

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN POLICY:**

### **IV. PETITIONERS' ACCESS TO TOWN COUNSEL**

Subject to these guidelines, Town Counsel is available to consult with registered voters who have been identified as the lead petitioner and desire to submit or who have submitted an article for consideration at an annual or special town meeting, as a "petitioner's article" without sponsorship of a town board.

1. Town Counsel's consultation is limited to (1) suggesting language that reflects the petitioner's legislative intent in presenting articles for insertion in the warrant; (2) suggesting language to insure compliance with procedural requirements; and (3) preparing the main motion for Town Meeting. Town Counsel will not render written opinions or give advice to petitioners about substantive legal issues relative to their articles.

2. Prior to the deadline for filing articles for insertion in the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting, the Selectmen will conduct a "petitioners' workshop" at which prospective petitioners may ask general questions. The Town Administrator shall set reasonable limits on the scope of lead petitioner inquiries and the time allocated for consultation with Town Counsel.

3. Town Counsel may decline to assist the lead petitioner if Town Counsel states in writing that such assistance would present Town Counsel with an actual conflict of interest, and gives the basis for the conflict of interest. The Town Administrator may assign Special Counsel to assist the lead petitioner as appropriate.

4. Access to Town Counsel during Town Meeting sessions is not permitted.

*Revised July 27, 2015*