



**TOWN OF HULL
LAW DEPARTMENT
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Hull, MA, pic. circa 1900

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**TO: NEWLY ELECTED/RE-ELECTED/APPOINTED/RE-APPOINTED
BOARD MEMBERS & OFFICIALS**
FROM: JAMES B. LAMPKE, ESQ., TOWN COUNSEL
**RE: OPEN MEETING LAW AND MINUTES REQUIREMENTS CONFLICT
OF INTEREST LAW**
DATE: MAY 20, 2024

**NOTE: THIS MEMO CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LAWS THAT
PERTAINS TO YOU. PLEASE READ CAREFULLY.**

Congratulations on your recent election/re-election/appointment/re-appointment to public office. Public service is a tremendously rewarding pursuit. I look forward to working with you for the betterment of our community.

There are various legal requirements that you are subject to, some of which are explained in this memo.

In conjunction with Town Clerk Lori West, the attached information is being provided to you.

OPEN MEETING LAW-

To assist you in your service as a public official of the Town of Hull, I have prepared the attached ***MEETINGS AND MINUTES GUIDE FOR BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES "INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSION QUICK INDEX MOTIONS GUIDE"***.

This document is designed to give you a better understanding of how the Open Meeting Law works and how to generally comply with the important requirement that all public bodies take and maintain minutes of their meetings.

Also as required by law (G.L. c. 30A, sec. 20), a copy of the Open Meeting Law (contained within the attached Open Meeting Law Guide from the Attorney General's office), its regulations and educational materials are attached. Please be sure to see the Town Clerk to sign the written acknowledgment form within 2 weeks.

In reference to public meetings, it is important to observe the Open Meeting Law. Most of the public's business can be and should be done in Open Session. Executive Sessions are the exception, not the rule, and should be used only when necessary. A failure to comply can result in actions being overturned and fines being imposed.

Copies of these documents or similar versions have been distributed to your fellow board members in the past. If additional copies are needed, copies can be made or just contact me.

While these documents are designed to be informative, there may be situations where additional guidance is needed. If at any time you are in doubt or have a question, I urge you to contact me. Many problems can be avoided with some additional preparation and discussion.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW-

IMPORTANT NOTE RE: THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW

Online SEC Training-

All municipal employees (elected, appointed, compensated or not with very few exceptions; note that under many circumstances consultants will be considered municipal employees for the purposes of the Conflict of Interest Law) must take within 30 days of becoming a municipal employee Conflict of Interest Law (COIL) training provided online by the State Ethics Commission (SEC). **The process for this online training has changed from past years,** It is very important that you undertake this training provided by the SEC and ensure that a proper record is created to verify that you have done so. In instances where there may be a complaint made against you over the COIL, the SEC will, among other things, check to see that you have taken the training and have a current certificate on file. Failure to have taken the training and have a certificate of completion can result in action against you by the SEC and will be considered by it. It is your responsibility to be sure you take the training and have on file a certificate of completion.

To be sure you are taking the proper current training and completing it:

1. Go on line to the SEC website at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/state-ethics-commission>
2. Scroll down and click "Complete Conflict of Interest Training"
3. Select 1 or more of the options under "What Would You Like To Do"
4. When you are ready to take the actual online training, click "Complete conflict of interest law education requirements"
5. Follow the instructions to complete the training

Be sure to keep a copy of your completion certificate for your records.

Summary of the COIL-

You are also to receive within 30 days of becoming under the COIL a municipal employee information prepared by the State Ethics Commission on the Conflict of Interest Law. You must acknowledge receipt of the summary;

Accordingly, also attached please find a copy of the Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees issued by the State Ethics Commission. You need to acknowledge receipt of this information with the Town Clerk within 10 days.

Compliance with these Conflict of Interest Law requirements is very important and failure to do so may have consequences as to the decisions and actions you take as well as open you up to possible enforcement action and financial penalties by the State. If you experience any difficulty in completing these requirements, be sure to contact me.

Also, please find attached a copy of G.L. c. 268A, sec. 23, Standards of Conduct.

Other helpful and important COIL information is available from the SEC website at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/state-ethics-commission> .

[If you continue to have difficulty, the State Ethics Commission staff can help you access the correct information. Call the Commission at (617) 371-9500.

If you are in the need of additional guidance concerning the Open Meeting Law and/or Conflict of Interest Law, do not hesitate to contact me.

Again, congratulations and good luck in your position for the Town of Hull. If I can be of assistance in your service to the community, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can best be reached at the following numbers: -O- 781-749-9922; Hull residential office- 781-925-1587; **cell phone- 617-285-4561- best way**; or by email- jlampke@town.hull.ma.us .

Jbl51524