



Select Board Handbook

Initial Approval: December 21, 2020
Updated: March 14, 2022

Table of Contents

Introduction.....3

History.....3

Powers and Responsibilities.....3

 Appointment of Town Manager.....4

 Election of Officers of the Select Board5

 Ceremonial Responsibilities.....6

 Ethics..... 6

 Appointments and Vacancies..... 6

 Relations Between Select Board and Appointed Boards.....8

Meeting and Hearing Procedures.....9

 Agenda Preparation.....10

 Minutes.....10

 Conduct of Meetings and Hearings.....11

 Attire.....11

 Dog Hearings.....11

Public Participation.....11

 Emails and Communications.....12

Town Meetings.....13

Sample Select Board Annual Calendar.....15

List of Bedford Selectmen/ Select Board Members.....16

List of Bedford Town Administrators/Managers.....20

Introduction

This document, setting forth the Bedford Select Board's functions and procedures, is intended to serve as a resource for the Bedford Select Board, for both new and veteran Board members, as well as for other officials and employees of the Town of Bedford-and for the public. This handbook is designed to provide a foundation for consistent, transparent, and effective Board administration. It will be reviewed periodically and updated appropriately, in particular at the annual goal-setting workshop of the Select Board and Town Manager. Board members, and the interested public, are encouraged to review companion documents, such as the Town's Charter and By-Laws; the Town's licensing and permitting regulations; the Massachusetts Municipal Association's (MMA) Handbook for Massachusetts Selectmen; resources on bedfordma.gov; the Bedford League of Women Voters' "Know Your Town" document; the most recent Annual Report; and historical records for additional context and information. An additional project that is in development is to post all of the approved policies of the Select Board on its website so they are easily accessible. This handbook may not supersede any federal, state, or Bedford laws, regulations, charter provisions, or by-laws.

History

The use of Selectmen to create one of the oldest forms of representative government in the United States dates back to the 1630s. At that time, citizens decided that a delegation of authority was needed to reduce the burdensome frequency of monthly town meetings. A group of "selectmen" was elected to administer town affairs in between town meetings.

Bedford's first Selectmen were elected at the first Town Meeting on October 6, 1729, shortly after Bedford was incorporated on September 23, 1729.

In Bedford, the current number of Select Board Members and their three-year terms was determined by a Town Meeting vote of June 21, 1954. In 2020, the Board was renamed the Select Board. Members are elected on the following cycle: two are elected one year; two are elected the following year; and one is elected in the third year of a given Board election cycle.

Powers and Responsibilities

The Bedford Select Board is the executive body of the Town, responsible for setting the strategic direction and policies of the Town. The Select Board provides the general direction and management of the property, buildings, and affairs of the Town in all matters not otherwise provided for by law or the Bylaws. The five Select Board members are the chief executive body of the town. The legal authority of the Select Board is limited to actions taken by the board at legally called, posted meetings with a majority of the board present. The sources of authority for the Select Board are Massachusetts General Laws and Special Acts, as well as the Town of Bedford Charter and Bylaws. More than 700 statutes and Special Acts define the powers and duties of the Select Board.

Bedford is governed by the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, federal statutes, Special Acts of the state legislature, the Charter of the Town of Bedford, Bedford General and Zoning Bylaws, and the rules and regulations of various Town Boards and Committees. Of course, other bodies in addition to the Select Board, such as the School Committee and Planning Board, have significant and separate authority under various Laws and Bylaws.

Section 3-2 of the Charter states that “the Select Board’s specific powers shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- conducting the affairs of the Town not specifically granted to another office, board, commission, or committee by the Massachusetts General Laws, Town Bylaws, or this Charter.
- investigating the conduct and operation of any Town department. Upon completion of such investigation a report shall be submitted to the Town Clerk and be printed in the Annual Town Report.
- making appointments to the offices specified in Section 3 of Article 3 of this Charter. They shall also make appointments to any temporary posts and committees they create for a special purpose.”

Additional powers of the Select Board are: developing policies and reviewing compliance with these policies; reviewing expense and payroll warrants; providing the Town with police, fire, and civil defense protection and Public Works services; exercising stormwater authority; acting as parks commissioners; naming, or renaming facilities located on parcels of land under the jurisdiction of the Board; and legally committing the Town to the requirements of most contractual agreements and legal documents. As the MMA Handbook states, “An effective [Select Board member] has the ability to take the patchwork of laws and bylaws that comprise the board’s authority and turn it into an action agenda that can be summed up in a single word: leadership.”

As noted in the MMA Handbook, building on the strict legal responsibilities of the Select Board enumerated above and role in setting policy and coordinating activities of other boards, as a general rule, “the effective board devises ways to work cooperatively, not necessarily unanimously, toward broad common goals. Teamwork can be developed if individual selectmen understand that effectiveness is not achieved by individual action, but by a board of selectmen acting in concert.” As such, Select Board members should, as much as possible, abide by, and carry out, all Board decisions once they are made.

