



Office of the  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
272 Main Street  
Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

Gordon Clark, *Chairman*

Andrew J. Sheehan,  
*Town Administrator*

Carolyn Smart, *Vice-Chairman*

Office (978) 597-1701  
Fax (978) 597-1719

**AGENDA**  
**OCTOBER 13, 2015, 6:00 P.M.**  
**SELECTMEN'S CHAMBERS, TOWN HALL**  
**272 MAIN STREET, TOWNSEND, MA**

**I PRELIMINARIES**

- 1.1 Call the meeting to order and roll call.
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.3 Announce that the meeting is being tape recorded.
- 1.4 Chairman's Additions or Deletions: **Delete 2.1**
- 1.5 Town Administrator updates and reports. Votes may be taken.
- 1.6 Board of Selectmen announcements, updates, and reports. Votes may be taken.
- 1.7 Approval of meeting minutes: None

**II APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS**

- ~~2.1 6:10 Steve Boczenowski of Teenage Anxiety & Depression Solutions (TADS), to discuss a free mental health and wellness referral service available to the member communities of the North Middlesex Regional School District. Votes may be taken.~~
- 2.2 6:20 Karen Hill, to address the Board regarding her public records requests. Votes may be taken.
- 2.3 7:00 Executive Session
  - 2.3.1 Executive session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(1) to discuss complaints or charges against individuals. Votes may be taken.
  - 2.3.2 Executive session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(2) to conduct contract negotiations with non-union personnel. Votes may be taken.
  - 2.3.3 Executive Session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining associated with the request for voluntary recognition of a new collective bargaining unit. Votes may be taken.

**III MEETING BUSINESS**

- 3.1 Review and approve request of Town Clerk Kathy Spofford to declare surplus the following office equipment: 1 Brother 6750 typewriter, 1 Smith Corona typewriter, several miscellaneous file boxes, miscellaneous old office supplies, and a laminator and accessories. Votes may be taken.
- 3.2 Review request of Gail DerBeghosian to rename the first bridge on West Meadow Road that spans Willard Brook in memory of her son, Jesse Todd Newcombe. Votes may be taken.
- 3.3 Discuss selection of a consultant to recruit a new Police Chief. Votes may be taken.
- 3.4 Review and approve a one day liquor license for Terri Roy, VFW Post 6538, 491A Main Street, for a Birthday Party from 7-11PM on October 17, 2015. Votes may be taken.
- 3.5 Review and approve a one day liquor license for Terri Roy, VFW Post 6538, 491A Main Street, for a Christmas Fundraiser from 6-11PM on December 15, 2015. Votes may be taken.

- 3.6 Review mission and positing for Girls' School Commemoration Committee to recognize the former girls school at 458 Main Street. Votes may be taken.
- 3.7 Proclaim November 13, 2015 Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day. Votes may be taken.
- 3.8 Discuss draft Selectmen's Policy on Use of Credit Cards. Votes may be taken.
- 3.9 Discuss draft Selectmen's Policy on Media Relations. Votes may be taken.

**IV APPOINTMENTS OF PERSONNEL/OFFICIALS**

None

**V WORK SESSION**

- 5.1 Review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants. Votes may be taken.

Steve Boczenowski  
President & Founder  
Teenage Anxiety and Depression Solutions (TADS)

### **1. Organization's History:**

On Dec 1, 2009, our son, Jeffrey, died by suicide. For several years before his death, Jeffrey suffered with anxiety and depression. In the weeks after Jeffrey's death, a group of friends surrounded my wife, Deb, and me in love and suggested that we join together and respond to this tragedy with some sort of event. Six months later, we held a community forum in which Deb & I told our story through a series of anecdotes which each identified an obstacle we encountered, and then mental health professionals described potential solutions to these obstacles. The idea was to provide the audience with practical advice for dealing with children who are suffering with mental illness. The event was very well received by our community and our group decided to keep working on mental health issues. We spent the next year formulating our mission and taking the required steps to become a non-profit organization. In February, 2013, the Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention honored Deb & me with a Leadership Award for our work with TADS.

