

At Civics Corner, we believe that hyperlocal news is one of the most powerful tools for strengthening democracy. Our mission is to help the Williamstown community stay informed, empowered, and engaged in civic life. Whether we're covering Select Board meetings or spotlighting local advocacy, our goal is to make civic information accessible, trustworthy, and actionable.

We draw inspiration from the [Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics](#), and for our purposes, we simplify that down to the following guiding principles:

- Tell the truth
- Label opinions and advocacy
- Provide context where possible
- Act independently
- Show compassion

To support these values in practice, all Civics Corner contributors will follow these standards:

1. Authorship and Attribution
 - All articles and posts will be tagged with the author's name or pseudonym.
 - Writers under the age of 18 will use a pseudonym to protect their identity in public online spaces.
2. Labeling Non-Objective Content
 - Any post that includes personal opinion, editorial commentary, or advocacy will be clearly labeled with the tag #opinion.
3. Independence and Integrity
 - Civics Corner does not accept monetary compensation, gifts, or donations in exchange for coverage or editorial influence.
 - If a contributor or Civics Corner as a whole receives funding from a source that is relevant to a specific article (e.g., a grant from a civic nonprofit, a sponsor with ties to a covered issue), we will disclose that relationship clearly in the piece, similar to NPR's transparency standards.
 - Writers must also disclose any personal affiliations or potential conflicts of interest that may influence their reporting.
4. Tone and Responsibility
 - We strive for respectful, inclusive writing.
 - We aim to humanize civic engagement and encourage participation without sensationalism or fear-mongering.