Appointment of Town Manager

A core responsibility of the Select Board is to supervise the departments of government that are not supervised by other elected officials. This responsibility is delegated when the Board appoints a Town Manager as Chief Administrative Officer of the Town to oversee day-to-day operation of the general government. The position of Town Administrator was created by the Town Charter in 1974 to relieve the Selectmen from the direct supervision of department heads and to provide a full-time administrative officer to conduct daily Town business. This position was renamed Town Manager through a Charter change approved in 2006. While the responsibilities and authority of the role were not affected by this change, the responsibility and authority of the Town Administrator/Town Manager have increased since the first Charter was adopted in 1974 and the

name change was intended to align the responsibilities and authorities typical of a town manager in other Massachusetts communities with the title. Town Managers must be qualified by education, training, and/or previous experience in public administration and must not have served in elected office in Bedford during the previous 12 months prior to appointment.

Responsibilities of the Town Manager include: recommending policies and long-range goals to the Select Board; appointing, supervising, and removing department heads for which the Select Board is responsible, subject to the approval of the Select Board; keeping the Select Board informed about the financial condition and needs of the Town; being responsible for the negotiation of all contracts within the Select Board's jurisdiction; preparing the annual budgets for departments under the Select Board's authority; preparing and distributing Town Meeting warrants to all households; annually developing, in conjunction with the Select Board, goals for the coming fiscal year; and several other duties enumerated in the Charter. The Town Manager is expected to attend all Select Board meetings and to keep the Board informed about and advise them on matters that fall within the jurisdiction of the office, then carry out the actions of the Select Board.

To resolve problems that have been brought to any Board member's attention by a Town resident or by any other means, the member should work in coordination with the Town Manager and, if appropriate, also bring the matter to the attention of the full Board. Select Board members should seek to inform themselves on topics that are the subject of inquiry primarily through the Town Manager. Further, the Select Board should refrain from involvement in day-to-day Town operations. Communications about the operation of departments and suggestions for improvements should be addressed to the Town Manager directly. This is especially crucial in the case of any personnel issues that may arise.

The Select Board determines the manner of review of the Town Manager's performance. The Chair and Clerk take the lead in coordinating this review. The Town Manager serves at the pleasure of the Board, but at least four Select Board members must vote for dismissal in order to remove the Town Manager from office.

Election of Officers of the Select Board

The officers of the Select Board are Chair and Clerk, who are elected annually from its members with a majority vote of the board, and each serve a term of one year. All five members should be present to hold the annual Board election, typically at the first regular meeting following the annual town election. The immediate past Chair presides as Chair Pro Tem until a new Chair is elected. If there is no immediate past Chair, or secondarily past Clerk, the longest-serving member serves as Chair Pro Tem.

The responsibilities of the Chair include: presiding at all Select Board meetings and hearings while maintaining order in the meeting room; recognizing speakers; calling for votes; presiding over discussions; signing official documents as necessary; calling special meetings; preparing agendas with the Town Manager; arranging orientation for new members; representing the Board at meetings, conferences, and other gatherings; serving as spokesperson of the Board at Town Meetings; making liaison assignments and assigning overview responsibilities for projects and tasks to board members. The Chair may make motions and resolutions, although it is not

customarily done in Bedford, and participate in discussions and voting just as the other members do.

The responsibilities of the Select Board Clerk are to see that warrants for the payments of bills are signed weekly, and that appointment slips and cemetery ledgers are signed as needed. The duties of the Clerk include all the duties of the Chair in their absence, or as requested by the Chair.

The Board may remove the Chair or Clerk at any time by a majority vote of the Board, but the topic should be included on the meeting's agenda.

Ceremonial Responsibilities

Select Board members participate in awards ceremonies, and attend and speak at ceremonial Town events. Events and ceremonies include Pole Capping; Bedford Day; Citizen of the Year Award ceremony; the Select Board holiday party; and patriotic holiday commemorations.

Ethics

Each Select Board member, as an elected official, has an individual and specific series of ethical obligations under Massachusetts' "Conflict of Interest" statute (MA General Laws Chapter 268A), as well as under the Office of Campaign and Political Finance's regulations. Moreover, the Board has obligations as a body to abide by a number of other important laws and regulations controlling its conduct, including, but not limited to, the Open Meeting Law and Public Records Laws. Both members as individuals and the Board as a whole must be especially mindful of these obligations in addition to its self-enforced Civil Discourse Policy (available on the Town website or through the Town Manager's Office), as the behavior and practices of the Select Board can set a tone for the Town.

Select Board members should be cautious about expressing opinions about subjects that will be going before the Board; be well-informed concerning the duties of a board member; represent the entire community at all times; accept the office of Select Board member as a means of unselfish service without personal gain, in particular refraining from using inside and/or confidential information gained by Select Board membership to benefit themselves personally; and judge all candidates for appointment on merit and not for the purposes of patronage.