### **2. Organizational Goals and Objectives (short-term and/or long-term):**

TADS actively advocates for mental wellness for young people. The mission and goals of TADS is to address issues of mental health by raising awareness, providing education, and enabling access to care. Bringing INTERFACE to your community will help us to achieve our goal of enabling access to mental health care.

### **3. Programs and Services (briefly describe your organization's programs and services):**

TADS mission is to raise awareness, provide education and enable access to care.

- TADS raises awareness: we speak to groups of parents and teachers to discuss mental health issues and provide practical guidance for them to use to help young people. We have also spoken in high schools to talk to students about anxiety, depression, suicide prevention, and resilience.
- TADS provides education by holding a training class each year for SOS-Signs of Suicide, which is suicide prevention curriculum for middle and high schools. We contract with Screening for Mental Health to provide trainers for these classes. In the past six years and during that time we have trained nearly 475 people from all over the state of Massachusetts.
- TADS helps to enable access to mental health care - we feel this is what differentiates us from other similar organizations. To properly address the problem of mental illness, people need mental health treatment. But finding an appropriate provider can be a daunting task. Therefore, we have contracted with the William James College who the INTERFACE Referral Service. TADS has brought the INTERFACE Referral Service to the Groton-Dunstable, Ayer-Shirley, Pepperell-Townsend-Ashby, and Acton-Boxborough.

#### **4. Organizational Structure (board, staff, volunteers):**

TADS is governed by a ten member Board of Directors. All members of our board are parents, some of whom are also mental health professionals, school guidance counselors, educators, and first responders. The role of the TADS Board is to provide strategic direction for the TADS mission and to support TADS programs and events.

TADS has no paid staff and solicits volunteers to run our programs and events. The TADS Board is very active at all of our programs and events.

The TADS Board has adopted a non-discrimination policy and it is included in this package.

### **Proposal Information**

#### **5. Description of Program/Project:**

In order to make scarce mental health resources more accessible, we propose to collaborate with William James College to provide mental health and wellness referral services to the North Middlesex School District, which includes the communities of Pepperell, Townsend, and Ashby. The INTERFACE Referral Service has been in operation since 2005 and has benefitted hundreds of individuals from approximately 25 cities and towns who contract with William James College for these services.

As one mental health professional put it when asked about the services of INTERFACE: "So often, people can be helped if they only know how to connect with the right resources, I am proud to work with such a competent and professional program"

The INTERFACE Referral Service helps to break down the "silos" that exist within community agencies or systems that can often hinder access to mental health and wellness services. INTERFACE starts by recruiting and developing a comprehensive database of all mental health providers in the service area of each community that it supports. The basic service is a referral Helpline, which operates during normal business hours that can be used on behalf of young people (age 26 and under) to receive consultation and referrals for treatment. After the referral is made, INTERFACE will follow up with the client to insure that individuals and families are receiving care that is matched to their stated needs. The Information Helpline is staffed by licensed mental health professionals and advanced graduate level interns from William James College.

The INTERFACE Referral Service will provide that missing link in the North Middlesex district by helping individuals and families access the services available in and around the community. Through the INTERFACE Referral Service, individuals will have matches made to providers who take the insurance of the caller, have expertise in the stated area, have an opening at the appropriate time and are located near the community of choice. The service also provides follow up to individuals and families until the match and therapeutic services are working and ongoing.

