

# **Town of Royalston**

## **Standard Operating Procedures**

### **Adopted by the Select Board**

#### **Dissemination of SOPs**

The administrative assistant will send an electronic copy of these standard operating procedures to all new town officials and employees, and a blanket e-mail to all officials and employees with the changes highlighted whenever the document is revised. The town webmaster will maintain a current edition of this list on the town's website. It is the responsibility of all town officials and employees to follow their provisions.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

#### ***Town Facilities***

##### **Use of Town Hall**

The senior luncheon program may use the kitchen and first-floor meeting room each Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Town committees and officials may also use these facilities, but must inform the administrative assistant in advance of any non-routine use or any change in scheduled use. Other town entities and community groups may use the facilities with the permission of the Select Board. Organizers who wish to use the kitchen facilities must also obtain a permit from the Board of Health.

Other groups granted permission to meet in the hall will be charged \$50 for the use of one floor or \$75 for the use of both floors, unless the fee is waived by the Select Board. The Board reserves the right to increase these fees for special events and to require renters to show proof of event insurance.

When more than one group is using town hall, each will respect the rights of the others to use the facilities, take reasonable care with noise levels, and enter each other's space with as little interruption as possible.

All users must leave the facilities in standard condition, per the rules posted by the administrative assistant. The individual who reserves the hall is responsible implementing this policy.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended July 17, 2012; October 15, 2013*

##### **Alcohol on Town Premises**

Anyone who wishes to serve or sell alcoholic beverages in any town facility or on town-owned land must apply first to the Select Board. That board's approval, however, is contingent on the applicant's also obtaining approval of the building inspector and the fire chief regarding capacity, aisles, egress, and identification of a responsible party. Applicants are also reminded that state law requires them to buy the alcohol in Massachusetts.

*Adopted October 15, 2013*

##### **Restricted Areas of Town Offices**

At town hall, no one is permitted behind the Select Board's table except board members, the administrative assistant, or their designee. No one but board members, the administrative

assistant, or their designee is permitted to open any drawer or cabinet or handle any documents or materials in the Select Board's office.

At Whitney Hall, no one other than the Select Board, town clerk, treasurer, tax collector or their designated assistants are permitted behind the counter in the treasurer/collector's office, unless accompanied by one of these officials, nor can anyone but these officials open any drawer or cabinet or handle any documents or materials except as authorized by these officials. No one but the Select Board, Board of Assessors, assessors' clerk, or town accountant is permitted in the assessors' office unless one of these officials is present, nor can anyone but these officials open any drawer or cabinet or handle any documents or materials except as authorized by these officials.

Fire and police personnel are exempt from these provisions in emergencies.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended February 21, 2012; July 17, 2012*

### **Parking at Town Hall**

Because the horseshoe in front of town hall provides emergency access, parking is not permitted in this area. In addition, parking is not allowed in front of the building except in the one handicap spot. The individual who reserves the hall is responsible implementing this policy.

*Adopted July 17, 2012*

### **Smoking Outside Key Town Buildings [new]**

Smoking is prohibited within 50 feet of Town Hall, Whitney Hall, and the Phinneas S. Newton Library and within the whole of Memorial Circle.

*Adopted November 19, 2013*

### **Keys and Locks**

The administrative assistant will keep a master set of labeled keys and a master list of lock combinations for all town buildings, rooms, cabinets, safes, gates, etc. in a secure lock box. He or she will also maintain a list of who has what keys and who is privy to lock combinations. Any town department, official or employee who changes a lock or combination must promptly provide a copy to the administrative assistant and help ensure that the discontinued key is disposed of. Keys may be issued to individuals by the Select Board, committee chairs, or department heads as need requires; such keys must be returned promptly when the reason for the issuance is complete.

