

**Governing West Tisbury:
A Practical Guide
MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES
FOR APPOINTED AND ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Fall 2025 Edition

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OUR TOWN

It doesn't take a cap and gown.
To learn your way around our town.
There's a lot of ways to show you care,
Assuming you have time to spare.

Just give your talents, views, and skills—
No need for powdered wigs or quills.
There's nothing lost, and lots to gain,
So, get involved—or don't complain.

D.A.W.

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FOREWORD

In creating the Improving Governance Task Force (IGTF) in 2023, the West Tisbury Select Board acknowledged that West Tisbury has grown in population, and that governing our town is now more complex and challenging. This governance handbook is intended to ensure clarity and transparency while helping both appointed and elected committee members comply with Massachusetts General Law when representing the Town of West Tisbury.

The Task Force reviewed the handbook created by Manchester-By-The-Sea. Town Clerk Dianne K. Bucco generously approved use of that town's *Handbook* to guide this document.

INTRODUCTION

It might surprise you to learn that West Tisbury town government depends on more than 200 volunteers who carry out a surprising variety of functions. In fact, our town life, as we know it, could not exist without this generous gift of individual time.

Town government exists to support community functions that we all agree are both important to our individual lives and that are better accomplished by group action—education, firefighting, elder services, public health, recreation just to name a few. Over time, governmental function has been codified so we have laws, rules, and customs at the federal, state, and local levels.

Which brings us to this Handbook. It is an attempt to collect and articulate these laws and expectations in one easy, accessible place; to inform and support the cadre of volunteers that enhance West Tisbury life. Here you will find informational resources for board and committee members including legal requirements as well as an outline of good practices.

Thank you for donating your time and expertise. May it be made a little easier with this resource to guide you.

GOVERNING WEST TISBURY

The duties of a municipality are simple and many: to see what needs to be done; to decide how it will be done; to find the people who can do it; to pay the people who will do it; and to find the money to pay them. Governing all this in a fair, equitable, efficient and economic way is the challenge. To manage and regulate all this takes people, talented, intelligent, sensitive and thoughtful people

The basic unit of government in New England is the city or town. A distinctive characteristic of town government is the Town Meeting, in which the townspeople exercise the traditional powers of the legislature –the power to make laws and to exercise budgeting authority.

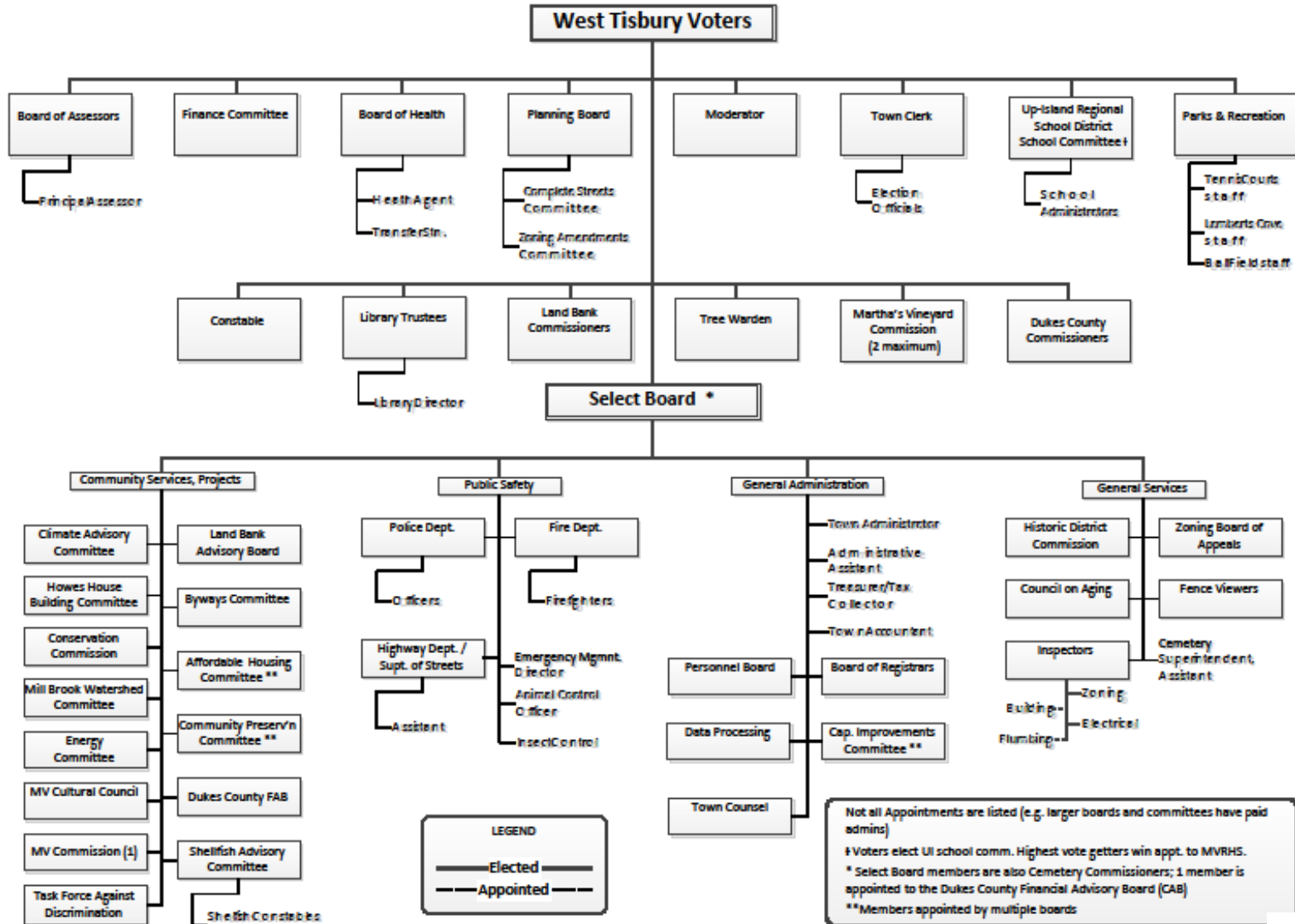
All fundamental town business is transacted at the annual Town Meeting, traditionally held on the second Tuesday in April. At this forum, townspeople exchange opinions as they determine the town’s direction through warrant articles and by the budgetary choices of how the money to be raised by taxes will be spent.

Between Town Meetings, the executive powers of West Tisbury are vested in the Select Board to be exercised by them or through Town agencies and officers under their direct supervision. Elected officials operate independently and are not subordinate to the Select Board or Town Administrator.

Boards, committees, commissions, and subcommittees will be referred to throughout this document as “Committee” and shall be understood to mean all such entities.

As of February, 2023

Town of West Tisbury, MA
Town Meeting Form of Government



LEGEND
 — Elected —
 - - - Appointed - - -

Not all Appointments are listed (e.g. larger boards and committees have paid admins)
 † Voters elect UI school comm. Highest vote getters win appt. to MVRHS.
 * Select Board members are also Cemetery Commissioners; 1 member is appointed to the Dukes County Financial Advisory Board (CAB)
 ** Members appointed by multiple boards

Org. chart by Doug Ruskin

West Tisbury Annual Political Calendar

Local Events

Set by Town By-law & Statute

Consult the [Town Clerk's page](#) on the town website for specific registration information and early voting information.

Island-Wide Offices

Set by State Statute

Massachusetts Secretary of State mails a comprehensive election guide to each registered voter in each election cycle.

For the most recent information contact the Mass Secretary of State (see below)

Item

Date or Deadline

Annual Town Meeting	2nd Tuesday in April
Annual Town Election	Thursday immediately following ATM
Deadline to Post Warrant for Annual Town Meeting	7 Days before ATM
Nomination papers for local offices	49 days prior to election
Last day to withdraw papers for local election	33 days prior to election
Annual Town Meeting Warrant Closes	1st Tuesday in February prior to ATM
Annual Committee Reports	Last Friday in January prior to ATM
Department Budgets	15 December (final date per Town Accountant)
Special Town Meeting	
Deadline for Posting Warrant	14 days before STM

Item

Deadline

Nomination papers due: Dukes County Commission Martha's Vineyard Comm. Register of Probate Register of Probate Sheriff	Spring preceding Sept. primary for registered party members or November general election for unenrolled
State Primary	Set by State Senate each election year, held in September
Last day to register to vote in State Primary	10 days prior to any election
Last day to register to vote in Federal Election	
Federal/State Election	1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November.
Up-Island Regional School District	Same as State election
<p><i>This handbook is published once a year, and deadlines may vary.</i></p> <p><i>Contact the Massachusetts Secretary of State at 617-727-2828 or 1-800-462 VOTE for current information.</i></p>	

Agenda: The agenda is the official order of business for a committee meeting. Any agenda changes must take public notice into consideration. Transparent government requires the public to be informed of all impending discussions as well as final decisions.

Adjourn, adjournment: The formal ending or suspension of a meeting or legislative session, either temporarily (to a specific time and place) or permanently. In Massachusetts municipal governance, adjournment may occur at the end of a town meeting session, with the meeting continuing on another date, or it may conclude the meeting entirely.

Appointment of appointed officials: The Select Board and various other committees designate individuals to serve as needed on committees or sub-committees. Appointing qualified and interested residents who are broadly representative of West Tisbury is vital.

By-laws: local legislation (regulation) passed at a town meeting and approved by the State AG.

CMR: Code of Massachusetts Regulation

Conflict of Interest: To influence any official act or any act within the official responsibility of a municipal employee or member of the judiciary or person who has been selected to be such. ([link](#))

Elected: An individual who has received a majority of votes from the registered voters of West Tisbury to fill a municipal position. Also see “appointed.”

Executive Session(s): A portion of a public body’s meeting that is closed to the public, held for specific, lawful purposes such as discussing litigation strategy, contract negotiations, personnel matters, or the purchase of real estate. Executive sessions must be announced during an open meeting and follow specific procedural rules under the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law ([M.G.L. c. 30A, §21](#)).

Majority: Unless otherwise specified by bylaw or Statute, a majority is considered to be more than half of the members eligible to vote, and voting—RONR: (see definition on page 9)

Minutes: The Open Meeting Law requires that all committees keep accurate records of its public meetings, referred to as “minutes.” These minutes contain date, time and place of the meeting, who is in attendance, major items discussed and all formal votes. They are public records as soon as the meeting has concluded.

MGL: Massachusetts General Law

Open Meeting Law (OML): The Massachusetts OML, [M.G.L. c. 30A, §§18-25](#), is one of the so-called “Sunshine Laws” enacted throughout the country designed to create transparency in the process of government decision making. The OML requires that most meetings of public bodies be held in public, and it establishes rules that public bodies must follow in the creation and maintenance of records of those meetings.

Public Hearings: Hearings are specially designated meetings held for the purpose of gathering information from which to draw a conclusion and reach a decision.

Public Meetings: A public meeting occurs at any time a quorum of the Town committee members gets together. This provision applies to meetings to discuss or consider any public business or policy over which the committee has some jurisdiction or advisory power. This can be tricky in a small town like West Tisbury where informal meet-ups happen naturally at the post office or grocery store. Committee members must be mindful of these important statutes.

Public Records: Most documents that are not employment related are “public” and must be made available to anyone who wishes to see them.

Quorum: A quorum is one more than half of the currently serving committee members.

Regulation: Regulations are detailed instructions that explain how to implement specific laws, ordinances or bylaws. They provide practical details on how laws are applied and enforced.

RONR: Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th edition 2020

Select Board: The 3 chief elected officials, elected for three-year staggered terms, to oversee the day-to-day operation of the town. Select Board meetings are held bi-weekly in Town Hall. [MGL Ch. 4 § 7: 5A & 5B](#)

Statute: A law enacted by a legislative body, such as the Massachusetts General Court. Statutes establish legal requirements, authorize actions, or prohibit conduct, and they serve as the foundation for municipal regulations and procedures.

