

**Bedford Selectmen  
Civil Discourse Policy**

**Whereas**, the Bedford Selectmen desire to have all Town of Bedford board and committee members engage in civil discourse when conducting the business of these public bodies;

**Now, therefore**, the Bedford Selectmen hereby establish guidelines for ensuring civil discourse occurs at public meetings and in all matters related to business of these public bodies as follows:

*The Town of Bedford respects and recognizes each citizen's right to free speech. In order to guarantee all people's right to free speech and to ensure productive civil discourse, we request that all citizens respect the following guidelines.*

***Show respect for others.***

*Discuss policies and ideas, not people  
Allow each person to finish speaking before responding  
Use helpful, not hurtful language*

***Speak as you would like to be spoken to.***

*Use courtesy titles (Mr., Ms., Sir, etc.) and ask if unsure  
Restate ideas when asked  
Use a civil tone of voice*

***Agree to listen.***

*Respectfully listen to differing points of view  
When unsure, request clarification  
Realize that what you say and what people understand you to have said may be different  
Recognize that people can agree to disagree*

***Speak for yourself, not others.***

*Speak from your own experience  
Use "I" statements ("I think that the ideas presented...")*

***Follow agreed upon guidelines regarding who speaks when and for how long.***

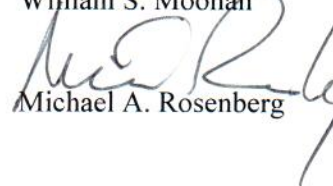
**Adopted** by the Bedford Selectmen this 26<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2018.

  
Margot R. Fleischman, Chair

  
Caroline Fedele

  
Edward M. Pierce

  
William S. Moonan

  
Michael A. Rosenberg