

PREFACE

The policies included in this manual constitute the policies, rules and regulations duly adopted by the Board of Selectmen in accordance with Section 4.11 of the Bylaws of the Town of Reading. The forms, procedures, guidelines, rules and regulations included in the Appendix of this document are not adopted by the Board of Selectmen but are adopted by the Town Manager in order to implement these policies. The dates of adoption and revision of each of the policies contained in this document are for historical purposes and are not adopted as part of these policies.

ARTICLE 1 - GENERAL OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section 1.1 - Board of Selectmen Operating Procedures

1.1.1 - Organization

The Board of Selectmen will reorganize (elect officers) in the month of June for the following fiscal year. The purpose of this policy is to have continuity of Board leadership through Annual Town Meeting.

1.1.2 - Chairmanship

Although the Board of Selectmen retains the right to reorganize at their discretion, this policy establishes the guidelines of:

1. Annual rotation of the chairmanship.
2. Not having a Selectman serve as chair in the final year of a term.

1.1.3 - Responsibilities

A. Board of Selectmen Chairman:

1. Responsible for calling regular, emergency and Executive Session meetings of the Board of Selectmen, as needed.
2. Presides over Board of Selectmen meetings, approves the Agenda and recognizes all speakers including other Board members.
3. Nominates Board members to represent the Board of Selectmen at appropriate functions, events and meetings, and for annual liaison assignments. The final decision on liaison assignments is by a majority of the Board members.
4. Nominates Board members to Board Subcommittees. Final appointment is by a majority of the Board members.

B. Board of Selectmen Secretary:

1. Final review and signature of Board Minutes.
2. Certifies, as required by law, votes of the Board of Selectmen.
3. Signs documents upon direction of a majority of the Board members, including legal settlements on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Alternatively, any other Board member or the Town Manager may be authorized to perform this function.

C. Board of Selectmen Liaisons:

1. The purpose of establishing Board of Selectmen liaisons to the various Departments is to maintain good communication and effective working relationships between other Boards, Committees and Commissions and the Board of Selectmen.
2. Liaison assignments shall be established by the Board of Selectmen on a yearly basis.
3. It is the Board of Selectmen's intention that every Board, Committee or Commission will have an assigned Board of Selectmen liaison each year.
4. Board of Selectmen roles as liaisons:
 - (a) To attend as many meetings of the Board, Committee and Commission as possible;
 - (b) To assist the Board, Committee or Commission where there is a problem with attendance of any member;
 - (c) To act as a resource person for the liaison Board, Committee or Commission regarding Selectmen's issues;
 - (d) To particularly understand and communicate to the full Board of Selectmen issues which affect budgets and other areas of concern of the Board, Committee or Commission;
 - (e) To adhere to Policy 1.1.4 - 4 when dealing with staff support for the liaison Board, Committee or Commission.

D. Board of Selectmen as a whole, by majority vote:

1. Responsible for approving overall goals, objectives and policy setting for the Town to be discharged by the Town Manager within the constraints of the Reading Home Rule Charter, and other applicable local Bylaws and Federal and State statutes and regulations.
2. Selects the Town Manager and establishes the rate and manner of compensation. The Town Manager serves as the equivalent of the Chief Operating Officer for the Board of Selectmen with the ultimate authority and responsibility for the operation and the management of the Town, under the direction and control of the Board of Selectmen. Except for actions contrary to decisions or written policies made by the Board of Selectmen as a whole, the Town Manager is authorized to take whatever actions are required to operate and manage the Town. The Town Manager is the designated representative for the Board of Selectmen regarding collective bargaining negotiations. The Town Manager may utilize other Town personnel as needed to carry out these responsibilities.
3. Serves as an appeal body for residents on matters arising from the Board of Selectmen's operations.
4. Annually chooses Selectmen to serve as Board Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.
5. Approves:
 - a. The Annual Report of the Board of Selectmen.
 - b. All correspondence on Board of Selectmen letterhead that is written by the Board to other elected or appointed Boards or Committees

- c. All collective bargaining agreements. Also establishes the goals and objectives for the Town Manager to meet in bargaining new or amended collective bargaining agreements.
- d. All presentations made by the Board of Selectmen to other elected Boards or Committees.
- e. Initiation of litigation or its settlement.
- f. The appointment of members to Boards, Committees or Commissions and to Board subcommittees.