Expenses in connection with *in-state* travel involving overnight accommodation or travel beyond 50 miles round trip may be reimbursed with the prior approval of the Select Board. Transportation, meals, lodging, and registration fees are eligible. Within 10 days of travel, a voucher should be submitted to the Town Manager. Registration fees for travel within 50 miles round-trip may be reimbursed. For *out-of-state* travel, the same requirements exist, but prior approval of both the Town Manager and the Select Board is required. Out-of-state travel should be approved only when the travel can be shown to be in the best interest of the citizens of Bedford. If a member of the Select Board undertakes out-of-state travel as a member and does not seek reimbursement from Bedford for expense, it is a best practice to disclose this travel to the Select Board.

Appointments and Vacancies

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, the Select Board is vested with the authority and responsibility to directly appoint a variety of board, commission, and committee members. These are generally one- or three-year appointments. When possible, the Select Board will seek to fill positions with a diversity of races, ages, genders, and geographic areas of residents so that a true cross-section of the community will be reflected. Vacancies should be advertised in order to attract a larger pool of applicants. The Select Board will be assisted in the process by the Volunteer Coordinating Committee (VCC), which is tasked with advertising openings and identifying candidates for appointment. The Town Manager's Office will provide a list of the vacancies to the VCC and Select Board. The VCC will notify incumbents that their current term is ending and request their statements of availability and interest regarding reappointment. The VCC will also provide the names of available candidates for vacancies on appointed Town boards.

Candidates seeking appointment for the first time to a position should complete the Volunteer Application Form. The Select Board will interview candidates seeking appointment. Appointments are made by majority vote of the full Select Board. The Select Board, in writing, thanks applicants for their interest and thank outgoing committee members for their service to the Town.

In the event that an appointee has not resigned, been reappointed, or been replaced by a new appointee by the date of the expiration of his or her term, such person will be considered a holdover appointee. A holdover appointee continues to serve in such appointment with all the duties and responsibilities of such position remaining, but is subject to removal at any time by a two-thirds vote of the Board.

The Select Board may remove any of its appointees by a two-thirds vote at any time. If a member of an appointed board, committee, or commission is absent for three or more successive meetings without just cause, that body may vote to request that the appointing authority, such as the Select Board, remove that member. The appointing authority holds a public hearing on the issue and provides at least 10 days' notice of the hearing to the absent member. Following the hearing, the authority may remove the member by two-thirds vote. If any elected or appointed official wishes to resign, resignation letters should be submitted to the Town Clerk. Whenever a vacancy occurs in an *appointed* board or committee, the remaining members should notify the Town Manager's office within 30 days. The appointing authority should give notice of the vacancy seven days before the planned appointment.

While some boards and commissions are defined in the Charter or General Bylaws, or mandated by state law, others are *ad hoc* or advisory in nature. The Select Board may, from time to time create committees, subcommittees, and working groups that report directly to the Board for the purpose of advising the Board on specific issues. These bodies are not authorized to create or establish policy. Rather, they are charged specifically, and/or generally, with advising the Board either orally or in writing. The Board then acts upon the recommendations of such bodies. Hence, it remains the Board's ultimate responsibility to discharge their obligations with respect to any matter referred to a committee or working group of the Board. The Board should annually evaluate the need for each of these committees to continue, and the non-permanent committee typically will produce a final report or other deliverable as part of the committee's winding-down process.

According to state law, if there is a vacancy in an *elected* committee or board consisting of two or more members, other than the office of Select Board, the remaining members must give written notice of the vacancy to the Select Board and Town Clerk within 30 days. The Select Board and the remaining member, or members of such board, jointly fill the vacancy by a roll call vote. The Select Board alone shall fill the vacancy if the notice is not given within the 30 days specified above. The Select Board must give public notice of the vacancy 14 days before the planned appointment. The vote of a majority of the officers entitled to vote must be necessary for this appointment. If a Town Election is scheduled within 120 days, these officers have the discretion to defer to the Town Election.

A vacancy in the Select Board may be filled by a special election, unless the vacancy occurs within 100 days of the annual town election.

Boards and committees known as appointed bodies of the Select Board are entirely appointed by the Select Board. Other appointed bodies, such as the Finance Committee and Capital Expenditures Committee, are bodies of Town Meeting, and those bodies are appointed as specified in the Town Charter. Some bodies have parameters for appointments, that require the inclusion of an existing member of another board.

In addition to the Select Board, the citizens of Bedford elect the members of the following boards: Board of Assessors, Moderator, School Committee, Trustees of the Bedford Free Public Library, Planning Board, Bedford Housing Authority, Board of Health, and Bedford's representative to the Regional Technical Vocational School District. The Select Board is encouraged to be in regular contact with the officials comprising these boards, as well as all other Town bodies, to best serve the needs of the Town. There is a recall procedure in the Town Charter for any elected official.

Relations Between Select Board and Appointed Boards

Once appointed, town boards and commissions must be free to act on their own without interference. If the committee was appointed to advise the Select Board on a certain matter, however, a clear understanding should be set forth as to what, if any, independent authority the committee may have. Town boards and committees serve an invaluable role to the Select Board and the Town as a whole. Such advisory committees, however, can take on a life of their own if their role and extent of independence is not understood. These boards should refrain from unilaterally seeking to place articles on the town meeting warrant, applying for grants (which should be facilitated through the Town Manager's office), or representing the community before state or federal agencies unless delegated by the Select Board or Town Manager. A clear understanding in the beginning will avoid awkward problems in the future.

