

# NHMA Gears Up for 2021-2022 Legislative Policy Process - It's Never Too Early to Submit Policy Suggestions

## ***Our Advocacy Efforts Matter! Your Voice Matters More!***

Established in 1941 as a voluntary association of New Hampshire's cities and towns, the New Hampshire Municipal Association has served as the primary legislative advocate for New Hampshire's municipalities, representing its members at the state legislature and before numerous federal and state administrative agencies.

We are a unique advocacy organization in that we do not support or endorse any candidate or political party. Our ability to maintain significant political relevance is tied directly to our advocacy efforts and the relationships we have cultivated over many years with state and municipal leaders, the New Hampshire Legislature, state agency officials and other stakeholder groups.

As many municipal officials already know, our legislative work is a full-time, year-round job. It is an ongoing process and staff members have already been working on laying the foundation for the next legislative biennium. The success of NHMA's legislative efforts, in large part, depends on you.

You work at the level of government that is closest to the citizens and you are uniquely situated to help legislators understand how pending legislation affects your city or town.

**Step One: Get Involved – Volunteer for a Policy Committee**

New Hampshire

Town and City

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Diary of a First-Time  
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New Laws Affecting  
Town Meeting (/town-  
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affecting-town-meeting)

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Town Meeting & Election  
Postponement (/town-  
city-article/town-  
meeting-election-  
postponement)

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Traits of a Good  
Moderator (/town-city-  
article/traits-good-  
moderator)

As a first step, we are recruiting volunteers to serve on our three legislative policy committees. These committees will review legislative policy proposals submitted by local officials and NHMA affiliate groups and make recommendations on those policies, which will go to the NHMA Legislative Policy Conference in September.

Each of the committees deals with a different set of municipal issues. The committees and their subject areas are as follows:

- **Finance and Revenue** – budgeting, revenue, tax exemptions, current use, assessing, tax collection, retirement issues, education funding.
- **General Administration and Governance** – elections, Right-to-Know Law, labor, town meeting, charters, welfare, public safety, other governance and legal matters.
- **Infrastructure, Development, and Land Use** – solid/hazardous waste, transportation, land use, environmental regulation, housing, utilities, code enforcement, economic development.

When you contact us, please indicate your first and second choices for a committee assignment. We will do our best to accommodate everyone's first choice, but we do need to achieve approximately equal membership among the committees. We hope to have 15-20 members on each committee.

There will be an organizational meeting for all committees on **April 3**. After that, each committee will meet separately as many times as necessary to review the policy proposals assigned to it—typically three to five meetings, all held on either a Monday or Friday, between early April and the end of May.

The committee process will allow for in-depth review and discussion of policy suggestions so all aspects of each proposal, both positive and negative, will be examined. Based on that review, each committee will make recommendations for the adoption of legislative policies.

Once the committees complete their work, their policy recommendations will be sent to every municipal member of NHMA. Each municipality's governing body will be encouraged to review the recommendations and establish positions on them. Members will also have an opportunity to submit floor policy proposals in advance of the Legislative Policy Conference in September.

At the Legislative Policy Conference, each member municipality is entitled to cast one vote on every policy recommendation submitted and on any floor proposals. Each policy proposal must receive a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting in order to be adopted as an NHMA policy.

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Town of Sandwich Selectman, Christopher Boldt, Receives NHMA's Russ Marcoux Municipal Advocate of the Year Award (/town-city-article/town-sandwich-selectman-christopher-boldt-receives-nhma%E2%80%99s-russ-marcoux-municipal)

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LEGAL Q&A: It's that Time of Year: Election Time (/town-city-article/legal-qa-it%E2%80%99s-time-year-election-time)

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HR Report: U.S. Department of Labor Announces New Overtime Rules Effective January 1, 2020 (/town-city-article/hr-report-us-department-labor-announces-new-overtime-rules-effective-january-1)

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Tech Insights: Six Questions Your Organization Should Be Asking About the Dark Web (/town-city-article/tech-insights-six-questions-your-organization-should-be-asking-about-dark-web)

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## Step 2: Create Change – Submit a Legislative Policy Proposal

Every NHMA legislative policy begins with a proposal submitted by a local official, board, or committee. If there is a law affecting municipal government that you think needs to be fixed, or if you have an idea for how the functions of local government might be improved through legislation, this is your opportunity to make a change.

Here is a [link to NHMA's Legislative Policy Proposal Form \(/sites/default/files/uploads/legislative-bulletins/2021-2022 legislative policy form final 0.pdf\) \(/sites/default/files/uploads/legislative-bulletins/2021-2022 legislative policy form final.pdf\)](/sites/default/files/uploads/legislative-bulletins/2021-2022%20legislative%20policy%20form%20final%200.pdf) that can be used to submit a proposal for consideration. The deadline for submitting proposals is **April 17**, although earlier submission is encouraged. Please follow the instructions on the form for submitting your proposal.

We leave you, then, with two assignments, should you choose to accept them:

- Contact the Government Affairs Staff (soon!) if you are interested in serving on a legislative policy committee (send us an email at [governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org) (<mailto:governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org>)); and
- Submit a legislative policy proposal if you have an issue that you would like to be considered as part of this year's policy process. If you have a policy suggestion, it is not too early to send it in! Policy proposals may be submitted by a board or a local official from a member municipality. Please use the form found in this issue and email to us at [governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org) (<mailto:governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org>).

## Policy Review Checklist

In order to make sure that each policy has been thoroughly considered and all pros and cons discussed, the following checklist should be applied to each recommendation.

- ☐ Where does the policy come from?
- ☐ What is the need for this legislative change/how widespread is this problem?
- ☐ What could we lose and what are the risks of pursuing this proposal? What could we gain?
- ☐ Who would likely be opposed to this proposal? Who would likely support it?
- ☐ Does this proposal require financial analysis?

☐ Would the policy cost money for municipalities? For the state?

☐ Would the policy be divisive for municipalities? Would it tend to pit one community against another?

## **NHMA Relies on its Members to Help Shape its Legislative Agenda**

If you are a local official in a NHMA member city or town and are interested in serving on one of the policy committees, please contact the Government Affairs staff at 800-852-3358, or at [governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org) (<mailto:governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org>).



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