



Town of Stow

Statement of Ethics of the Select Board

Adopted: July 28, 2009, Amended: October 24, 2023

1. A member of the Select Board, 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 Select Board 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 Select Board, 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 Select Board, 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 decisions.
- e. Refrain from communicating the position of the Select Board to reporters or state officials without prior board approval.
- f. Be respectful of other Board members and their opinions.

- 4. A member of the Select Board, 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, Executive Assistant to the Select Board, 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.

5. Enforcement

- a. The Select Board shall enforce the Statement of Ethics.
- b. Any Select Board member violating the Statement of Ethics may be subject to public censure by the Select Board.
- c. During a meeting the Chair may, after an initial warning, remove a member from a meeting who acts in an inappropriate manner, is unruly or disorderly.