

TOWN OF MENDON FLAGPOLE/SPEECH CENTER POLICY

Purpose: This policy addresses the Town of Mendon's ("Town") display of flags and banners, or electronic signboards (collectively, "Speech Symbols") on flagpoles and/or banner poles ("Speech Centers") located on Town property. This policy reserves the use of all Town Speech Centers and selection of Speech Symbols to the Town acting through the Select Board or the Select Board's designee.

Policy: It is the policy of the Town of Mendon that Speech Symbols be displayed in conformance with Federal and State policies, as stated in the Federal "Our Flag" publication of the Congress, House Document No. 96-144; Ch. 2, § 6 of the Massachusetts General Laws and Chapter 2, § 6A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Flag Order of Precedence: Outdoor flags will be flown on Town flagpoles in the following order of precedence; first, the United States flag; second, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts flag; and third, the Town of Mendon flag. The Town may also fly any official United States military flag, including the POW-MIA flag and any related honorary and memorial United States military flags on any Flagpole.

Flag Special Occasions: By order of the Select Board, or the Board's designee, flags may be lowered to half-staff, including but not limited to flags of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in honor of the death of a Town employee killed in the line of duty, or in observance of a specific event or circumstance.

Other Speech Symbols: Town Speech Centers are not intended to serve as a forum for free expression by the public and are not open to use by the public. Town Speech Centers are intended solely for the expression of speech by the Town, subject to the limitations as set forth in this policy.

The Town's ceremonial flagpoles, banner poles, and electronic signboards ("Ceremonial Speech Centers") shall be used for the expression of speech by the Town, only. By order of the Select Board, or the Select Board's designee, the following other Speech Symbols may be displayed on Ceremonial Speech Centers as an expression of the Town's official sentiments:

- (a) In accordance with a proclamation of the President of the United States or the Governor of the Commonwealth.
- (b) In recognition of governments and/or territories recognized by the United States.¹
- (c) In honor of, in conjunction with, or as part of official Town: (i) ceremonies; (ii) events; or (iii) special occasions.
- (d) The Town shall acquire ownership of all Speech Symbols that it displays on Ceremonial Speech Centers.


¹ See United States Department of State list of sovereign states with a definite territory recognized as independent by the U.S. <https://www.state.gov/independent-states-in-the-world/>.

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Date Adopted 2/21/2024 by the Town of Mendon Select Board


Michael Merolli, Chair


Alejna Brugos, Vice Chair


Brendan Chenelle


Michael Goddard


Jason Kuter