

TOWN OF HOPKINTON
PUBLIC ASSET NAMING POLICY

Adopted: 11/18/2014

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Selectmen shall be responsible for the naming of public assets. For this purpose, public assets shall mean buildings, parks, squares, streets and ways, parcels of land, or portions thereof owned by the Town. The Board understands that a name given to a Town asset may have a long-lasting effect and will span future generations whose perceptions and values might change. It is the goal of the Board to reserve the naming or renaming of public assets for circumstances that will best serve the interests of the Town and to ensure a worthy and enduring legacy for the Town's public assets. It is the policy of the Board that the naming or renaming of public assets shall be done sparingly and only for good cause shown. The Board intends to be cautious in its implementation of this Policy in order to avoid over-naming public assets. As the the School Department has already adopted a "Naming of Facilities and Events" policy, they will be exempted from the provisions of this policy.

PURPOSE

The Board of Selectmen believes that the naming of public assets is a matter of substantial or significant public interest and deserves careful consideration. The Board, therefore, creates this policy to establish a systematic, consistent and transparent approach for naming of public assets in the Town.

GUIDELINES

As part of the naming process, it is the Board's goal to inform a wide cross-section of the public when a proposal is brought before the Board for its consideration. When considering the naming of any public asset, the Board may consider the following guidelines:

1. Priority should be given to names carrying geographic, historical or cultural significance to the Town as a whole or to the area in which the public asset is located.
2. The public asset may be named after an individual or organization that has made significant financial or civic contributions to the Town or that has made a direct financial grant to the Town for the purpose of developing a particular public asset.
3. Suggestions for naming of any public asset or portion thereof may come to the Board of Selectmen from any town official or member of the public.

PROCESS

Any board, committee or resident may propose in writing that a Town asset be named. Said proposal shall be submitted to the Town Manager/Board of Selectmen Office. Proposals should include substantial documentation to support the rationale for selecting the name, and to the extent possible should reflect a broad level of community backing, including from any boards or committees that have any connection to the asset that is proposed to be named. Requests pertaining to the facilities under the care of the, control and custody of the any town board, committee or commission shall be referred to that board, committee or commission in the first instance to confirm their support before the proposal is reviewed by the Board of Selectmen.

To ensure that the Board of Selectmen is fully aware of the public's interest in a naming or renaming proposal, a public hearing shall be held by the Board before deliberations and a vote can occur. Public notice of such hearing shall be posted at least fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing.

Prior to the hearing, the Board shall solicit input from relevant town boards and committees, surrounding property owners, residents, affected parties, groups or individuals that the Board believes may contribute meaningful input. The Town entity having care, custody, management and control of the public asset shall be invited to attend the hearing and to participate in the deliberations of the Board of Selectmen,

CRITERIA

In deciding the appropriateness of any naming or renaming proposal, the Board shall consider:

- a) The significant public value of the public asset;
- b) The public interest to be served;
- c) Any historic events, people or places associated with the public asset;
- d) Any outstanding individual associated with the public asset;
- e) Any major gift associated with the public asset;
- f) Whether the naming proposal is for a time certain; and
- g) Whether a naming agreement or other documentation is appropriate or necessary.

In addition, in deciding the appropriateness of any renaming proposal, the Board shall consider:

- a) Any existing agreement or documentation regarding the current name;
- b) The appropriateness of a new name, taking into consideration historical significance of the public asset or its current name; and
- c) Any costs associated with the renaming;

In making its decision to name or rename a public asset, the Board of Selectmen shall consider:

- a) Any other assets named, or currently being considered for naming, by the Board;
- b) Whether conditions or limitations should be placed on the maintenance or use of the public asset as part of the naming or renaming;
- c) Compliance with state laws, town bylaws, regulations or policies;
- d) Whether the naming should be restricted in duration.

A majority vote of the Board will apply.

This policy is meant to serve as a guide to those persons seeking to name or rename a public asset. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit the Board's authority to exercise its discretion based on the relevant facts and circumstances.

This policy may be amended or rescinded by the Board by majority vote.