In order to facilitate coordination and information sharing among Town boards, the Select Board appoints liaisons to the other boards, commissions, and committees in town. The liaison should attend as many meetings as possible, and time will typically be reserved on Select Board agendas for members to provide reports back to the full Select Board about the activities, accomplishments, and potential problems of these bodies including but not limited to attendance issues. The liaison serves as the main point of contact between a committee and the Select Board and assists the chair of the committee with ensuring the committee's workplan aligns with Select Board goals. For

committees on which the Select Board member is a full voting member and counted as part of the quorum requirement, they should strive to attend all meetings. Additional ways that boards and committees can communicate with the Select Board include writing a memo and/or requesting time on a Select Board agenda to discuss a topic.

Select Board members have traditionally not served on other major elected or appointed Town committees, in order to avoid the concentration of authority and influence within town government structure. New Select Board members are encouraged to step down from any other major appointed or elected committees at the time of their election. This tradition does not apply to liaison roles or memberships on a board or committee as a representative of the Select Board.

Meeting and Hearing Procedures

The Select Board conducts much of its work via public meetings and hearings. Regular meetings are typically held at 7:00pm on Mondays in the Select Board's Room in Town Hall, via videoconference or hybrid technology when necessary. Agendas should generally be designed so that meetings end prior to 11:00 pm. Meetings are usually scheduled every other week, but occur more frequently in the weeks prior to Town Meetings and occur less frequently in the summer months. The Board should not meet on legal holidays or major religious holidays.

A "special meeting" is a meeting called for a time other than regular meetings, and the same rules for regular meetings shall apply. A majority of members should agree to meet and all Select Board members must be notified.

An "emergency meeting" is defined by law as a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action. Emergency meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair or any Member of the Board through the Town Manager consistent with the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, which allows a meeting in special circumstances even though no notice was previously posted. However, a notice should be posted at the earliest possible time; all Board members must be notified; and a majority of members must agree to convene an emergency meeting.

Working meetings are informal "working sessions" and may be conducted as the situation warrants, such as setting Board and Town Manager goals and objectives for the upcoming fiscal year. An annual goal setting meeting typically takes place in the summer, and progress toward goals is reviewed quarterly. The meetings must be posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law but no official actions will be taken. A synopsis will be made a part of the minutes of the following regular meeting. Trainings or workshops are not subject to the Open Meeting Law.

Hearings (that are conducted separately from regular meetings) may be scheduled at the discretion of the Board in coordination with the Town Manager's office regarding any matter within its jurisdiction. Standalone hearings may include warrant articles when regular meetings would not provide sufficient time to address all the appropriate articles within a given Town Meeting cycle. Any hearings must follow the normal notice procedure, absent an emergency or pertinent provision of law setting forth further notice criteria.

Hearings, whether part of a meeting or not, shall be advertised and the Town Manager's office shall notify interested persons as required by statute or as directed by the Chair. Hearings are held in open session unless otherwise voted by the Select Board in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. During the hearing, the Chair announces the nature and purpose of the hearing, and the Clerk makes a motion to open the hearing. Questions are addressed to the chair. The usual order of procedure is as follows: a presentation by applicant; recommendations from any Town agency or officer; statements by proponents; statements by opponents; rebuttal statements; questions and answers.

The Town Manager's Office is responsible for compliance with the Open Meeting Law on behalf of the Select Board, including filing appropriate public notice of any Board meeting or hearing with the Town Clerk and posting on the Town website at least 48 business hours (unless laws or regulations require more notice) in advance of the meeting or hearing. The notice must set forth the date, time, and place of the meeting, as well as a list of topics the Chair reasonably anticipates to be discussed at the meeting or hearing.

Agenda Preparation

The Town Manager coordinates agendas in consultation with the Chair. Members may request items to be on the agenda, but should communicate that to the entire Board, ideally at a previous meeting. The Chair and Town Manager should estimate the time period needed for each agenda item. The Town Manager's office will notify persons directly involved in agenda items.

Background and reference materials should be submitted to the Town manager's office by 1:00 pm the Friday 10 calendar days prior to the meeting to be included in the Select Board packet. The Town Manager should strive to share the packets with Board members by 4:00 pm on the Wednesday prior to a Monday meeting. Select Board members and the Town Manager alike should be cognizant of the need for adequate time both for packet development and review of packet materials. In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, the meeting agenda may need to be reposted if the agenda is substantially altered with the addition of emergency items.

Minutes

Consistent with the Open Meeting Law, the Board must maintain accurate records of both Open Meetings and Executive Session. At a minimum, the records must set forth "the date, time, place, members present or absent and action taken." Executive Session records shall remain confidential only "so long as the publication may defeat the lawful purpose of the Executive Session, but no longer." Thereafter they shall be open to the public. The Board should periodically review its executive session minutes and vote to maintain confidentiality or release such records for public review following recommendations by Town Counsel. All votes taken in Executive Session must be recorded roll call votes made part of the records of the Executive Session.

