

Andover Select Board

Governance & Policy Manual

*Reference for Duties, Conduct,
Procedures, and Public Interaction*



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I. Purpose and Legal Authority

This Governance & Policy Manual serves as the official procedural and operational guide for the Andover Select Board. Its purpose is to clearly define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the Board and its members, while establishing transparent rules for governance, operations, communications, and public interaction.

This document consolidates historical guidance and reflects current legal standards and the evolving needs of Andover's residents, town government, and administrative structure.

The authority, powers, and responsibilities of the Select Board derive from New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated (RSA), especially Title III, which governs Towns, Cities, Village Districts, and Unincorporated Places. This document draws extensively on applicable RSA citations, supplemented with operational procedures tailored for Andover's size, structure, and community expectations.

For a full listing of statutory authorities, refer to the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated (Title III) and the NHMA's 'Knowing the Territory'.

This manual is intended to serve both as a standing policy document and as a day-to-day reference guide for use by Select Board members, the Town Administrator, and members of the public. It shall be reviewed periodically for relevance, accuracy, and compliance with state law.

II. Structure and Roles of the Select Board

The Andover Select Board consists of five members, each elected by the voters of Andover.

All members are equal in authority. Individual Select Board Members have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the Town or to take any action as a Town Official except upon a majority vote. This does not prohibit Members from acting as an ordinary citizen of the Town by expressing personal viewpoints and opinions on municipal matters to the extent that such information is based on encounters and observations derived *outside* of the privileged purview of a Selectman.

Upon seating new members following elections, the Board shall organize by selecting a Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair presides over meetings, coordinates agendas, and serves as the official spokesperson for the Board. The Vice Chair serves in the absence of the Chair. Selection is made by majority vote of the Board and may be changed at any time by a subsequent majority vote.

Each Board member may also be assigned liaison roles to committees, boards, or departments. Such assignments are intended to support communication and coordination but do not convey supervisory or decision-making authority outside of official Board action.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

The Select Board serves as the Town's chief executive body and shall operate to manage the prudential affairs of the Town and perform the duties prescribed by law (RSA 41:8).

The Select Board may delegate many of its responsibilities to staff members with enhanced levels of expertise, qualifications, and specific competencies; however, it should also be understood that the Select Board retains the final decision-making authority for all of its responsibilities.

The Select Board's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Governance

- Enact decisions made the Legislative Body at the Town Meeting.
- Propose warrant articles for the Town Meeting (budget items, local laws, zoning amendments, etc.).
- Develop and enforce town ordinances
- Represent the Town in legal matters

2. Financial Oversight

- Prepare and present the proposed annual Town budget to the budget committee and Town Meeting
- Oversee and authorize expenditures
- Ensure lawful and efficient use of public funds
- Approve payroll and accounts payable
- Set the property tax rate with the state Department of Revenue Administration (DRA)
- Oversee town-owned property, facilities, and capital assets

3. Personnel and Administration

- Supervise municipal departments through delegated authority to the Town Administrator
- Make appointments to various boards and commissions (e.g., Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Conservation Commission, etc.)
- Issue licenses and permits (e.g., hawkers/peddlers, junkyards, etc.)
- In coordination with the Town Clerk, maintain official Town records
- Maintain personnel and administrative records in coordination with TA

4. Public Works and Safety

- Through the appointed Highway Supervisor:
 - Oversee contracts for services and the management and maintenance of Town roads, bridges, and other Town infrastructure
- Handle public safety concerns through coordination with appointed department heads (Police Chief, and Emergency Services Chief)

III. Duties and Responsibilities (cont.)

5. Elections & Appointments

- Serve as election officials on Election Day
- In coordination with the Town Clerk and Supervisors of the Checklist, assist with preparations for elections
- Fill vacancies in elected offices when authorized by law

6. Legal Compliance & Reporting

- Adhere to RSA 91-A (Right-to-Know)
- Properly notice and conduct public meetings
- Record minutes in accordance with RSA
- Ensure timely submission of required reports and permits (e.g., DRA, NH DES, Etc.)

7. Community Representation

- Through the appointed Town Administrator:
 - Serve as liaisons between Town government and residents
 - Handle citizen complaints, concerns, and suggestions
- Represent the Town in intergovernmental relations and engage with regional and state partners (e.g., Regional Planning Commissions, County Government, etc.)

It shall be the responsibility of the Town Administrator to keep the Select Board informed of their duties in a timely manner and to ensure, to the greatest extent practical, that the Board acts in compliance with all applicable laws, including, but not limited to posting notices, meeting deadlines, producing minutes and reports, advertising, scheduling hearings, etc.

IV. Policy Development and Adoption

Policies shall be developed to guide the administration of town government, ensure consistency in decision-making, and promote transparency and efficiency.

1. Policies may be introduced by any Board member or the Town Administrator and must be submitted in writing.
2. A draft policy shall be placed on the agenda of a regular Board meeting for first reading and discussion.
3. Policies shall not be adopted at the same meeting they are introduced, unless a waiver is approved by majority vote in extraordinary circumstances.
4. The Board may solicit comment from affected parties or officials, schedule hearings, or table discussion for further research.
5. A majority vote of the Board is required for policy adoption. The effective date shall be specified in the vote.

IV. Policy Development and Adoption (cont.)

6. The Town Administrator's Office shall be responsible for the maintenance of all policies and procedures, for updating the Policy Manual with new and amended policies, and for ensuring the distribution to Board members and staff.
7. Copies of the policies shall be made available to the public at the Select Board Office and at the Office of the Town Clerk.