To summarize, here is a general overview of this project:

- TADS will contract with William James College to bring the INTERACE Referral Service to Pepperell, Townsend, and Ashby for one year.
- In the three months before the contract period starts, William James College will create a database of all of the mental health providers in the North Middlesex area, i.e. the three towns in the school district plus surrounding towns.
- When the contract begins, the telephone Helpline will be available to residents of Townsend, Pepperell, and Ashby to call if they are concerned about the mental health of a child or young adult (age 26 and below) and want to consider seeking mental health services for that young person. (Ordinarily a parent will make the call, but it could also be a school guidance counselor, or the young person him/herself, if he/she is a legal adult.)
- Answering Helpline calls will be a member of the INTERFACE staff, a licensed mental health provider or an advanced graduate-level student. The INTERFACE staff member will be familiar with mental health issues and will guide the conversation to help the caller to get the help they need, i.e. practical guidance to better understand what the issues are with their loved one. During the call, the INTERFACE staff member will record the critical information: the presenting issues of the patient, appointment availability information, insurance information, and any other pertinent information needed to make a good match between the patient and a potential provider.
- After the call has ended, the INTERFACE staff member will search the database of mental health providers and, using the criteria collected during the call, will find the best match of a mental health provider who has immediate openings. The INTERFACE staff member will then call back the original caller within two weeks, but usually no later than two or three days, and provide the caller with the contact information with the most appropriate mental health provider.
- Then a few weeks later, the INTERFACE staff member will call back the original caller and inquire whether the patient has visited the provider and how things are going.
- There is no charge for the use of this service, i.e. the callers pay no fee to William James College. However, callers are required to pay for the cost of the mental health provider either through insurance coverage or out-of-pocket expenses.

**North Middlesex INTERFACE Activity Report  
January 1, 2015- June 30, 2015**

**Number of Cases**

**Total Cases 1/1/15- 6/30/15: 48**

**Cases Per Town**

	Ashby	Pepperell	Townsend	Total
7/1/14- 12/31/14	4	11	18	33
1/1/15- 6/30/15	7	18	23	48

**Data Trends**

For the recent six month period, the number of INTERFACE cases increased from 33 to 48. There was one case where the presenting issue was suicidal ideation. Anxiety, depression and stress continue to be the most frequently reported presenting issues. The majority of callers are parents who learned about INTERFACE from the schools.

**Breakdown of Cases**

Preschool 0-5yrs: 0

Children 6-12 yrs: 16

Teenagers 13-17yrs: 18

Young Adult (18-24yrs): 3

Adults: 6

Older Adult: 5

*\*Note Over 60 yrs*

**HelpLine Calls**

Total from North Middlesex Schools:

Ashby Elementary School: 5

Spaulding Memorial Elementary School: 2

Varnum Brook Elementary School: 1

Nissitissit Middle School: 10

Hawthorne Brook Middle School: 8

North Middlesex Regional High School: 5

Nashoba Valley Regional Technical High School: 0

Other: 0

**Sources (callers)**

Parent: 34

School staff: 0

Self: 12  
Mental Health Provider: 1  
Other: 1

**Learned about MSPP INTERFACE Service:**

Schools: 30  
Internet: 1  
Publication: 0  
Local church: 0  
Previous User: 1  
TADS: 0  
Family member/friend: 2  
Mental Health Provider: 2  
Primary Care Provider: 5  
Other: 5

**Presenting Reason / Issue**

*\*(Note: some cases have overlapping issues, so the following numbers do not match up with the number of cases).*

Abuse and Neglect- 0  
Adoption- 0  
ADD/ADHD- 8  
Anger - 7  
Anxiety - 16  
Autism Spectrum Disorders - 0  
Behavioral - 0  
Bipolar Disorder- 1  
Body Image - 0  
Bullying - 0  
Depression - 14  
Divorce/Family Issues - 3  
Forensic Issues - 0  
Grief – 3  
Learning Issues/Disability - 0  
Medication - 0  
Parent Coaching/Support - 3  
Psychosis - 0  
OCD - 1  
Self-Injury - 0  
GLBT Support - 0  
Social Skills - 2  
Stress - 12  
Substance Use/Abuse - 2  
Suicidal Ideation - 1  
Trauma - 4

## Andy Sheehan

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**From:** Steve Boczenowski <boczeno@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2015 3:39 PM  
**To:** Andy Sheehan  
**Subject:** Re: Teenage Anxiety and Depression Solutions (TADS)

Andy,

Thanks for getting back to me.