E. Board of Selectmen Subcommittees:

Subcommittees serve as a mechanism for the Board to review and consider specific issues. Subcommittees may recommend, but not approve, a course of action to the Board.

Adopted March 9, 2004

1.1.4 – General Operating Policies

It is the policy of the Board of Selectmen:

1. To operate in accordance with the spirit, as well as the letter of all laws affecting its business and its employees.
2. All Board members, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions appointed by the Board of Selectmen, and Town staff and employees are required to act with the highest level of integrity, business ethics and objectivity in any transaction where a Selectman or employee represents the Board of Selectmen. No Selectman or employee is allowed to misuse the authority or influence of their position.
3. To operate in a businesslike and efficient manner in all aspects of operating and managing the Board of Selectmen.
4. To be supportive of a good working relationship between management and employees including Unions.
5. To hold regular open and public meetings to allow residents to provide direct input on any open session matter before the Board and to offer the opportunity at all regular sessions of the Board of Selectmen for residents to comment upon any issue that is on the Agenda for that meeting.
6. To affirmatively and courteously respond to all requests for public information. All requests will be arranged through the Town Manager.
7. To advocate for the use of technology, training, personnel and flexible work and administrative processes to maintain an efficient municipal government serving the best interests of residents;
8. To operate in the best interests of the Town in all matters.

Adopted March 9, 2004

1.1.5 Limit of Hours for Regular Meetings

The regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Selectmen shall be limited by having discussion limited to agenda items taken up or tabled prior to 11:00 p.m. All remaining items will be deferred to a subsequent meeting. In order to facilitate the above policy efficiently, the Chairman will:

1. Limit the time of speakers from the floor especially during public hearings.
2. Call for votes on major issues or policy changes prior to 11:00 p.m., or defer final votes to subsequent meetings.
3. Request staff to prepare motions for Board action in advance.

1.1. 6 - Declassifying Confidential Executive Session Minutes

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 39, Section 23, the Town Manager, acting as clerk to the Board of Selectmen, will review approved confidential minutes of the Board of Selectmen's Executive Sessions on a regular basis. It is the intent of the Board of Selectmen to withhold minutes only for as long as the publication of the record would defeat the original purpose of a lawfully convened Executive Session.

At least once a month, the Town Manager will review all approved minutes still in confidential status, and will release for publication those segments that need not be confidential any longer.

This action will be part of a report on the "Routine Matters" of the Board of Selectmen's meeting agenda.

Adopted 9-24-91, Revised 12-13-94

1.1. 7 - Identification of a Person Addressing the Board of Selectmen

Each person appearing before the Board of Selectmen who wishes to speak will, upon recognition by the Chairman of the Board, identify him/herself by name and address of residence. Failure to identify him/herself will result in the Chair withdrawing permission for that individual to speak to the Board of Selectmen.

Adopted 1-16-96

1.1. 8 - Continuity of Business

It shall be the policy of the Board of Selectmen (subject to the provisions of Section 1.1.3 of these policies) to conduct the business on its agenda at the meeting for which it is listed, unless a particular member of the Board is essential to the topic of discussion by virtue of special background or expertise, and is not able to be present at the meeting for which that item is listed.

Adopted 9-24-91, Revised 12-13-94, Revised 1-16-96, Revised 1-7-97

1.1. 9 - Board of Selectmen Communication

It is important to the public and to the Board of Selectmen itself to make it clear when an individual member is speaking for the Board as a whole, or when he/she is speaking for him/herself as an individual. In order to ensure this clarity of communication, the following shall be the policy of the Board of Selectmen:

1. Members of the Board of Selectmen shall be given stationery in printed or electronic format for their use. This stationery shall name only that member of the Board on the masthead. Board members may use this stationery for correspondence relative to Town business or matters. Correspondence of this type shall be copied to all of the other members of the Board of Selectmen and to the Town Manager. Any such correspondence shall state that the views expressed are those of that member of the Board of Selectmen only.
2. The Board of Selectmen stationery, naming all five members of the Board on the masthead, will be used only for correspondence from the full Board of Selectmen.

- This will be used to communicate positions of the full Board of Selectmen based on consensus of the full Board or based upon actually voted positions of the Board.
3. The Board of Selectmen may take votes on recommendations on Warrant Articles appearing before Town Meeting, and the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen or his/her designee will be responsible for communicating those recommendations to Town Meeting based on votes of the Board.
 4. If a Board member rises to speak at Town Meeting, he/she shall identify whether he/she is speaking for the full Board or as an individual.