The Town Manager's office drafts minutes and distributes such minutes to the Board for approval at future meetings as prescribed by the Open Meeting Law. Select Board members may propose amendments to draft minutes. Non-substantial corrections may be made to the minutes without advanced circulation of such corrections. Minutes shall contain a statement of all actions taken by

the Board and a list of materials referenced. Approved minutes shall be recorded and filed consistent with Town Bylaws and Massachusetts Public Records Laws.

For a full summary of relevant provisions of the Open Meeting Law, see summary document and Town Counsel presentations on the topic available through the Town Manager or Clerk's office.

Conduct of Meetings and Hearings

Meetings are conducted in accordance with generally accepted rules of parliamentary procedure. Robert's Rules of Order is used as a guide in matters requiring clarification or definition. Discussions can be relatively informal due to the size of the group and the desirability of flexibility in the expression of opinion. A quorum consists of three members of the Select Board, but as a practical courtesy, action on critical or controversial matters should be taken, whenever practicable, with the full Board in attendance. Actions and decisions shall be by motion, second and vote. Split vote results will be identified by name. Remote participation is allowed under the provisions of the Town's Remote Participation Policy.

Attire

As meetings and hearings are open to the public, members are expected to dress professionally, with business attire suggested except during the time period between Memorial Day and Labor Day, when business casual is acceptable.

Dog Hearings

After the Select Board has been notified by the Animal Control officer of a vicious dog attack, the Board will notify the owner of the dog and schedule a public hearing on whether to revoke the license of said dog or to order destruction of the dog. If the Select Board revokes the license of the dog, but does not order its destruction, the Board shall notify the owner or keeper of the dog and the Town Clerk within seven days that said dog will be impounded and destroyed if it is found within the town after the succeeding seven days.

Public Participation

The public is welcome and invited to attend all non-executive session Select Board meetings. A Public Comment period typically will be scheduled at each meeting, generally at the beginning of the agenda, to hear concerns of the public. Citizens and interested parties with a connection to Bedford are welcome to comment on agenda items. Speakers are encouraged to sign up to speak at the meeting ahead of time, specifying which issue they wish to address, and provide contact information so appropriate Town staff or Board members may follow-up on their comments as necessary. The Chair calls on speakers and should set time limits per speaker. The Chair reserves the right to limit the total time allotted to public comment or extend any planned time limit.

Speakers are subject to Bedford's guidelines for civil discourse and remarks are to be addressed through the Chair. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the Chair

may terminate that individual's privilege of address. Further, in public session, the Board will not hear personal complaints of Town personnel nor against any member of the community.

At the discretion of the Chair, meeting attendees may participate in the discussion of agenda items.

The press is welcome at all non-executive session meetings. Select Board meetings are generally recorded by Bedford TV, which provides members of the public free access to such recordings. Audio and video recordings of meetings by members of the public are permitted under state law so long as such recording does not interfere with the conduct of the meeting. By law, the Chair must be notified by any member of the public of their intention to record a meeting before the meeting commences. The Chair shall announce any such personal recordings.

Executive sessions, other than a few minutes in duration, will typically be scheduled at the end of, or prior to, the beginning of the open session unless the situation warrants it. Only items clearly allowed under the Open Meeting Law shall be included in Executive Session. An Executive Session shall not be held unless the Board has first convened in open session for which notice has been given. However, nothing shall restrict the Board from entering executive session at any time for any lawful purpose not previously reasonably anticipated by the Chair. A majority of the members must vote to go into Executive Session and the vote of each member must be by roll call recorded in the minutes. The mover must specify in the open meeting the grounds on which Executive Session is sought. Before the Executive Session, the Chair must state whether or not the Board will reconvene in open session.

Individuals or groups may request a meeting with the Board by contacting the Town Manager with the reason for the appearance and the action desired. If a request is granted, at such meeting, participants will be given opportunity to make a presentation and express opinions and ask for information. Background data may be prepared by boards and departments prior to the meeting if possible. Written materials to be included in Select Board's packet are welcome. If discussed in public meeting, the Town Manager's office will make best efforts to notify those who would be affected.

Emails and Communications

Because the Select Board represents and is accountable to Bedford's citizens, the Board should make every effort to maintain strong communications with citizens.

The Select Board maintains an email address and website where the public can email all Board members and the Town Manager. The Chair should strive to provide timely responses citizen questions and complaints via email unless delegated to the Town Manager or another member of the Board. As outlined above, the Chair is encouraged to consult with the Town Manager before replying, as necessary. Additional Board members may respond, but the suggested method is to ensure that every email is responded to by at least one message. Whenever possible, Select Board responses to communications should feature a unified voice. As a reminder, the Civil Discourse Policy applies to electronic communications.

In order to comply with the Open Meeting Law and the spirit of open exchange, Select Board members shall refrain from electronic and any other communication exchanges among a quorum of members regarding any Town business, and any debates about policy or opinions on matters before the Board whether or not among a quorum of members.

