Executive Summary of Selectboard Meeting Agenda Item Template

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VLCT's "Executive Summary of a Selectboard Meeting Agenda Item" template can be used by Selectboards to help create consistency, clarity, and efficiency in how information is presented for decision-making. When staff use a standard template, board members receive agenda materials that clearly outline the purpose of the item, the background, the specific action requested, and any fiscal, legal, or policy implications. This reduces confusion and minimizes the time board members spend trying to determine what is being asked of them.

An executive summary helps focus meetings on policy-level discussion rather than basic fact-finding. By requiring staff to clearly articulate the recommendation and alternatives in advance, the selectboard can more easily evaluate options, ask informed questions, and make timely decisions. This is especially important given limited meeting time and the volume of agenda items boards often face.

This template also improves transparency and accountability. A concise written summary becomes part of the public record, helping residents understand why an item is on the agenda and what outcome is being sought. It can also reduce the risk of misunderstandings or last-minute surprises during meetings. And who doesn't want less of that in their lives?

Finally, a standardized executive summary supports better preparation by staff and board members alike. It sets clear expectations for submissions, improves the quality of information provided, and ultimately leads to more productive meetings and more defensible decisions.

Feel free to use VLCT's template as-is or adapt it for the needs of your board. The goal is to help you hit the ground running, not waste time reinventing the wheel!

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Publication Date

Copyright Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Current as of: 11/2/2026

02/03/2026

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Current as of: 11/2/2026