KINGSTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OPEN FORUM POLICY

- Not required
- The chair will announce the time for Open Forum at the beginning to the meeting.
- When scheduled, maximum meeting allotment 15 minutes (Note: appointments will be scheduled around this time when possible, but is at the discretion of the Chair.)
- Maximum individual allotment 3 minutes
- The Clerk of the Board of Selectmen will keep time during Open Forum
- Controlled by the Chairman
- Back and forth discussion and/or debate is not allowed between the Board of Selectmen and the individual to avoid any appearance of an Open Meeting Law violation
- An individual may not disrupt a meeting of a public body
- At the request of the chair, all members of the public shall be silent.
- If, after clear warning, a person continues to be disruptive, the chair may order the person to leave the meeting.
- If the person does not leave, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person.
- Any member of the public may make an audio or video recording of an open session of a public meeting once notifying the chair

Open Forum at a Board of Selectmen meetings is not a requirement, but is allowed to encourage community participation.

Open Forum is a time to make announcements, give a brief update on something, ask a question with the expectation that it may not be able to be answered at that time, or voice a concern.

Any complex concerns or questions may have to be answered at a later date. A question or concern may be addressed by a Board member but not discussed. i.e., “What day is the Recycling Center open?” Answer by Board member “Tuesday”.

Open Meeting Law 2017 “Although a public body may consider a topic that was not listed in the meeting notice if it was not anticipated, the Attorney General strongly encourages public bodies to postpone discussion and action on topics that are controversial or may be of particular interest to the public if the topic was not listed in the meeting notice.”

If there is an appointment or a full agenda for a particular Board of Selectmen meeting, Open Forum may be cancelled at the Chair’s discretion. This would be noted on the agenda.

Any committee wanting to give an update or make a presentation will need an appointment to do so, unless they can conclude in the 3 minutes allotted to them during Open Forum.

Open Meeting Law 2017 “While the public is permitted to attend an open meeting, an individual may not address the public body without permission of the chair. An individual may not disrupt a meeting of a public body, and at the request of the chair, all members of the public shall be silent. If, after clear warning, a person continues to be disruptive, the chair may order the person to leave the meeting. If the person does not leave, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person. Although public participation is entirely within the chair’s discretion, the Attorney General encourages
public bodies to allow as much public participation as time permits. Any member of the public may make an audio or video recording of an open session of a public meeting. A member of the public who wishes to record a meeting must first notify the chair and must comply with reasonable requirements regarding audio or video equipment established by the chair so as not to interfere with the meeting. The chair is required to inform other attendees of any such recording at the beginning of the meeting. If someone arrives after the meeting has begun and wishes to record a meeting, that person should attempt to notify the chair prior to beginning recording, ideally in a manner that does not significantly disrupt the meeting in progress (such as passing a note for the chair to the board administrator or secretary). The chair should endeavor to acknowledge such attempts at notification and announce the fact of any recording to those in attendance."

The time allotted per person for open forum will be 3 minutes. The total time for Open Forum will be 15 minutes, (Note: appointments will be scheduled around this time when possible, but is at the discretion of the Chair.) above

The chair will announce the time for Open Forum at the beginning to the meeting. Above

The Clerk of the BOS will keep time during Open Forum. Above

As stated in the Open Meeting Law Guide quote above and pursuant to our code of conduct there will be respect by all at all times. In the event that a member of the community does not adhere to the rules they may be removed from the meeting and may not be able to speak without a scheduled appointment at the next meeting.

If you have a topic that is of an urgent nature, contact the Board of Selectmen’s Office at 781-585-0500 or by email gmitchell@kingstonmass.org. If you prefer an appointment with the Town Administrator, please schedule a meeting through the Board of Selectmen’s office. You may ask for an appointment with the Board of Selectmen by providing any documents or information to the Selectmen’s Office, who in turn, will provide you a date and time at the next available Selectmen’s meeting based on scheduling and research needed.