

***What procedure is required when the selectboard names or renames highways?***

There are three separate statutes which give the municipal legislative body the authority to name and re-name roads and to number and re-number lots. 24 V.S.A. §§ 2291(16) & 4421; 19 V.S.A. § 304(17). The only process mentioned is “after a public hearing” in section 4421. Since that is a part of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, the board should follow the process for public hearings spelled out in 24 V.S.A. § 4447. The requirements in that section include a 15-day notice period with both published and posted notice. Such notice shall include the date, place and purpose of the hearing.

Interestingly, 10 V.S.A. § 152 gives the state Board of Libraries the authority to “name roads and geographic locations [such as] mountains, streams, lakes and ponds upon petition...” When the Board of Libraries receives such a petition it must give notice to the town where the road is located and shall “give preference to ... names characteristic to Vermont and its traditions and local place names where long usage has made them appropriate and useful.” 10 V.S.A. §§ 153-154.

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