

2018 PEPPERELL SELECTBOARD

CODE OF CONDUCT

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN 4/9/18

This Code of Conduct sets forth a standard of conduct for the Pepperell Board of Selectmen under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Town Charter. As an elected public official, a Selectboard member has taken an oath to adhere to all federal laws, the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the bylaws of the Town of Pepperell.

This Code of Conduct outlines three general areas of a member's responsibility:

- (1) community responsibility;
- (2) responsibility to Town Administration; and
- (3) relationship to fellow Selectboard members, and other persons appearing before the Selectboard.

1. Community Responsibility: A member in his/her relations with the community should:

- A. Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to all Pepperell citizens.
- B. Recognize that his/her function is policy-making and not administrative or executive.
- C. Remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Selectboard decisions once they are made.
- D. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Selectboard member on both a local and state level and on the municipal issues in Pepperell.
- E. Remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
- F. Accept the office of Selectboard member as a means of unselfish public service with no intent to "play politics" in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Selectboard activities.

2. Responsibility To Municipal Administration: A member in his/her relations with the Town Administration should:

- A. Endeavor to establish through the Board sound, clearly defined policies with which to govern and support the Administration.
- B. Recognize and support the Administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside of the Administration.
- C. In accordance with the Town Charter, recognize that the town manager has full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties as the Chief Executive Officer and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.

- D. Refer all complaints to the Administration for solution and only pursue satisfactory results through the frameworks of the Selectboard structure if such solutions fail.

3. Relationship To Fellow Selectboard Members And Other Persons: A member in his/her relations with fellow Selectboard members and other persons shall:

- A. Accept differences of opinion as building blocks of our democratic process.
- B. Always treat other members, the Town Manager, Town administrators and employees with personal respect and act in a civil manner towards them.
- C. Concentrate all dialogue on the issue and refrain from personal criticism.
- D. Recognize that Board action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Selectboard outside such meetings.
- E. Realize that statements or promises should not be made regarding how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Selectboard.
- F. Uphold the confidentiality of executive sessions and documents presented during same, and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions.
- G. Not withhold pertinent information on municipal matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Selectboard or from members of other bodies who may be seeking help and information on problems.
- H. Make decisions only after all facts on an issue have been presented and discussed by the Selectboard.
- I. Cooperate with the Chair of the Board in the conduct of meetings.
- J. Treat persons who appear before the Board with respect, and dignity and in a manner free from discrimination, abuse and harassment.
- K. Act in a civil and professional manner at all Board meetings.
- L. Speak in a civil manner and not harass or bully citizens, other Board members, the Town Manager, Town administrators, and employees.

4. Social Media Policy—Conduct of Town Officials

Those designated and authorized to utilize town social media sites do so with the understanding that they are truly representing the town via social media outlets and must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the town. This includes any usage of town social media sites and/or other sites from outside of the workplace.

Elected Officials found in violation of this policy may be subject to public admonishment and censure by a majority of the Board of Selectmen.

When a town official responds to a comment or post in his/her capacity as a town official, the official's name and title should be made available to maintain transparency and open government. Town officials are expressly prohibited from disclosing any information via social media posts that may be confidential or exempt from disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law and State Ethics Laws.

Town officials are discouraged from using personal accounts to comment on or post information to town social media sites, and/or posting information regarding official town business on other social media sites. All social media site comments and posts by town officials are subject to the Public Records Law, Open Meeting Law, and all other applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, By-Laws and Town Charter provisions. Town officials posts to social media from personal social media accounts will be considered public records if the post discusses, in any way, or form, the aspects of town government.

Town officials, given the nature of their public service, should have no expectation of privacy regarding anything created, sent or received on social media sites. The town may monitor any and all transactions, communications and transmissions to ensure compliance with this policy.

It is the responsibility of the Selectboard to ensure that information communicated by means of social media is accurate and up-to-date.

4. Enforcement of Code of Conduct.

- A.** The Selectboard shall enforce the Code of Conduct.
- B.** Any Selectman violating the Code of Conduct may be removed from Committee assignments and from Board assignments by the Chairman, and may be subject to public censure by the Selectboard.
- C.** During a meeting the Chairman may, after an initial warning, remove a member from a meeting who acts in an inappropriate manner, is unruly or disorderly.
- D. Censure.** A formal, **public** reprimand for an infraction or violation. From time to time deliberative bodies are forced to take action against members whose actions or behavior runs counter to the group's acceptable standards for individual behavior. In the United States, governmental censure is done when a body's members wish to publicly reprimand an elected member and it is a formal statement of disapproval of actions and certain behavior.

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Acknowledgment of Receipt

I acknowledge receipt of this 2018 Pepperell Selectboard Code of Conduct, and that I have read its contents.

Name:

Selectman Signature:

Date: