



Procedures for Dog Hearings

Applies to:	Dog Hearings
Select Board Original Adoption:	<u>August 11, 2015</u>
Amended/Approved – Select Board	March 28, 2023
Last Reviewed by Select Board:	March 7, 2023

1. COMPLAINT. A written complaint must be filed with the Select Board within ten (10) days of the occurrence. The Complaint shall provide names, addresses and contact information of the complainant and the dog owner. The Complaint shall describe the dog and further specify why and how the dog is considered to be a nuisance and/or behaving in a dangerous manner. The Complaint shall specify times, dates and reasons and provide a list of all individuals who may have knowledge of the issue.
2. HEARING: Hearings will be conducted in accordance with MGL c140, §157 within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint, absent extenuating circumstances. The hearing will be included in the agenda for a regular Select Board meeting and held in open session. The Town Administrator will notify the Animal Control Officer, Police, and all other persons involved of the date and time of the hearing.
3. HEARING PROCEDURE. The procedure for conducting a hearing, under MGL c140 §157, as follows:
 - a READ COMPLAINT. Read complaint: fully identify and describe dog; present picture when available.
 - b OATH. Swear in complainant that all information and statements are true.
 - c REPORTS. Hear reports from the Animal Control Officer, Police, Health Agent and/or Animal Inspector. The dog must be fully identified.
 - d WITNESS TESTIMONY. Take testimony from complainants—directly question as to why the dog is considered to be a nuisance or dangerous. Are they fearful of dog? Describe dog’s behaviors.
 - e OWNER TESTIMONY. Take testimony from the owner and/or others speaking on the owner’s behalf.
 - f DECISION. At the conclusion of the hearing, or shortly thereafter, the Select Board may render its decision or take the matter under advisement, announcing the intended date of decision. A copy of the decision will be filed with the Town Clerk’s office.
 - g OTHER. Unless requested by the Select Board, the dog shall not attend the hearing.