

[LETTERHEAD]

[Date]

TO: All Active Woodstock Town Advisory Committees
FR: Supervisor Anula Courtis, on behalf of the Woodstock Town Board
RE: Advisory Committee Authority, Communications Protocols, and Town Board Resolution
No. ____-2026

Dear Committee Members:

Please find attached a copy of Resolution No. ____-2026, adopted on _____, 2026, a copy of which is enclosed. This is being sent to all active advisory committees to clarify Town policy.

The Town Board values the work of its volunteers and the significant contributions advisory committees make to town governance. To ensure that all committees operate effectively and within appropriate boundaries, the Board has formally adopted the following provisions:

1. Advisory committees serve the Town Board. All advisory committees are established by Town Board resolution and exercise only those powers expressed in their resolutions. Advisory committees do not make policy, on their own, but only through the Town Board. Boards established by local law such as the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals have independent authority as set forth in the State and Town Code.
2. Communications with outside agencies require authorization. Committees, including members acting in their committee capacity, should not contact state, federal or municipal agencies (including submittal of written advocacy) without authorization from the Town Board or the Supervisor. If you are unsure whether a communication is authorized, you should contact the Supervisor or appear before the Town Board for review and clarification.
3. Disagreements. Disagreements between committees, or between a committee and a Town official, body, or resident, are to be brought before the Town Board or the Supervisor on behalf of the Town Board, not aired through communications to outside agencies, social media platforms operating under Town committee names, or other public forums in a manner that misrepresents committee authority. A position on an advisory committee does not authorize the member to disparage fellow volunteers, public officials, staff and/or anyone else.
4. Social media and public communications. Any social media page, website, or public platform operating under a Town committee name is subject to these same standards. Committee-branded platforms may not be used to advocate personal opinions, criticize Town officials or other Town bodies, or make unverified public claims about Town projects or personnel.

5. Only properly appointed members may act in the committee's name. Only individuals formally appointed by the Town Board are authorized to act on behalf of a Town advisory committee. If your committee has participants who have not been formally appointed, please provide their names to the Town Clerk so their status can be verified.
6. Nothing in this policy restricts the personal speech of any Town resident or volunteer. This policy governs only communications made in the name of, or purportedly on behalf of, a Town advisory committee or the Town. Any indication of affiliation with the Town government or its advisory committee will be deemed an intent to represent the Town for purposes of this policy. If you wish to communicate an opinion or statement for yourself personally, please ensure that your communication does not bear any official Town indicia, including membership on or leadership of an advisory committee.

These are not new principles. They reflect the terms under which every advisory committee was established. They are intended to ensure that the Town can effectively communicate its priorities to outside agencies.

If you have questions about your committee's scope of authority, or if your committee wishes to bring a matter to the Town Board's attention, please contact the Supervisor's office. We are glad to work with you.

Thank you for your service to the Town of Woodstock.

Respectfully,

Anula Courtis
Supervisor, Town of Woodstock

Enclosure: Town Board Resolution No. ____-2026

cc: Woodstock Town Board
Town Clerk
Town Attorney