With the authorization of the Select Board, keys to town hall may also be loaned out by the administrative assistant, who will maintain a list of such loans and specify the time when they must be returned. With the authorization of a financial officer or one member of the Select Board, keys to Whitney Hall or any of its offices may be loaned out in an emergency by the administrative assistant, who will maintain a list of such loans and specify the time when they must be returned. Whenever possible, the emergency responder should be accompanied by an official or employee in the affected office, a member of the Select Board, or the administrative assistant.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended February 21, 2012; July 17, 2012*

### **Town Dog Pound**

Dogs picked up the animal control officer will be held at the pound for 10 days while the officer seeks to identify the owner. After 10 days, the officer will make every effort to find someone to adopt the dog, a pound with long-term facilities to take it in, or a rescue group willing to take it. If these efforts are unsuccessful within 30 days after the dog was impounded, the officer will inform the Select Board, who may authorize that it be euthanized. In the case of a pregnant female dog, the grace period is extended for 8 weeks after she gives birth.

*Adopted July 17, 2012*

## ***Town Vehicles and Equipment***

### **Titles and Registrations of Motor Vehicles**

Fire vehicles are to be registered to the fire department and carry FD plates. Police vehicles are to be registered to the police department and carry PD plates. Highway vehicles are to be registered to the town and carry “official” plates. Emergency management equipment not obviously associated with fire or police is to be registered to the town and carry “official” plates. Titles for all town-owned vehicles are to be turned over to the administrative assistant as soon as they are received by the purchasing department. The administrative assistant will keep them in a secure place. Registrations for all town-owned vehicles are to be carried in the vehicles.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Owner’s Manuals**

The user of any town equipment or service that comes with an owner’s manual is responsible for that manual and for making it available to anyone servicing the equipment and any subsequent user. Department heads are responsible for the owner’s manuals of equipment used by more than one person.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Town-Issued Cell Phones**

The Dispatch Committee determines who receives town-issued cell phones, keeps a master list of numbers, and controls who may be informed about those numbers, a list which should include all members of the Select Board. Such cell phones are to be used only for town business.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Use of Town Computers**

Town officials and employees may use town-owned computers only for town business. Any town-owned computer is subject to review by the Select Board or its designee; if such review is necessary, the Board will make every reasonable effort to have the computer user present. In the event of the death or incapacitation of a user of a town computer, the Select Board may authorize a qualified technical person to access town data.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended February 21, 2012*

## ***Financial Matters***

### **Budget Schedule**

By January 1 of each year, town departments and committees shall submit their budget requests to the Select Board and (per Section XVIII of town bylaws) their capital requests to the Capital Planning Committee. By February 1, the Capital Planning Committee shall submit their recommendations to the Select Board, and by April 1, the Select Board shall create an executive budget to present to the Advisory Committee.

*Adopted October 15, 2013*

### **Town Purchases**

Officials or employees authorized to make purchases should seek vendors who accept net 30 days as standard terms. If the preferred vendor will not accept those terms, the purchaser should seek the advice of the Select Board.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Use of Town Charge Accounts**

Only authorized town agents may use town charge accounts with outside vendors. Any use of these cards must include the purchaser's name and department on the sales slip.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Submission of Bills for Payment**

It is the responsibility of department heads to review all bills to ensure that they are correct and that prior payments are acknowledged. Department heads must complete the "Schedule of Departmental Bills Payable" and fill in the "amount paid" box on the payment slip, sign the bill receipt (*not* the payment slip), and submit the original receipt, sales slip or bill to the town accountant for the next available warrant. Requests for reimbursement of mileage must be submitted within 48 hours at the end of each month.

When the accountant notices an error, he or she will flag and initial it, and return the submission to the department head for correction and resubmission.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended February 21, 2012; July 17, 2012; January 22, 2013; October 15, 2013*

### **Payments to the Town**

Special care must be taken with cash payments to the town. The tax collector, the town clerk, and the building department will use a three-part receipt system, with one receipt going to the payer, one to the treasurer when the funds are turned over, and one to internal records. The Board of Health will use a dual-tape cash register. (*Note: The donations jar at the library is exempt from these requirements.*)

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended August 7, 2012*

### **Energy-Related Purchases**

In other than emergency situations, any upgrade of an energy system or purchase of energy-using equipment (e.g., a furnace for a town building) will be submitted to the Energy Committee for review. If necessary, the committee will schedule a special meeting to consider the purchase. If time is not of the essence, the committee will have 30 days to complete its recommendation.

The final decision, however, rests with the purchasing department or the Select Board.