Neither of those dates will work for me. Could we try for Oct 6?

Thanks,  
Steve

On Mon, Aug 24, 2015 at 3:35 PM, Andy Sheehan <[asheehan@townsend.ma.us](mailto:asheehan@townsend.ma.us)> wrote:

Hi Steve,

The agenda for tomorrow got pretty full and I did not include you. I can add you to the agenda for September 8 or 22.

Andy

**From:** Steve Boczenowski [<mailto:boczeno@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 23, 2015 5:14 PM  
**To:** [asheehan@townsend.ma.us](mailto:asheehan@townsend.ma.us)  
**Subject:** Re: Teenage Anxiety and Depression Solutions (TADS)

Andrew,

I am wondering if we are confirmed for August 25.

Steve

On Tue, Aug 18, 2015 at 6:40 AM, Steve Boczenowski <[boczeno@gmail.com](mailto:boczeno@gmail.com)> wrote:

Andrew,



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The INTERFACE Referral Service provides personalized counseling referrals matched for location, specialty and insurance or fee requirements. If you live in Groton, Dunstable, Ayer, Shirley, Pepperell, Townsend, Ashby, Littleton, Acton, Boxborough, Harvard, Chelmsford, or Westford, you can call the referral helpline at 617-332-3666 x 1411, (toll free number at (888) 244-6843 x1411) Monday-Friday from 9 AM-5 PM, to consult with a Resource and Referral Counselor to receive services. This service is available for people of all ages and more info can be found on their web site <http://interface.williamjames.edu/>

Teenage Anxiety & Depression Solutions (TADS)  
[www.tadsmma.org](http://www.tadsmma.org)

**Andy Sheehan**

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3.1 -

**From:** Kathy Spofford <kspofford@townsend.ma.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2015 3:30 PM  
**To:** Andrew Sheehan  
**Subject:** Surplus

Hi Andy,

I would like approval to dispose of some misc items within my office.  
It includes:

- 1 Brother gx 6750 typewriter
- 1 Smith Corona unknown model typewriter (broken)
- Several misc files boxes (old index card files, etc)
- Old office supplies, such as used file folders etc.
- Laminator and accessories (Laminator is broken. I have looked to see about replacing it but it is old and outdated).

I do not feel any of this has any value. Could you tell me if there is anything else I need to do?

Thanks,  
Kathy

Kathleen M. Spofford  
Town Clerk  
Town of Townsend  
272 Main Street  
Townsend, MA 01469  
PH: 978-597-1704  
FAX: 978-597-8135

This message (including any attachments) contains confidential information intended for a specific individual and purpose, and is protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, you should delete this message. In Massachusetts, the term "public record" is broadly defined to include all documentary materials or data created or received by any officer or employee of any governmental unit, regardless of physical form or characteristics unless it falls under one of the statutory exemptions to the Public Records Law MGL c. 4, s. 7(26). Consequently, email is subject to the disclosure, retention and maintenance provisions as required by law. MGL c. 66.

OCTOBER 1, 2015

3.2

DEAR BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEMBERS,

My NAME IS GAIL DERBOGHOSIAN AND I LIVE AT 64 WEST MEADOW ROAD. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THE BOARD IF THE SMALL BRIDGE ON MY ROAD (THE FIRST ONE CLOSEST TO RT 119) COULD BE DEDICATED IN THE MEMORY OF MY SON JESSE TODD NEWCOMBE. JESSE PASSED AWAY ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2013 AT THE AGE OF 20. WE SPENT A LOT OF TIME TOGETHER ON THAT BRIDGE WHEN HE WAS GROWING UP, HANGING OVER THE TOP AND WATCHING THE WATER FLOW BENEATH IT. JESSE LOVED THIS TOWN AND THE PEOPLE IN IT AND I THINK IT WOULD BE A GREAT HONOR TO HIS MEMORY TO HAVE THIS BRIDGE DEDICATED IN HIS NAME. I AM HOPING YOU WILL CONSIDER MY REQUEST AS IT WOULD MEAN SO MUCH TO ME TO GET THIS ACCOMPLISHED.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

