



Town of Hanover, Massachusetts Committee, Commission, Board, and Trust Handbook

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Prepared by Sean Dever, Student Intern and Joe Colangelo, Town Manager

INTRODUCTION

One of the benefits of living in a tight-knit community like Hanover is the ample opportunity to engage directly with the local democratic process. While there are many ways one can volunteer time and energy towards the betterment of Hanover, the vast majority of decisions that impact the health, safety, and general well-being of this community are accomplished via public bodies otherwise referred to as committees, commissions, boards, and trusts (CCBTs).

HANOVER-TOWN GOVERNMENT FRAMEWORK

A general understanding of how Hanover local government works is important for CCBT members. The Town of Hanover is governed by two foundational documents 1. [The Town Manager Act](#) 2. [The Town of Hanover General Bylaws](#). These two enabling documents, when put together, provide the basis for how Hanover local government is organized, how it operates, and general guidance for how decisions are made.

Hanover has an Open Town Meeting – Select Board – Town Manager form of government:

- [Town Meeting](#). Town Meeting voters are the legislative branch of Hanover government. Hanover has an Open Town Meeting form which means that any (and all) registered voters in Hanover can participate in Town Meeting. The Annual Town Meeting takes place the first Monday of May each year; Special Town Meetings can take place anytime with proper notice. Town Meeting voters make many important decisions such as approval of the annual operating budget(s), capital budget requests (such as which vehicles the town will purchase or whether to build new buildings such as a fire station or a school), new or amended Bylaws, and land use regulations, to name a few.
 - [Town Moderator](#). The Town Moderator presides over all Annual and Special Town Meetings.
 - [Advisory Committee](#). This nine-member committee, appointed by the Town Moderator, reviews and vets all articles up for vote at all Annual and Special Town meetings and makes recommendations to the full legislative body.
- [Select Board](#). Comprised of five elected members-at-large who serve for staggered 3-year terms, Hanover's Select Board is the chief executive and policy-making body of the Town. The Select Board meets [regularly](#) throughout the year, typically on the first and third Monday evenings of the month.
- [Town Manager](#). The Town Manager is the chief executive of the administrative operations of the Town and is responsible for effectively managing all affairs of the Town and carrying out policy objectives of the Select Board and decisions made by Town Meeting voters.

COMMITTEES, COMISSIONS, BOARDS, AND TRUSTS (CCBTs)

CCBTs are formed in different manners and operate under different sets of circumstances. Some are made up of elected members, some are made up of appointed members, some are prescribed in State law, some are defined in the General Bylaws, some are created by the Select Board, while others are created at Town Meeting voters. Hanover's various CCBTs fill many different roles and responsibilities. It is incumbent upon all volunteers to learn how the CCBTs they seek to join operate.

LISTING OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Public Body	Appointment / Election
Advisory Committee	Appointed by Town Moderator
Affordable Housing Trust Board of Trustees	Appointed by Select Board
Board of Assessors	Elected
Board of Health	Elected
Board of Library Trustees	Elected
Board of Registrars	Appointed by Select Board
Select Board	Elected
Bylaw Review Committee	Appointed by Town Moderator
Community Preservation Committee	Appointed by Town Moderator (subject to approval of Select Board)
Conservation Commission	Appointed by Town Manager (subject to approval of Select Board)
Council on Aging Advisory Board	Appointed by Select Board
Cultural Council	Appointed by Select Board
Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority	Appointed by Select Board
Historical Commission	Appointed by Select Board
Indian Head River Restoration Steering Committee	Select Board appoints a member to this regional commission.
Information Technology Study Committee	Two members appointed by Select Board, two members appointed by School Committee, one member appointed by Town Moderator.
Master Plan Implementation Committee	Appointed by Select Board

MBTA Advisory Board	Select Board appoints a member to this state-wide Board.
North River Commission	Select Board appoints a member to this regional commission.
Old Colony Elder Services	Appointed by Select Board
Old Colony Planning Council	Select Board appoints a member to this regional commission.
Old Colony Planning Council Area Agency on Aging	Appointed by Select Board
Open Space Committee	Appointed by Town Moderator (subject to approval of Select Board)
Parks and Recreation Committee	Appointed by Town Moderator (subject to approval of Select Board)
Planning Board	Elected
Route 139 Action Committee	Appointed by Select Board
School Committee	Elected
Zoning Board of Appeals	Appointed by Select Board

GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in serving on one of Hanover's many CCBTs, first take the time to review the important information above. Then, follow the step(s) outlined below to join.