The Select Board should not become involved in personnel issues or employee complaints received by email or other method of communication. Such communications should be referred to the relevant Department Head, Town Manager's Office, and/or Human Resources.

Through social media channels, Select Board members may wish to communicate Select Board and Town initiatives and decisions, as well as engage in conversations with residents. Select Board members are reminded that the Civil Discourse Policy applies to social media interactions, and they should refrain from engaging in contentious exchanges. If an online interaction becomes difficult, they are encouraged to offer an alternate means of communications such as email or a phone call, or disengage with the other party if the exchange is particularly unproductive. Select Board Members are also reminded that they do not have individual authority to commit Town staff or resources to any actions, projects, or initiatives and should refrain from opining or overpromising on items that are expected to come in front of the Select Board on social media.

Other ideas for engagement with residents include office hours or a presence at public events.

While Select Board members may wish to engage in limited constituent services, they should feel free to refer any complex or granular resident concerns or questions to the Town Manager's office. It is most often better to hand over an issue to the Town Manager's office than to guess the proper resolution. Again, they should be sure to act as a member of a team, and refrain from overcommitting or oversharing.

Select Board members are asked for comment by the media from time to time. They may speak to the media, but are encouraged to check in with the Town Manager's office if they would like background information to help them respond to the inquiry.

In sum, Select Board members should refrain from conducting business on behalf of the Town without authorization, overcommitting the Town, or sharing confidential information.

Town Meetings

Town Meeting is the historic form of government for towns throughout the Commonwealth. Bedford has an "open" form of town meeting meaning that any registered voter may debate and vote on any warrant article put forth at any Annual or Special Town Meeting. The Select Board serves many important functions in the Town Meeting process—opening the warrant, holding hearings on proposed warrant articles to be considered at Town Meeting, and participating in Town Meeting to present the Select Board's recommendations.

Annual Town Meeting typically begins on the fourth Monday of March. Traditionally, additional nights, if necessary, are held on the next night (Tuesday) and then, if necessary, the following Mondays and Tuesdays, until action on all articles is completed. The required quorum, as specified

in the Charter, is 100 registered voters. The Town Moderator calls Town Meeting to order, and presides over Town Meeting. The Board generally divides speaking duties amongst its members by article. The Town Clerk keeps the official meeting minutes.

Special Town Meetings may be called at the discretion of the Board for conducting business between annual town meetings. A Special Town Meeting Warrant is required. Often times, there is a Special Town Meeting called by the Select Board in November. A Special Town Meeting must be called by the Select Board upon receipt of a petition signed by 200 voters' signatures—in this case, they also must hold a hearing on the petition.

The agenda for Town Meeting, called the warrant, is drawn up by the Select Board. Articles are either drafted by the Town Manager, drafted by the Select Board, or submitted to the Board by departments, boards, or 10 or more voters' signatures (100 signatures for a Special Town Meeting). The Select Board has discretion to put articles in the order they choose. Only articles included in the warrant may be considered at the meeting. The deadline for inclusion in the Annual Town Meeting warrant is the second Monday in January. Each household gets a copy of the warrant, which is also distributed widely by the Town Manager's Office.

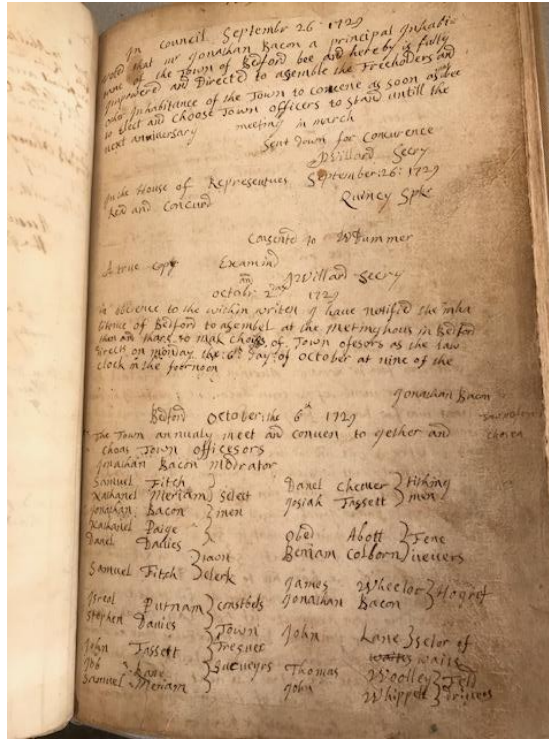
After placement of articles on the warrant, the Select Board conducts hearings on warrant articles within their jurisdiction. These can be portions of regular meetings. The purpose is to develop recommendations and hear from proponents and other interested parties. The Board shall develop a motion for Town Meeting to take a specific action, or recommend a vote of "no action." The Select Board, through the Town Manager's office, shall make its best efforts to inform affected parties of proposed warrant articles. A public hearing shall be held on each proposed bylaw change. Budgets are sent to the Finance Committee by the second Monday in January, and all warrant articles shall be sent to the Finance Committee for consideration by the fourth Monday of January.