Town Meeting: The traditional powers of the legislative branch of government is vested in Town Meeting—the power to make laws (called bylaws) and exercise budgeting authority.

Town Report: An annual compendium of West Tisbury governmental actions for a given year. This report is compiled by the Select Board and printed each spring.

Volunteers: Those who work for the Town in unpaid positions.

Warrant: A legal document that authorizes and outlines the agenda for a town meeting. It lists the articles (proposed actions or decisions) to be considered and voted on by the voters. In Massachusetts towns, the warrant must be publicly posted in advance and serves as the official notice of the meeting.

Warrant Article: An individual item listed on a town meeting warrant, representing a specific proposal, action, appropriation, or bylaw change to be debated and voted on by the voters. Each article forms the basis of the motions made at the meeting.

Recognized Holidays.

The following holidays shall be recognized by the Town on the day on which they are legally observed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Holidays which fall on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday and those falling on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

- New Year's Day,
- Martin Luther King Day,
- Presidents' Day,
- Patriots' Day,
- Memorial Day,
- Juneteenth Day,
- Independence Day,
- Labor Day,
- Indigenous People’s Day,
- Veterans' Day,
- Thanksgiving Day,
- Day after Thanksgiving,
- Half day last workday before Christmas,
- Christmas Day

Source: Town Personnel Bylaw 2025 11.2

Governing West Tisbury

Two paths lead to serving the town on a board, commission, or committee: one requires standing for election, and other requires an appointment by the Select Board. They are listed in the [Annual Report of the Town Officers](#).

A. Elected Officials

You may wish to serve as an elected official. Town elections are held the Thursday after the Annual Town meeting. Nomination papers with *at least 20* signatures of town voters must be filed with the Town Clerk 49 days prior to the election. See schedule on page 8

B. Appointments

Residents interested in getting involved in the Town should reach out to the Town Administrator and complete the [volunteer application](#) form on the Town website. The [Annual Town Report](#) and [General Bylaws](#) of West Tisbury are excellent sources of information regarding the duties and responsibilities of individual committees. Citizens are encouraged to attend meetings of the committee of interest to learn about it and its role in town governance.

Openings and vacancies in all Town committees are posted on the [Town website](#).

All elected and appointed officials are Town employees (by Massachusetts General Law) and are required to take an in-person oath of office prior to voting. There are also statutory requirements for these officials including the [Open Meeting Law](#) (OML) and the [Conflict of Interest Law](#) (with the Ethics exam) trainings.

The Select Board, as prescribed by law, devotes considerable time and effort to make logical appointments to the various committees of the Town. Appointing qualified and interested residents who are broadly representative of West Tisbury is vital. Applicants may also provide a resume and/or background documentation illustrating any related experience and a brief explanation for their interest in the open position. An interested volunteer will benefit from attending a committee meeting before being appointed. That way the newbie will better understand the duties, charges, and responsibilities of the committee upon taking office.

State statutes outline the powers and duties of many committees. Each West Tisbury Board and Committee must have an up-to-date charge approved by the Select Board to further define the work of the committee.

All appointments made by the Select Board or other elected boards are made by majority vote in a regular open meeting. Appointments are made at the sole discretion of the governing board which may request suggestions from other boards or commissions.

C. Reappointment Process

The Select Board turns its attention to reappointments in the Spring following the Annual Town Meeting.

D. Committee Duties

Preparing for and performing the duties of a committee member will require additional time beyond attending scheduled meetings. (See page 9)

E. Expectations

Many boards such as the Conservation Commission, the Historical Commission, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Council on Aging, Board of Assessors, Board of Health, and the Cultural Council have duties and responsibilities established by Commonwealth law. Other committees have charges prepared by the Select Board while others are guided by Town bylaws. It is the responsibility of the individual to understand all governing authority and responsibilities of the Committee.

F. Conflict of Interest Law

The conduct of members of municipal committees is regulated by the provisions of the [Conflict-of-Interest-Chapter 268A of the Massachusetts General Laws](#) and enforced by the Massachusetts Ethics Commission. The statute assigns personal responsibility to regular and special municipal employees (including elected and appointed volunteers) in four general areas: Community Responsibility, Responsibility to Municipal Administration, Relationship to other Board Members, and Prohibited Conduct.

The State Ethics Commission website and contact information can be found at www.mass.gov/ethics.

G. Open Meeting Law

All committee members need to be acquainted with the complete and often revised Open Meeting Law (OML) located at <https://www.mass.gov/the-open-meeting-law>.

The Massachusetts OML, [M.G.L. c. 30A, §§18-25](#), is one of the so-called “Sunshine Laws” enacted throughout the country designed to create transparency in the process of government decision making. The OML requires that most meetings of public bodies be held in public, and it establishes rules that public bodies must follow in the creation and maintenance of records of those meetings.

A meeting is generally defined as “a deliberation by a public body with respect to any matter within the body’s jurisdiction” ([M.G.L. c. 30A, § 18](#)).

The law is based on the premise that the public is entitled to see how governmental decisions are debated and decided and not simply to know the end result. Except in very specific cases spelled out in the law, the public and the press/media have the right to attend all meetings of government bodies.

All people who work or volunteer for the Town must follow the OML and are required to renew their Open Meeting Law certification at each appointment, election, or hiring. This certification is required within two weeks of a member’s election or appointment or the taking of the oath of office, whichever occurs later.

Certification: All members of public bodies must complete the “Certificate of receipt (link) of Open Meeting Law Materials” certifying that they have received these materials, and that they understand the requirements of the OML and the consequences of violating it.

Deliberations and votes held in private sessions, commonly called **Executive Sessions**, are allowed only under specific, strict circumstances as outlined in the OML. Executive Sessions may only be held after convening in an open, public session.

OML Complaints: Anyone can file an OML complaint against any committee via the process set forth by the Attorney General. The complainant must use the complaint form (link). The complainant must file the complaint with the committee and the Town Clerk. The committee has 14 business days to respond to the complaint. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response by the committee, they can report it to the Attorney General who will then investigate and issue a declination or a determination.

H. Public Records Law

Documents created by a committee are public records and must be available to the public.

Documents that are deemed employment records, such as the application and appointment letters which contain information of a personal nature are protected by MGL. The Town Clerk serves as the Records Access Officer

GUIDELINES FOR COMMITTEE OPERATION

All town committees shall elect a Chairperson, Co- or Vice Chair, and Secretary annually. The organization of the committee shall be communicated to the Town Clerk’s office at townclerk@westtisbury-ma.gov and be visible on the Town website. All changes to the committee (resignations, new appointments, etc.) must be reported prior to the next scheduled committee meeting.

A. Role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson of each committee has the same rights as other members to propose resolutions, engage in discussions, and vote on matters. In addition, the Chairperson’s responsibilities include:

1. Presiding over all meetings.
2. Deciding questions of order.
3. Ensuring compliance with the OML.
4. Seeing that all new members are introduced to their duties.
5. Performing one or more of the following Duties
 - Seeing that the committee’s annual report is submitted on time (last Monday in Dec).
 - Submitting the annual budget if the committee has one (by Mid-December)
 - Signing Pay Vouchers for the administrator.
 - Presiding over the hiring process of a new committee employee when necessary.

B. Vice Chairperson: Chairs meetings in the Chair’s absence; assists in planning agendas In the event of a prolonged absence or vacancy of the chair, the vice chair assumes all duties of the chair.

C. Secretary/Clerk ensures that the meeting is properly posted; takes minutes in the absence of staff; ensures that the minutes are properly posted on the Town website; can provide documents on request.

D. Orientation

Each committee shall provide a copy of this handbook and discuss it with new members at the annual review that must be held by each committee at the first meeting following the ATM.

E. Posting Agendas

The Open Meeting Law requires a complete meeting notice be posted at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. The notice must include the committee’s name, date, day, time, location of the meeting, Zoom instructions (if applicable), and a detailed agenda. The agenda must be sent to the Town Clerk at townclerk@westtisbury-ma.gov and copied to the Town Hall Assistant at boardassist@westtisbury-ma.gov.

In case of emergency, the 48-hour notice requirement is waived, but notice must be given to the Town Clerk as soon as possible. Emergency means a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action. (940 CMR 29.02 Definitions)

F. Amending an Agenda

The posted agenda provides notice to the public of impending discussions. Because of its primacy, any agenda changes must take public notice into consideration.

A public body may consider a topic that was not listed on the meeting notice if it is unanticipated or a topic that is added late, keeping in mind this from the AG: “Although a public body may consider a topic that was not listed in the meeting notice if it was not anticipated, the Attorney General encourages public bodies to postpone discussion and action on topics that are controversial or may be of particular interest to the public if the topic was not listed in the meeting notice.”

G. Minutes

The Open Meeting Law requires that all committees keep accurate records of its public meetings, referred to as “minutes” which must comply with the “Checklist for Creating and Approving Meeting Minutes” in [940 CMR 29](#) (download) These are public records as soon as the meeting has concluded and a draft may be requested in accordance with the OML by anyone immediately following the meeting.

The minutes must be approved in a timely manner. A “timely manner” is considered to be within the next three public body meetings or 30 days from the date of the meeting, 940 CMR 29.11.

When the minutes are prepared and sent to the members in advance of the meeting, the chair may announce that the reading of the minutes will be omitted ‘without objection. 41:9

A formal motion is not required for approval, though it is not out of order. The chair will ask for corrections. Corrections and objections may be proposed and dealt with by amendment as usual. 41:10

After corrections have been made the chair may say “There being no further corrections, the minutes are approved as corrected

It should be noted that a member’s absence from the meeting for which minutes are being approved does not prevent the member from participating in their approval. .

H. Conduct of Meetings

Because most people are familiar with [Robert’s Rules of Order](#), and there is no practical alternative, committees generally follow those guidelines although formal items, like standing to be recognized, and reading aloud of the minutes can be dispensed with. Adjudicatory hearings may have their own rules and regulations. A public meeting occurs at any occasion where a quorum of the Town committee members gets together to discuss or consider any public business or policy over which the committee has some jurisdiction or advisory power.

I. Quorum and Votes

A quorum is one more than half of the currently serving members. Under certain circumstances, some committee actions may require more than a simple majority, and these requirements should be noted in the Committee’s bylaws or set forth by Massachusetts General Law.

No quorum of a Town committee shall meet outside a properly posted meeting for the purpose of deciding on or deliberating a decision on any matter within the purview of the committee.

No votes taken in open session may be by secret ballot. The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting. MGL Title 41 Ch 30A § 22

During virtual meetings, all votes must be conducted by roll call and recorded in the meeting minutes, indicating each member's name and vote (e.g., "John: aye," "Cheryl: yes").

J. Email

Electronic communication may not be used to circumvent the Open Meeting Law by what is called “serial deliberation.” Individual committee members may email each other only to discuss scheduling a meeting, to distribute an agenda, or to distribute materials that will then be discussed in a properly posted meeting. Any personal opinions must be reserved for a properly noticed meeting.

K. Conduct of Members – Conflict of Interest

Members are reminded that the basic responsibility of each individual is to represent the interests of the entire community. This is known as fiduciary duty. Appearance of or actual personal benefit is against the law.

MGL, Chapter 268A, [§ 3](#) or [§ 23\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#) is very clear that committee members shall not accept gifts or other consideration valued at more than \$50 or engage in any business or professional activity which might appear to impair their independence of judgment in the exercise of their official duties.

Confidential information must not be disclosed or used to advance personal interests. Maintaining public trust is essential; therefore, committee members must avoid any actions or appearances that could raise suspicion among the public. Members should refrain from participating in matters where they or their immediate family members have a direct or indirect financial interest.

Decisions and actions of an official legal meeting are binding. Individual committee members may not represent the committee outside of a meeting.

