

TOWN OF STOW
Statement of Ethics of the Board of Selectmen

Adopted: 7.28.09

- 1. A member of the Board of Selectmen, in relation to his or her community, should:**
 - a. Realize that his or her basic function is to make policy, with administration delegated to the Town Administrator.
 - b. Realize that in creating and enforcing Town policy, the Board of Selectmen may direct the Town Administrator in setting priorities that affect policy, but that the day-to-day operations of the Town are left to appropriate department heads.
 - c. Realize that he or she is one of a team and should abide by, and carry out, all Board and Town Meeting decisions once they are made.
 - d. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Board member on both local and state levels.
 - e. Remember that he or she represents the entire community at all times.
 - f. Realize that service on the Board is service to the community and not service for personal or political benefit.
 - g. Abide by the ethics guidelines established by the Commonwealth.
 - h. Abide by the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law, including regulations for electronic communications.

- 2. A member of the Board of Selectmen, in his or her relations with the Town Administrator, should:**
 - a. Realize that his or her basic function is to make policy, with administration delegated to the Town Administrator.
 - b. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refer complaints to appropriate members of the administration.
 - c. Give the Town Administrator full responsibility for discharging his or her duties.
 - d. Refrain from requesting assistance from Town department heads; instead all such requests should be handled through proper administrative channels through the full Board and the Town Administrator.

- 3. A member of the Board of Selectmen, in his or her relations with fellow Board members, should:**
 - a. Recognize that action at official legal meetings is binding and that he or she alone cannot bind the Board outside of such meetings.
 - b. Refrain from making statements or promises regarding the outcome of matters that will come before the Board until after having a full and fair opportunity to weigh the merits of an issue during a Board meeting.
 - c. Uphold the intent of executive session and respect the privileged communication that exists in executive session.
 - d. Make informed decision.
 - e. Refrain from communicating the position of the Board of Selectmen to reporters or state officials without prior board approval.
 - f. Be respectful of other Board members and their opinions.

- 4. A member of the Board of Selectmen, in his or her relations with Town staff, should:**
 - a. Treat all staff as professionals, with clear, honest communication that respects the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual.
 - b. Limit contact to specific Town staff. Questions of Town staff and/or requests for additional background information should be directed to the Town Administrator, Town Counsel, Assistant Town Administrator, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen, or Department heads.
 - c. Never publicly criticize an individual employee. Concerns about staff performance should only be made to the Town Administrator through private conversation.
 - d. Limit requests for staff support, and ensure that all requests go through the Town Administrator's office.