



**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF ABINGDON TO
ESTABLISH COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE
FOR BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

WHEREAS, according to The Code of the Town of Abingdon Virginia, Article VII Boards, Commissions and Committees, Section 2-383. – Appointment and qualifications of members, adopt the attached Commitment to Excellence for Boards, Commissions, and Committees; and

WHEREAS, the Council strive to improve the Town citizens’ lives and support business and economic growth; and

WHEREAS, the Commitment to Excellence includes a Code of Ethics, Scope of Duties, Standards of Conduct, and Best Practices for Communicating with the Media and Citizens; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council adopts the attached *Commitment of Excellence for Boards, Commissions, and Committees*.

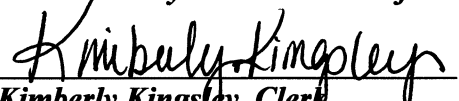
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this Resolution shall take full force and effect upon its passage and approval.

BY: 
Mayor Derek Webb

The undersigned Clerk of the Town of Abingdon, Virginia (the “Town”) hereby certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the Council held on February 7, 2022. I hereby further certify that such meeting was a regularly scheduled meeting and that, during the consideration of the foregoing resolution a quorum was present. I further certify that the minutes of such meeting reflect the attendance of the members and the voting on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Member	Attendance	Vote
Derek Webb, Mayor	Yes	Aye
Donna Quetsch, Vice Mayor	Yes	Aye
James Anderson	Absent	—
Amanda Pillion	Yes	Aye
Mike Owens	Yes	Aye

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Town of Abingdon as of February 7, 2022.


Kimberly Kingsley, Clerk

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE



Town of Abingdon
Boards, Commissions, and
Committees

Message from the Abingdon Town Council:

Thank you for serving on a board, commission, or committee, and welcome! Every day we strive to improve our citizens' lives, and we are grateful for your assistance in making that happen. Our vision is:

“Working together, we will be a progressive community shaped by new ideas and solutions, a skilled and innovative workforce, and citizen leadership-all distinguished by responsible and traditional values, involvement, new technology, and quality citizen services.”

In your capacity as an appointee, it is essential to remember you have a duty to act in the best interest of the people of Abingdon. Transparency and accountability are crucial, so we have adopted by resolution this Commitment to Excellence for boards, commissions, and committees to formally recognize certain principles and standards that every member should follow to ensure that Abingdon continues to thrive for future generations.

This Commitment to Excellence includes a Code of Ethics, Scope of Duties, Standards of Conduct, and Best Practices for Communicating with the Media and Citizens. The Council expects appointees to adhere to the policies set forth. Many of these items are requirements pursuant to the Virginia Conflict of Interests Act and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. You will also receive in-person or virtual training from a member of Town staff and/or Town Attorney. Please note that in the event provisions in this Commitment to Excellence are not adhered to - for example, posting racially insensitive statements on social media or accepting gifts in your official capacity for personal gain - the Council reserves the right to end your appointment.

We appreciate that you have chosen to devote your time by making a difference in our Town. We cannot serve the people of Abingdon to the best of our ability without your continued collaboration and support.

Sincerely,

Mayor

Message from the Town Manager, Clerk of Council, and Town Attorney:

We are Abingdon, a vibrant historic community celebrating and embracing years of innovation to create an even more dynamic future.

We honor Council's vision statement for our great Town every day through our collective efforts. As a board, commission, or committee member, you too play a critical role in realizing an even more dynamic future. Thank you for agreeing to be a significant player in our work!

This Commitment to Excellence outlines the operational norms that guide us, some of which are legal and Abingdon-centric – to ensure expectations during our service. While training will be provided to newly appointed members, we expect you to periodically review and remain knowledgeable of these norms. We thus ask that you take time to review this Commitment to Excellence as you embark on or continue your service to our community. By signing your declaration of commitment, you agree to adhere to our communal standards each year of your service.

We are so glad to have you join Team Abingdon! If any of us - or staff - can help to enrich your volunteer service, please do not hesitate to contact us!

TOWN OF ABINGDON
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

CODE OF ETHICS

Recognizing that the community sees Town Council appointees as influencers, they should display the highest levels of moral and ethical conduct, and any person serving on a Town board, commission, or committee shall comply with the following Code of Ethics:

1. Uphold the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Town of Abingdon laws and regulations, including the Code of Virginia, Town Code, Charter, and never intentionally violate them.
2. Give a full measure of service and effort to the position of trust for granted guardianship, giving best thought and sincere attempt to perform your duties.
3. Avoid adopting policies, engaging in activities, or supporting programs that discriminate against individuals based on race, color, religion or creed, sex, national origin, age, or other protected characteristic.
4. Comply with all provisions of the state and local Conflict of Interests Act and Ethics in Public Procurement Act, including, but not limited to, those sections that regulate the solicitation and acceptance of money, gifts, or other things of value for services completed during the performance of your official duties.
5. Attend all Virginia Conflict of Interests Act, Freedom of Information Act, and Ethics in Public Procurement Act training sessions, if required by your appointment.
6. Seek out the Town Attorney for legal counsel if you have any questions about a potential conflict of interest.
7. Ensure the integrity of actions performed by boards, commissions, or committees by avoiding the disbursement of unfair privileges or special favors to anyone. You should never receive favors or benefits or gifts for family members or yourself; under the circumstances, a reasonable person influences the performance of your governmental duties.

