Article 1 - By-Law Committee

§ 1 Purpose
   A. There shall be a standing By-law Committee (“Committee”) to review and recommend changes to the Town’s general by-laws.

§ 2 Authority
   A. This article is enacted under the authority granted to the Town by MGL c. 40 §21.

§ 3 Definitions
   A. Change – Any addition, deletion, or amendment to the Town’s general by-laws.

§ 4 Members
   A. Said Committee shall consist of five (5) members, appointed by the Select Board.
   B. The term of appointment for each member shall be three (3) years, excepting terms assigned during the initial Committee appointments and appointments to fill vacancies.
   C. Terms shall be so arranged that the terms of as nearly an equal number of terms as possible will expire each year.
   D. Vacancies occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled by appointment of the Select Board. The term for such appointments shall be the balance of the term of the member replaced.
   E. The Town Clerk and Town Administrator shall be ex officio, non-voting members of the Committee.

§ 5 Officers
   A. The Committee shall annually, at its first meeting of the fiscal year, elect a chair, vice chair, and secretary for the ensuing year.

§ 6 Meetings
   A. The Committee shall meet at least once each quarter.

§ 7 Duties and Responsibilities
   A. The Committee shall assist any Town board, officer, or administrator, when requested, in drafting changes to the Town’s general by-laws.
B. The Committee may assist any resident, when requested in writing, in
drafting changes to the Town’s general by-laws.

1) The Committee shall refuse such a request if a majority of the Committee
votes to deny the request.

2) If the Committee votes to deny a request the Committee shall document,
in writing, the reasons for that denial.

C. The Committee shall propose to the Select Board any general by-law changes
that the Committee determines should be made.

D. Whenever practicable, the Select Board shall submit to the Committee all
proposed general by-law changes prior to their inclusion in the warrant for
any Town Meeting. The Committee shall review all such proposed changes
and report to the Select Board its recommendations as to their content, form,
and consistency with existing provisions of the general by-laws and to their
placement in the general by-laws.

E. The Committee may consult with Town Counsel as to the legality of any
proposed change.

F. The Committee shall forward all proposed changes to Town Counsel for legal
review.

G. The Committee shall report to Town Meeting its recommendation on any
warrant article that proposes a change to the general by-laws. The
Moderator shall call upon the Committee for such report prior to the
discussion or vote on such article.

H. The Committee shall conduct a complete review of the Town’s general by-
laws to ensure their consistency with any applicable law at least once every
six (6) years.

I. The Committee shall assist the Town Clerk in preparing the publication of
the general by-laws.

J. The Committee shall assist with formatting, structure, presentation, and
publication of the Town’s zoning by-law, when requested by the Planning
Board.

§ 8 Public Information and Input

A. The Committee shall, whenever practicable, hold one or more public
information and input meetings to discuss general by-law changes.

1) The purpose of these meetings is to provide a forum for interested parties
to engage in discussion regarding the proposed by-law changes.

B. Such meetings shall be held no less than two (2) weeks before the Town
Meeting where the changes are to be voted.

C. Such meetings shall be posted publicly and published one (1) week in advance
in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town.
§ 9 Failure to Observe

A. Failure to observe any provision of this article shall not affect the validity of any change in the general by-laws that has been duly adopted by vote of Town Meeting.

§ 10 Severability

A. If any provision of this by-law shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, such validity or unconstitutionality shall not be construed to affect validity or constitutionality of any of the remaining provisions.