

## **TOWN OF CHATHAM**

### **Statement of Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships of the Board of Selectmen**

- 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 Manager.
  - b. Realize that in creating and enforcing Town policy, the Board of Selectmen may direct the Town Manager 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 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 State.
  
- 2. A member of the Board of Selectmen, in his or her relations with the Town Manager, should:**
  - a. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies that will direct and support the administration of or the benefit of the staff and residents of the community.
  - b. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refer complaints to appropriate members of the administration.
  - c. Give the Town Manager full responsibility for discharging his or her duties.
  - d. Refrain from instructing or requesting assistance from Town department heads; instead all such activities should be handled through proper administrative channels through the full Board and the Town Manager.
  
- 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 decisions.
  - 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 only to the Town Manager, Town Counsel, Assistant Town Manager, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen, or department heads. The office of the Town Manager should be copied on all requests or correspondence.
  - c. Never publicly criticize an individual employee. Concerns about staff performance should only be made to the Town Manager through private conversation.
  - d. Limit requests for staff support, and ensure that all requests go through the Town Manager's office.
  - e. Ensure that any materials or information provided to a Selectman from a staff member be made available to all Selectmen.