

# Town of New Durham



## Video Recording and Community Television Broadcast Policy

Effective Date: July 6, 2005

## Town of New Durham Video Recording and Community Television Broadcast Policy

*"Openness in the conduct of public business is essential to a democratic society. The purpose of this chapter is to ensure both the greatest possible public access to the actions, discussions and records of all public bodies, and their accountability to the people."*

Preamble. – RSA 91-A:1, New Hampshire's "Right to Know" Law

### 1. Statement of Purpose

- A. To promote the greatest possible public awareness of and interest in the work of all town boards and commissions.
- B. To enhance the accountability of these boards and commissions to those they serve, the townspeople of New Durham.
- C. To ensure that the process for recording and broadcasting public meetings is consistent, fair, open, and not subject to political or personal influence.
- D. To assist and serve other volunteer based special events, public forums, community or school based activities in enriching and promoting their valuable contributions to the life of our community.
- E. To ensure the safe archiving of these records as an immediate and readily accessible reference library in the ongoing work of the town, and also as a part of the history of our town.
- F. To recognize the critical role of community volunteers in the success of this program and support their efforts to bring about greater community awareness and involvement.

### 2. Town Boards and Committees

It shall be the responsibility of every public board, committee or commission of the town to ensure that its meetings are filmed for broadcast whenever any of the following filming criteria are met:

- A. It is discussing, deliberating or advising on the expenditure of public funds.
- B. It is hearing evidence, making findings of fact or reaching a decision that will directly affect the rights of any party, or the interests of the town as a whole.

Notwithstanding the above criteria, a board, committee or commission may elect to have any or all of its meetings filmed for broadcast by affirmative vote of the majority of its members.

#### Specific Guidelines:

- **Board of Selectmen** - All meetings are to be filmed and broadcast.
- **Planning Board / Zoning Board of Adjustment** - All business meetings are to be filmed and broadcast. Workshop meetings are to be filmed and broadcast whenever either of the filming criteria outlined above are met.
- **Budget Committee** - All meetings are to be filmed and broadcast.
- **All other Boards, Commissions or Committees** - Meetings must be filmed and broadcast whenever either of the filming criteria outlined above are met. Meetings may be voluntarily filmed by any interested resident of the Town in accordance with Wolfeboro Community TV (WCTV) policy.

### 3. Town Boards and Committees: Procedures

- A. It shall be the responsibility of each board or committee to film its own meetings when required by this policy.

- B. In other circumstances, filming may be performed on a volunteer basis using local volunteers, or staff provided by prior arrangement through WCTV.
- C. Town employees or board members may film meetings, but only as a normal part of their duties of attendance. Assignment of additional town staff for filming shall be only by specific, case-by-case order of the Board of Selectmen.
- D. Meeting venues and camera positions are to be chosen such that every effort is made to include board members and primary participants within the view of the camera and effective range of the microphone.
- E. The Town Clerk's Office shall maintain a video log book indicating, at a minimum:
  - Which meetings are recorded
  - When exposed media are delivered back to Clerk's Office
  - When media are delivered to WCTV
  - When DVD master is delivered back to Clerk's Office
- F. Once filmed, media are to be logged in with the Town Clerk's Office within 24 hours for delivery to WCTV within two (2) business days in order to assure timely broadcast on WCTV.
- G. The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a Town employee to serve as Video Coordinator to work with the public, Town boards and WCTV personnel in all matters relating to equipment availability, scheduling, equipment use, training and disposition of tapes and DVDs.
- H. Each board or committee shall designate one member to arrange video recording efforts with the Video Coordinator.
- I. The Town of New Durham will publicize the broadcast schedule of Town board, commission and committee meetings on its web site.

#### 4. Correlation with Official Minutes

Video recordings of public meetings shall not be considered a part of the official minutes of any public meeting. However, minutes shall include the following statement:

A video recording of this meeting is on file with the Office of Town Clerk, is available for public viewing during normal business hours, and will be retained in accordance with the New Hampshire Municipal Records Board rules established under RSA 33-A:4, or for a minimum of 24 months.

#### 5. Retention / Storage

- A. DVD masters of public meetings are to be maintained in accordance with the New Hampshire Municipal Records Board (NHMRB) rules established under RSA 33-A:4, or for a minimum of 24 months.
- B. After the expiration of the minimum retention period outlined above, the DVD's shall be offered to the New Durham Public Library for retention.
- C. No DVD recordings shall be destroyed without a roll call vote of the responsible board or committee.

#### 6. Public Access

- A. All DVD recordings are to be made available for public access and viewing on a town DVD player during normal business hours.
- B. No master DVD recordings are to be removed from Town Hall for any purpose. Individual recordings will be logged in and out for viewing in a manner approved by the Town Clerk and Board of Selectmen.
- C. Individuals wishing to purchase copies of meeting DVDs may arrange for copies to be produced through WCTV.

## 7. Community Events

Community organizations are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to have programs of community interest aired on WCTV and are asked to comply with the following guidelines:

- A. Town-owned video recording equipment must be signed out by a party agreeing to be responsible for its safe use and shall be returned to the Town Hall within 24 hours of the scheduled event, or the next business day.
- B. In the event of a scheduling conflict with Board, Committee or Commission meetings, priority will be given to the filming of those public meetings. Additional video recording equipment may be available from WCTV.
- C. Recordings produced by community organizations are not Town property. Producers of community event recordings are responsible for blank media and transmittal of recorded media to WCTV for possible broadcast.
- D. All other provisions of WCTV video recording and broadcast policy shall apply.

## 8. Conflicts

Where the provisions of this policy conflict with the provisions of any other Town of New Durham regulation or State of New Hampshire statute, those provisions that impose the higher standard of openness and accountability shall control. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to diminish or conflict with the standards outlined in NH RSA 91-A.


## 9. Policy Implementation and Review

The Board of Selectmen shall be responsible for the adoption and maintenance of this policy, and shall review this policy within six (6) months of implementation, or as circumstances may require, in order to effect any necessary changes or improvements. The Board of Selectmen designates the Town Administrator to be responsible for daily implementation of this policy, in concert with the appointed Video Coordinator.

ADOPTED by  
New Durham Board of Selectmen

Date: July 6, 2005

  
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Ronald W. Gehl, Chairman

  
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Dwight C. Jones, Selectman