In today's society, much of the correspondence to the Board of Selectmen is electronic, and often is copied to all members of the Board. The Board of Selectmen acknowledges that correspondence in electronic form that is made and/or received by it and its individual members are "public records". Additionally, the Board of Selectmen acknowledges that the manner in which it deals with electronic correspondence may raise concerns relative to the Open Meeting law. The Board also feels it is important to ensure that a proper response is given to an email request.

Electronic correspondence will be handled in the following manner:

- Correspondence about a particular service that needs attention from town staff. *The Town Manager will respond to this electronic correspondence, with an electronic copy to all members of the Board of Selectmen, and this correspondence will be listed on the next Board of Selectmen agenda.*
- Correspondence addressed to the Board of Selectmen expressing an opinion or comment on a matter before the Board of Selectmen. *The Town Manager will respond to acknowledge this electronic correspondence, with an electronic copy to all members of the Board of Selectmen, and this correspondence will be listed on the next Board of Selectmen agenda.*
- Correspondence addressed to the Board of Selectmen asking the Board for action on a particular matter. *The Secretary to the Board of Selectmen (or designee) will draft a form letter, acknowledging the receipt of the correspondence, outlining that the Open Meeting Law prohibits the Board of Selectmen as a whole from commenting on the matter outside of a public meeting, and that the Board will consider at a future meeting whether to schedule agenda time on that matter.*
- Acknowledging that it is possible that private one on one electronic communications may reach a quorum of members without the knowledge of all participants, members of the Board of Selectmen shall only comment in electronic form on any correspondence received by referring the matter to the Town Manager.
- Members of the Board of Selectmen may communicate electronically on housekeeping matters such as the scheduling, cancellation and time of meetings and requests to put matters on its agenda.
- Documents may be distributed via email from the Board of Selectmen to all members of the town's boards, commissions and committees to permit advance review of materials to be discussed at upcoming meetings.
- Hard copies of all electronic communications will be created and immediately placed in a central file where it can be provided as a public record upon request.

Revised March 9, 2004

Revised June 5, 2007

1.1.10 - Appointment of Volunteers to Town of Reading Boards, Committees and Commissions

The Board of Selectmen hereby implements the following process in order to address the following two issues related to the Board of Selectmen consideration of and appointment to the various Boards, Committees, and Commissions (BCC) of the Town of Reading for which the Board of Selectmen has responsibility to appoint:

1. The amount of time taken by the Board of Selectmen and volunteers for this process has been extraordinary and not necessarily productive
2. The depth of interviews given time constraints does not allow the Board of Selectmen to do a thorough job of interviewing.

The process will be as follows:

1. Incumbents will be asked whether or not they wish to be considered for reappointment
2. Applications for Potential new Board, Committee and Commission (BCC) members will be solicited and received.
3. The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a two member Volunteer Appointment Sub-Committee (VASC) at the time that Board of Selectmen liaison assignments are established. No member will serve on the VASC for two consecutive terms.
4. The VASC shall schedule meetings to interview all potential BCC members, including any incumbents that wish an interview, and any incumbents that the Board of Selectmen or the VASC wishes to interview. This process will be used for the “annual” appointment process as well as any appointments that come up during the year. The meetings of the VASC will be posted and open to the public.
5. The VASC will inform all candidates for appointment or reappointment of the slate of candidates for each BCC that will be recommended to the full Board of Selectmen.
6. The VASC will transmit a slate of candidates for each BCC to the entire Board of Selectmen along with a list of all candidates who had applied for each BCC. A copy of the application form and/or resume for any new candidate will also be provided to the entire Board of Selectmen.
7. For the annual appointment process the VASC will present the recommended slate of candidates to the Board of Selectmen in early June as a “consent” item on the agenda. Any member of the Board of Selectmen may ask for any BCC recommendation to be removed from the consent item for consideration by the full Board of Selectmen. Any candidate for a position to a BCC may also ask the Board of Selectmen to consider the BCC for which they applied to be removed from the consent item for consideration by the full Board of Selectmen. The consent item with any remaining BCC appointments will then be considered and voted in its entirety.
8. Any BCC appointments pulled from the consent item will then be scheduled for interview during a succeeding Board of Selectmen meeting, and the appointment process to that BCC will be by the full Board of Selectmen.