A committee member may not make statements or promises of how they will vote on matters that come before the committee until they have an opportunity to hear the pros and cons of the issue during a committee meeting.

While all members are entitled to their own opinions, responsible committee decisions depend on a thorough presentation and discussion of all relevant facts, including the plain meaning of the law.

Executive sessions often reveal privileged information. This should not be discussed outside of the committee.

L. Location of Meetings

Each committee establishes a regular meeting schedule to suit the needs and convenience of the members; however, they must be always scheduled in public locations and be accessible in all ways to the public. A public place is generally an indoor or outdoor area, whether privately or publicly owned, to which the public have access by right or by invitation, expressed or implied.

When the committee wishes to schedule a meeting in the Town Hall, it must reserve the space through the Town Clerk's office by email at townclerk [Town-Clerk](#) The Governor has extended authorization for public meetings to be held remotely or in a hybrid format through June 2027. A public body is not required to provide remote access to a meeting if the meeting is held in a physical location that is open and meets accessibility requirements.

M. Public Hearings

Hearings are held for the purpose of gathering information from which to draw a conclusion and reach a decision.

Hearings have mandatory time frames for posting requirements.

N. Resignations and Removal

A committee member who is no longer able to serve for whatever reason, including a change in residency, shall officially resign so that the vacancy may be advertised and filled in a timely manner. A resigning member should submit a written letter of resignation to the Chairperson and the Town Clerk. The Chairperson of a committee shall notify the appointing authority in writing when a vacancy occurs. Whenever possible, the appointing authority shall fill the vacancy within sixty (60) days of receipt of the notice of vacancy.

The Select Board may, at any time, by majority vote, remove any appointed committee or board member, for cause, including on account of a conflict of interest or of failure to attend committee meetings or attend to committee business or to fail to uphold the oath they took upon taking office. No member shall be removed, absent an opportunity for the member to resign or appear at a hearing before the Select Board. A written statement setting forth specific reasons for such removal must be filed with the Town Clerk and a copy delivered to or sent in writing to the committee and to the board member in question at least five days before the date of the proposed hearing. The actions of the Select Board are final. [MGL Ch 39 §8A](#)

O. Treatment of Public Observers/Public Right to Comment

All meetings of a Town committee shall be open to the public, and any person shall be permitted to attend any meeting except under those circumstances listed in the section “Executive Session.”

Any attendee may be recognized by the Chair to speak, or a comment period may be specified in the agenda.

Any person may record a meeting (excluding executive sessions) using a tape recorder or any other recording device (audio or video), as long as the Chairperson is notified and the recording does not disrupt the meeting’s proceedings.

Q. Conflict Resolution

Differences are an inevitable part of committee work. These four steps may help to resolve an intractable disagreement.

1. Separate the people from the problem
2. Focus on interests, not positions
3. Create options for mutual gain
4. Insist on using objective criteria.

Elected officials are independent and operate outside the authority of the Select Board and Town Administrator.

R. Staff Support & Access to Town Counsel

Town committees may have access to staff support in a variety of situations. Some committees have dedicated clerical support, while others can request resources such as Town supplies, the copier, and the postage machine through the Town Administrator’s Office.

Most cases of access to Town Counsel must be approved by the Select Board.

FINANCES

A. Financial Matters

A committee’s budget must be authorized by a vote at Town Meeting. If a committee anticipates the need to expend funds, it must submit a budget request for the upcoming fiscal year through the Town Administrator and Town Accountant no later than October 1st of the preceding year. Should a need for funds arise during the fiscal year, the committee must contact the Town Administrator to address the request. Any expenditure of funds must be preceded by a favorable vote of the committee to ensure proper approval and accountability.

B. Fund Raising

The provision of [M.G.L. c. 44, § 53A](#) and the written policy adopted by the Select Board enable specific Town committees to raise and disburse funds according to specific procedures.

C. Reimbursement

Town policy provides specific procedures for approval prior to expenditure to reserve and/or arrange to be reimbursed for expenses such as off island transportation costs. Your department head will contact the [Town Accountant](#) for best practices and procedures.

Best Practices

- A. A committee will adopt a rotation of the officers at intervals deemed by the committee to be appropriate. While doing so annually may be too aggressive, given the importance of experience, electing a new Chairperson while the former Chairperson remains on the committee allows a transfer of accumulated knowledge.
- B. A committee shall annually review the authority and duties of the committee as specified by Massachusetts General Law, By-laws, and other sources as described in this Handbook. Ideally this review will include newly appointed or newly elected members. This review will be completed at the first meeting in April or May after the annual election, and a report detailing the participants, questions and recommended changes shall be made to the Town Administrator
- C. Putting the Open Meeting law into practice
 - a. Information to be shared with the rest of the committee must first be sent to the Administrator of that committee or to the Chairperson for distribution. Although sharing directly with other committee members by email or other means is legal, *responding* other than to acknowledge receipt of such a correspondence is a violation of the open meeting law. This becomes important when a decision of the committee is challenged.
 - b. Tracking and storing documents is key to responsiveness to public requests. The town is developing a system to do that, but in the meantime make sure that any document used by the committee must be retained and has at a minimum the name of the document, the committee that uses it, the authors, and the date or version.
 - c. File names should identify the document specifically. For a counter example, “Annual Report” is not a sufficient file name; Former treasurer Kathy Logue suggests leading with the date (yyyy:mm:dd) as in “20250515 FinCom Annual Report”. This will sort with the most recent at the top of the column, and the document name and who sent it is clear.
- D. Checklists and written procedures help to make sure that no consideration is overlooked. They also encourage consistency in application of the laws and bylaws. All committees should consider writing or adopting checklists.
- E. Policies and procedures, if they are not in opposition to bylaws, can be written or adopted by any committee to govern their procedures, but they do not have the effect of law.
- F. Where the annual functioning of a committee repeats from year to year, best practice recommends developing and making public a calendar with the essential dates and deadlines e.g. see the Community Preservation Committee webpage.
- G. The Town Clerk offers this shorthand guidance for posting meetings. (Full guidance on p. 14)

Post by:	To have your meeting on
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Monday of the following week
Friday	Tuesday of the following week.

Handbook Part 2

Boards, Committees and Commissions

The following pages contain a brief codification of the Statutes, Regulations, Town By-laws where required, and basic information about each individual Committee, Board, and Commission that have been created for governing West Tisbury.

Each document aims to be one sheet, with useful information on both sides for both the novice and the experienced practitioner to illustrate and inform the work and deliberation of that particular committee. We have made an effort to limit the number of annual changes, i.e., staff, and the names of members. This information may be found on the Town Website

The following pages contain references to Town Bylaws, state statutes, and local regulations that are crafted to solve problems, to mitigate dangers, and to allow us to live together in harmony.

In a small town we depend on volunteers. They are your neighbors and friends, and, with a little persuasion, you, working to see that, “the laws be faithfully executed,” just as the US Constitution instructs.

CHECK THE CALENDAR ON THE [TOWN WEBSITE](#) FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION AND AGENDA.

Board or Committee	Day	Time	Location	Contact	Page
Affordable Housing ¹	2 nd & 4 th Tues.	6:30 PM	Town Hall Conf.	Wanda Higgins	21
Afford. Housing Trust	As needed			Wanda Higgins	23
Assessors	1 st & 3 rd Tue.	4:30 PM	Town Hall	Mac Anderson	25
Board of Health ¹	2 nd & 4 th Tue.	5:00 PM	Howes House	Alex Lam	27
Byways	As needed			Jane Rossi	29
Capital Improvement ²				Chelsea Joiner	31
Cemeteries ³				Jen Rand	33
Climate Advisory	1 st Wed.	4:30 PM	Zoom	Kate Guiney	35
Community Pres. ¹	4 th Wed*	5:30 PM	Howes House	Maura Valley	37
Complete Streets	As needed			Jane Rossi	39
Cons. Commission ¹	1 st & 3 rd Tues.	5:00 PM	Town Hall Conf	Angela Luckey	41
Energy Committee	2 nd Wed.	8:30AM	Zoom	Kate Guiney	43
Facility Maintenance	1 st Thur.	8:30 AM	TH		45
Finance Committee ²	2 nd Tues	5:00 PM	Zoom	Shawn Ramoutar	47
Hist Dist. Commiss. ^{1 3}	As needed			Sean Connelly	49
Howes House Comm	On pause*				51
Improving Governance	1 st & 3 rd Fri*	4:00PM	Zoom	John Christensen	53
Library Trustees	2 nd Tues	1:00 PM	WT Library	Alexandra Pratt	55
Land Bank Advisory				Peter Wells	57
Local Historical ³	As needed			Annie Fisher	59
MV Reg. Cultural Cncl					63
Mill Brook Watershed				Prudy Burt	61
Parks & Recs ³	1 st Wed.	6:00 PM	Town Hall	Peggy Stone	65
Personnel Board ²	2 nd Mon.	5:00 PM	Town Hall	Kate Guiney	67
Planning Board ¹	2 nd & 4 th Mon.	5:00 PM		Jane Rossi	69
Preserve WT	Dormant				71
School Committees	MVPS (link)				73
Select Board ¹	Most Weds.	4:30 PM	Town Hall Conf.	Jen Rand	75
Shellfish Advisory ³	As needed		Tree behind TH	David Merry	77
Discrimination TF	Dormant*				79
Tree Advisory	2 nd Thurs	Noon	WT Library	Tim Borland	81
UICOA	1 st Tues	9 AM		Bethany Hammond	83
Visioning	*			Jane Rossi	85
Zoning Appeals Bd. ¹	2 ^x Thursdays	5:00 PM	Town Hall	Kim Leaird	87
Acknowledgements					89

¹ Committees also may hold hearings in accordance with specific MGL and CMR.
² Committees often begin their work in the fall, preparing for the Annual Town Meeting. This may involve extra meetings.
³ Some committees hold meetings or hearings as circumstances arise, or on a seasonal basis.
 Note: Budget planning begins in the fall. Any public input needs to be offered early in the process to have any effect on deliberation.

Committee Name Affordable Housing Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/237/Affordable-Housing-Committee>

Staff Administrative Assistant

Date Established May 24, 2000

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	1	Board of Assessors	At large
	2	Select Board	
	1	Planning Board	
	1	Zoning Board of Appeals	
	1	Board of Health	
	1	Community Preservation Comm.	
	1	Select Board	Select Board Member
Total 8			

Term 2 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B](#)

Enacted in 1969, Chapter 40B aims to increase the supply of affordable housing by allowing developers to override certain local zoning restrictions if their projects include a specified percentage of affordable units. The goal is for every community in Massachusetts to have at least 10% of its housing stock designated as affordable.

Local Affordable Housing Committees often work to help their communities meet the objectives of Chapter 40B by identifying housing needs, recommending policies, and facilitating the development of affordable housing projects. These committees operate under the authority granted to municipalities and are not mandated by a specific state law.

Mission Statement The WTAHC aims to promote, develop, increase and support the creation of long term, year round, stable housing in order to serve its residents, municipal employees and seasonal workforce while interpreting, adhering to and complying with the housing provisions of the WT Zoning Bylaw 4.4 and its amendments.

- The committee will
- Identify housing needs.
 - Prioritize serving those populations most in need whenever possible.
 - Encourage town contributions of land and funds
 - Share information with other island Towns.
 - Participate in public sessions related to our mission.