*Adopted August 7, 2012*

### **Grant Awards and Receipts**

The Select Board should be notified of grant applications made in the town's name by any official, committee or employee. If a grant is awarded, the Select Board will sign it and forward a copy to the town accountant.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

## ***Emergency Management***

### **NIMS Training**

Certain town officials – all members of the Select Board and the Board of Health; all police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, highway personnel and CERTs (Community Emergency Response Team members); and the emergency management director (EMD), the animal control officer, and the building inspector – are required to take basic training through the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Training Program. The EMD, senior police and fire personnel and the highway superintendent are required to take additional levels of training. Refer to the EMD and current FEMA guidelines to determine what level(s) of training are required. Officials and employees should give the EMD and the administrative assistant a copy of their certificate(s). (*Note: The building inspector is not included on the NIMS list, but in Royalston this official's training could prove useful.*)

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Key Emergency Personnel**

Key emergency personnel – the emergency management director, the fire chief, the police chief, and the highway superintendent – should inform the Select Board of absences from town of more than 24 hours; they should also inform the board if they will not be available during predicted, potentially dangerous weather events.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Emergency Management**

In emergencies other than strictly medical, fire, police or highway situations, the Select Board retains emergency command. In the absence of the chair of the Select Board, another member may sign a declaration of emergency. The police chief, fire chief and highway superintendent will be in charge of their respective responses; in their absence, a pre-established chain of command takes over. The emergency management director (EMD) will act as resource manager and communications liaison, particularly with state and federal agencies. The EMD will also oversee the opening and operation of a warming center or shelter if need arises and if a town facility can offer these services. He or she will also maintain a list of town residents who may be in need of special services and if possible arrange for those services to be delivered. In the absence of the EMD, the Select Board or its designee will handle these functions.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Emergency Response Reports and Plans**

Within 30 days after a local, state, or national emergency, the Emergency Management Team should present a report to the Select Board, along with an action plan including (1) recommendations for improvement, (2) designation of who is responsible for implementing each recommendation, and (3) a timeline for implementation. The discussion with the Select Board may result in additional recommendations. Both the Select Board and the emergency management director are responsible for keeping copies of these plans. Both are also responsible for monitoring the action plan and maintaining awareness of long-term recommendations.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Traffic Flow Interruptions**

The Select Board and police, fire and highway departments must be notified in advance of any non-emergency changes to normal traffic flow. This includes, but is not limited to, drills for emergency personnel, unusual parking provisions for special events, outsize vehicles being escorted through town, etc. If time constraints do not permit notification of the Select Board, notification should still go to the police, fire and highway departments.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

## ***Miscellaneous***

### **Access to Town Counsel**

No town official or committee may contact town counsel without the prior consent of the Select Board. Before requesting such service, officials should consider other sources of information, such as the state Ethics Commission, the local district attorney, the state attorney general, the town's state representative or senator, etc.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

### **Identification Codes**

The administrative assistant will maintain a list of identification codes (the case number of a grant application, DUNS numbers, FID numbers, CCR numbers, etc.); it is the responsibility of any official, department or committee who uses such codes to provide them to the administrative assistant.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended February 21, 2012*

### **Right of First Refusal on Chapter Lands**

When the town receives notice of its right of first refusal on chapter lands, the administrative assistant will immediately send that notice to the Select Board, the Board of Assessors, the tax collector, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, and the Open Space Committee. Authority to act on this right remains solely with the Select Board.

*Adopted December 12, 2011*

*Amended July 17, 2011*

### **New Employee Procedures**

Any new employee *must* contact the treasurer to receive and fill out pre-employment paperwork. He or she may *not* begin work until this paperwork is completed.

*Adopted October 2, 2012*

**Sick or Injured Animals**

If the animal control officer is responding to a problem of a sick or injured animal whose owner cannot be identified, he or she is authorized to contact a veterinarian or to take the animal to a clinic and to direct the bill to the Select Board. If the animal must be hospitalized, the animal control officer should contact the chair of the Select Board (or another member, if the chair is unavailable) as soon as possible in order to determine how much care the town will authorize.

*Adopted January 8, 2013*