Adopted 6/22/10

Section 1.2 – Acceptance of Gifts to Departments

In numerous instances, the various departments or agencies of the Town receive offers of gifts or donations for various purposes. It is the policy of the Board of Selectmen to encourage such donations and gifts, with the clear understanding that there is no offer on the part of the Town or its Departments or Agencies to reciprocate in any manner with regard to provisions of services, enforcement of laws or regulations, or any other consideration by the Town.

The Town Manager is hereby authorized to accept any such gifts or donations on the part of the Town, to see to their disposition in accordance with donors wishes and applicable law, and to notify the Board of Selectmen at their next meeting of any such gifts or donations.

Adopted 11-4-86, Revised 12-13-94

Section 1.3 – Solicitation/Acceptance of Donations

The Board of Selectmen values and appreciates the efforts of individuals, community groups, and businesses in the community to raise private funds for the betterment of the Town. These donations often take the form of donations of trees and benches, construction of capital projects, and donation of funding for programs.

It is important for the Town and donors to have an understanding of the nature, location, design, and details of any such equipment, capital project or program on Town property or at Town facilities or utilizing Town resources prior to entering into fundraising efforts, so that the Town can meet its share of any commitments related to capital projects or programs, so that donations of trees and benches and other equipment are of a design and quality and in locations consistent with Town needs, and so that any such projects or programs are compatible with the plans and programs of the Town. Therefore, the Town must be consulted prior to any fundraising efforts. In accepting gifts and donations the Board of Selectmen should consider how the maintenance of the and operation of the equipment, capital project or program will be funded. Agreements as to gifts and donations, including maintenance, should be documented in writing.

In order to facilitate this process, the Town is working to develop master plans for its various facilities and sites.

The following procedures shall be used under the circumstances outlined:

Town sites with Master Plans:

- The donor shall consult with Town staff through the Town Manager, and if the proposed donation is consistent with the master plan, approval may be granted by the Town Manager to proceed with fund raising.
- If a commitment of Town funds is required to match or supplement fund raising efforts, the fundraising efforts may be approved if the proposed project is included in the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), with an understanding that Town funds will not be available until those capital funds are available through the budget.
- The Town Manager shall notify the Board of Selectmen of any such approved projects.

Town Sites without Master Plans:

- The donor shall consult with the agency having jurisdiction over the property in question - Board of Selectmen as Park Commissioners; Conservation Commission for Conservation lands; Town Forest Committee; etc. for projects in those locations.
- The agency having jurisdiction may grant approval to proceed with the project.
- If a commitment of Town funds is required to match or supplement fund raising efforts, the fundraising efforts of the donor may be approved only if the proposed project is included in the Town's Capital Improvement Program(CIP) or funds are otherwise available, with an understanding that Town funds will not be available until those capital funds are available through the budget.

Equipment, Plantings, and programs:

- Donors shall consult with Town staff and/or Board, Committee, or Commission as appropriate, having jurisdiction in the area where the equipment or planting is proposed to be located, or the staff of the department or division within which the program is proposed to be run.
- If the equipment, planting, or proposed program is consistent with the standards, design, mission and direction of the agency having jurisdiction, approval may be granted to proceed with fundraising.
- If a commitment of Town funds is required to match or supplement fund raising efforts, the fundraising efforts may be approved if the needed funding is otherwise available from the agency of jurisdiction.

Replacement, maintenance and repair:

In circumstances where donations are made to replace, maintain or repair portions of Town sites and facilities, including replacement of elements of parks, recreation areas, buildings, and similar equipment, (example – replacement of pitchers mounds and home plates, replacement of basketball hoops) the Department Head within whose jurisdiction the site or facility falls may accept such donations where:

- The value of the donation is \$5000 or less
- The item being replaced, maintained, or repaired is consistent with any master plan for the property in question.

Where the above criteria are met but the value of the replacement, maintenance, or repair, is between \$5000 and \$10,000, the Town Manager may approve the donation upon the recommendation of the Department Head.

The Town will develop a standardized mechanism to recognize donors of equipment, capital projects, and programs that is consistent and which will be easy to maintain and update. The method of recognition shall be subject to review and approval of the Board of Selectmen.

