

Administrative Policy #2025-04

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CITIZEN MEMBERS APPOINTED BY COUNCIL ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

I. PURPOSE

The public expects the highest standards of professional conduct from its citizen members appointed by Council to Advisory Committees, Boards, Commissions and Committees. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for the ethical and interpersonal conduct of Citizen Members ("Members"). The Council is answerable to the community through democratic processes and this Code will assist in providing for the good government of the Town of Digby.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

A written Code of Conduct for Local Boards and Committees helps to ensure that those appointed to represent the Town of Digby on a board, commission or committee share a common basis for acceptable conduct.

III. SCOPE

This Code of Conduct applies to all public citizen members who are appointed by Digby Town Council and participate on an advisory committee, or board, or Commission or Committee within the Town of Digby.

IV. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

A member shall at all times conduct themselves with propriety, decency and respect and with the understanding that all members of the public, other members and staff are to be treated with dignity, courtesy and empathy.

Members shall conduct themselves with decorum in accordance with the provisions of applicable law including the Municipal Government Act and the Town of Digby's Council Meetings and Proceedings Policy, as amended from time to time, to show courtesy and respect to fellow members and others.

V. DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF PUBLIC MEMBERS

Members of the public appointed to committees are appointed at the pleasure of Council. They do not hold office as elected officials, nor do they represent either Council or the committee unless mandated to do so. Members of the public appointed to committees must respect both the word and spirit of this Code as it applies to them.

Members of the public shall, when conducting business of the corporation, act in a manner that:

- a) fulfills the mandate and mission state of the Advisory Committee, or Commission, or Board or Committee;
- b) respects due process and the authority of the Chair, Vice-Chair or Presiding Officer;
- c) demonstrates respect for all fellow committee members, Council, staff and the public;
- d) respects and gives fair consideration to diverse and opposing viewpoints;
- e) demonstrates due diligence in preparing for meetings, special occasions or other committee-related events;
- f) demonstrates professionalism, transparency, accountability and timeliness in completing any tasks or projects undertaken by the committee;
- g) conforms with all relevant legislation, by-laws, policies and guidelines; and,
- h) contributes in a meaningful manner, offering constructive comments to Council, staff and fellow members.

Furthermore, a member of the public shall not:

- a) come into a position where the member is under obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or favor on their part or who might seek in any way preferential treatment;
- b) accord, in the performance of his or her official duties, preferential treatment to relatives or to organizations in which the member, his or her relatives have an interest, financial or otherwise;
- c) deal with an application to the Town for a grant, award, contract, permit or other benefit involving the member, his or her immediate relative;

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- d) come into a position where the member could derive any direct benefit or interest from any matter about which they can influence decisions; and,
- e) benefit from the use of information acquired during the course of his or her official duties which is not generally available to the public.

Committees of Council are either advisory or have a management function.

- a) An Advisory Committee provides Council with information or recommendations on matters related to their mandate for a Council decision.
- b) A Management Committee/Board/Commission has responsibility for the management of an entity such as Digby Area Recreation Commission and Digby Water Commission.
- c) A Governance Committee is responsible for ensuring that an organization operates with integrity, accountability, and transparency.

A member who is aware of a known conflict of interest shall immediately disclose to the staff administrator and shall refrain and abide by any decision made with respect to such conflict of interest without recourse.

If a member fails to disclose a conflict of interest, then the matter may be brought forward for consideration by an alternate member. A majority vote would determine if the member were in a conflict position and would be subject to this Code of Conduct Policy.

VI. ABUSE OF ROLE

No citizen Member shall use the influence of their role as it relates to participating on an advisory committee, or commission, or board or committee for any purpose other than for the exercise of their official duties.

VII. HARASSMENT

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, any behavior, conduct, form of imagery or comment by any person that is directed at or is offensive to another person on the protected grounds of discrimination: age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status (including single status), gender identity, gender expression, receipt of public assistance (in housing only), record of offences (in employment

only), sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding), sexual orientation and sexual harassment and any other grounds under the provisions of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Code and the Town’s Respectful Workplace Policy.

In accordance with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Code, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Town’s Respectful Workplace Policy, all persons will be treated with dignity and respect in an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Harassment, whether it occurs inside or outside the workplace, but is related to the activities of the members appointment, is considered to be inappropriate behavior for the purpose of this Code of Conduct.

