



EMAIL RESPONSE POLICY

15-02

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to members of the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager when electronic mail ("email") is received by either individual Selectmen at their email address provided on the Town's website or at the Selectmen's general inbox at the address selectmen@townofgroton.org.

II. POLICY

A. Emails, which concern Town business and/or affairs, whether received at a Selectmen's personal email address or at their townofgroton.org address, are public records and shall be treated and retained pursuant to the Public Records Law and the Commonwealth's Municipal Records Retention Manual.

B. Emails received at selectmen@townofgroton.org shall be opened by the Town Manager and/or Executive Assistant, in the Town Manager's absence or at his/her direction. If the email is requesting information that the Town Manager is capable of providing, the Town Manager shall endeavor to provide the information to the requester as soon as possible. All emails and responses generated by the Town Manager shall be forwarded to the members of the Board of Selectmen at their respective e-mail accounts for their information.

C. When a Board member receives an email at their personal email address which relates to their service on the Board, the Board member has the discretion to determine whether to share the email with the other members of the Board and/or the Town Manager. If a Board member chooses to share a response to an e-mail they receive, the Board member shall forward the response to the Town Manager who shall deliver the response to the other Board members. Emails that raise employee issues, concerns, or complaints should be forwarded to the Town Manager for handling. Selectmen should pay special attention to avoid "serial communications" through email exchanges as such conduct may violate the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

D. When a Selectman responds to an email sent to their individual account, they must make it unambiguously clear that (s)he is responding as an individual, and his/her comments, thoughts, and/or suggestions do not represent those of the Board of Selectmen.

E. If it is deemed necessary by a Board member, and placed on the agenda by the Chair, the Board will discuss the e-mail in open session, or executive session, and, where appropriate, prepare a response to the email. The sender of the email will be advised in writing that the Board is meeting to discuss his/her email. If a response is authorized by the Board of Selectmen, it will be issued by the Chairman.