Additionally, the Town must be assured that any donations that are solicited or received on behalf of improving Town facilities or operating Town programs are either solicited by properly established non-profit corporations, through for profit corporations, or by individuals making donations directly to the Town. This is important for purposes of ensuring that donor's expectations are completely met with regard to possible tax deductibility of donations, and that a

fundraising group is indeed making all donations properly and directly to the Town for the purpose intended.

In order to achieve other department missions and provide essential services, the Board of Selectmen recognizes the need for staff to develop fiscal and other resources to supplement municipal funding. The policy of the Board of Selectmen regarding fundraising activities by staff is the following:

1. Such activities will not decrease staff effectiveness nor will they constitute an inordinate amount of work time.
2. In accordance with the Conflict of Interest Law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 268A), Town employees will not realize personal financial benefit from fundraising activities.
3. Employees involved in fundraising are expected to use good judgment at all times, and to be sensitive to issues such as the business climate and the ability to give.
4. In accordance with the Town's established policy on Acceptance of Gifts, it is understood that there is no offer on the part of the Town or its employees, Departments, or Agencies to reciprocate in any manner with regard to provision of services, enforcement of laws or regulations or any other considerations by the Town.
5. To ensure consistency in communication about fundraising efforts, Boards, Committees, Commissions and Department Heads shall inform the Town Manager of new fundraising efforts or campaigns prior to such activities.
6. Notice of regular or ongoing fundraising activities should be given to the Town Manager through the regular channels of communication.
7. The Town Manager may establish guidelines which specifically describe different types of fundraising and appropriate actions.

Adopted 3-8-94, Revised 12-13-94; Revised 9-22-09; revised 1-9-10

Section 1.4 – Authorization for the Town Manager to Sign Grant Applications and Acceptances

The Town of Reading from time to time makes application for grants from various State, Federal and private sources.

Since the Town Manager is authorized to execute contracts for the Town, the Board of Selectmen authorizes the Town Manager to sign grant applications and acceptances for such grants as have been authorized by the Board of Selectmen or the appropriate public body.

It shall be the responsibility of every Department to report to the Town Manager that all operating requirements and resources are in place to properly implement the grant, including personnel policies, labor contract provisions, availability of resources, equipment, and all other things that will be needed. This action should take place prior to application for the grant if possible, but in all cases shall take place prior to the acceptance of any grant, unless the Board of Selectmen waives this requirement.

Adopted 11-3-86, Revised 12-13-94, Revised 12/14/04

Section 1.5 – Use of Public Funds for Gifts

1.5.1 – Retirement/Resignations

Public funds shall not be expended by any employee, official, Board, Committee or Commission of the Town, except the Board of Selectmen, for the purchase of food, gifts, flowers or other gifts for personnel of any Town Department who are retiring or resigning from employment. Use of public areas for the purpose of Department testimonials may be approved by the Town Manager.

The Selectmen representing the Town may, as they deem fit, expend public funds for the purpose of presenting personnel or members of Boards, Committees or Commissions, testimony of service in the form of printed, framed documentaries or other forms of appreciation, as the Selectmen shall decide from time to time.

1.5.2 – Sickness/Bereavement

The Selectmen representing the Town may, as they deem fit, accept and use funds donated for the specific purpose of expressing sympathy for injury or death with appropriate acknowledgment.

Adopted 12-22-86, Revised 12-13-94, Revised June 7, 2011

Section 1.6 - Convention/Seminar Expenses - Spouses and Families

The Board of Selectmen recognizes that in many instances it is desirable for staff and/or elected officials to have spouses and/or families attend conventions or seminars with them. The intent of this policy is not to prohibit or discourage such attendance but to provide that, to the extent such attendance creates an expense over and above the expense of the employee or official attending such seminar or conference, that the employee or official will personally bear that additional expense. It is not the intent, where no additional expense is generated, to have the employee bear a pro rated share of the expense for rooms, transportation or other costs.

Adopted 9-28-87, Revised 12-13-94

Section 1.7 - Use of the Town Seal

The Town Seal was adopted by the Town in 1890, and constitutes a symbol to the general public of the Town of Reading. In order to control and regulate the use of the Town Seal so that it is used only to represent official uses by the Town, this policy is adopted as follows:

1. The Seal of the Town shall be used on all letterhead, forms, legal notices and other official papers of the Town of Reading, in a form and format to be approved by the Town Manager.
2. The Town Seal is to be placed on municipally-owned or operated vehicles as may be determined by the Town Manager.