- Support the establishment of dedicated funding sources that support our mission.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum. Quorums for most matters is six.*

Minimum Notice for Meetings Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve its action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting. *

Posting of minutes The Open Meeting Law requires public bodies to create and approve minutes in a timely manner. A “timely manner” is considered to be within the next three public-body meetings or 30 days from the date of the meeting, whichever is later

Regular Meeting Day Second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:30pm

Regular Meeting Location Town Hall, 2nd Floor Select Board’s Meeting Room

Resignations and Removal *See Page 16*

Committee Name Affordable Housing Trust

Town Webpage <https://www.westisbury-ma.gov/237/Affordable-Housing-Committee>

Staff Administrative Assistant

Date Established 2005

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	1	Board of Assessors	Members per bylaw+
	3	Select Board	
	1	Planning Board	
	1	Zoning Board of Appeals	
	1	Board of Health	
	1	Assessor’s Appointed Member	
	2	Select Board	At Large appointees Special Municipal Empl.
	Total 10		

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term 2 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 55C](#)

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 55C allows cities and towns to create Municipal Affordable Housing Trusts. These trusts are designed to help communities create and preserve affordable housing. Key points:

- A municipality can establish a trust by vote of its legislative body (e.g., town meeting).
- The trust is managed by a board of trustees (at least 5 members), usually appointed by the mayor or select board.
- The trust can receive and spend funds, buy and sell property, and support affordable housing initiatives.
- Funds in the trust remain local and don’t revert to the general fund.

This law gives local governments flexibility and authority to respond to housing needs directly.

[West Tisbury Affordable Housing Trust Bylaw](#)

There shall be a board of trustees of the West Tisbury Affordable Housing Trust Fund, in this section referred to as the Board, which shall include members of the Select Board and members of the West Tisbury Affordable Housing Committee as appointed by their respective boards. Trustees shall serve for a term not to exceed two years. A quorum of the Board shall be six members except when voting to appropriate funds, and in that instance, the minimum number of members present shall be seven.

Amended at Annual Town Meeting April 8, 2025

The powers of the Board shall be carried on in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 55C.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

As needed

Regular Meeting Location

Resignations and Removal

See Page 16

Committee Name Board of Assessors

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/232/Assessors-Office>

Staff Principal Assessor
Data Collector(s)

Date Established 1993?

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	3	Elected Officials	

Term 3 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41 Sections 24-25A](#)

These sections cover the election or appointment, terms, and duties of assessors.

- Section 24: Towns must have a board of assessors with three members, unless a different number is authorized by town meeting. Assessors may be elected or appointed, depending on local bylaws.
- Section 25: Specifies term lengths (typically 3 years, staggered terms), and that assessors must be residents of the town unless otherwise provided by bylaw.
- Section 25A: Allows for the appointment of assistant assessors or staff as needed.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59](#)

This chapter outlines the assessors’ responsibilities for valuing property and levying taxes.

- Section 2A: Assessors must determine the full and fair cash value of all real and personal property.
- Section 38: Requires assessors to list and value all taxable property within the town annually.
- Section 59: Covers procedures for abatements (requests for property tax reductions), which are handled by the assessors.
- Section 64–65: Discusses the process for appealing an abatement decision to the Appellate Tax Board.

[West Tisbury Board of Assessors Purpose](#)

The mission of the West Tisbury Assessors Department is to provide fiscal stability by promptly, fairly and equitably determining the valuation of all real and personal property located in the Town of West Tisbury. The Assessor’s Department is obligated under law to assess all property at its full and fair market value each year for the purpose of taxation. This is accomplished through the maintenance and administration of all property tax data records. In addition, the department also administers motor vehicle excise tax, real, personal and motor vehicle excise tax abatements, and all statutory tax exemptions as

allowed by law.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*

Minimum Notice for Meetings Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day First and third Tuesdays of each month at 4:30pm

Regular Meeting Location As posted

Resignations and Removal *Elected Official--West Tisbury has no procedure for recall.*

Committee Name Board of Health

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/231/Board-of-Health>

Staff Health Agent
Assistant Health Agent

Date Established 2018?

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	3	Elected Officials	

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term 3 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111, Section 26-33, 122 and 31](#)

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111, Sections 26-33, 122, and 31 primarily deal with public health regulations and the authority of local boards of health. Sections 26-33 outline the structure and powers of city and town boards of health, including their ability to make reasonable health regulations. Section 122 specifically addresses regulations concerning nuisances and examinations to protect public health, while Section 31 allows boards to make reasonable health regulations and outlines publication requirements.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 1](#)

Three or more members of the board of health for the term of one or more years if the town provides for such board, otherwise the selectmen shall act as a board of health.

[West Tisbury Board of Health Bylaws](#)

Tanks: Underground

Tanks, Underground Fuel Storage

Waste: Solid

Waste, Solid, Fines

[Links to related information](#)

[West Tisbury Board of Health Regulations](#)

The purpose of these regulations is to protect the public health and general welfare, to maintain the quality of the groundwater and surface waters, to prevent pollution of potable water supplies, and to maintain the viability of fishing and shell fishing areas.

[Online permitting](#)

Link to online permitting

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

Every second and fourth Tuesday at 5pm

Regular Meeting Location

Howes House

Resignations and Removal

West Tisbury has no procedure for recalling Elected Officials.

Committee Name Byways Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/byways-committee>

Staff

Date Established 2007

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	4	Select Board	

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
 Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40, Section 15C](#)

A city or town in Massachusetts can designate a local road (not a state highway or numbered route, unless entirely within town boundaries and not maintained by the state) as a scenic road, upon recommendation from the planning board, conservation commission, or historical commission.

Once designated:

- No trees may be cut or stone walls altered along the road without written approval from the planning board (or selectmen/city council if no planning board).
- Approval must follow a public hearing, advertised twice, with the last notice at least 7 days before the hearing.
- If tree removal also requires a hearing under another law (Chapter 87, Section 3), the hearings must be combined.
- Towns can adopt a bylaw imposing a fine (up to \$300) for violations.

[West Tisbury Scenic Roads](#)

These roads are recognized for their scenic, historical, or environmental value in West Tisbury.

- Music Street / Eastern Middle Road
- Panhandle Road / Scotchman's (Bridge) Lane
- Old County Road
- New Lane
- Tiah's (Tyre's) Cove Road
- Lambert's Cove Road
- Middle Road
- Indian Hill Road

- Christiantown Road / Steven's Path
- Pine Hill Path
- Old Courthouse Road
- Old Mail Road (Holmes Hole Road)
- Scrubby Neck Road
- Deep Bottom Cove Road
- Watcha Path
- Daggett Farm Road (Cedar Tree Neck Road)
- Old Lambert's Cove Road
- Stoney Hill Path
- Doctor Fisher Road
- North Road
- Head of Pond Road

Scenic Roads II
Shade Trees

Public Shade Tree: Any tree, shrub or growth within the right of way in a local public way.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

As needed

Regular Meeting Location

As posted

Resignations and Removal

See Page 16

Committee Name Capital Improvements Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/228/Capital-Improvements-Planning-Committee>

Staff None

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	1	Select Board	
	1	Building Inspector	Specified by Bylaw
	1	Finance Committee	
	1	Planning Board	
	1	Board of Assessor	
	1	Energy Committee	
	1	Accountant	Specified by Bylaw
	1	Treasurer/Collector	Specified by Bylaw

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term 3 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or language regulation. Refer to the hyperlink for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 106B](#)

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 106B permits municipalities to establish a **Capital Planning Committee**. This committee is responsible for preparing and updating a **capital improvement program** that outlines proposed capital expenditures over a period of at least five years. The committee must submit this program to the local legislative body for approval. The goal is to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to capital investments within the municipality.

[West Tisbury Capital Improvements Committee Bylaw](#)

The Capital Improvement Planning Committee in West Tisbury is responsible for evaluating proposed capital expenditures, projects, and improvements involving major, non-recurring tangible assets. This includes assessing the need, timing, and financial impact of such projects. The committee's role ensures that capital investments align with the town's long-term goals and fiscal capacity.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period <u>MGL Chapter 40A Section 5</u>
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
Regular Meeting Day	<i>As needed</i>
Regular Meeting Location	
Resignations and Removal	<i>See Page 16</i>

Committee Name Cemeteries
Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/227/Cemeteries>
Staff Cemetery Assistant Superintendent

Date Established

Cemetery Commissioners	Number of Members	Remarks
	3	All Select Board Members

Term

Rules and Regulations

*These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts
General Laws,
Chapter 114 -
Municipal
Cemeteries](#)

Section 1 – Authority to Establish Cemeteries

Cities and towns may purchase or take land by eminent domain for cemetery use. Cemeteries may be established, laid out, and maintained by the municipality.

Section 2 – Cemetery Commissioners

A city or town may elect or appoint a Board of Cemetery Commissioners. Commissioners have the power to lay out, manage, and improve cemeteries.

Section 3 – Duties of Commissioners

They control the sale of lots, oversee maintenance, and may make rules and regulations for cemetery use. They handle records and the general administration of municipal cemeteries.

Section 15 – Funds and Revenue Use

Money from lot sales and other cemetery income must be used solely for cemetery purposes.

Section 16 – Public Burial Grounds

Municipal cemeteries are considered public burial grounds and subject to public access and maintenance standards.

Section 17 – Lot Ownership

Lot purchasers receive a deed, giving them the right of burial but not absolute land ownership. Municipalities maintain certain rights over lot usage and maintenance.

Section 18 – Care of Grounds

Municipalities can establish rules on planting, decorations, and grave markers to preserve cemetery aesthetics and safety.

[Town of West Tisbury Cemetery Rules & Regulations](#)

The West Tisbury Cemetery Rules and Regulations (as of November 6, 2019) outline the policies governing the use and maintenance of the town’s cemeteries. Key points include:

- **Plot Ownership and Interment:** Only residents or taxpayers of West Tisbury may purchase burial plots. Interments require prior approval, and cremated remains must be in approved containers.
- **Monuments and Markers:** All monuments and markers must conform to specified size and material guidelines. Installation requires approval to ensure consistency and safety.
- **Maintenance and Decorations:** The town is responsible for general maintenance, but plot owners must adhere to rules regarding plantings and decorations. Prohibited items include glass containers and artificial flowers.
- **Conduct and Access:** Cemeteries are open from dawn to dusk. Visitors must respect the solemn nature of the grounds, with prohibitions on alcohol, littering, and disruptive behavior.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

As needed

Regular Meeting Location

Resignations and Removal

West Tisbury has no procedure for recalling Elected Officials

Committee Name Climate Advisory Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/226/Climate-Advisory-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	5	Select Board	

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[West Tisbury Climate Advisory Committee](#)

The West Tisbury Climate Advisory Committee helps the Town prepare for, adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

The Select Board, in view of the climate crisis which the Governor describes as affecting all aspects of human endeavor, hereby establishes a Climate Advisory Committee that:

- 5-7 members appointed by the Select Board for three-year terms each dating from the Annual Town Meeting, in three classes, offset by one year, with no term limits;
- Consists of representatives of Town Departments, Boards and Committees most impacted by Climate Change, e.g., Planning Board, Energy Committee, Conservation Commission, Emergency Management, plus up to two “at large” members;
- Annually nominates and elects by majority vote a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Clerk at the next meeting after the annual town meeting.

[Chapter 21N: Climate Protection and Green Economy Act](#)

This chapter outlines Massachusetts' approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting climate resilience. It includes provisions for municipal involvement in climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

[Acts of 2018, Chapter 209](#)

This act emphasizes the importance of climate change adaptation and provides for programs supporting environmental and energy initiatives across the Commonwealth.

[Executive Order No. 569](#) Issued in 2016, this order establishes an integrated climate change strategy for Massachusetts, encouraging municipalities to assess vulnerabilities and develop adaptation plans.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*

Minimum Notice for Meetings Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day First Wednesday 4:30 PM

Regular Meeting Location Zoom

Resignations and Removal *See Page 16*

Committee Name Community Preservation Committee
Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/225/Community-Preservation-Committee>
Staff Administrative Assistant
Date Established Adopted Special Town Meeting October 18, 2005

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	1	Conservation Com.	
	1	Planning Board	
	1	Historical Commission	
	1	Parks & Recreation	
	1	Affordable Housing	
	1	Finance Committee	
	2	Select Board	At large; Not SBd memb.
	1	Dukes County Housing Authority	West Tisbury resident

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term 3 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

[General Law Part 1 Title V 2 Chapter 44B – Section 3](#)

b) the legislative body may vote to accept sections 3 to 7, inclusive, by approving a surcharge on real property of not more than 3 per cent of the real estate tax levy against real property, as determined annually by the board of assessors.

