk

Agenda and Minutes Style Guide

- If you need to send a **revised agenda**:
 - o Name the document as above, adding “Rev” and number the revisions. (If your group frequently submits multiple versions, you may instead be asked to title all agendas with “V#”, starting with “V1” for Version 1.)
 - Ex: “CSC 1.1.2020 Agenda Rev 1”; if there’s a revision after that: “CSC 1.1.2020 Agenda Rev 2”
 - o All versions of the agenda must be made available upon request.
 - o Please keep to the 48 hour rule when possible. Posting a revised agenda after the 48 deadline is a gray area and may introduce issue for you with OML.
- If you miss the 48 hour deadline, our office will inform you of the missed deadline. We can still post the agenda, at your request, but it does open your group up to OML complaints.
 - o Emergencies are the only exception to the 48 hour rule. “Emergency” is defined in Massachusetts General Laws c. 30A, §§ 18 as a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action.

For Minutes:

- Naming the document: Your group’s name/abbreviation, followed by the date, and the word “minutes”
 - o Example: The Carlisle School Committee Meeting Minutes for 1/1/2020 would be saved as “CSC 1.1.2020 Minutes”
- Include page numbers in the form of “Page x of y” as noted above.
- Include the full group name (no abbreviated names) and meeting date on each page.
- **All supporting documents need to be saved with the Minutes in one PDF document.** Please do not send supporting documents separately from the minutes. The web system does not allow for more than one Minutes file to be posted. Multiple files also make it more difficult to organize electronically by meeting.
- Save as a PDF document and send as an attachment to townclerk@carlislema.gov

Why are you being asked to do this?

- The law still requires we keep physical records of agendas and minutes in addition to our electronic files.
- There are consistently over 50 Boards, Committees, and Working Groups that meet in Carlisle, with the required agendas and minutes. Conforming to this Style Guide will save the office time; we won’t need to rename every agenda and minutes document that comes in and will streamline digital and hard copy organization.
- Including the group name, meeting date, and page numbers makes it possible for multi-page minutes to be identified, filed correctly, and to ensure pages are not missing or removed when

Carlisle Office of the Town Clerk

Agenda and Minutes Style Guide

the public or another board reviews the files. The public has access to all agendas and minutes that are on file in the Parlin room.

While not necessary for efficiency or efficacy, pleasantries in communication are always appreciated.

Content of Agendas and Minutes

For Agendas:

Agendas are permanent records. Acceptable Agendas must include:

- Date, time, and place of meeting
- Topics anticipated at the time of calling the meeting

For Minutes:

Minutes are permanent records. Acceptable Minutes must include:

- Date, time, and place of the meeting
- Lists of present and absent members
- Subjects acted upon, votes taken (including individual votes of members), and any other actions taken
- Description (summary) of any discussion that takes place during the meeting that reflects the nature of deliberations (transcript is not required)
- Description of any public participation in a meeting, including name and address of individual participating
- Supplemental information including reports to the committee or prepared by the committee, presentations, or other relevant documents

For further details about the content of Agendas and Minutes, see the Open Meeting Law Guide.