VIII. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

CONDUCT TO BE OBSERVED

Members are agents of the public whose primary objective is to address the needs of the citizens. As such, they're entrusted with upholding and adhering to the by-laws and policies of the municipality as well as all applicable provincial and federal laws. As public servants, Members must observe a high standard of morality in the conduct of their official duties and faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of their offices, regardless of their personal or financial interests.

DEDICATED SERVICE

All Members should faithfully work towards developing programs to address the needs of the citizens in the course of their duties. Members should strive to perform at a level which is expected of those who work in the public's interest.

RESPECT FOR DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

All Members recognize the responsibility of the Mayor to accurately communicate the decisions of the Council, even if they disagree with such decisions, such that respect for the decision-making processes of Council is fostered.

CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

Members shall respect the chair, colleagues, staff and members of the public present during meetings or other proceedings of the municipality. Meetings shall provide an environment for transparent and healthy debate on matters requiring decision-making.

RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION PROHIBITED

No Member shall disclose or release to any member of the public any confidential information acquired by virtue of their office, in either oral or written form except when required by law or

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authorized by the municipality to do so. Nor shall Members use confidential information for personal or private gain, or for the gain of relatives or any person or corporation.

GIFTS AND BENEFITS

No Member shall show favouritism or bias toward any vendor, contractor or others doing business with the Town of Digby. Members are prohibited from accepting gifts or favours from any vendor, contractor or others doing business with the municipality personally, or through a family member or friend, which could give rise to a reasonable suspicion of influence to show favour or disadvantage to any individual or organization.

USE OF PUBLIC PROPERTY

No Member shall request or permit the use of municipal-owned vehicles, equipment, materials or property for personal convenience or profit, except where such privileges are granted to the general public. Members shall ensure that the business of the municipality is conducted with efficiency and shall avoid waste, abuse and extravagance in the provision or use of municipal resources.

OBLIGATIONS TO CITIZENS

No member shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen or group of citizens beyond that which is accorded to all citizens.

INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

Members shall treat every person, including other Members, corporate employees, individuals providing services on a contract for service, and the public with dignity, understanding and respect and ensure that their work environment is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

Members shall observe a high standard of professionalism when representing the municipality and in their dealings with members of the broader community.

IX. GOOD GOVERNANCE

Members accept that effective governance of the municipality is critical to ensuring that decisions are taken in the best interests of all stakeholders and to enable the municipality to function as a good corporate citizen. 4

X. GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Members recognize the importance of working constructively with other levels of government and organizations in Nova Scotia and beyond to achieve the goals of the municipality.

XI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AVOIDANCE

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Members are committed to making decisions impartially and in the best interests of the municipality and recognize the importance of fully observing the requirements of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 299 with regard to the disclosure and avoidance of conflicts of interest.

XII. REPORTING BREACHES

Persons who have reason to believe that this Code has been breached in any way are encouraged to bring their concerns forward. No adverse action shall be taken against any Member or municipal employee who, acting in good faith, brings forward such information.

XIII. CORRECTIVE ACTION

Any reported violation of the Code will be subject to investigation by the Council. Violation of this Code by a Member may constitute a cause for corrective action. If an investigation finds a Member has breached a provision of the Code, Council may impose corrective action commensurate with the nature and severity of the breach; which may include a formal warning or reprimand to the Member.

XIV. COMPLIANCE WITH CODE

Members acknowledge the importance of the principles contained in this Code which will be Regulated by Council. Citizen Members are required to sign the "Statement of Commitment to the Code" (Attachment A) within seven (7) days of being appointed by the Council to an Advisory committee, Board, commission or Committee.

Failure to sign the "Statement of Commitment to the Code" (Attachment A) shall result in the immediate termination of the Members appointment.

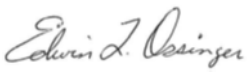
Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Notice: February 18, 2025

Date of adoption: March 4, 2025

Policy effective date: March 4, 2025

I certify that this **Code of Conduct for Citizen Members Appointed by Council on Advisory Committees, Boards, Commissions, and Committees** was adopted by Council as indicated above.



March 4, 2025

Clerk

Date

ATTACHMENT “A”

“STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CITIZEN MEMBERS APPOINTED BY COUNCIL ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES.

I, (Full Name) _____ declare that as a Citizen appointed by Digby Town Council to serve on _____ (Advisory Committee, Board, Commission or Committee) I acknowledge and support the Code of Conduct for Citizen Members Appointed by Council on Advisory Committees, boards, Commissions, and Committees. Councilors’ Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____

Declared this _____ day of _____, 20__.

Before me:

Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk-Treasurer