V. Board Conduct and Code of Ethics

Members of the Select Board are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, ethical, and lawful manner in all dealings related to municipal governance. The following expectations apply to all members:

1. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command. Board members shall not direct staff, give orders, or interfere with operations outside of Board action.
2. The Town Administrator will have full responsibility for discharging decisions and actions directed by the Board
3. Treat all staff, residents, and fellow Board members with respect, professionalism, and civility, even in disagreement.
4. Refrain from publicly criticizing staff or volunteers. Concerns shall be directed through the Town Administrator and addressed in a nonpublic session when appropriate.
5. Do not represent the Town or speak on behalf of the Board unless authorized to do so by formal vote.
6. Avoid commitments or promises of action prior to full Board discussion and public input. Making decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented or discussed
7. Disclose any conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts and recuse oneself from deliberations when appropriate.
8. Abide by the confidentiality requirements of nonpublic sessions under RSA 91-A. Do not share sealed minutes or privileged information.

Board members shall endeavor to uphold the public trust and act in the best interests of Andover at all times.

VI. Meetings and Decision-Making

1. All Select Board meetings shall be held in compliance with RSA 91-A (Right to Know Law). Notice must be posted at least 24 hours in advance, except in emergencies.
2. The Board may enter nonpublic session only for reasons listed in RSA 91-A:3, with a motion, second, roll call vote, and reference to the applicable citation.
3. Minutes shall be prepared and maintained for all meetings. Draft minutes are considered public records after five business days.

VI. Meetings and Decision-Making (cont.)

4. Sealed nonpublic minutes must be reviewed periodically and unsealed when appropriate, or retained under seal by majority vote.
5. Remote participation by Board members is permitted under RSA 91-A:2, III with consent of a quorum present at the physical meeting location.
6. Quorum is defined as a majority of Board members. In the absence of quorum, no official business may be conducted.
7. Consent agendas may be used to approve routine items such as manifests, abatements, and correspondence, provided the documents are available for review and approval at the meeting.
8. Decisions by the Board must be approved by a majority vote at a duly posted meeting unless otherwise provided by law.
9. The Select Board may conduct informal "working sessions" as needed to coordinate on projects that otherwise would consume a regular meeting and shall be posted as such with no public participation.

VII. Communication Protocols

Recognizing the ease of use of electronic communication, the Board shall acknowledge the necessity for full disclosure of such communications:

1. Board members shall not communicate electronically (email, text, messaging apps) in a way that would constitute deliberation outside of a posted meeting.
2. No Board member shall email or message more than one other Board member about Town business, except for scheduling purposes.
3. Any electronic communication from a resident to a quorum of the Board shall be printed and included in the next meeting packet for discussion.
4. All correspondence intended to represent a decision or action of the Board must originate from the Town Administrator or be signed by the Chair after a vote.
5. The Chair or Town Administrator may respond to administrative inquiries.
6. Policy issues or items requiring Board action must be placed on an agenda.
7. Administrative matters concerning the delivery of Town services, interpretation of law or policy, and employee performance, should generally be referred to the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator will address the matter and report back to the member or to the full Board as appropriate.
8. Legislative matters concerning the letter or intent of Town policy, or the decisions of the Board should be referred to the Town Administrator for study or recommendation and placed on a meeting agenda.
9. Board members shall refrain from using Town letterhead or email accounts to express personal opinions.

VIII. Public Participation

The Select Board values input from Andover residents and encourages public engagement in municipal affairs. The following protocols ensure productive and respectful participation during meetings:

1. Members of the public wishing to speak during a meeting must raise their hand and be recognized by the Chair.
2. Comments must pertain to the current agenda item and shall be limited to three (3) minutes per person unless otherwise permitted by the Chair.
3. Individuals wishing to present documents or materials to the Board must submit them to the Town Administrator at least three (3) business days in advance.
4. Requests to be placed on the meeting agenda must be submitted through the Town Administrator. Inclusion is at the discretion of the Chair.
5. Speakers must address the Board as a whole. Cross-talk or directing comments at staff, officials, or other attendees is discouraged.
6. The Chair may limit discussion or close public comment to maintain order or allow the Board to proceed with its business.

IX. Violations and Enforcement

The Select Board recognizes the importance of accountability and lawful conduct. Any violation shall be reported to the Board within five (5) days of the occurrence.

Violations of these governance protocols may result in corrective action as follows:

1. Any Select Board member who knowingly violates the Right-to-Know Law (RSA 91-A) or acts outside of the Board's authority may be subject to legal review and sanctions.
2. Violations of confidentiality, including disclosure of nonpublic session information, may result in formal censure by a vote of the Board.
3. Repeated or egregious breaches of conduct may result in removal from liaison roles or committee assignments.
4. If a majority of the Board believes a member has committed a legal violation, they may vote in public session to initiate judicial removal proceedings.
5. Board members are strongly encouraged to resolve disputes internally or through consultation with the Town Administrator prior to taking public action.

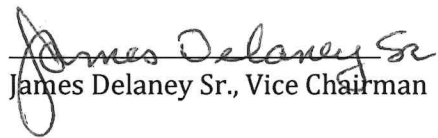
Adoption of Governance & Policy Manual

The following signatures represent formal adoption of the Andover Select Board Governance & Policy Manual. This manual shall be reviewed periodically and amended by majority vote of the Board as necessary.

Adopted on this 4TH day of SEPTEMBER, 2025.

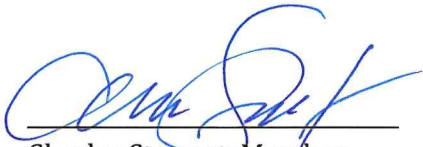


Dana Swenson, Chairman



James Delaney Sr., Vice Chairman

Roland Carter, Member



Charles Stewart, Member



Leslie Fenton, Member

