

Conflict of Interest Policy Town of Cabot, Vermont

- F. **Public interest** means an interest of the community as a whole, conferred generally upon all residents of the municipality.
- G. **Public officer** means a person elected or statutorily-appointed to perform executive, administrative, legislative, or quasi-judicial functions for the municipality. This term does not include any municipal employee.
- H. **Quasi-judicial proceeding** means a case in which the legal rights of one or more persons who are granted party status are adjudicated, which is conducted in such a way that all parties have opportunities to present evidence and to cross-examine witnesses presented by other parties; and which results in a written decision, the result of which is appealable by a party to a higher authority.

Article 5. Prohibited Conduct.

- A. A public officer shall not participate in any official action if he or she has a conflict of interest in the matter under consideration.
- B. A public officer shall not personally – or through any member of his or her household, business associate, employer or employee – represent, appear for, or negotiate in a private capacity on behalf of any person or organization in a cause, proceeding, application, or other matter pending before the public body in which the public officer holds office.
- C. A public officer shall not accept gifts or other offerings for personal gain by virtue of his or her public office that are not available to the public in general.
- D. A public officer shall not use resources unavailable to the general public – including but not limited to municipal staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities – for private gain or personal purposes.

Article 6. Disclosure. A public officer who has reason to believe that he or she has or may have a conflict of interest in a particular matter shall, prior to participating in any official action on the matter, publicly disclose at a public meeting or public hearing that he or she has an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the matter under consideration and disclose the nature of the actual or perceived conflict of interest. Alternatively, a public officer may request that another public officer recuse him or herself from a matter due to a conflict of interest.

Article 7. Consideration of Recusal. Once there has been a disclosure of an actual or perceived conflict of interest, other public officers shall be afforded an opportunity to ask questions or make comments about the situation. If a previously unknown conflict is discovered during a meeting or hearing conducted by a public body of the municipality, the public body shall take evidence pertaining to the conflict and, if appropriate, adjourn to an executive session to address the conflict.

Conflict of Interest Policy Town of Cabot, Vermont

this meeting occur in public. If appropriate, the Cabot Selectboard may admonish the offending public officer in private.

3. If the Cabot Selectboard decides that further action is warranted, the Cabot Selectboard may admonish the offending public officer at an open meeting and reflect this action in the minutes of the meeting. The public officer shall be given the opportunity to respond to the admonishment.
4. Upon majority vote in an open meeting, the Cabot Selectboard may request (but not order) that the offending public officer resign from his or her office.

B. Enforcement Against Appointed Officers. The Cabot Selectboard may choose to follow any of the steps articulated in Article 11A. In addition to or in lieu of any of those steps, the Cabot Selectboard may choose to remove an appointed officer from office, subject to state law.

Article 12. Exception. The recusal provisions of Article 8 shall not apply if the Cabot Selectboard determines that an emergency exists and that actions of the public body otherwise could not take place. In such a case, a public officer who has reason to believe he or she has a conflict of interest shall disclose such conflict as provided in Article 6.

Article 13. Effective Date. This policy shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Cabot Selectboard.

Signatures:

Michael Hogan
Jac "Jack" Doney
Bernard Stetson
Robert Doney
Ed Doney

Date:

November 20, 2017