



**Policy on the Publication of Candidate Statements
on the Town Bulletin Board in accordance with Charter Section 7.6**

Under [Section 7.6](#) of the Amherst Home Rule Charter, the Town Council “shall establish a process compliant with state campaign and political finance laws for candidates whose names will appear on the election ballot to publish statements regarding their candidacy on the Town bulletin board.” Under this authority, the Town Council hereby adopts this policy. The Town Council reserves the right, at any time, to revise or rescind this policy.

1. The Town Bulletin Board, as defined in [Charter Sec. 1.7](#) is “the display in the Town Hall on which the Town Clerk posts official notices of meetings and upon which other official Town notices are posted, the display on the Town’s website established and maintained by the Town as its online repository of municipal information, or the display at any other location(s) as may be designated from time to time by the Town Council.” It can be found at <http://www.amherstma.gov/bulletin>.
2. The phrase “Candidate Statement” shall mean the following:
 - a. The name of the candidate, as it shall appear on the election ballot.
 - b. A hyperlink to one webpage. The candidate shall provide the URL for the hyperlink.
 - c. A text-only statement provided by the candidate that contains no more than 900 characters (including spaces).
3. The Town Bulletin Board shall publish Candidate Statements for persons whose names will appear on the Town election ballot for the following local elected offices:
 - a. Town Councilor
 - b. School Committee
 - c. Board of Library Trustees
 - d. Housing Authority
 - e. Oliver Smith Will Elector
4. Persons whose names will not appear on the Town election ballot for the offices listed in Paragraph 3 above shall not have Candidate Statements published on the Town Bulletin Board.
5. If a person’s name is removed from the Town election ballot after the Candidate Statement is published on the Town Bulletin Board, the Town shall remove that person’s Candidate Statement, as defined in Paragraph 2 above, from the Town Bulletin Board.
6. No later than 5:00 pm Amherst, MA local time 1 business day after the deadline for filing nomination papers with the Board of Registrars the Town Clerk shall email all persons who filed nomination papers with the Board of Registrars for the elected offices outlined in Paragraph 3 above a URL that shall be used to submit the Candidate Statement as defined in Paragraph 2 above. Each person filing nomination papers with the Board of Registrars shall provide the Town Clerk with an email address at the time of filing nomination papers with the Board of Registrars in order to facilitate the distribution of the URL. Alternatively, if a person filing nomination papers asks to submit a Candidate Statement in paper form, the Town Clerk shall provide the person with a form to do so. The Town Clerk, at its discretion and with proper notice to persons filing nomination papers, may accept Candidate Statements submitted by other electronic means. Submitting the Candidate Statement electronically is preferred.



7. Persons filing nomination papers with the Board of Registrars shall submit Candidate Statements no later than 5:00 pm Amherst, MA local time the same date as the deadline for filing withdrawals of nomination papers. Candidate Statements submitted after this deadline shall be published no later than 5 business days after they are submitted.
8. If a Candidate Statement, or any part thereof, has not yet been submitted, the Town Bulletin Board shall indicate this.
9. Once submitted, persons shall not be permitted to revise the Candidate Statement. If a provided text-only statement, as detailed in Paragraph 2.c. above exceeds 900 characters, the Town Clerk shall delete all characters occurring after the 900th character. Persons providing Candidate Statements are responsible for the accuracy of the content provided.
10. Candidate Statements submitted prior to the deadline identified in Paragraph 7 above shall be published on the Town Bulletin Board no later than 5:00 pm Amherst, MA local time 3 business days after the deadline for filing withdrawals of nomination papers.
11. All locations that publish Candidate Statements shall also publish a disclaimer similar to the following, modified as appropriate for each location: **“The Statements on this page are written, submitted, and provided by the candidates and do not reflect the position of the Town of Amherst in whole or in part. The links in the Statements to webpages are provided by the candidates, are not hosted by the Town of Amherst, and do not reflect the position of the Town in whole or in part. The Town has not made any changes to the Candidate Statements, except in accordance with the Policy on the Publication of Candidate Statements adopted by the Town Council.”** The Town shall decide the manner in which to publish the disclaimer so as to provide maximum visibility of the disclaimer.
12. On the Town Bulletin Board, Candidate Statements shall appear first by office being sought, then by name in the same order in which the candidate names will appear on the Town election ballot. The offices shall appear in the order they will appear on the election ballot.
13. The Board of Registrars shall provide all persons requesting nomination papers with a copy of this policy, the relevant dates, and the URL for submitting the Candidate Statement at the time the nomination papers are requested.
14. A copy of this policy shall be published on the Town Bulletin Board and in an appropriate location on the Town Clerk’s page on the Town website.