

## **DECENNIAL BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes**

**June 2, 2025**

**6:30 p.m.**

### **Call to Order**

Chair Cecilia Butler called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

### **Attendance**

Cecilia Butler, Chair

Fred Wofford

Michelle Labadini

Micah Flynn

Norman Vigil

Nancy Baker

Jennifer Doherty

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## **Review of Fire Department Bylaws**

Chief William Spillane of the Dedham Fire Department was introduced.

Chief Spillane addressed the effectiveness of current fire department–related bylaws. He stated that existing bylaws governing communication systems in buildings are functioning well and that no significant issues have arisen. He noted, however, the ongoing need to adapt bylaws to reflect advances in technology. Chief Spillane also discussed challenges related to high-rise buildings, communication systems, and the importance of regular testing, which is routinely conducted.

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## **Review of Police Department Bylaws**

Chief Michael D’Entremont of the Dedham Police Department arrived at 6:36 p.m. and was introduced. He apologized for his late arrival.

Nancy Baker explained that a standalone Police Department bylaw no longer exists. Instead, police-related bylaws are dispersed across multiple chapters and departments, including Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Works. As a result, some police-related provisions are difficult to locate.

Chief D’Entremont provided the committee with a list of bylaws he recommended for review and potential revision.

Discussion focused on the need to modernize bylaws addressing trespassing, loitering, and public ways to reflect current enforcement practices. Members suggested broader language to

encompass public parks and other public spaces. Updates related to federal guidance on imitation firearms were also discussed. The bylaw governing night work was reviewed, with suggestions to simplify language and clarify emergency exceptions. Additionally, members discussed improving communication during snow removal operations to prevent unnecessary vehicle towing.

Fred Wofford departed the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

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## Action Items

(The committee received a comprehensive list.)

- Review Chapter 154, Section 4 (Imitation Handguns) and update language to align with Consumer Product Safety Commission guidance.
  - Consider expanding bylaws related to public ways to include parks, playgrounds, and other public spaces.
  - Evaluate Chapter 136 (Disorderly Conduct) to determine whether the language remains necessary or if state law sufficiently addresses the conduct.
  - Review Chapter 199, Section 7 (Willful Destruction of Public Property) to determine whether a standalone bylaw is still needed.
  - Revise Chapter 265, Section 9 (Vehicle Impounding) to clarify applicability to public property rather than “any place.”
  - Assess the appropriateness of the \$300 fine in Chapter 265, Section 18 for failure to comply with the Fire Chief’s orders.
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## General Discussion

Members emphasized the importance of maintaining clear, effective, and current bylaws for the benefit of the community. Concerns were raised regarding outdated provisions. It was recommended that the committee focus on bylaws that are specific to Dedham and rely on state and federal law where appropriate.

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## Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, June 30, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.**, revised from the originally scheduled June 23 date due to Town Counsel’s availability. The committee will begin working with Town Counsel to develop proposed bylaw amendments incorporating departmental feedback.

The meeting minutes of June 2, 2025 were approved on January 14, 2026.