Any other use of the Seal of the Town of Reading will require prior approval by the Board of Selectmen.

Adopted 12-13-94

Section 1.8 – Access to Public Records

The Board of Selectmen is committed to the philosophy that the citizens should have access to public records that are not exempt by law. To this end, the Town Clerk is hereby designated as custodian of public records for the Town of Reading (not including the School or Light Department).

The custodian of public records will carry out the duties and responsibilities of a record custodian as required by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 4, Section 7, and may establish and charge such reasonable fees and establish other regulations in accordance with rules and regulations established by the Supervisor of Public Records, Regulation 950 CMR 32.06, or other applicable laws and regulations.

Adopted 1-12-87, Revised 12-13-94

Section 1.9 – Non Discrimination – Persons with Disabilities

The Town and its employees will not discriminate in any way on account of race, political activity, religion, creed, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, or life-threatening illnesses.

It is the policy of the Town of Reading not to discriminate in hiring, promoting, contracting, appointing or any other means on the basis of disabilities. The Town of Reading will make its best effort to provide reasonable accommodations to employees, appointees, contractors and others who have disabilities.

Adopted 10-18-88, Revised 12-13-94; Revised 3-9-04

Section 1.10 - Americans With Disabilities Act Reasonable Accommodations

It is the policy of the Town of Reading to provide reasonable accommodations to the known physical and mental impairments of qualified job applicants, employees and members of the public in order to ensure equal opportunity for them to participate in and enjoy the benefits of the Town's many programs, activities and services including employment. Requests for accommodations can be made directly to the head of any Town department or his or her designee, to the Director of Personnel or to the ADA Coordinator.

Once a request for accommodation is made to any party other than the ADA Coordinator, a copy of that request must be forwarded to the ADA Coordinator who is also available to provide technical assistance regarding alternatives for accommodating an individual's disability and what accommodation(s) might be considered reasonable under particular circumstances.

Once a request for accommodation has been made, strict confidentiality procedures will be observed in order to uphold the rights of the self-identified person with the disability. Every request for reasonable accommodation will be evaluated independently and implemented to the extent that it does not impose undue financial or administrative burden. Under no circumstances will the individual requesting an accommodation either incur the cost of that accommodation or be penalized in any manner for making the request. In all cases, the individual with the disability will be included in the process of identifying appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

If the process of requesting reasonable accommodations results in an unsatisfactory accommodation, or if the accommodation requested is determined to impose undue financial or

administrative burden and therefore to be unreasonable, a grievance procedure has been established to process, investigate and mediate complaints at the local level. Aggrieved parties also have remedies available as set forth under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The Town Manager shall appoint an ADA Coordinator, and shall periodically publish the name and phone number of the Coordinator.

Adopted 12-13-94

Section 1.11 - ADA Section 504 Grievance Policy for the General Public

Equal Access to Facilities and Activities

Maximum opportunity will be made available to receive citizen comments, complaints and/or resolve grievances or inquiries.

Step 1:

The Town Manager will be available to meet with citizens and employees during business hours.

When a complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification is received either in writing or through a meeting or telephone call, every effort will be made to create a record regarding the name, address and telephone number of the person making the complaint, grievance, program policy interpretation or clarification. If the person desires to remain anonymous, he or she may.

A complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification will be responded to within ten working days (if the person making the complaint is identified) in a format that is sensitive to the needs of the recipient (i.e., verbally, enlarged type face, etc.).

Copies of the complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification and response will be forwarded to the appropriate Town agency (i.e., Recreation Committee, Park Commission, Conservation Commission). If the grievance is not resolved at this level, it will be progressed to the next level.

Step 2:

A written grievance will be submitted to the Town Manager. Assistance in writing the grievance will be available to all individuals. All written grievances will be responded to within ten working days by the Town Manager in a format that is sensitive to the needs of the recipient (i.e., verbally, enlarged type face, etc.). If the grievance is not resolved at this level, it will be progressed to the next level.

Step 3:

If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, citizens will be informed of the opportunity to meet and speak with the Board of Selectmen, with whom local authority for final grievance resolution lies.