[West Tisbury Community Preservation Bylaw](#)

1. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) shall study the needs, possibilities and resources of the town regarding Community Preservation. The CPC shall consult with existing municipal boards, committees, and commissions...hold one or more public informational hearings...and publish an annual plan.
 2...3...etc.

[State Reporting Requirements](#)

The community preservation committee shall keep a full and accurate account of all of its actions, including its recommendations and the action taken on them and records of all appropriations or expenditures made from the Community Preservation Fund. The committee shall also keep records of any real property interests acquired, disposed of or improved by the city or town upon its recommendation, including the names and addresses of the grantors or grantees and the nature of the consideration. The records and accounts shall be public records.
 Follow the link for a fuller description

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

- Meeting Requirements** *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*
- Minimum Notice for Meetings** Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
- Minimum Notice for Hearings** Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)
- Meeting Votes** The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Key Dates—See town website for updates

Year	Date	Meeting Type	Remarks
2025	September 3	Public Hearing	Announcement of opening of FY26 application window
	September 18	Deadline	Eligibility application
	September 24	Regular Meeting	Review of eligibility applications
	October 15	Deadline	Final applications with supporting documentation
	November 19	Regular Meeting	Review of final applications and determination of which applicants will be invited to make presentations
2026	December 10	Regular Meeting	Applicant presentations
	December 17	Regular Meeting	Applicant presentations
	January 14	Regular Meeting	Final vote on projects to present at Town Meeting
	January 21	Regular Meeting	Final review of draft warrant articles
	March 25	Regular Meeting	Preparation for Town Meeting (if needed)
	April 22	Regular Meeting	Review of Town Meeting vote and set FY26 schedule. Review committee pages for completeness and accuracy.
	Spring	Regular Meetings	Update Annual Plan
Regular Meeting Day	4th Wednesday 5:30 PM		
Regular Meeting Location	Howes House <i>or</i> Zoom		
Removal	<i>See Page 16.</i>		

Committee Name Complete Streets Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/224/Complete-Streets-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	6	Planning Board	

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
 Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 90I](#)

Section 1: Defines "Complete Streets" and outlines the criteria for a municipality to become a certified Complete Streets community. This includes adopting a local policy, identifying responsible parties, and setting goals for increased use of alternative transportation modes.

Section 2: Establishes the Complete Streets Program within the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to provide grants to municipalities that incorporate Complete Streets design elements into their road projects.

Section 3: Details the eligibility requirements for municipalities to receive funding under the program, such as developing a prioritization plan and demonstrating a commitment to Complete Streets principles.

Section 4: Mandates the development of rules and regulations for the administration of the program, including consultation with an advisory committee appointed by the governor.

[Massachusetts Complete Streets Funding Program](#)

Municipalities are encouraged to establish the Complete Street Committee to effectively participate in the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Complete Streets Funding Program. This program supports communities in implementing roadway designs that accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period <u>MGL Chapter 40A Section 5</u>
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
Regular Meeting Day	
Regular Meeting Location	As posted
Resignations and Removal	<i>See Page 16</i>

Committee Name Conservation Commission

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/223/Conservation-Commission>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established February 14, 1967

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	7	Select Board	
	1		Associate Member

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term Elected Official 3 years,

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or language regulation. Refer to the hyperlink to the left for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 8C](#)

This statute authorizes municipalities to establish a Conservation Commission responsible for promoting and developing natural resources and protecting watershed resources. It grants the commission powers to conduct research, coordinate activities with other bodies, and manage conservation areas.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 131, Section 40](#)

Known as the Wetlands Protection Act, this law prohibits activities such as removing, filling, dredging, or altering land bordering waters without filing a notice of intent and obtaining an order of conditions from the local Conservation Commission. It aims to protect wetlands and other water-related lands from destruction or alteration.

[West Tisbury Conservation Commission Bylaw](#)

The purpose of this bylaw is to protect the wetlands, water resources and adjoining land areas in the Town of West Tisbury by prior review and regulation of activities deemed by the Conservation Commission (the “Commission”) likely to have a significant or cumulative effect upon public or private water supply, groundwater, flood control, erosion and sedimentation control, storm damage prevention including coastal storm flowage, water quality, prevention of water pollution, fisheries, shellfisheries, wildlife habitat, rare species habitat, agriculture, and aquaculture (collectively, the "resource values protected by this bylaw").

[West Tisbury Wetlands Protection Bylaw Regulations](#)

The purpose of these regulations is to establish definitions, criteria, design specifications, performance standards, and uniform procedures by which the Commission is to carry out its responsibilities under the Bylaw with respect to

regulation of activities deemed by the Commission likely to have a significant or cumulative effect upon public or private water supply, groundwater, flood control, erosion and sedimentation control, storm damage prevention including coastal storm flowage, water quality, prevention of water pollution, fisheries, shellfisheries, wildlife habitat, rare species habitat, agriculture, and aquaculture.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings per WT bylaws

Any person filing an application for a permit --- give written notice thereof, by certified mail or hand delivery, to all abutters --- The abutter notification format may be the same as that sent under the [Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act](#) (M.G.L. c.131, s. 40) and its rules and regulations ([310 CMR 10.00](#)). The Commission shall place a legal ad of the date and time of the hearing in the local newspaper at least five (5) days before the public hearing at the applicant's expense.

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 5:00 PM

Regular Meeting Location

*Town Hall, 2nd Floor Select Board Meeting Room
Zoom*

Resignations and Removal

See Page 16

Committee Name Energy Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/219/Energy-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Charge is defined

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	4	Select Board	

Note: The Energy Committee delegates a member to serve on each, the Capital Improvements Committee and the Facilities Maintenance Committee.

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40, Section 8I](#) Permits cities and towns to establish an energy resources commission.

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 25A, Section 10](#) Establishes Green communities

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 164, Section 134](#) allows municipalities to aggregate the electrical load of their residents and businesses,

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 164, Section 143](#) authorizes municipalities to design, install, own, and operate small renewable energy generating facilities.

Formation of the Energy Committee The Select Board, in view of the climate crisis which the Governor describes as affecting all aspects of hum endeavor, hereby establish an Energy Committee that

- Consists of 5-7 members appointed by the Select Board for 3-year terms, each dating from each dating from the ATM, in three classes, offset by one year, with no term limits;
- Consists of citizens of the town, and one member from the UPIRSD committee or WT School staff, who are willing to qualify under the West Tisbury standards for committees and boards, and have or are willing to acquire knowledge of energy resources and administration.

Energy Committee Charge Mitigate the effects of climate change by leading the town in establishing a clean, affordable, equitable, and resilient energy future.

Energy Committee Mission Assist and advise the Town in achieving State and Local energy goals by:

- Accessing State, Federal, and local resources
- Reviewing and updating Town Bylaws and regulations at least annually
- Promoting and participating in clean, affordable, equitable and resilient energy programs.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*

Minimum Notice for Meetings Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day 2nd Wednesday 08:30 AM

Regular Meeting Location Zoom

Resignations and Removal *See Page 16*

Committee Name Facilities Maintenance Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/218/Facilities-Maintenance-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	4	Select Board	
	1	Energy Committee	

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 7C, Section 26](#)

Development of Standards: The Director of Facilities Management is tasked with recommending maintenance and repair standards to the Commissioner. These standards are mandatory for state agencies and building authorities.

Annual Certification: State agencies and building authorities must annually certify their compliance with these standards or provide reasons for any noncompliance.

Inspections and Reporting: The Director may conduct unannounced inspections to ensure adherence. Noncompliance findings are reported to relevant officials, including the Commissioner and the Secretary of Administration and Finance.

Corrective Measures: If noncompliance persists beyond three months, the Director can recommend emergency measures. Agencies may be required to submit detailed monthly reports until compliance is achieved.

Transfer of Control: In cases of continued noncompliance, the Commissioner, advised by the Director, may assume control over an agency's maintenance and repair operations. This transfer is formalized through an order filed with various state oversight bodies.

While this statute primarily governs state agencies, West Tisbury's Facilities Maintenance Committee can reference these standards to inform their maintenance practices.

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 7C, Section 28](#)

This statute outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Facilities Management in Massachusetts. The Director is responsible for overseeing the maintenance and repair of state-owned buildings, ensuring compliance with established standards, and coordinating with using agencies to manage facility operations effectively. This includes developing and implementing policies, conducting inspections, and providing guidance to ensure the proper functioning and upkeep of state facilities.

While this statute primarily governs state agencies, West Tisbury's Facilities Maintenance Committee can reference these standards to inform their maintenance practices.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

1st Tuesday 8:30 Am

Regular Meeting Location

Town Hall

Resignations and Removal

See Page 16

Committee Name Finance Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/216/Finance-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established May 1, 1961

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	5	Elected Officials Town Accountant	Ex Officio

Term 3 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.

Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Law - Part I, Title V 2, Chapter 39, Section 16](#)

Every town whose valuation for the purpose of apportioning the state tax exceeds one million dollars shall, and any other town may, by by-law provide for the election or the appointment and duties of appropriation, advisory or finance committees, who shall consider any or all municipal questions for the purpose of making reports or recommendations to the town; and such by-laws may provide that committees so appointed or elected may continue in office for terms not exceeding three years from the date of appointment or election.

In every town having a committee appointed under authority of this section, such committee, or the selectmen if authorized by a by-law of the town, and, in any town not having such a committee, the selectmen, shall submit a budget at the annual town meeting.

[Massachusetts General Law - Part I, Title V 2, Chapter 40, Section 6](#)

To provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures, a town may at an annual or special town meeting appropriate or transfer a sum or sums not exceeding in the aggregate five per cent of the levy of the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the fund, to be known as the reserve fund, is established. No direct drafts against this fund shall be made, but transfers from the fund may from time to time be voted by the finance or appropriation committee of the town, in towns having such a committee, and in other towns by the selectmen; and the town accountant in towns having such an official, and in other towns the auditor or board of auditors, shall make such transfers accordingly.

[West Tisbury Finance Committee Bylaw](#)

Section 1: The Selectmen shall before the first day of May 1961 appoint a Finance Committee consisting of five registered voters of the Town, no one of whom shall be an elected official of the Town nor an employee of the Town who is responsible for the compilation and presentation of a departmental budget, two members of which original committee shall be appointed for a term of one year. Subsequent replacements to this committee shall be elected beginning with the 1963 Annual Town election and shall be for a term of three years except that appointed members of the committee shall continue in office until the expiration of their terms. Interim appointments to fill vacancies caused by

death or resignation shall be to fill the unexpired term.

Section 2: The Finance Committee shall have the powers and duties set forth in Section 16 of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws and shall consider and act upon any and all municipal questions to be included as Articles in all Warrants for Annual and Special Town Meetings including the annual town budget. Articles involving the appropriation of money and to come before the Annual Town Meeting shall be presented to the Finance Committee at least forty-five days before the date set for such Annual Town Meeting. Other Articles for the Annual Town Meeting and all Articles for a Special Town Meeting shall be presented to the Finance Committee at least twenty-one days before that meeting. ---. The Committee shall make its report and recommendations to each Town Meeting, which report and recommendations if so voted by the said Committee, shall be printed by and at the expense of the Town.

Section 3: Members absent from one-third of the regular meetings in any fiscal year may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the other members present and voting.