SINCERELY, *Gail Derboghosian* (JESSE'S MOM)

CONTACT INFO:

HOME: 978-597-2338

CELL: 978-660-0975

EMAIL: GAILPND@COMCAST.NET



3.4

TOWN OF TOWNSEND  
One-day Special License Application Form  
(M.G.L. Chapter 138, Section 1)

Bert McDonald  
Name of Responsible Person/License Holder

VFW Pavilion 491A Main St Townsend -  
Name/ Address of Event Premise

10/17/15                      7-11  
Date of Event                      Hours of Event

Birthday Party -  
Type of Event/Sponsors

Number of people expected at event: 60

Police Detail Required: YES [ ] NO [  ] (Please consult with Licensing Agent)

Type of Beverages to be served: All Alcoholic [  ] Wine & Malt only [ ]

United Liquors  
Name of licensed wholesaler

Servers trained in serving and handling alcohol: YES [ ] NO [ ]

*By signing below I certify that I am in receipt of the Town of Townsend Alcohol Beverages Policy Guidelines and agree to the terms and conditions set forth under section V. - One-day Special Licenses.*

Teri Roy  
Signature of License Holder

9-29-15  
Date

Date Application Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date sent to licensing Agent for review: \_\_\_\_\_



3.5

TOWN OF TOWNSEND  
One-day Special License Application Form  
(M.G.L. Chapter 138, Section 1)

Albert (Tubby) Boucher  
Name of Responsible Person/License Holder

VFW Pavilion 491A main st West Townsend  
Name/ Address of Event Premise

12/5/15 6-11  
Date of Event Hours of Event

Christmas Fundraiser / Silver Wolf Ext.  
Type of Event/Sponsors

Number of people expected at event: 100

Police Detail Required: YES [ ] NO [] (Please consult with Licensing Agent)

Type of Beverages to be served: All Alcoholic [] Wine & Malt only [ ]

United Liquors  
Name of licensed wholesaler

Servers trained in serving and handling alcohol: YES [ ] NO [ ]

*By signing below I certify that I am in receipt of the Town of Townsend Alcohol Beverages Policy Guidelines and agree to the terms and conditions set forth under section V. - One-day Special Licenses.*

Tom Roy  
Signature of License Holder

9-27-15  
Date

Date Application Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date sent to licensing Agent for review: \_\_\_\_\_

3.4

**PUBLIC NOTICE OF VACANCY**

In accordance with Section 7-10 of the Townsend Charter requiring a ten (10) day posting, the following vacancy is posted:

**GIRLS' SCHOOL COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE**

By vote of the Board of Selectmen there is hereby established a Girls' School Commemoration Committee. The Committee shall develop an appropriate means for memorializing the former Girls' School at 458 Main Street, West Townsend. The Committee shall be comprised of five (5) members.

Individuals interested in serving should forward a Volunteer Response Form to the Office of the Board of Selectmen, 272 Main Street, Townsend, MA 01469. Forms are available at Town Hall or at online

[http://www.townsend.ma.us/Pages/TownsendMA\\_Selectmen/volunteer.pdf](http://www.townsend.ma.us/Pages/TownsendMA_Selectmen/volunteer.pdf)

September 18, 2015



# TOWNSEND FIRE-EMS DEPARTMENT

*Proudly serving the citizens of Townsend since 1875*

**PO Box 530 – 13 Elm St.  
Townsend, MA 01469**

**Mark R. Boynton  
Chief of Department**

**Headquarters: 978-597-8150**

**Fax: 978-597-2711**

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Andrew Sheehan, Town Administrator

**From:** Mark R. Boynton, Fire – EMS Chief

*MRB*

**Subject:** Monument at the Former Girls School

**Date:** August 10, 2015

On behalf of the Fire Station Committee we would like to request a committee be formed or an existing committee be assigned the task of considering, designing and fund raising to put a monument on the site of the former girl's school located 456 Main Street in West Townsend. As you know the Town has purchased this site for a new West Townsend Fire Station. The Historic District Committee has approved the demolition and removal of the building formerly known as the Girls School and more recently known as the American Legion.