Sample Select Board Annual Calendar

MONTH	AGENDA TOPICS
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warrant development (Budget, Salary Bylaw, Merit Article, etc.)
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional warrant review (Community Preservation Committee, Zoning, etc.) • Close of warrant • Motion assignments
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Town Election • Annual Town Meeting
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal Setting Retreat
September/October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Town Meeting warrant development • Close of warrant • Motion assignments
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Town Meeting • Tax rate hearing
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Budget review

List of Bedford Selectmen/Select Board Members

Please note: Some 18th century records are difficult to verify, including instances where it is unclear whether a long term of service may actually indicate a father and “junior” son’s service.



Listing of the first Selectmen chosen in October, 1729 (Bedford Town Archives)

NAME	DATES OF SERVICE
Samuel Fitch	1729-1738
Nathaniel Meriam	1729-1737
Jonathan Bacon	1729-1730, 1736-1737
Nathaniel Page	1729-1731, 1738-1742, 1744-1745, 1747-1748
Daniel Davis	1729-1730
Josiah Fasset	1730-1734, 1739-1740, 1754-1755, 1757-1759, 1761-1762
Israel Putnam	1731-1734, 1737-1755, 1760-1761
Richard Whelore	1731-1737, 1746-1749, 1753-1754
Samuel Meriam	1731-1732, 1737-1740
Paul Raymond	1733-1734, 1742-1743, 1749-1750
Job Lane	1730-1739, 1741-1743, 1749-1756, 1758-1759, 1764-1765, 1767-1768, 1770-1771
Francis Wilson	1736-1737, 1741-1742
Stephen Davis	1737-1738, 1743-1744, 1749-1764, 1766-1773
David Taylor	1738-1739, 1742-1744
Thomas Woolley	1738-1739
James Lane	1739-1741, 1766-1767
John Meriam	1740-1741, 1744-1746, 1748-1749, 1751-1752, 1755-1757, 1770-1771, 1776-1777, 1780-1781

Obed Abbott	1740-1741
Joseph Fitch	1740-1746, 1748-1753, 1756-1761
John Whitmore	1743-1744, 1746-1749
John Lane	1744-1748, 1761-1764, 1766-1767
Benjamin Kidder	1744-1746, 1749-1750
Benjamin Hutchenson	1746-1747, 1755-1756, 1764-1765
John Page	1751-1752, 1758-1759
Benjamin Bacon	1752-1753, 1761-1766, 1768-1771
Jonathan Woolley	1752-1753
John Bacon	1754-1755, 1757-1760
Timothy Hartwell	1756-1757
Josiah Davis	1757-1758, 1767-1768, 1770-1771
Walter Pollard	1759-1760
John Reed	1759-1766, 1768-1776
John Moore	1759-1761, 1765-1766, 1771-1777
Joseph Hartwell	1760-1761, 1779-1780
Christopher Page	1763-1766, 1776-1777, 1781-1783, 1791-1792
Timothy Lane	1765-1766
John Webber	1766-1769, 1775-1780, 1783-1794, 1806-1808
Joseph Hartwell	1766-1769, 1771-1780
Hugh Maxwell	1767-1768
Moses Abbott	1767-1768, 1773-1774, 1777-1778
Eleazar Davis	1769-1770
Thomas Lane	1769-1770
Edward Stearns	1771-1772, 1777-1779
Jonathan Wilson	1772-1774
Samuel Lane	1774-1776, 1781-1789, 1791-1792
Ebenezer Page	1775-1776
Joseph Converse	1777-1778, 1780-1781, 1783-1785
William Page	1778-1779, 1780-1782, 1783-1785, 1789-1790
Timothy Jones	1778-1779, 1781-1783, 1786-1789, 1792-1793
William Meriam	1779-1783, 1789-1805
Jeremiah Fitch, Jr.	1779-1780
James Wright	1780-1781, 1791-1792
David Reed	1782-1783, 1790-1791, 1805-1810
Thadeus Fitch	1783-1784
David Page	1784-1785
John Meriam	1785-1786, 1808-1823
Thadeus Davis	1792-1793
Moses Fitch	1792-1793
Thompson Bacon	1793-1802, 1805-1806, 1811-1812
Solomon Lane	1794-1799, 1801-1802
William Webber	1799-1830
Oliver Reed, Jr.	1801-1804
John Reed, Jr.	1810-1813