- **Appointed CCBTs Membership.** Fill out and submit a [Talent Bank Application](#). Completed applications will be forwarded to the appointing authority for further consideration. Depending on which CCBTs you seek appointment to you may be asked to interview before the Select Board during a public meeting and a vote to consider your membership will be done in open meeting.
- **Elected CCBTs Membership.** See [Hanover's Town Clerk](#) to receive nomination papers, receipt of nomination papers, statement of organization, memorandum on campaign finance, memorandum on campaign signs, invitation to Candidate Night, and a calendar of the election cycle. The Town Clerk will guide you through the process of declaring your candidacy - which requires 50 signatures of residents as well as the completion of previously mentioned forms.

FIRST STEPS AFTER JOINING A CCBT

- **Oath of Office.** All appointed and elected officials must get sworn in by the Town Clerk (or their designee). Until you are sworn in you are not able to officially participate/vote on the CCBT. You will be provided with several

documents by the Town Clerk (or their designee). This information is stored online for your reference:

- [Conflict of Interest Training and Ethics](#)
- [Open Meeting Law](#)

- **Conflict of Interest Training.** You must complete the online Conflict of Interest Training within thirty days of being sworn in.
- **Communications.** Make sure you are connected with the Chair of the CCBT and the appropriate Town staff member so they can assist you in becoming acclimated to the CCBT.

CCBT OPERATIONS

- **Leadership.** Each CCBT is responsible for appointing its own leadership and setting a meeting schedule.
- **Agendas.** It is the responsibility of the CCBT Chair, typically with assistance from a Town staff member, to have agendas posted to the Town website at-least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Your CCBT is required to include the date, time, and location of meeting on the agenda. Meeting information should be available on the individual CCBT portion of the website as well as the meetings & events calendar. Please contact Janet Tierney and Steve Ryerson to publish this information.
- **Meetings.** All CCBT meetings are considered public meetings and therefore must adhere to Massachusetts [Open Meeting Law](#). Additionally, here in Hanover all CCBT meetings, except for in rare, specified occasions, are held in a hybrid format (meaning that they take place both at a physical location and on Zoom.)
- **Quorums.** A quorum of any CCBT is a simple majority of all its members. Unless the CCBT is engaged in a posted, public meeting a quorum of its members cannot discuss business related to the CCBT in person or via email.
 - There are four exceptions to communicating with a quorum outside of a meeting: 1) distributing an agenda, 2) scheduling a meeting, 3) distributing minutes for review, and 4) distributing necessary documents.
 - Unless a different quantum of vote is established by statute, motions will be decided by a majority of the votes cast by the members present at any given CCBT meeting.
- **Minutes and Video.** Minutes of each meeting are required. Meeting minutes of the previous meeting will be approved at a subsequent meeting and made public on the CCBT's page on the Town website. Further, Hanover Bylaws require that all meetings be video and/or audio recorded and be made available on the Town website.

- **Public Records.** All documents, correspondences (including emails, texts, notes, etc.) generated for the purpose of CCBT business are likely to be considered public records and would need to be turned over upon request.
- **Public Comment Policy.** Your CCBT may provide the opportunity for public comment at each meeting. If you have questions about this, please connect with the Town Manager.
- **Staff Assistance.** Every CCBT has an assigned Town staff member. Once a volunteer is appointed to a CCBT, the Town Manager’s Office will assist in connecting new CCBT members with the applicable staff member. Staff has the professional expertise to ensure that CCBTs are provided with relevant and necessary information essential to make sound decisions. Staff members also pride themselves on providing volunteer CCBT members with a rewarding community service experience.

CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

	Name	Email	Extension 781-826-5000
Town Manager	Joseph Colangelo	joseph.colangelo@hanover-ma.gov	1084
Administrative Assistant for Town Manager and Select Board	Julie Burke	julie.burke@hanover-ma.gov	1033
Director of Public Affairs, Licensing, and Insurances	Janet Tierney	janet.tierney@hanover-ma.gov	1032
Communications Specialist	Stephen Ryerson	stephen.ryerson@hanover-ma.gov	1050
Town Clerk	Cathy Harder-Bernier	catherine.harder-bernier@hanover-ma.gov	1079

Massachusetts Municipal Association provides hundreds of helpful [resources](#), that you should feel free to use to the advantage of your CCBT.