



TOWN OF HANOVER
550 HANOVER STREET, SUITE 29
HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS 02339
781-826-5000 ext. 1084

Board of Selectmen

Board of Selectmen Operating Policies and Procedures

POLICY 15-03

1. Purpose

The Board of Selectmen of the Town of Hanover, recognizing the need to codify the traditional and accepted working relationships among the members of the Board, between the Board and the Town Manager, and between the Board, other Town Boards, committees, officials, employees, and citizens, hereby creates the Board of Selectmen Operating Policies and Procedures.

2. Election and Qualification

The Board shall consist of five duly elected members. Before assuming official duties, each newly elected member shall be sworn to faithful performance of official duties and responsibilities by the Town Clerk.

3. Organization

The Chairman shall be elected annually at the first regular meeting following the Annual Town Election. The Board at any time may remove the Chairman by a majority vote. The immediate past Chairman shall preside as Chairman pro temp until the Chairman is elected. If there is no immediate past Chairman, the immediate past Vice-Chairman shall preside. If there is no immediate past Vice-Chairman the member with the most seniority on the Board shall preside.

If a vacancy occurs in the office of Chairman, the Board shall elect a successor. The Board shall further appoint a Vice-Chairman under the same provisions stated for the Chairman.

4. Chairmanship

Although the Board of Selectmen retains the right to reorganize at their discretion, this Policy establishes the guideline of an annual rotation of the Chairman position. It is also the intent of this Policy to not have a Board member serve as Chairman in the final year of their term. However, the Board retains the right to elect any member of the Board to serve as Chairman.

5. Responsibilities of the Chairman

The Chairman of the Board shall:

- a. Be responsible for calling regular, emergency and Executive Session meetings of the Board of Selectmen, as needed.
- b. Preside at all meetings of the Board of Selectmen. In doing so, he/she shall maintain order in the meeting room, recognize speakers, call for votes and preside over the discussion of agenda items.

- c. Sign official documents that require the signature of the Chairman.
- d. Represent the Board at meetings, conferences and other events determined by the Board or delegate to another Board member.
- e. Serve as spokesperson of the Board at Town Meetings and present the Board's position unless otherwise determined by the Board or delegated to another member.
- f. Recommend liaison assignments and assigns overview responsibilities for projects and tasks to Board members. The final decision on liaison assignments is by a majority of the Board members.
- g. Nominate Board members to Board Sub-Committees. Final appointment is by a majority of the Board members.

6. Responsibilities of the Vice-Chairman

The Vice-Chairman of the Board shall:

- a. Act in the place of the Chairman during his/her absence at meetings.
- b. Should the Chairman leave office, the Vice-Chairman shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chairman until the Board elects a new Chairman.

7. Board of Selectmen Liaisons

The purpose of establishing Board of Selectmen liaisons to the various Departments is to maintain good communication and effective working relationships between other Boards, Committees and Commissions and the Board of Selectmen.

Liaison assignments shall be established by the Board of Selectmen on a yearly basis.

It is the Board of Selectmen's intention that every Board, Committee or Commission will have an assigned Board of Selectmen liaison each year.

Board of Selectmen Liaisons shall:

- a. Attend as many meetings of the Board, Committee and Commission as possible.
 - b. Assist the Board, Committee or Commission where there is a problem with attendance of any member.
 - c. Act as a resource person for the liaison Board, Committee or Commission regarding Selectmen's issues.
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- d. To particularly understand and communicate to the full Board of Selectmen issues which affect budgets and other areas of concern of the Board, Committee or Commission.

Board of Selectmen as a whole, by majority vote shall:

- a. Approve overall goals, objectives and policy setting for the Town to be discharged by the Town Manager within the constraints of the Hanover Town Manager Act, another applicable local Bylaws and Federal and State statutes and regulations.
 - b. Select the Town Manager and establishes the rate and manner of compensation. The Town Manager serves as the equivalent of the Chief Executive Officer for the Board of Selectmen with the ultimate authority and responsibility for the operation and the management of the Town, under the direction and control of the Board of Selectmen. Except for actions contrary to decisions or written policies made by the Board of Selectmen as a whole, the Town Manager is authorized to take whatever actions are required to operate and manage the Town. The Town Manager is the designated representative for the Board of Selectmen regarding collective bargaining negotiations. The Town Manager may utilize other Town personnel as needed to carry out these responsibilities.
 - c. Serve as an appeal body for residents on matters arising from the Board of Selectmen's operations.
 - d. Approve:
 - 1. The Annual Report of the Board of Selectmen.
 - 2. All correspondence on Board of Selectmen letterhead that is written by the Board to other elected or appointed Boards or Committees.
 - 3. All collective bargaining agreements. Also establishes the goals and objectives for the Town Manager to meet in bargaining new or amended collective bargaining agreements.
 - 4. All presentations made by the Board of Selectmen to other elected Boards or Committees.
 - 5. Initiation of litigation or its settlement.
 - 6. The appointment of members to Boards, Committees or Commissions under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen or as authorized by Town Bylaws or the Town Manager Act.
 - e. Board of Selectmen Subcommittees: Subcommittees serve as a mechanism for the Board to review and consider specific issues. Subcommittees may recommend, but not approve, a course of action to the Board.
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8. Town Manager Evaluation

