

# 2014

# HOLDEN SELECTBOARD

## CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct sets forth a standard of conduct for the Holden 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 Holden.

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 Holden 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 Holden.
- 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 Town 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. 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.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN 4/7/14
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