Adopted 8-7-01

Section 1.12 Policy Prohibiting Fraud and Establishing Procedures to Investigate Allegations of Fraud

The Town is committed to complying with and requires its employees (which includes officers, board, committee, and commission members and other persons acting on its behalf) to comply with all applicable Town policies, State and Federal Laws and regulations and internal accounting controls. The Town of Reading will investigate any report of fraudulent acts or related misuse of Town resources or property. Any individual found to have engaged in fraudulent acts or related misconduct, as defined in this policy, is subject to disciplinary action by the Town, which may include dismissal or expulsion, as well as prosecution by appropriate law enforcement authorities.

1.12.1 - Definition of Fraud

Fraud and related misconduct prohibited by this policy generally involves a willful or deliberate act or failure to act with the intention of obtaining an unauthorized benefit. The following are examples of activities that may be considered fraud:

- Making or altering documents or computer files with the intent to deceive
- Purposely inaccurate financial reporting
- Improper handling or reporting of money transactions
- Misappropriation or misuse of Town assets and resources for personal gain or for the advantage of another
- Unauthorized use of Town assets and resources for personal gain or for the advantage of another
- Altering or incorrectly reporting information for personal gain or for the advantage of another or the Town
- Authorizing or receiving remuneration for time not worked
- Authorizing or receiving compensation for goods not received or services not performed

Fraud includes a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, by false or misleading statements, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, which deceives and is intended to deceive.

1.12.2 - Responsibilities

The Town has a responsibility to investigate and report to appropriate governmental authorities, as required, any violations of compliance with Town policy, State and Federal Laws and regulations, internal accounting controls and questionable accounting matters.

Town of Reading management is responsible for establishing and maintaining policies and controls that provide security and accountability for the resources entrusted to them. Internal controls are intended to aid in preventing and detecting instances of fraud and related misconduct. Management is also expected to recognize risks and exposures inherent in their area of responsibility and be aware of indications of fraud or related misconduct. Responses to such allegations or indicators should be consistent.

Every employee has the responsibility to assist the Town in complying with policies and legal and regulatory requirements, and in reporting known violations. It is the policy of the Town to encourage the support and cooperation of all employees in meeting the Town's commitment and responsibility to such compliance.

1.12.3 - Reporting Suspicion of Fraud

Employees should report suspected instances of fraud or irregularity to their immediate supervisor or their next appropriate management level. However, in certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for employees to report suspected instances of fraud or irregularity directly to the Town Accountant (If the alleged fraud has been committed by the Employee's supervisor.) It is the responsibility of a supervisor or relevant manager to ensure that the suspicion of fraud and/or irregularity that is reported to them is reported as soon as practical to the Town Accountant. The written or verbal report should be sufficiently detailed and inclusive to ensure a clear understanding of the issues raised. In the event that the Town Accountant is the subject of, or otherwise identified as involved in the acts underlying such report, the person making the report may notify and forward such report to the Town Manager or Assistant Town Manager who will then lead the investigation, and the Town Manager or Assistant Town Manager shall immediately report such allegation to the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen.

Town employees are not to initiate investigations on their own. However, anyone may report suspected violations or concerns by letter to the Town Accountant and should indicate that he or she is an employee of the Town. The report should be sufficiently detailed and inclusive to ensure a clear understanding of the issues raised. Mark the envelope "Confidential and Private". It is the policy of the Town that anyone who reports a violation may make such report confidentially and offsite.

There shall be no retaliation by the Town's employees against any employee who makes a report pursuant to this policy even if after investigation the Town Accountant determines that there has not been a violation of any applicable Town policy, State or Federal laws and regulations or internal accounting controls. However, employees who make reports or provide evidence which they know to be false or, without a reasonable belief in the truth and accuracy of such information, may be subject to disciplinary action.

1.12.4 - Investigation

Following receipt of a report, the Town Accountant shall commence an investigation, as he/she, in his reasonable judgment, deems appropriate. The Town Accountant shall be authorized to retain such other individuals, including outside legal and accounting experts, as he or she deems appropriate to assist in such investigation.