A comprehensive performance evaluation will take place at least annually. The annual evaluation may be used as the basis in determining any merit based increase or bonus for the Town Manager. However, the result of the annual performance review does not obligate the Board to grant a merit increase or bonus.

- a. The performance evaluation period will run from April 1st to March 31st.
 1. If a Town Manager is hired during the performance evaluation period the evaluation will still be conducted by March 31st provided the Town Manager has been in the position a minimum of six months.
- b. The Board of Selectmen will establish a schedule to complete the Town Manager Evaluation and vote on any salary increase or bonus prior to the annual Town election.
- c. Prior to June 30th, the Board shall:
 1. Review & update the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager goals for the next fiscal year.
 2. Review and update the criteria that the Town Managers performance will be evaluated on for the next fiscal year.

9. General Operating Policies

It is the policy of the Board of Selectmen:

- a. To operate in accordance with the spirit, as well as the letter of all laws affecting its business and its employees.
 - b. All Board members, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions appointed by the Board of Selectmen, Town staff and employees are required to act with the highest level of integrity, business ethics and objectivity in any transaction where a Selectman or employee represents the Board of Selectmen. No Selectman or employee is allowed to misuse the authority or influence of their position.
 - c. To operate in a businesslike and efficient manner in all aspects of operating and managing the Board of Selectmen.
 - d. To be supportive of a good working relationship between management and employees including Unions.
 - e. To hold regular open and public meetings to allow residents to provide direct input on any open session matter before the Board and to offer the opportunity at
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all regular sessions of the Board of Selectmen for residents to comment upon any issue that is on the agenda for that meeting.

- f. To affirmatively and courteously respond to all requests for public information. All requests will be arranged through the Town Manager.
- g. To advocate for the use of technology, training, personnel and flexible work and administrative processes to maintain an efficient municipal government serving the best interests of residents.
- h. To operate in the best interests of the Town in all matters.
- i. Refrain from the use of texting, emailing, and phone calls during meetings.

10. Regular Board Meetings

Regular Board meetings are held on Mondays. The Board shall not meet on days designated as legal holidays. The Board may establish an alternative schedule by a majority vote.

11. Special Meetings

A meeting called for any time other than the regular meetings shall be known as a "Special Meeting". The same rules as those established for regular meetings will apply. Special meetings may be called provided that a majority of the members agree to meet and all Board members who are available are notified.

12. Workshop Meetings

The Board may conduct informal "workshops" from time to time as the situation warrants. At such meetings, which will be posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, no official action will be taken.

13. Executive Session

If practicable, Executive Sessions, other than a few minutes in duration will be scheduled only at the end of the open meeting. Only items clearly allowed under the Open Meeting Law shall be included in Executive Session. The mover must specify in the motion to enter Executive Session the reason the session is sought.

A majority of the members present must vote to enter Executive Session by roll call vote. The Chairman must state whether or not the Board will reconvene into open session.

14. Limit of Hours for Regular Meetings

The regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Selectmen shall be limited by having discussion limited to agenda items taken up or tabled prior to 11:00 p.m. All remaining items will be deferred to a subsequent meeting. In order to facilitate the above policy efficiently, the Chairman will:

- a. Limit the time of speakers from the floor especially during public hearings.
- b. Call for votes on major issues or policy changes prior to 11:00 p.m., or defer final votes to subsequent meetings.
- c. Request staff to prepare motions for Board action in advance.

15. Minutes

The Selectmen's secretary is responsible for preparing minutes of all Board meetings. Minutes shall contain a full statement of all actions taken by the Board and of the disposition of all proposals for action.

