Selectboard Onboarding & Board Development

"The beginning is the most important part of the work."

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Selectboard onboarding and development are essential to effective local governance. New members step into complex legal, financial, and policy responsibilities that affect every resident, and a clear onboarding process helps them contribute confidently and avoid missteps. Ongoing development keeps the full board aligned, informed, and working as a team. Getting started can be simple: create a concise orientation packet (charter, bylaws, key policies, budget overview), schedule a brief onboarding meeting with the chair and town manager or administrator (if applicable), and plan at least one annual retreat or training session. These small steps build shared understanding, improve decision-making, and strengthen trust in local government.

The following templates, tools and resources can help new selectboard members better understand the "how to" aspects of the role they are taking on. They can also help existing boards adopt new processes and practices to improve upon how they are currently carrying out their work. At VLCT all dogs - new and old - can learn new tricks.

*Plato

Templates:

- How to Get An Item on the Selectboard Meeting Agenda Template
- Selectboard Agenda Request Form Template
- Executive Summary of Selectboard Meeting Agenda Item Template

- [Staff Report on Agenda Item for Selectboard Meeting Template](#)

- [Selectboard Onboarding Packet Table of Contents Template](#)

- [Selectboard Grant Pre-Application Form Template](#)

Resources:

- [The Selectboard Handbook](#)

- [The Selectboard Resources Compendium](#)

- [Selectboard Organizational Meetings](#)

- [A Guide to Planning Simple, Effective Selectboard Retreats](#)

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