Appropriate Town management, together with the Town Accountant, will constitute the Investigation Team and will determine the necessary action depending upon the nature of the allegations or suspicions. The individual being investigated shall be notified immediately of said investigation and shall have the right to an attorney and/or union representative, as applicable, during all stages of the investigation. All efforts shall be made to ensure due process in the investigative process. Law Enforcement agencies may be notified and included on the

Investigation Team. In those instances where the investigation indicates the probability of criminal activity, the inquiry will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

In an investigation, objectives include verifying the facts, maintaining objectivity and confidentiality, determining responsibility and recommending corrective action. Details of the initial response and/or investigation will remain confidential.

If in the opinion of the Investigating Team fraud is probable, employees suspected of such irregularities and/or fraud shall be suspended pending investigation. Appropriate Human Resource personnel will provide guidance to the Investigating Team related to action (disciplinary or otherwise) required as a result of any response to or investigation of fraud or irregularity.

Any individual suspected of irregular and/or fraudulent activities should not be confronted prior to commencement of the investigation process. Records related to the activity may need to be seized before the suspected individual becomes aware of any investigation. All employees suspected of irregularities and/or fraud are to be treated fairly and consistently and in compliance with the collective bargaining agreements and personnel policies. Employees suspected of irregular and/or fraudulent activities have legal rights that must be respected.

In the event any such investigation reveals information that is either material or, in the reasonable judgment of the Investigation Team, merits immediate attention by the Audit Committee, and in every case where the dollar impact of fraudulent activities exceeds \$2500, they shall contact the Chairman of the Audit Committee to discuss the matter, and shall inform the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. The Investigation Team shall make the final determination of whether a violation of the Town policy, State and Federal laws and regulations or internal accounting controls applicable to the Town has occurred.

1.12.5 - Reporting Results

The Town Accountant will prepare a report of the results of any review of fraudulent or irregular activities. The report will contain the disciplinary taken, if any. As applicable, it will also contain details of the systems weaknesses that did not prevent or detect the fraudulent or irregular activities and provide recommendations for improving systems controls to prevent or detect similar events.

It is recognized that management investigating the incident may share information with senior management, the town's audit committee, town counsel, and/or law enforcement agencies as deemed necessary. The Town Accountant will include a statistical summary of the fraud reports in the annual report.

Adopted 6-13—06

Section 1.13 – Policy providing for the use of Purchasing Cards

Use of purchasing cards will expedite Town and School purchasing and payables for isolated one-time purchases along with payment for smaller dollar items. Purchasing cards may be issued to one or more employees at the discretion of the Town Manager or

Superintendent of Schools as applicable, and with the names of all users to be filed with the Town Accountant.

Issuance of a purchasing card under the name of the Town of Reading or the Reading School Department is a privilege and every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that cards are used responsibly and in a manner consistent with Town and School Department policies, guidelines and applicable laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Town Accountant will authorize the type of items that can be purchased on the card and the maximum single transaction limit. In any event, the purchasing card shall not be used for purchases of travel, lodging, food, or beverages, for employees or Officials. The procurement card may be used for travel, lodging, and food and beverage (but not alcohol) expenses from student activity accounts for student travel. The Procurement card may be used to register for conferences or seminars. If the use of purchasing cards is extended beyond the one year trial period, the Town Accountant will periodically establish and issue guidelines to purchasing card users. It is the responsibility of each purchasing card user to ensure that their respective card is stored in a secure place and that the account number is protected. A card number may be used in a secure internet transaction but shall never be written out and transmitted via email. Each purchasing card user is responsible to reconcile every transaction made within the month.

Purchasing cards may be issued to individual users at the discretion of the Town Manager or Superintendent of Schools as applicable. Each user will sign for receipt of the card. Cards are to be stored in a secure location. If a purchasing card is lost or stolen the purchasing card user will notify the Town Accountant who will notify the bank, local police department and the Town Manager or Superintendent of Schools as applicable. Replacement of a lost or stolen card will be at the determination of the Town Manager or Superintendent of Schools as applicable.

Failure to adhere to purchasing card policy and guidelines will result in revocation of card use, and the user may be subject to disciplinary action. An individual who is found to abuse the use of a purchasing card will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment along with potentially criminal charges being filed against them. In addition the Town will seek restitution for any inappropriate charges made to a purchasing card.

The Town Accountant will establish procedures to be followed regarding the reconciliation processes. All relevant records are to be included with each statement and retained with applicable voucher records.

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on 7-23-12

Adopted by the Board of Selectmen 7-24-12

Revised by the Board of Selectmen 10-22-13