Section 4: In the event of any vacancy in its membership, the Finance Committee shall notify the Selectmen in writing and the Selectmen and the Finance Committee, under the provisions of Chapter 41 Section 11, MGL, shall fill such vacancy.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period <u>MGL Chapter 40A Section 5</u>
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting. *
Regular Meeting Day	Second Tuesdays of each month at 5pm
Regular Meeting Location	Zoom
Resignations and Removal	<i>See page 16</i>

Committee Name	Historic District Commission		
Town Webpage	https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/212/Historic-District-Commission		
Staff	None		
Date Established	The West Tisbury Historic District Commission was established in 1982 when the town's voters adopted the West Tisbury Historic District By-Law. This by-law created a small historic district comprising 14 structures in the town center. In 1999, the district was significantly expanded by a two-thirds vote at the Annual Town Meeting.		
Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	8	Select Board	Qualifications specified
Term	3 years		

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C](#)

The Historic Districts Act establishes the legal framework for the creation and management of historic districts in Massachusetts. It allows municipalities to designate areas with significant historical value as local historic districts. The act empowers historic district commissions to review and regulate exterior alterations to buildings and structures within these districts to ensure they preserve the area's historic character. Commissions must approve changes through a certificate of appropriateness before work can begin. The law is designed to protect and maintain the architectural and historical integrity of designated districts.

[West Tisbury Historic District Bylaw](#)

The West Tisbury Historic District Bylaw establishes the town's local historic district and outlines the procedures and standards for preserving its historic character. It empowers the Historic District Commission to review and regulate exterior alterations to buildings and structures within the district to ensure they are consistent with the district's historic character. The bylaw requires a certificate of appropriateness before any external changes can be made to buildings, structures, or signs within the district. The bylaw also includes provisions for the expansion of the historic district to include additional properties

[West Tisbury Historic District Expansion](#)

To see if the Town will vote to expand the Historic District by including properties, starting at the Chilmark/West Tisbury Town Line located on the Massachusetts State Highway (South Road/Vineyard Haven Road) to the West Tisbury Cemetery; Music Street to Panhandle Road; Massachusetts State Highway (Edgartown Road) to the parcel of land located on the western side of Daniel's Way; Old County Road (Southern end) to Dumont Drive.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period <u>MGL Chapter 40A Section 5</u>
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
Regular Meeting Day	As needed
Regular Meeting Location	As posted
Resignations and Removal	<i>See Page 16</i>

Committee Name Howes House Building Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/210/Howes-House-Building-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	3	WT Select Board	
	1		Aquinnah Representative
	1		Chilmark Representative

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 41, Section 81A](#)

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 81A pertains to the establishment of planning boards in municipalities. While it does not explicitly authorize municipalities to establish building committees for specific projects, it provides a legal framework for creating planning boards, which are responsible for overseeing various aspects of municipal planning, including land use and development. The statute outlines the process for establishing planning boards, their membership, and their duties. In some cases, municipalities may establish specific committees or subcommittees under the authority of the planning board to address particular projects or needs. These committees operate within the scope of the planning board's responsibilities and are subject to the applicable laws and regulations governing municipal planning and project oversight.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

**Regular Meeting
Day** As needed

**Regular Meeting
Location** As posted

**Resignations and
Removal** *See Page 16*

Committee Name Improving Governance Task Force

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/209/Improving-Governance-Task-Force>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established September 2023

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	4	Select Board	

Term

Authorities & Guidance

Mission The Improving Governance Task Force in West Tisbury was created to enhance transparency, trust, and communication between the town government and residents.

Their Charge Includes:

- Evaluating current town government practices to identify areas for improvement.
- Recommending strategies to increase citizen engagement and participation.
- Improving communication between town officials and the public.
- Building public trust in local government through better processes and clearer information sharing.

The task force was designed to serve as an advisory group, making recommendations to the Select Board and other committees, without the authority to implement policy directly.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*

Minimum Notice for Meetings Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting The first and third Friday of the month at 4pm

Day

Regular Meeting Location Zoom or as posted

Resignations and Removal *See Page 16*

Committee Name Land Bank – West Tisbury Advisory Board

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/208/Land-Bank---West-Tisbury-Advisory-Board>

Staff None

Date Established 1985

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	1	Conservation Commission	
	1	Select Board	
	1	Elect Land Bank Commissioner	
	1	Planning Board	
	1	Board of Health	
	1	Board of Assessors	
	1	Parks & Recreation	

Note: Should any of the appointing authorities cease to exist, appointing authority reverts to the Select Board.

Term 3 years

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Chapter 736 of the Acts of 1985](#)

“Town Advisory Board”, a town board created in each of the towns of Chilmark, Edgartown, Gay Head, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury and West Tisbury to assist the land bank commission in administering this act, such advisory board to consist of one representative duly appointed, either from its membership or otherwise, by each of the following town boards should they exist: conservation commission, 3 planning board, board of assessors, board of health, park and recreation commission, board of selectmen and water commission and in said town of Tisbury there shall be one representative duly appointed either from its membership or otherwise by the Department of Public Works.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*

Minimum Notice for Meetings Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

**Regular Meeting
Day**

**Regular Meeting
Location**

**Resignations and
Removal** *See Page 16*

Committee Name Library Board of Trustees

Town Webpage [Library | westtisburyma](#)

Staff At publication date: 7 full and 8 part time
Alexandra Pratt, Director

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	6	Elected Officials	

Term 3 years; two members elected each year

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw, regulation or MGL language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Public Libraries MGL Chapter 78 §7 - §13](#)

Section 7	Establishment by cities and towns; records
Section 8	Use of facilities by non-residents
Section 9	Return of unwanted state publications
Section 10	Town libraries; selection of trustees and officers
Section 11	Board of trustees; powers and duties
Section 12	Annual report of trustees
Section 13	Applicability of sections relating to trustees

“The duly elected Library board shall have all management rights, authorities, and responsibilities as stated in Massachusetts General Law Chapter 78: Section 11. “The board shall have the custody and management of the library and reading room and of all property owned by the town relating thereto. All money raised or appropriated by the town for its support and maintenance shall be expended by the board, and all money or property which the town may receive by gift or bequest for said Library and reading room.”

[Library policies](#)

[Library Personnel Policy](#)

[Trustee Bylaws](#)

As elected officials, the Library Trustees represent the community within the library and advocate for the library in the larger community. The Board of Trustees hires and evaluates the Library Director, sets and upholds library policy reviews the annual library budget, reviews and approves the Library strategic plan, and approves and submits a report to the Town Annual Report

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

- Meetings** *The trustees meet monthly at the library, usually on the second Tuesday of the month.*
- Minimum Notice for Meetings** Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
- Minimum Notice for Hearings** Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period
[MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)
- Meeting Votes** The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
- Regular Meeting Day** 2nd Tuesday Noon?
- Regular Meeting Location** WT Library
- Resignations and Removal** *See page 16*

Committee Name Local Historical Commission

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/206/Local-Historical-Commission>

Staff

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	2	Select Board	

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[West Tisbury Historic Inventory Project](#)

“Town Advisory Board”, a town board created in each of the towns of Chilmark, Edgartown, Gay Head, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury and West Tisbury to assist the land bank commission in administering this act, such advisory board to consist of one representative duly appointed, either from its membership or otherwise, by each of the following town boards should they exist: conservation commission, 3 planning board, board of assessors, board of health, park and recreation commission, board of selectmen and water commission and in said town of Tisbury there shall be one representative duly appointed either from its membership or otherwise by the Department of Public Works.

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 9, Section 26](#)

The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and protecting the Commonwealth's historic and archaeological assets. Its duties include maintaining an inventory of historic properties, administering the State Register of Historic Places, and reviewing projects that might affect historic resources. The Commission also provides guidance and support to local historical commissions and promotes public awareness of Massachusetts' historical heritage.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period MGL Chapter 40A Section 5
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
Regular Meeting Day	As needed
Regular Meeting Location	As posted
Resignations and Removal	<i>See Page 16</i>

Committee Name	Mill Brook Watershed Management Committee		
Town Webpage	https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/201/Mill-Brook-Watershed-Management-Committe		
Staff			
Date Established	2014		
Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	8	Select Board	

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Mill Brook Watershed Management Committee](#)

The Mill Brook Watershed Management Committee is a locally established body that functions in coordination with state environmental efforts but is not governed by specific state statutes.

This committee was created at the local level by the West Tisbury Select Board in 2014, following directives from town voters. Its primary purpose is to assess the water quality and overall health of the Mill Brook watershed and to develop a management plan based on collected data.

While the committee operates under local authority, its work aligns with broader state environmental objectives. For instance, the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) has conducted studies on Mill Brook, highlighting issues such as elevated water temperatures and sediment accumulation that affect the ecosystem.

<https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/475/Forms-Documents>

Forms and Documents

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period <u>MGL Chapter 40A Section 5</u>
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
Regular Meeting Day	Awaiting info
Regular Meeting Location	
Resignations and Removal	<i>See Page 16</i>

Committee Name Martha’s Vineyard Regional Cultural Council
Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/203/Marthas-Vineyard-Regional-Cultural-Counc>
Staff West Tisbury is the fiscal agent for the Martha’s Vineyard Regional Cultural Council
Date Established 2007

	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
Membership	6	Select Board	Individual Towns

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Martha's Vineyard Cultural Council](#)

The Martha’s Vineyard Cultural Council is part of the Massachusetts Cultural Council’s Local Cultural Council program, formed more than a quarter century ago. The MVCC’s mission is to promote excellence, access, education, or diversity in the arts, humanities and interpretative sciences for the purpose of improving the quality of life for all of the Island’s residents.

[Massachusetts General Law Chapter 10, Sections 58-58A](#)

Any city or town may establish a local cultural council and any consortium of cities and towns, with the approval of the council, may establish a regional cultural council. Local cultural councils shall consist of at least five and not more than twenty-two members to be appointed by ...the board of selectmen of a town ...
Members shall be considered to be special municipal employees for the purposes of chapter two hundred and sixty-eight A...

Social Media

<https://www.facebook.com/marthasvineyardcc/>
<https://www.instagram.com/marthasvineyardculturalcouncil>

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

- Meeting Requirements** *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*
- Minimum Notice for Meetings** Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
- Minimum Notice for Hearings** Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)
- Meeting Votes** The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
- Regular Meeting Day**
- Regular Meeting Location**
- Resignations and Removal** *See Page 16*

Town Webpage <https://www.westisbury-ma.gov/200/Parks-Recreation>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	5	Elected Officials	

Term 3 years

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
Refer to the hyperlink for complete information.*

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 45, Section 2](#) **Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 45, Section 2** outlines the governance structure for park commissions in Massachusetts municipalities. Towns may establish a board of Park Commissioners consisting of three or five members, with terms of office prescribed by the town. Vacancies are filled in the same manner as the original appointments, and commissioners may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the voters in a town or by a two-thirds vote of the city council.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 45, Section 3](#) Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 45, Section 3 authorizes park commissioners to acquire land for public parks through purchase, gift, or eminent domain. The land must be designated for public park purposes and approved by the local legislative body. This section ensures that municipalities have the legal means to expand and maintain public park spaces for community use.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 45, Section 5](#) Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 45, Section 5 grants park commissioners the authority to:

- Develop and enhance public parks.
- Establish rules for park use and management.
- Appoint necessary staff, including engineers, surveyors, clerks, and park police, defining their roles and compensation.
- Exercise powers related to public ways and tree management as specified in Chapters 84 and 87.
- Conduct recreational programs and activities outside designated parks, subject to available funding.

These provisions empower park commissioners to effectively manage and oversee public parks and related activities within their jurisdiction.

Functions of the Parks and Recreation Department

Park and Recs coordinates year-round recreational activities for West Tisbury residents. They supervise the use of town beaches, ball fields, tennis courts, and playgrounds, and offer various creative programs for children and adults. Note: The Town of West Tisbury will not issue any permits, including beach permits, to anyone who owes delinquent taxes to the town.

Rules and Regs.