During the hearing with the Historic District it was suggested a monument be erected to recognize the historic significance of this site. We would also suggest and offer one or two pieces of the granite foundation to be utilized for the monument of the Committee is interested.

3.7

## RESOLUTION

### **Declaring the month of November “Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month” in the Town of Townsend**

WHEREAS in 2015, an estimated 48,960 people will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in the United States and 40,560 will die from the disease;

WHEREAS pancreatic cancer is one of the deadliest cancers, is currently the fourth leading cause of cancer death in the United States and is projected to become the second by 2020;

WHEREAS pancreatic cancer is the only major cancer with a five-year relative survival rate in the single digits at just six percent;

WHEREAS when symptoms of pancreatic cancer present themselves, it is generally late stage, and 73 percent of pancreatic cancer patients die within the first year of their diagnosis while 93 percent of pancreatic cancer patients die within the first five years;

WHEREAS approximately 920 deaths will occur in Massachusetts in 2015;

WHEREAS the *Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act* was signed into law in 2013, which calls on the National Cancer Institute to develop a scientific framework, or strategic plans, for pancreatic cancer and other deadly cancers, which will help provide the strategic direction and guidance needed to make true progress against these diseases; and

WHEREAS, it will be very difficult to leverage the opportunities that come out of the scientific framework developed as a result of the Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act unless sustained and adequate funding is provided to the National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute; and

WHEREAS federal funding for medical research is critical to job protection and creation in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network is the national organization serving the pancreatic cancer community in Townsend and nationwide through a comprehensive approach that includes public



policy, research funding, patient services, and public awareness and education related to developing effective treatments and a cure for pancreatic cancer;

WHEREAS the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network and its affiliates in Townsend support those patients currently battling pancreatic cancer, as well as to those who have lost their lives to the disease, and are committed to nothing less than a cure;

WHEREAS the good health and well-being of the residents of Townsend are enhanced as a direct result of increased awareness about pancreatic cancer and research into early detection, causes, and effective treatments; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Board of Selectmen designate the month of November 2015 as “Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month” in the Town of Townsend, Massachusetts.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

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Gordon Clark, *Chairman*

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Carolyn Smart, *Vice-Chairman*

3.8



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Office (978) 597-1701  
Fax (978) 597-1719

POLICY #3-2015  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

### **USE OF CREDIT CARDS**

**STATEMENT:**

Understanding that use of cash accounts with all vendors is difficult the Town of Townsend hereby establishes the following credit card policy for use by Town Departments.

**TYPE OF ALLOWED CREDIT CARD:**

Major Credit Cards (Master Card, Visa, Discover etc.) are not allowed.  
Vender specific Credit Cards (Lowe's, Home Depot, Staples etc.) will be allowed.

**TERMS OF USE:**

The maximum limit (total) to be charged by any Departmental Credit Card(s) is not to exceed \$6,000.00 per fiscal year unless authorization is received by the Town Accountant. Charges should never be over appropriated departmental budgetary constraints.

Only items for direct use of the department in pursuing departmental operations will be allowed.

No charges shall be incurred for personal use by town personnel authorized to use said credit card.

**TERMS OF PAYMENT:**

The department credit card invoice will be processed for payment when received. Late charges will not be tolerated and will result in loss of use.

**RETURNS:**

Any item charged on any department credit card and returned to the vender will be explained on a "Returned Merchandise Form" which will contain the following information;

1. The name of the Vender to which the item was returned
2. The date of purchase and the date of the return
3. The reason for the return of merchandise

All credit card reimbursements will be made in the form of a credit to the credit card account.

