

USE OF TOWN PROPERTY

The purpose of this policy is to define the approved uses of Town buildings and equipment.

1. Town Buildings:

All Town buildings shall be used solely for the public business functions that they were intended. Use of the buildings for any other purpose requires prior approval by the Board of Selectmen. Application for public uses of Town buildings may be made at the Town Manager's office on the applicable form. Liability insurance must be provided by the petitioner and a fee for rental and custodial services may be assessed. Approval of applications for use will normally take place at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen may authorize the Town Manager to execute applications for use of Town buildings.

The Town of Exeter maintains an open forum policy. This policy allows any group or organization to use Town buildings, so long as the group or organization does not sell goods or services for profit. When non-municipal groups use Town buildings, they do so under this open forum policy.

The use of Town buildings by any non-municipal group or organization for any activity or expression of any viewpoint does not constitute an endorsement of that activity or viewpoint(s) by the Town.

A. Criteria for Approval:

- (1) Applications for building use are approved on a first come-first served basis;
- (2) First preference should be given to events that are of interest to the largest number of people;
- (3) Second preference should be given to events that would benefit the greatest number of participants.

B. Specific Listing of Priorities:

- (1) Any and all regular or special Town Meetings; any regular or special elections; any meeting of a duly constituted Town board;
- (2) Any use by a school group for plays or other such activities; any bona fide state or federal agency meeting for Town purposes;
- (3) Use by lecture groups (i.e. Merrill Lectures Series); use by players groups (i.e. Exeter Area Art Association);
- (4) Any other group of Exeter residents.

C. There shall be no use of Town buildings allowed for the purpose of sales of goods or services for profit.

D. Application for building use shall be limited to four uses by the same user. Reapplication for subsequent use is permitted.

2. Loan of Town Equipment

Town equipment shall only be used by authorized personnel for Town functions. No Town equipment shall be loaned for personal or commercial use unless:

- A. authorized by the Board of Selectmen;
- B. in the event of an emergency or a compelling need, the Town Manager or a Department Head finds it appropriate to honor a request for loan or exchange from another municipality or vendor;
- C. small hand equipment may be loaned by department heads to other municipalities or a vendor if the equipment is used for an appropriate public function.

All loans shall be subject to the following criteria:

- A. the equipment is subject to immediate recall by the Town of Exeter if needed for an appropriate Town function;
- B. insurance coverage is in effect by the borrower;
- C. an inventory and receipt exchange is made on the equipment;
- D. damages, if they occur, are paid by the party borrowing the equipment.

3. Solicitation

Solicitations in Town of Exeter buildings shall be prohibited unless authorized by the Board of Selectmen or conducted in compliance with ordinary business or personal function of Town Government. Exceptions to this section may be granted under the following conditions:

- A. solicitation is conducted for or by town-related subjects and specifically authorized by the Town Manager;
- B. specific instances with the approval of a department head, when such action is in the best interest of personnel and/or the department, provided the activity does not disrupt the work site.

4. Use of Swasey Bandstand

The Swasey Bandstand shall not be used for any function without the approval of the Board of Selectmen. Applications for use may be made at the office of the Town Manager on the applicable form. Liability insurance must be provided by the petitioner and a fee for custodial services may be assessed. Approval of the application for use will normally take place at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

5. Signs on Swasey Bandstand

No signs, banners, hangers or other devices may be attached to the Swasey Bandstand. Two sign boards for the use of public groups are available adjacent to the Town Hall.

Sign Board Case (right of Town Hall):

- a. signs shall be limited to 35" x 47" in size, poster board only;
- b. shall be placed in the sign case for no longer than seven (7) days;
- c. shall not be placed without proper written approval of the Town Manager on the applicable form;
- d. sign will be available to be picked up at the Town Office for one week after it is removed from the sign case, then it will be destroyed.

Sign board (to left of Town Hall):

- a. Sign insert material must be 1/4" or 3/8" waterproof plywood or hardboard;
- b. Drill four 1/2" holes in locations shown (on available sheet with application);
- c. Lettered insert attaches to sign w/existing wing nuts and 3/8" bolts;
- d. User is responsible for putting up and taking down sign.

Application for placement of signs at the Town Hall may be made at the Office of the Town Manager on the applicable form.

The following language was approved by the Board of Selectmen at their regular meeting of January 5, 2004 concerning the use of free standing signs for events held in Town facilities:

“Free standing signs are permitted advertising an event to be held in a Town facility.

Such signs may only be placed immediately in front of the facility or the entrance to the Bandstand. In the case of the Town Hall, signs may be placed on the porch and/or steps. Event signs may not be placed off site or to the side of the facility being used. Such signs will be limited to a total of 72 square feet per event, regardless of the number of Town facilities being used.

All signs will be free standing and in **no** case will signs be affixed to any Town property.

A sign is defined as any device providing identification, advertising or directional information for a specific business, service, product, person, organization, place or building. Included in this definition are graphic devices such as logos, attention-attracting media such as banners, pennants, flags or logo sculpture, and obtrusive colored fascia or architectural elements.”

Political campaigns are reminded that New Hampshire Revised Statute Annotated 664:17 provides in pertinent part: “No political advertising shall be placed on or affixed to any public property including highway rights-of-way or private property without the owner’s consent.” In general, the public right-of-way runs from the street to the building side of the sidewalk or telephone poles.