



BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENT POLICY

Introduction

Service on Town boards and commissions is one of the principal means by which citizens can participate in the conduct of local government. Volunteers may serve in a variety of capacities and are encouraged to look for opportunities which will allow them to share their experience, skills and talents, while offering a meaningful and rewarding experience for the volunteer.

Boards and commissions exercise a number of advisory, administrative and quasi-judicial powers and functions that are essential to the operation of town government. Boards and commissions are created and enabled in different ways. Some are required by the State of Connecticut and some are created by the Town Council. Terms of office and qualifications for office vary as well. Most terms, however, expire at the end of a given year.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to develop a process for the Town to follow for board and commission appointments. This process will ensure that boards and commissions are composed of capable, dependable and effective members and that all have the ability to apply for board and commission membership. Additionally, this written process will clearly outline for citizens the process the mayor and the town council will use for such appointments. This process may be varied based on unique facts or circumstances.

General

No person shall be eligible to apply for board/commission seats unless he/she is a resident of the Town, with the exception of those boards and commissions as indicated in the Town Ordinances.

Additional training and testing may be required in order for applicants to serve on particular boards or commissions. It is recommended that the applicant attend at least one meeting of the board or commission that is the subject of their application prior to submitting the application.

While this policy was written primarily to address the appointment of members to boards and commissions, it will also be used as a guideline for filling unexpired terms of office should a member resign or be removed from service before the term expires.

Recruitment and Application Process

In November of each year, the boards and commissions clerk shall notify all appointed volunteers whose terms expire December 1 of the same year, informing them that they must submit a completed application if they wish to be considered for reappointment.

The boards and commissions clerk shall also advertise a notice of vacancies at Town Hall, and in any of the following public communications; local newspapers, Town website, Town Facebook page. This Notice shall specify the vacancies for all boards and commissions, and will set forth the details regarding the application procedure and the deadline for receipt of applications. In order to be considered by the Mayor and the Town Council, applicants must file an application with the boards and commissions clerk by the due date set forth in the Notice.

Selection and Appointments

The boards and commissions clerk will distribute copies of all applications to the Mayor who may then forward it to the Town Council for appointment in accordance with the Town Charter.

Reappointment of Current Members. Board/commission members who have performed their role satisfactorily will be strongly reconsidered for reappointment. In determining performance, the Mayor shall prepare a recommendation to the Town Council considering the following performance standards:

1. Attendance. It is expected that the members understand the commitment required and attend meetings. Members who have been absent for 30% or more of their regular meetings will normally not be considered for reappointment. Extenuating circumstances, such as sickness, may be considered.
2. Effort. Members who have not become knowledgeable about their duties, or who have failed to comply with required training and/or continuing education will not be considered for reappointment.
3. Professionalism. While differences of opinion are anticipated and encouraged, members are expected to be civil, and observe recognized rules of order and procedures. Members who are quarrelsome, disruptive, and/or use their authority inappropriately will not be considered for reappointment.

Appointment of New Members. The Mayor and the Town Council will consider the following criteria:

1. Service. On other boards, or commissions with the Town or other government or non-profit entity.
2. Background. Education, experience, business, profession or occupation which qualified the applicant for serving.
3. Commitment. Verification that the candidate is aware of the time commitment to prepare for and attend meetings and training sessions.
4. Potential Conflict of Interest. Analysis concerning possible conflicts between the appointment sought and business or other possible conflicts.
5. Mandatory Qualifications. Applicants must be residents of the Town of East Hartford, registered voters at time of appointment, have no criminal record considered by the town to be so serious that it should be a disqualification, not be an adversary party to pending litigation against the town, not be in arrears on any town taxes, fines, or other obligations owed to the town.

The boards and commissions clerk will follow up in writing to all applicants to advise them of their appointment status after the council has voted on the appointments. Applicants must be sworn in at the Town Clerk's Office prior to serving as a voting member of a board or commission.

Filling Unexpired Terms. Applications not selected and applications received after the due date will be kept on file in accordance with record retention schedule and will be considered when vacancies arise during the year.

Outgoing Members. Appointed boards and commission members who no longer wish to or are unable to continue to serve must submit in writing a letter of resignation to the boards and commissions clerk and Town Clerk. Failure to submit a letter of resignation within 30 days of request to do so shall be deemed a resignation.