

Australian Ballot Budget Rejection



What happens if the town's Australian ballot budget is rejected by the voters?

If the town's budget is rejected by the voters, then 17 V.S.A. § 2680(c)(2) is triggered, which describes the required process to adopt a subsequent budget. This law requires the selectboard to warn a special town meeting, prepare a revised budget, and set a date for the town to vote on the revised budget.

To warn a special town meeting, the selectboard must post the warning and notice in at least two public places in town and in the clerk's office, not fewer than 30 nor more than 40 days before the meeting. 17 V.S.A. § 2641. The warning must also be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the town at least five days before the meeting.

In addition, the selectboard must hold another public informational meeting on the revised budget, which must be noticed at least five days in advance. The selectboard should give notice of the additional public informational meeting by posting warnings in at least two public places in town and in the clerk's office.

The date of the vote on the revised budget must be at least seven days following the notice of the public informational meeting. The vote on the revised budget must be by Australian ballot and must occur at the same location that the first vote was taken; however, if that polling place is unavailable, the vote may be held at a different location, so long as notice of the new meeting location is also posted at the original location. The revised budget is adopted by a majority vote.

If the revised budget again is voted down, the town must repeat the above procedure until a budget is adopted.

Carl Andeer, Staff Attorney II
VLCT Municipal Assistance Center