[Forms-Documents](#)

[Beaches-Lamberts-Cove-Hours](#)

[Uncle Seth's Pond, Season Expansion & Fine Increases | West Tisbury, MA](#)

[Programs-Information](#)

[Parks-and-Recreation Penalties for violation](#) of regulations for Parks and Rec. property

[Recreational-Vehicle-Fines](#) for operation on private property or ancient ways.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

1st Wednesday 6 PM

Regular Meeting Location

*Town Hall, 2nd Floor Select Board Meeting Room
Or Zoom*

Resignations and Removal

West Tisbury has no procedure for recalling Elected Officials

Committee Name Personnel Board

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/199/Personnel-Board>

Staff Administrator

Date Established April 11, 2023

Members appointed	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	5	Select Board	At least 1 must be a Town employee who need not be a Town resident

Term 3 years, or until they no longer serve on the appointing authority committee, whichever is shorter.

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlink to the left for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 108A](#)

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 108A allows city and town officials (like select boards or city councils) to establish a plan of classification and compensation for municipal employees. This includes setting salary schedules based on job classifications. It applies to any or all town or city positions (excluding elected officials and certain other exceptions) and is meant to standardize pay and job roles.

[Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 108C](#)

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 108C allows towns to consolidate all personnel-related by-laws—such as compensation plans, classification systems, and other employment policies—into a single by-law chapter or article. Towns may also establish a personnel board or similar agency to administer these provisions and advise on related matters. Importantly, such consolidated by-laws do not require approval from the Attorney General under Chapter 40, Section 32.

[West Tisbury Personnel Bylaw](#)

The purpose of this By-law is to establish a system of personnel administration with policies and procedures governing employment within the Town of West Tisbury, which are consistent with the following merit principles:

- (a) Recruitment, selection, and advancement of personnel shall be based on ability, knowledge, education, and skill under fair and open competition.
- (b) Fair treatment of all applicants and employees shall be the goal in all aspects of the personnel system which shall be administered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, age,

disability, pregnancy, or other non-merit factors and with proper regard for privacy and constitutional rights. (4/13/10) (4/10/18)

(c) Retention of employees shall be determined on the basis of their performance. A reasonable effort shall be made to assist employees with inadequate performance. If, following such effort, inadequate performance cannot be corrected, separation shall occur.

(d) Employees shall be protected against coercion for partisan political purposes and shall be prohibited from using their official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or nomination for office. (4/8/03)

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

2nd Monday 5:00 PM

Regular Meeting Location

Town Hall

Resignations and Removal

See Page 16

Committee Name Planning Board

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/planning-board>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	5	Elected Officials	
	1	Select Board Appointed	Associate member

Term 5 years

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlink to the left for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 81A](#)

MGL Chapter 41, Section 81A allows cities and towns to establish a **planning board** with **five members** (unless otherwise authorized). Members are **appointed** in cities and **elected** in towns, serving **staggered five-year terms**. Vacancies are filled for the remainder of the term. This section sets the foundation for local land use planning authority.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 81B](#)

MGL Chapter 41, Section 81B authorizes a city or town to **adopt subdivision control** by a vote at town meeting or city council. Once adopted, the **planning board becomes the subdivision control authority**, responsible for reviewing and approving subdivision plans to ensure proper street layout, utilities, and access.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 81D](#)

MGL Chapter 41, Section 81D requires local planning boards to create a **master plan** guiding long-term development. The plan must include elements like land use, housing, economic development, natural resources, open space, services, transportation, and an implementation schedule. It must be adopted by the board and submitted to the state.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 1](#)

MGL Chapter 40A, Section 1 establishes that this chapter governs **zoning regulations** in Massachusetts. It provides the legal framework for municipalities to adopt and enforce zoning bylaws or ordinances to regulate land use.

[West Tisbury Zoning Bylaws](#)

This zoning bylaw is adopted in order to achieve the Town’s planning goals. These goals include:

- Protecting the Town's rural and natural character, including its farms, forests, wetlands, ponds, beaches, hilltops, and other open spaces.

- Providing a supply of year-round housing that is affordable to residents of West Tisbury.
- Offering opportunities for small businesses in appropriate locations throughout the Town, without changing the attractive rural, agricultural, and residential character of the Town.
- Providing a scenic and ecologically healthy environment for both year-round residents and the seasonal residents who help to support the economy and tax base of the Town.

[Chapter IX. Fee Structures and Regulations Section 9.1 Introduction](#)

Pursuant to MGL c40A. s.9 and c.41, § 81Q, the Planning Board adopted the following regulations governing fees and a fee schedule for review conducted by the Planning Board and its consultants on the various types of applications which come before it. These regulations and fee schedules have been adopted to produce a more equitable schedule of fees which more adequately reflects the costs of technical and legal review of applications to the Planning Board; to take advantage of the procedures offered by MGL c44, §53G; to establish a review procedure in the selection of consultants and to promote more informed decision-making by the Planning Board.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

2nd and 4th Monday 5:00 PM

Regular Meeting Location

See posted Agenda for location

Resignations and Removal

West Tisbury has no procedure for recalling Elected Officials.

Committee Name Preserve West Tisbury Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/196/Preserve-West-Tisbury-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established 2021

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	7	Select Board	

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements *Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.*

Minimum Notice for Meetings Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day Not active

Regular Meeting Location Not active

Resignations and Removal *See Page 16*

Committee Names Up-Island Regional School Committee of Martha’s Vineyard
Martha’s Vineyard Regional [HS] School Committee

Useful Webpage [Martha's Vineyard Public Schools](#)

Staff

Date Established UIRSD: October 27, 1993, Agreement MVRSD 1954
1 July 1994 estimated Effective Date

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	1	Elected by district voters at the annual State Election. *Highest vote-getters are appointed by SBd to represent their towns on HS committee	*Aquinnah
	1		*Chilmark
	1		*West Tisbury
	2		At large

Term 4 years

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlink to the left for complete information.

Authority to form a regional district [Massachusetts General Laws Chapt. 71, § 14B](#)

Regulations for forming [603 CMR 41 Dept. of Education Regional School Districts](#)

Up-Island Regional School District of Martha's Vineyard The towns of Aquinnah, Chilmark, and West Tisbury voted to amend the Up-Island Regional School District Agreement only once in recent history — during the 2022–2023 amendment and restatement process. Each of the three towns approved the amendment at their Annual Town Meetings in spring 2022 (Aquinnah on May 10, 2022; Chilmark on April 25, 2022; and West Tisbury on April 12, 2022).

Representation for the Up-Island Regional School Committee The Up-Island Regional School Committee (RSC) shall be made up of five (5) representatives, one from each member town and the remainder as representatives “at large”. Representatives shall be elected in District-wide elections on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November of the years of biennial state elections to serve a four (4) year term. The candidates receiving the highest vote totals fill the “member town” seats first to guarantee representation to each member town. The candidates with the next highest vote totals then fill the “at large” seats.

Vacancies Should vacancies occur, member towns’ representatives seats will be filled for the balance of the unexpired term, by appointment by the Selectmen of the member town in which said vacancy occurs; “at large” representatives will be replaced for the balance of the unexpired term, by a majority vote of the remaining Up-Island Regional School Committee Any interim representatives shall serve until the next duly recognized election takes place and a successor has been elected

DOE Authorities 603 CMR 41.00: M.G.L. c. 69, §1B; c. 71, §14B and §16D; c. 150E, §1

Martha's Vineyard Regional School District (HS)

“pursuant to Chapter 71 of the General Laws of Massachusetts (“M.G.L.”), as amended, among the towns of Tisbury, Oak Bluffs, Edgartown, West Tisbury, Chilmark, Aquinnah (formerly known as Gay Head), in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, hereinafter sometimes referred to as “member towns” for the purpose of establishing a regional school district and setting forth the terms and conditions for its operation. The regional school district shall be called the Martha’s Vineyard Regional School District (hereinafter sometimes referred to as “District”)

MVRHS	# of Reps	Town	Remarks
Committee	1	Aquinnah	Elected by UIRSD voters
Membership	1	Chilmark	Elected by UIRSD voters
	2	Edgartown	Elected by Edgartown voters
	2	Oak Bluffs	Elected by Oak Bluff voters
	2	Tisbury	Elected by Tisbury voters
	1	West Tisbury	Elected by UIRSD voters

Membership of the Martha’s Vineyard Regional School District
 At any time during the month of May, the local school committee of the member towns of Edgartown, Oak Bluffs and Tisbury shall annually appoint from its own membership the number of Committee members specified in Section I (a) above to serve for one year commencing the first day of June following their appointment and until their successors are appointed and qualified.

Membership of the Up-Island Regional School District of Martha’s Vineyard
 The Select Boards of the towns of Chilmark, Aquinnah and West Tisbury shall each appoint as the Committee member from such member town the same representative who is elected or appointed from their town to fill the “member town” seat of the Up-Island Regional School District. Committee members from the towns of Chilmark, Aquinnah and West Tisbury will serve from the time of their appointment by their Select Board until their successors are appointed and qualified.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements
Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings
 Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings
 Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes
 The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day	Committee	Date	Remarks
	MVRHS school	1 st Monday @ 5:30 PM	All meetings, see calendar All-island Events calendar
	MVRHS building	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday @ 5:30 PM	
	UIRSD school	3 rd Monday @ 5:00 PM	
	UIRSD building	3 rd Tuesday @ 5:30 PM	
	All-Island School	3 rd Tuesday @ 5:30 PM	

Resignations and Removal
 West Tisbury has no procedure for recalling Elected Officials.

Committee Name Select Board

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/193/Select-Board>

Staff Town Administrator

Date Established 1892

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	3	Elected Officials	

Term 3 year term
Chair rotates annually after Town Election

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41](#)

General Powers: Select Boards serve as the executive branch of town government, responsible for implementing policies and overseeing the administration of town affairs.

Appointments: The Select Board has the authority to appoint various town officials and board members, including the Town Administrator, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and members of multiple boards and committees.

Licensing Authority: Select Boards act as the local licensing authority, issuing permits and licenses for activities such as alcohol sales and special events.

Town Meetings: The Select Board is responsible for calling town meetings, preparing the warrant for consideration, and convening special meetings when necessary.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 268A](#)

Select Board members are considered **municipal employees** under this law. They must follow strict rules to prevent **conflicts between their official duties and personal interests**.

- **No Personal Financial Benefit:** Select Board members can't participate in any town decision where they, or their immediate family, have a financial interest.
- **Recusal Required:** If a matter comes before the board that affects a Select Board member's own business, property, or finances, they must recuse themselves from the discussion and vote.
- **No Gratuities or Gifts:** The acceptance of gifts or favors worth \$50 or more are strictly prohibited.
- **No Self-Dealing in Contracts:** A Select Board member can't have a financial interest in any town contract unless a specific exemption is met.

- **Disclosure Required:** If a potential conflict exists, the Select Board member may file a written disclosure with the Town Clerk to be transparent (in some cases this allows participation).

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

Every Wednesday at 4:30pm

Regular Meeting Location

Town Hall, 2nd Floor Select Board’s Meeting Room and Zoom

Resignations and Removal

West Tisbury has no procedure for recalling Elected Officials.

Committee Name Shellfish Advisory Committee

Town Webpage [Shellfish-Advisory-Committee](#)

Staff Shellfish Constable
Shellfish Agent

Date Established 2016

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	7	Select Board	

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 130, Section 52](#)

Grants local authorities in coastal towns the power to regulate or prohibit the commercial taking of eels, shellfish, and sea worms within their jurisdiction. This includes authority over aspects such as the times, places, methods, sizes, and quantities of harvesting. Towns can issue permits and set associated fees. Additionally, towns are required to designate areas where commercial shellfishing is prohibited, allowing residents to harvest shellfish for personal use with a permit.

[Shellfish Regulations](#)

Permit Required: All shellfishing requires a valid town permit.

Seasons & Closures: The Select Board can close shellfishing seasons to protect resources.

Size Limits: Oysters must be at least 3 inches; eels must be at least 10 inches.

Inspections: All shellfish must be inspected by the Shellfish Constable at designated locations.