16. Declassifying Confidential Executive Session Minutes

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 39, Section 23, the Town Manager, acting as clerk to the Board of Selectmen, will review approved confidential minutes of the Board of Selectmen's Executive Sessions on a regular basis. It is the intent of the Board of Selectmen to withhold minutes only for as long as the publication of the record would defeat the original purpose of a lawfully convened Executive Session.

At least once a month, the Town Manager will review all approved minutes still in confidential status, and will release for publication those segments that need not be confidential any longer.

This action will be part of a report on the "Town Manager Update" of the Board of Selectmen's meeting agenda.

17. Identification of a Person Addressing the Board of Selectmen

Each person appearing before the Board of Selectmen who wishes to speak will, upon recognition by the Chairman of the Board, identify him/herself by name and address of residence. Failure to identify him/herself will result in the Chair withdrawing permission for that individual to speak to the Board of Selectmen.

18. Continuity of Business

It shall be the policy of the Board of Selectmen to conduct the business on its agenda at the meeting for which it is listed, unless a particular member of the Board is essential to the topic of discussion by virtue of special background or expertise, and is not able to be present at the meeting for which that item is listed.

19. Board of Selectmen Communication

It is important to the public and to the Board of Selectmen itself to make it clear when an individual member is speaking for the Board as a whole, or when he/she is speaking for him/herself as an individual. In order to ensure this clarity of communication, the following shall be the policy of the Board of Selectmen:

- a. Members of the Board of Selectmen shall be given a Town email account for their use. Board members shall use their Town email account for correspondence relative to Town business or matters. Correspondence of this type shall be copied to all of the other members of the Board of Selectmen and to the Town Manager. Any such correspondence shall state that the views expressed are those of that member of the Board of Selectmen only.
- b. The Board of Selectmen stationery, naming all five members of the Board, will be used only for correspondence from the full Board of Selectmen. This will be used to communicate positions of the full Board of Selectmen based on consensus of the full Board or based upon actually voted positions of the Board.
- c. The Board of Selectmen may take votes on recommendations on Warrant Articles appearing before Town Meeting, and the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen or his/her designee will be responsible for communicating those recommendations to Town Meeting based on votes of the Board.
- d. If a Board member rises to speak at Town Meeting, he/she shall identify whether he/she is speaking for the full Board or as an individual.

In today's society, much of the correspondence to the Board of Selectmen is electronic, and often is copied to all members of the Board. The Board of Selectmen acknowledges that correspondence in electronic form that is made and/or received by it and its individual members are "public records". Additionally, the Board of Selectmen acknowledges that the manner in which it deals with electronic correspondence may raise concerns relative to the Open Meeting Law. The Board also feels it is important to ensure that a proper response is given to an email request.

Electronic correspondence will be handled in the following manner:

- a. Correspondence about a particular service that needs attention from Town staff. *The Town Manager will respond to this electronic correspondence, with an electronic copy to all members of the Board of Selectmen, and this correspondence will be listed on the next Board of Selectmen agenda.*
 - b. Correspondence addressed to the Board of Selectmen expressing an opinion or comment on a matter before the Board of Selectmen. *The Town Manager will respond to acknowledge this electronic correspondence, with an electronic copy to all members of the Board of Selectmen, and this correspondence will be listed on the next Board of Selectmen agenda.*
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- c. Correspondence addressed to the Board of Selectmen asking the Board for action on a particular matter. *The Secretary to the Board of Selectmen (or designee) will draft a form letter, acknowledging the receipt of the correspondence, outlining that the Open Meeting Law prohibits the Board of Selectmen as a whole from commenting on the matter outside of a public meeting, and that the Board will consider at a future meeting whether to schedule agenda time on that matter.*
- d. Acknowledging that it is possible that private one on one electronic communications may reach a quorum of members without the knowledge of all participants, members of the Board of Selectmen shall only comment in electronic form on any correspondence received by referring the matter to the Town Manager.
- e. Members of the Board of Selectmen may communicate electronically on housekeeping matters such as the scheduling, cancellation and time of meetings and requests to put matters on its agenda.
- f. Documents may be distributed via email from the Board of Selectmen to all members of the Town's boards, commissions and committees to permit advance review of materials to be discussed at upcoming meetings.
- g. The Board shall have as a resource an "Executive Dashboard" which is an electronic repository for all information provided by the Town Manager, including updates on weekly activities, personnel actions, and legal developments.

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 27, 2015

BOARD OF SELECTMEN


Harold L. Dunn, Chairman


Susan M. Setterland, Vice Chairman


Joseph R. Salvucci


Brian E. Barthelmes

Robert S. O'Rourke