Elijah Putnam	1811-1812
Timothy Page	1813-1816, 1832-1834
Joseph Brown	1816-1820, 1831-1832
Elijah Shelton	1820-1823
Reuben Bacon	1823-1834
Mather Hayward	1823-1826
Amos Hartwell	1826-1837, 1843-1848
Joel Fitch	1830-1831
Albert Bacon	1834-1836, 1843-1845
John P. Reed	1834-1837, 1839-1842, 1845-1848, 1857
Liob Lee	1836-1839
Elbridge Bacon	1837-1838
Oliver R. Abbott	1838-1840
David Rice	1838-1840
Jonathan Bacon	1839-1840, 1845-1848
Nathaniel Cutler	1840-1842
Michael Crosby	1840-1843
Amos B. Cutler	1842-1845, 1850-1852
Thomas Stiles	1848-1857
Isaac P. Bacon	1848-1850, 1874-1877, 1880-1881
Benjamin J. Davis	1849-1850
P.W. Chamberlin	1850-1856
Charles Spalding	1852-1857
William M. Ashby	1856-1866
William A. Stearns	1857-1866
Samuel Gage, Jr.	1858-1859
Oliver J. Lane	1859-1866, 1868-1874, 1877-1879, 1881-1896
Marcus B. Webber	1866-1874, 1877-1880
Fairfield R. Davis	1866-1868
John Boynton	1866-1874, 1881-1883
Henry Bacon	1874-1875
Thomas B. Hosmer	1874-1875
A.H. March	1875-1876
E.P. Davis	1875-1877
Charles H. Clark	1877-1880
Samuel W. Huckins	1879-1880
Calvin Rice	1880-1881
William R. Hayden	1880-1881
Willard Ladd	1881-1883
Nathan B. Smith	1883-1891
Albert Sampson	1883-1884
Edward H. Blake	1884-1891, 1899-1903
Dudley Hartford	1891-1893
Irving L. Hodgdon	1891-1899, 1903-1916
William G. Hartwell	1893-1899

Arthur H. Parker	1896-1897, 1899-1904
Willis G. Lane	1897-1899
Frederic Parker	1899-1904
George M. Dimond	1904-1910
Howard D. Skelton	1905-1911
Immanuel Pfeiffer, Jr.	1910-1922
Sherman G. Rich	1911-1913
David C. Cutler	1913-1920
John R. Comley	1916-1918
Duane F. Carpenter	1918-1924
George H. Lovejoy	1920-1923
Merton L. Winchenbaugh	1922-1928
John Kirkegaard	1923-1929
Claude A. Palmer	1924-1927
Francis J. Kelley	1927-1933
George H. Sweetnam	1928-1931
Arthur H. Hayden	1929-1932, 1955-1963
Stillman G. Whittaker	1931-1934
Herbert L. Clark	1932-1941
Daniel E. Perkins	1933-1942
Benjamin B. Converse	1934
Stephen R. Tackney	1935-1940
Frank W. Cloutier	1940-1942, 1958-1961
Louis Pfeiffer	1941-1947
Henry C. Isnor	1942-1945
James H. Joyce	1942-1946
Earl S. Atwood	1945-1948, 1949-1955
Charles S. Hume	1946-1949, 1950-1959
Clayton O. Morrill	1947-1950
Albert W. Clifford	1948-1951
Irvin M. Puffer	1951-1953
Richard K. Brown	1953-1957
John Earl Dick	1955-1962
William J. Walsh	1955-1958
Louis H. Smith	1957-1963
Warren K. Lewellen	1959-1974
Alan D. Maier	1961-1967
Chandler H. Stevens, Jr.	1962-1965
Nicholas Genetti	1963-1966
John F. Perkins, Jr.	1963-1969
David Pickman	1965-1968
Robert D. Benoit	1966-1969
Robert A. Barton	1967-1973
Charles M. Markell	1968-1974
Lawrence Braverman	1969-1975, 1976-1978

Benjamin R. Sears	1969-1972
Richard A. Weidman	1972-1975
Francis A. Gicca	1973-1985
Louise C. Maglione	1974-1983
Donald L. Corey	1974-1977
Robert C. Frenier	1975-1976
Grace T. Erdman	1975-1980
C. Eric Ellingson	1977-1980
Robert C. Folweiler	1978-1984
Judith A. Barber	1980-1989
Joseph F. Walsh	1980-1981
Carol E. Goldman	1981-1990
Joseph W. Sweeney	1983-1989
Richard B. Brown	1984-1985
Betsey J. Anderson	1985-1996
John McCulloch	1985-1994
Angelo A. Colao	1989-1992, 2004-2010
Joseph R. Piantedosi	1989-2004
William L. King	1990-1996
Val V. Asbedian	1992-2001
Lora Goldenberg	1994-2000
Gordon Feltman	1996-2008
Mark Siegenthaler	1996-2017
Sheldon Moll	2000-2009
Catherine B. Cordes	2001-2013
Michael Rosenberg	2008-2020
Walter J. St. Onge, III	2009-2012
William S. Moonan	2010-2022
Margot Fleischman	2012-Present
Caroline Fedele	2013-2019
Edward M. Pierce	2017-Present
Emily J. Mitchell	2019-Present
Bopha Malone	2020-Present
Shawn Hanegan	2022-Present

***List of Bedford Town Administrators/Managers
(Changed to “Manager” in 2006)***

NAME	Years of Service
Richard Brown	1974-1980
Stephen Daly	1980-1984
Richard White	1984-1987
Richard Reed	1988-2018
Sarah Stanton	2018-Present