Harvest Rules: No returning to harvest after coming ashore without permission.

Pot Regulations: Eel pots must be labeled and not placed in navigable channels.

Daily Limits (Offshore):

- Sea scallops – 200 bushels
- Sea clams – 100 bushels
- Mahogany clams – no set limit

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period <u>MGL Chapter 40A Section 5</u>
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
Regular Meeting Day	Seasonal, as needed
Regular Meeting Location	Under the tree behind Town Hall
Resignations and Removal	<i>See Page 16</i>

Committee Name Task Force Against Discrimination

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/190/Task-Force-Against-Discrimination>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established 2016

Appointed Members*	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	7	Select Board	

Term

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.

Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

Chapter 151B

UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGIOUS CREED, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY OR SEX

Diversity Statement of the Select Board

The Board of Selectmen of the Town of West Tisbury recognizes and values diversity as a vital characteristic of the town. Yet, this moment calls on us to state unequivocally that we stand in solidarity with Black, Brown, Indigenous, and all People of Color against racial injustice and for racial equity.

The Board of Selectmen celebrates the diversity of the community it serves and the individuals it employs, embracing the differences in race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, age, economic status, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

The Board of Selectmen believes it has a responsibility to capitalize on the strength emanating from these differences and has a duty to ensure its employees, citizens, business associates and the members of the general public are treated with dignity and respect in all of their duties and dealings with the Town of West Tisbury.

The Board of Selectmen believes a workplace that attracts and retains diverse personnel will allow it to serve its citizenry more creatively, strategically, and productively. A successful inclusion and diversity program will ensure these objectives, goals, and priorities are maintained.

We take our commitment to inclusivity seriously by:

- Committing to Equal Opportunity Employment;
- Practicing a Community Policing Model;
- Providing Translation on our website

Still, we can do more. We can be better. There can be no complacency. No “good enough.” To that end, we pledge:

- To listen carefully and engage in conversations about race and white privilege by acknowledging the systematic racism in our culture.
- To create a Task Force Against Discrimination**, who can respond to issues and concerns from the community.
- To increase our broader understanding by requiring cultural competency, trauma and anti-racism and anti-bias training for all staff members.
- To further develop and promote equitable hiring policies and leadership cultivation at all levels of our organization.
- This is our commitment and our pledge. To listen, to engage and to be mindful in creating and maintaining a level of service that respects every person.

[Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-commission-against-discrimination)

Make-up of the Task Force

*The Task Force Against Discrimination consists of members which may include a member of the clergy, a law enforcement officer, an attorney or educator, and concerned citizens appointed yearly by the Board of Selectmen. The goal is to maintain a community where all individuals are welcome regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or ethnic background. The Task Force meets throughout the year in open sessions to discuss concerns raised by the residents of the Town and to create ongoing programs that will celebrate diversity within the Town.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period

[MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

None specified

Regular Meeting Location

None Specified

Resignations and Removal

See Page 16

Committee Name Tree Advisory Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westisbury-ma.gov/186/Tree-Warden>

Staff Tree Warden

Date Established 9 February 2022

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	6	Select Board	

Term 1 year appointment

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts Urban & Community Forestry Program](#)

A Town Committee or Tree and Forest Board or Committee is a citizen-led group that works with town public officials to improve the health of the urban and community forest through tree plantings, advocacy, education, management, and maintenance activities.

Committee goals Goals and Objectives of this group

- a) To evaluate existing trees and propose sites for new tree plantings
- b) To advocate for proper tree planting, maintenance, and care
- c) Start small – town owned land in Historic District of West Tisbury
- d) Jeremiah Brown – Tree Warden for 17 years
- e) Duties include assessing hazards and health of trees; planning and implementing new tree plantings.

Many hazardous trees have been cut down over the years, but not as many have been planted and this council is an opportunity to jumpstart this process

Operations to date Currently, the existing tree inventory is limited in species diversity and declining. The trees are mostly in the 70-80 age range and are dominated by two non-native, invasive species: Norway maple and Sycamore maple. Our initial field review indicates that these two species occupy much of our current inventory within the Historic District. Several of these trees have poor structural health. Arborists and city planners recommend that no singular tree species should occupy more than 10% of the total species diversity of a street tree population. The goals of the committee include the annual assessment of the current tree canopy and the planned planting of new trees as we continue to diversify and replace a declining group of age-similar trees.

The committee is composed of tree healthcare professionals who will also advise on broader threats to the island's naturally occurring trees, including American beech (beech leaf disease) and coniferous species (such as Pitch-pine and White Pine) which are under threat from Southern Pine Beetle.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period
[MGL Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

2nd Thursday at Noon

Regular Meeting Location

West Tisbury Library

Resignations and Removal

West Tisbury has no procedure for recalling Elected Officials

Committee Name Up-Island Council on Aging

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/185/Up-Island-Council-on-Aging>

Staff
 Director
 Assistant Director
 Administrative Assistant
 Outreach Coordinator

Date Established March 23, 1972

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	7	Select Board	West Tisbury Resident

Term 4 year term and limited to two terms

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
 Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts
 General Laws
 Chapter 40,
 Section 8B](#)

A city by ordinance or a town by by-law may establish a council on aging for the purpose of coordinating or carrying out programs designed to meet the problems of the aging in coordination with programs of the department of elder affairs. The council shall submit an annual report to the city or town and shall send a copy thereof to the department of elder affairs. Said department shall from time to time review and evaluate such reports and make recommendations as to any required or needed changes in said local programs. The council may appoint such clerks and other employees as it may require. The names, addresses, telephone numbers, or other identifying information about elderly persons in the possession of the council shall not be public records, but the use of these records shall comply with sections 14 to 24, inclusive, of chapter 19A as a condition of receiving a government contract, program grant or other benefit, or as otherwise required by law.

[Council on Aging
 Bylaw](#)

Section 1: The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a Council on Aging for the purpose of coordinating or carrying out programs designed to address the needs of the aging population, in cooperation with the programs of the Commission on Aging, which is established under Chapter E, Section 73 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Section 2: The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a Council on Aging consisting of three members. Upon the acceptance of the bylaw, the Board shall appoint one member for a three-year term, one for a two-year term, and one for a one-year term. Members can be reappointed and shall serve without pay.

Section 3: If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Council due to death, resignation, inability to act, or any other reason, the vacancy shall be filled by an appointment by the

Selectmen for the remainder of the term.

Section 4: The Council shall prepare and submit an annual report of its activities to the Town and send a copy to the Commission on Aging.

Section 5: The Council may appoint clerks and other employees as necessary.

COA-MOU

Agreement Between the Towns of Aquinnah, Chilmark, and West Tisbury

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [MGL 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.

Regular Meeting Day

First Tuesday of the month at 9am

Regular Meeting Location

Howes House

Resignations and Removal

See Page 16

Committee Name Visioning Committee

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/183/Visioning-Committee>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established 2023

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	21	Select Board	West Tisbury Resident

Term

Authorities & Guidance

*These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language.
 Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.*

[Massachusetts
 General Laws
 Chapter 41,
 Section 81A](#)

The West Tisbury Visioning Committee functions as a subcommittee of the Planning Board. While there isn't a specific state statute that directly governs this committee, it operates under the general authority granted to municipal planning boards in Massachusetts. The Visioning Committee's role is to engage the community in long-term planning and visioning processes, aligning with the Planning Board's responsibilities.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements	<i>Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.</i>
Minimum Notice for Meetings	Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)
Minimum Notice for Hearings	Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period <u>MGL 40A Section 5</u>
Meeting Votes	The committee will approve an action by a majority of those eligible to vote and voting.
Regular Meeting Day	Inactive
Regular Meeting Location	Inactive
Resignations and Removal	<i>See Page 16</i>

Committee Name Zoning Board of Appeals

Town Webpage <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/181/Zoning-Board-of-Appeals>

Staff Board Administrator

Date Established

Membership	Number of Members	Appointing Authority	Remarks
	5	Select Board	
	2	Select Board	Associate

Term Regular members: 5 years with staggered terms. Associate members: 2 years.

Authorities & Guidance

These excerpts/summaries do not include all bylaw or regulatory language. Refer to the hyperlinks for complete information.

[Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 12](#)

Section 12. Zoning ordinances or by-laws shall provide for a zoning board of appeals, according to the provisions of this section, unless otherwise provided by charter. The mayor subject to confirmation of the city council, or board of selectmen shall appoint members of the board of appeals within three months of the adoption of the ordinance or by-law. Pending appointment of the members of the board of appeals, the city council or board of selectmen shall act as the board of appeals. Any board of appeals established hereunder shall consist of three or five members who, unless otherwise provided by charter, shall be appointed by the mayor, subject to the confirmation by the city council, or by the selectmen, for terms of such length and so arranged that the term of one member shall expire each year. Each zoning board of appeals shall elect annually a chairman from its own number and a clerk, and may, subject to appropriation, employ experts and clerical and other assistants. Any member may be removed for cause by the appointing authority upon written charges and after a public hearing. Vacancies shall be filled for unexpired terms in the same manner as in the case of original appointments. Zoning ordinances or by-laws may provide for the appointments in like manner of associate members of the board of appeals; and if provision for associate members has been made the Chairperson of the board may designate any such associate member to sit on the board in case of absence, inability to act or conflict of interest on the part of any member thereof, or in the event of a vacancy on the board until said vacancy is filled in the manner provided in this section.

The board of appeals shall adopt rules, not inconsistent with the provisions of the zoning ordinance or by-law for the conduct of its business and for purposes of this chapter and shall file a copy of said rules with the city or town clerk. In the event that a board of appeals has appointed a zoning administrator in accordance with section thirteen said rules shall set forth the fact of such appointment, the identity of the persons from time to time appointed to such position, the powers and duties delegated to such individual and any limitations thereon.

[Zoning Board Rules and Regulations](#)

For more detailed information about the role, follow the link to the ZBA Rules and Regulations

[West Tisbury Zoning Bylaws](#)

This zoning bylaw is adopted in order to achieve the Town’s planning goals. These goals include:

- Protecting the Town's rural and natural character, including its farms, forests, wetlands, ponds, beaches, hilltops, and other open spaces.
- Providing a supply of year-round housing that is affordable to residents of West Tisbury.
- Offering opportunities for small businesses in appropriate locations throughout the Town, without changing the attractive rural, agricultural, and residential character of the Town.
- Providing a scenic and ecologically healthy environment for both year-round residents and the seasonal residents who help to support the economy and tax base of the Town.

Meetings, Quorum, and Votes

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will be held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting law. The committee must not meet nor conduct business with less than a majority of members present, which will constitute a quorum.

Minimum Notice for Meetings

Notice and Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk in time to post at least 48 hours in advance, Weekends and Holidays not included. (See list on page 10)

Minimum Notice for Hearings

Where required, notice must appear in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 14 days prior to the hearing and it must be posted publicly in the Town Hall for the same period [Chapter 40A Section 5](#)

Meeting Votes

The board requires a simple majority vote (3/5) to act on regular business. Applications for special permits, variances and appeals require a super majority vote (4/5). See [ZBA’s Rules and Regulations](#) for more information.

Regular Meeting Day

Twice a month, Thursdays, 5:00 PM depending on hearing schedule

Regular Meeting Location

Town Hall

Resignations and removal

See Page 16

Acknowledgements

We thank the following for their help, support and counsel:

Jennifer Rand	Town Administrator
Tara Whiting-Wells	Town Clerk
Jane Rossi	Administrator
Alex Lam	Health Agent
Kathy Logue	Treasurer/Collector (retired)
Shawn Ramoutar	IT Administrator
Monica Burke	Treasurer/Collector
MacGregor Anderson	Chief Assessor
Maria McFarland	Administrator
Kim Leaird	Board Administrator
Doug Ruskin	County Commissioner
Bea Phear	Citizen
Skipper Manter	Citizen...
Kim Angell	Citizen