



| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Policy Title | Hartford Committee, Commission & Board Appointment Policy |
| Keywords | Committees, Commissions, Boards, Vacancies, Openings, Appointment, Applications |

Purpose of Policy

The Hartford Selectboard is responsible for making appointments to Town Committees, Commissions, and Boards. This policy supports the Selectboard in making these appointments with the following objectives:

- To appoint qualified members who will do the best possible job to serve and act on behalf of the best interests of the Town.
- To appoint members with a mix of identities, backgrounds and experiences in an effort to represent the diversity of the community.
- To appoint members who reside in differing villages within the Town whenever possible.
- To appoint members who are willing to make a commitment to understand the laws, regulations and procedures necessary to fulfill the membership role.
- To appoint members who will respect and follow the Town of Hartford’s Conflict of Interest Policy.

Policy Scope

This policy pertains to all Committees, Commissions and Boards in the Town of Hartford.

Note: In the case of a statutory public body authorized by the Vermont Legislature (such as the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment), the relevant Vermont Statutes should be consulted and followed. When the statutes do not describe the process or requirements to follow, this policy shall be applied.

Definitions

Committees, Commissions and Boards shall be referred to as “committees.”

Those serving on any of the aforementioned bodies shall be referred to as “members.”

Policy Statement

Residency Requirements: Each committee's charge dictates the specific residency requirements of its members. Generally, the Selectboard should make every effort to recruit and appoint Hartford residents for committee positions. However, the Selectboard acknowledges that Hartford is part of an interconnected region with other neighboring municipalities. Residents of those municipalities who are employed in, own a business in, or receive services from Hartford may wish to contribute their time and expertise to a Hartford committee. The candidacy of non-Hartford residents will be considered at the discretion of the Selectboard and in alignment with a committee's charge.

Applications for Committee Membership:

- When there is a current or anticipated committee vacancy, candidates shall submit an application to the Town Manager's office by email or hard copy.
- Unless the Selectboard pursues an extension of the application period, applications will be reviewed by the Selectboard after a thirty (30) day application period commencing upon the date of posting.
- Applicants shall be notified by the Town Manager's Office acknowledging receipt of their application and will be invited to attend a scheduled Selectboard meeting for a brief interview. Meeting attendance is mandatory for first-time appointments and optional for re-appointments.
- Should any committee require additional steps in the application process, such steps will be detailed in the committee's charge and candidates will be notified by the Committee Chairperson, Administrative Assistant, and/or Selectboard Liaison.

Checking References: Prior to an application being reviewed by the Selectboard, a designated Selectboard member shall contact the references listed on the application. Information gathered from the applicants' references shall be considered as the Selectboard decides whether or not to appoint the applicant.

Expiring Terms for Existing Members:

- By the 5th of each month, committee Chairs shall share any vacancies or anticipated vacancies by emailing them to the Town of Hartford's Administrative Assistant and corresponding Selectboard liaison(s).
- Members whose terms are expiring shall inform the Town of Hartford's Administrative Assistant and Selectboard in writing of their intention to seek or not seek reappointment along with an application for reappointment if applicable. Members should inform the Selectboard as soon as possible and no later than thirty (30) days before their term's end date.
- Following their submission, applications for reappointment will be reviewed by the Selectboard at a subsequent meeting.

Term Limits: There is no legal requirement that establishes the number of terms that can be served. The Selectboard recognizes that it can be difficult to get qualified individuals and those with important lived experience to serve volunteer positions; therefore, an arbitrary term limit might not be in the best interest of the Town. The Town also recognizes the benefits of term limits to promote accessible and inclusionary government. The Selectboard strives to attract and involve as many interested, diverse, qualified, and knowledgeable members as it can to participate in Town government. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Selectboard to evaluate the contribution of each member and determine whether that member should continue serving.

Resignations: Members may resign at any time if they feel they cannot perform their duties. Members must notify the Selectboard of their decision to resign in writing. Unless otherwise noted by the member, their resignation will be effective immediately upon the Selectboard's receipt of their resignation notice.

Removals: While the Town should make every effort to retain members, there may be occasions on which it is in the Town's best interest to remove a member from a committee. Members may be removed from their positions by a majority-vote decision of the Selectboard for the following reasons:

- Violations of the Town of Hartford's Conflict of Interest Policy
- Consistent failure to perform the duties of the position
- Consistent absenteeism that prohibits productive committee operations (such as an inability to meet quorum)
- Misrepresentation and other abuse of the authority of the position
- Promotion of hostility amongst the other members of the committee and/or the general public
- Any other reason deemed fair and valid by a majority-vote of the Selectboard that supports the Town's best interests. Note: Selectboard members cannot vote to remove a member based on personal bias or dislike and in such instances should recuse themselves.

A three-letter documentation process shall be used in cases of removal:

1. An initial letter shall be sent to the member by the Chairperson of the member’s committee or Selectboard outlining concerns with the member and inviting the member’s response and plan to rectify said concerns.
2. If the situation is not resolved by this action within thirty (30) days of the first letter’s send date, a second letter shall be sent by the Selectboard requiring that the member meet with the Selectboard. Though not required, a probationary period may be instituted at the Selectboard’s discretion.
3. If the situation remains unresolved after the meeting, a third letter shall be sent by the Selectboard removing the member from the committee. The member’s removal will be effective immediately upon the letter’s send date.

| | | |
|---|---|------------|
| Responsible Owner: | Selectboard | |
| Approved By: | Selectboard: Michael Hoyt Dan Fraser Kim Souza Lannie Collins Mary Erdei Rocket Ally Tufenkjian | |
| Date Policy in Effect: | 05/30/23 | Version #1 |
| Amendment Dates: | N/A | N/A |
| Related Policies & Procedures: | Hartford Committee, Commission & Board Vacancy Notification Policy Hartford Selectboard Rules of Procedure Hartford Conflict of Interest Policy | |
| Attachments/Links | Hartford Selectboard Rules of Procedure Town of Hartford Conflict of Interest Policy Town of Hartford Advisory Board/Commission Application For reference: Richmond, VT’s Appointment Policy | |