**LOSS OF USE:**

Use of departmental card to make personal purchases or items other than for the use of the department.

Incurring late charges

**CONTROLS:**

The departmental credit card(s) will be the responsibility of the Department Head and under his/her direct control which will include but not be limited to;

1. Provide a safe and secure environment for the credit card(s) when not in use.
2. Authorizing the use of departmental credit card(s) by employee (s).
3. Regaining custody of credit card(s) after the use by an authorized employee
4. Record of any account # user names and/or passwords on file with the Town Accountant to secure and/or report to any appropriate agency information needed for lost or stolen card (s).

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN ON \_\_\_\_\_, 2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon Clark, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carolyn Smart, Vice-Chair



Office of the  
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272 Main Street  
Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

3.9

Gordon Clark, *Chairman*

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*Town Administrator*

Carolyn Smart, *Vice-Chairman*

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Fax (978) 597-1719

POLICY #2-2015  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

## **MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY**

### **GOAL:**

The Town of Townsend seeks to inform its residents, businesses and visitors by engaging in a pro-active communications program. This program recognizes that one of the most effective and quickest ways to communicate Town policies and activities to citizens is by working in partnership with the news media.

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Only the Board of Selectmen acting by and through the Chair is authorized to provide an official statement on behalf of the Town of Townsend in relation to any significant incident or issue. This does not pertain to those matters that fall within the jurisdiction of elected officials of the Town. Department Heads must receive confirmation from the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen through the Town Administrator before making any public statement on behalf of the Town. Confirmation to discuss one issue or incident does not imply that the Department Head may discuss on behalf of the Towns other current or future issues that may arise, without further confirmation.

### **POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

Comments to the media regarding a police or fire investigation shall be directed to the Police or Fire Chief or their designee.

If a member of the media is requesting statement of the Towns position from an employee, then that employee must politely direct the media representative to the designated Department Head. Where special circumstances exist, employees should be aware that all comments regarding those circumstances is to be referred to the Department Head or Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. Under no circumstances are employees permitted to comment as an official position of the Town.

If you become aware of any newsworthy events or activities that may be developing in your area of responsibility, you should promptly inform the Office of the Board of Selectmen.

The Town recognizes that individuals have the right to make public comment and publicly debate political and social issues. However, employees must make it clear that other than in the course of Town business or when giving evidence in court, they are neither making an official comment nor representing an official position of the Town.

**SENSITIVE OR CONTROVERSIAL SITUATIONS:**

All television, radio, newspaper or other media inquiries regarding sensitive or controversial issues should always be referred immediately to the Office of the Board of Selectmen. The Town Administrator will notify the Board of Selectmen before any media response is provided. The Town Administrator will coordinate a response including designating a spokesperson (if needed).

**MEMBERS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:**

The Chairperson of an appointed Town Board or Committee, shall be the primary interface to provide all information to the public on behalf of the Board or Committee (i.e. represent the Board or Committee in stating Board or Committee Positions). Each Board or Committee member shall recognize that it is the responsibility of the Board or Committee Chairperson to speak for and on behalf of the Board or Committee. Any Board or Committee member may speak on behalf of the Board or Committee on a specific subject as long as he/she receives permission from the Board or Committee Chairperson. That being said, each Board or Committee member has the right to speak for/on his/her own behalf as long as s/he clearly identifies that is the case in any communications that are intended to be released to the public.

**PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES:**

Because the Police and Fire Departments operate 24/7 and their work generates a high volume of media calls, those departments have designated sworn personnel as media spokespersons and follow specific guidelines when releasing information. Any media calls to other Town staff regarding a Police or Fire issue should be referred immediately to the Police Department or Fire Department, as appropriate. All information released to the media by the Police and Fire Departments should be provided immediately to the Office of the Board of Selectmen; and, when appropriate, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen should be contacted at the time of major incidents

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN ON \_\_\_\_\_, 2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon Clark, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carolyn Smart, Vice-Chair