TOWN OF ABINGDON
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

SCOPE OF DUTIES

1. Make no promises binding upon the duties of any office.
2. Do not use information learned confidentially during the performance of governmental duties to make a private profit for your family, employees, close family relations, yourself, or any business where you have a personal financial interest.
3. Report to the Town Attorney's Office any misconduct, neglect of duty, or corruption when discovered.
4. Comply with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, including, but not limited to:
 - Not discussing public business outside of an open meeting in a group of three or more members of your body or such a number that would constitute a “meeting” under the law.
 - Complying with the principle that the public's business should be conducted openly by following and observing the spirit and letter of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, using closed sessions only to deal with matters adequately exempted under the law.
 - Maintaining confidentiality of all matters discussed during a closed session and personnel matters.
 - Using Town of Abingdon email for official Town business purposes to correspond with our citizens in the course of normal operations.
5. When presenting individual positions and opinions, you shall purposefully state that you are not representing the Town or your body, nor will you convey an inference that you do. When speaking in your official capacity, you shall also not use the media or social media to criticize, question the integrity of, or vilify the personal beliefs of citizens, Town employees, or colleagues.
6. When responding to the media, you must make a clear distinction between personal belief or opinion and a decision made by your body.
7. Be an active listener, carefully considering all points of view and opinions.
8. If appropriate, work in partnership with other political subdivisions, organizations, and governmental agencies to further the interest of the Town of Abingdon.

TOWN OF ABINGDON
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Recognizing that individuals holding public office are under continuous observation by interested Town residents and the media, and realizing that maintaining the dignity and integrity of public office is vital for maintaining high levels of public confidence in governmental institutions. Each member of a board, commission, or committee shall adhere to the following Standards of Conduct:

1. Avoid the use of intimidating, abusive, or threatening gestures or language directed at citizens, colleagues, or Town employees during the performance of public duties and public meetings.
2. Stay current on all tax obligations.
3. Adhere to the following Social Media Policy:

Members who use social media shall not do the following:

- Post any materials of a sexually graphic nature;
 - Promote violence or suppression;
 - Post any materials that encourage or show illegal activity;
 - Use any speech containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images, acts, statements, or other forms of speech that ridicule, malign, disparage, or otherwise express bias against any race, any religion, or any other protected class; or
 - Use speech that could reasonably be considered reckless.
4. Attend all scheduled meetings of your board, commission, or committee, resigning whenever personal circumstances preclude regular attendance. Refer to the Council Ordinance and/or bylaws of your particular board, commission, or committee for specific attendance requirements.
 5. Make a diligent effort to be well prepared for every meeting.
 6. Avoid criticism or personal attacks on Town employees or colleagues unrelated to the public business before your board, commission, or committee. Maintain an attitude of consideration and courtesy toward all Town employees and colleagues during every deliberation and discussion.
 7. Refrain from the use of personal devices during meetings.
 8. During board, commission, and committee meetings, all members should dress appropriately for the business environment.

TOWN OF ABINGDON
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATING
WITH THE MEDIA AND CITIZENS

1. When responding to questions from citizens or the media, you should:
 - Remind the listener that you do not speak for the entire board, commission, or committee;
 - Clarify your position on a specific item; and
 - Not comment on closed session matters unless and until discussed in an open session meeting.
2. Every member shall acknowledge that personnel matters must remain confidential, and the board, commission, or committee should protect individual privacy.
3. Members will concentrate on issues and avoid making public comments about Town employees, individuals, fellow board, commission, or committee members, media representatives, or community residents. The Town Manager should be the primary contact for Town matters. When requested to give an interview, the member asked should contact the Town Manager's Office, and they will, in turn, contact the Mayor and Town Council to inform them of the interview's subject matter. In addition, the staff liaison to that particular board, commission, or committee shall update the other members regarding the circumstances and substance of the interview as soon as practicable.
4. This procedure does not prevent any member from responding to questions from the media.

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

As a member of a Town of Abingdon board, commission, or committee, I agree to uphold and affirm the Town of Abingdon Boards, Commissions, and Committees Commitment to Excellence as articulated in the Code of Ethics, Scope of Duties, Standards of Conduct, and Best Practices for Communication with the Media and Citizens. In furtherance of that pledge, I will:

- Appreciate the individual contributions, perspectives, and talents of individual members;
- Help create an environment of civility and respect where individual members, the public, and Town employees are free to work to their full potential and express their ideas;
- Conduct my public and private affairs with integrity, fairness, honesty, and respect for others;
- Respect the privacy and dignity of organizations and individuals;
- Focus on achieving meaningful solutions for the public benefit and strive to uphold the common good;
- Avoid and discourage actions that are harmful or divisive to the best interest of the Town; and
- Treat everyone I meet the same way I wish to be treated.

I affirm that I have read and comprehend the Town of Abingdon Boards, Commissions, and Committees Commitment to Excellence. Failure to adhere to the policies articulated in this document may result in removal from the board, commission, or committee by the Town Council.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

Board/Commission/Committee