

# BOS Membership Size Study Committee

## Monday, February 27, 2023

### Members

Present: Bob Springett, Richard Forte, David Peress, Carolyn Ringel, Mark Sarro  
Not Present: Kate Cannie, Jim Dawley, Laverne Lovell

Also present: Carl Valente, Interim Town Administrator

Mr. Springett called the meeting to order at 6:30PM in the Great Hall of the Town House.

### 1. Introduction and Committee Charge

As this was the Committee's first meeting, the members introduced themselves, noting their tenure in the Town, past experiences on Town board and committees, and interest in the issue of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) membership size. None of the members has a prior view on the optimal size, but all agreed this is an important issue for efficient Town governance.

The Committee's charge is to present a recommendation on this question at the Annual Town Meeting in the Spring of 2024. Any proposed change to the size of the BOS ultimately would be an amendment to the Town Bylaws, requiring an affirmative two-thirds vote at Town Meeting and (pro forma) approval by the Attorney General. The relevant section of the Bylaws is Article II, Section 4.5(A) which states, "There shall be a 3-member Board of Selectmen elected on a rotating basis of 1 member each year for a 3-year term."

The Committee will issue a Request for Proposals for a consultant to provide information at the Committee's request and to advise the Committee.

The Committee members present voted unanimously to elect Kate Cannie as Committee Chair. They also agreed the Committee will meet for approximately one hour twice per month, usually on Wednesday evenings at 7PM.

### 2. Initial Discussion

The Committee discussed why the Town is evaluating the size of the BOS. As background, the members asked to receive a copy of all material on this topic presented in advance of, and at, the 2022 Town Meeting. In addition, Mr. Valente will make available to the Committee a digital copy of the Handbook for Massachusetts Selectmen, a guide to the roles and responsibilities of select board members published by the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

The Committee also discussed Town's relatively decentralized governance structure, the role of the BOS within this structure, and its interaction with other boards and committees. Mr. Springett noted that the Dover BOS is primarily a policy board, with implementation done by employees and other appointed and elected officials of the Town.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark Sarro