

**TOWN OF HAMILTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Hamilton Human Rights Commission

Purpose. There shall hereby be established an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen to be known as the Hamilton Human Rights Commission, hereinafter referred to as the “Commission.” The purpose of creating the Commission is to affirm that the Town of Hamilton is an inclusive community that has, as one of its core values, the freedom from discrimination, intolerance, disrespect, bigotry, other forms of micro- or macroaggressions, hatred and oppression, and to reaffirm the Town’s commitment to upholding and defending the rights of all individuals to enjoy the free and equal exercise of their rights and privileges, as secured by the Constitutions of the United States and Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

To that end, the Commission strives to ensure that all persons feel safe in Hamilton and enjoy the equal opportunity to participate in local affairs, including but not limited to education, public accommodation, access to Town services, insurance, credit, banking and health care, regardless of race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, disability, marital or familial status, military or veteran status, socioeconomic status, and/or ex-offender status.

Composition. The Town Manager shall serve as an ex officio member of the Commission. The Commission shall consist of nine (9) voting members:

A. Town Government Representatives:

1. The Chief of Police or designee;
2. One member of the Hamilton Board of Selectmen, as designated by the Hamilton Board of Selectmen;
3. The Director of the Council on Aging;
4. One member of the Housing Authority as designated by the Housing Authority.
5. Non-voting student representative of Hamilton.

B. At-Large Community Members

The Board of Selectmen shall appoint five (5) at-large members who shall be Town residents, one of whom may be a high school student. Appointments of the Town residents shall be representative of the demographics of the Town, including without limitation, representative of race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, disability, marital or family status, military or veteran status, socioeconomic status. It is also preferable that the Town residents seeking appointment to the Commission have some demonstrated interest or background in human rights issues. Appointment to the Commission, however, remains within the sole discretion of the Board of Selectmen.

Term. The members who are Town government representatives shall be appointed for terms of three years, and shall cease to serve on the Commission if they no longer hold their underlying positions. The five (5) members who are residents of the Town shall be appointed initially as follows, and thereafter for terms of three years: two members for a three-year term; two members for a two-year term; and, one member for a one-year term. Any at-large member may be removed with or without cause by the Board of Selectmen. Any vacancy that occurs other than by the expiration of a term shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term. The members of the Commission shall serve without compensation.

Duties. The Commission shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Selectmen, and shall have the following charge and responsibilities:

1. Recommend program, policies and initiatives to promote diversity, inclusion, awareness and anti-discrimination in the Town;
2. Promote an understanding of the diverse cultures within the Town and surrounding areas by working with other municipal, local and regional human rights organizations through education, organization of community events, conferences, public speaking programs, educational panels, celebrations and other community actions;
3. Serve as a resource to the Board of Selectmen with respect to issues that challenge any individual or group's enjoyment of their basic human rights in the community;
4. Annually, and more often as may be requested, provide a written report to the Board of Selectmen on the Commission's activities;
5. As often as is desired by the Commission or requested by the Board of Selectmen, prepare written or oral reports on racial, religious, ethnic, gender, disability, age, and civic initiatives or relationships, including on police relations, to cultivate and encourage an atmosphere of mutual understanding and harmonious intergroup relationships in Town;
6. Attend and support panels, meetings, conferences, celebrations or other educational or community events held by municipal or regional human rights committees, private or public corporations, organizations, high schools, colleges or universities.
7. Serve as a portal for residents or visitors to report concerns, complaints or questions of real or perceived discrimination or unequal treatment of individuals within the Town of Hamilton.
8. The Commission may report and render recommendations on certain issues involving the Town. The Commission may also report any concerns, complaints, questions or other issues raised by residents or visitors to the Town Manager. The Commission does not have the authority to formally investigate complaints, the power

to subpoena witnesses or take sworn testimony, or the power to adjudicate or mediate the resolution of disputes between individuals or entities.

Procedures. The Commission shall annually select from amongst its members a chair, vice-chair and clerk, and may decide whether to select from amongst its members a liaison to the Town of Wenham's Human Rights Commission, if any. The clerk shall be responsible for the preparation of meeting minutes, agendas, and other administrative matters for the Commission. The Commission shall decide on a preliminary calendar of meetings for the year, supplemented as desired by meetings with the Wenham Human Rights Commission, all of which shall be posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.

A majority of members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, and a majority of those present and voting shall be sufficient for any action taken by the Commission, unless otherwise required by law. The Commission shall be subject to and governed by the requirements of the Open Meeting and Public Records Laws.

This policy may from time to time, be amended by a vote of the Board of Selectmen.

This policy was adopted on _____, 2020, by a vote of the Board of Selectmen.

(Certified by the Town Clerk)

Signed,

Shawn M. Farrell, Chair

William Olson, Vice-Chair

Rosemary Kennedy

Darcy Dale

Jamie Knudsen, Clerk