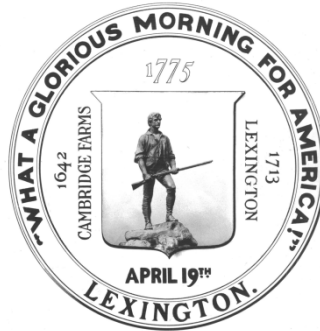


# **Town of Lexington Non-Elected Volunteer Boards & Committees Review**



Select Board Work Session  
January 18, 2022

*“Life’s most persistent  
and urgent question is,  
What are you doing for others?”*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*“The best way to find yourself  
is to lose yourself  
in the service to others.”*

*Mahatma Gandhi*

*“There’s no greater challenge  
and there is no greater honor  
than to be in public service.”*

*~ Condoleezza Rice*

# The Issue

- Need to review, revise and streamline the process for non-elected volunteer Board & Committee Members appointments
  - Select Board Appointments
  - Town Manager Appointments

# Timeline

- **September 20, 2021**
  - Overview/Confirmation of Direction
  - Decision Identification and Discussion
- **January 18, 2022**
  - Review/Discuss Survey Data
- **Future Meeting in 2022**
  - Review/Discuss Changes to Appointment Process
  - Decide/vote on potential changes to appointment process for a specified effective date

# **Volunteer Non-Elected Board/Committee Member Survey Data Review**

- **Sent to 339 Board/Committee Members via email on 9/10/21.**
- **Responses from 142 Board/Committee Members or 41.8%**

**How many volunteer Board(s)/Committee(s)  
do you currently serve on?**

**1 = 114**

**2 = 21**

**3 = 6**

**4 = 0**

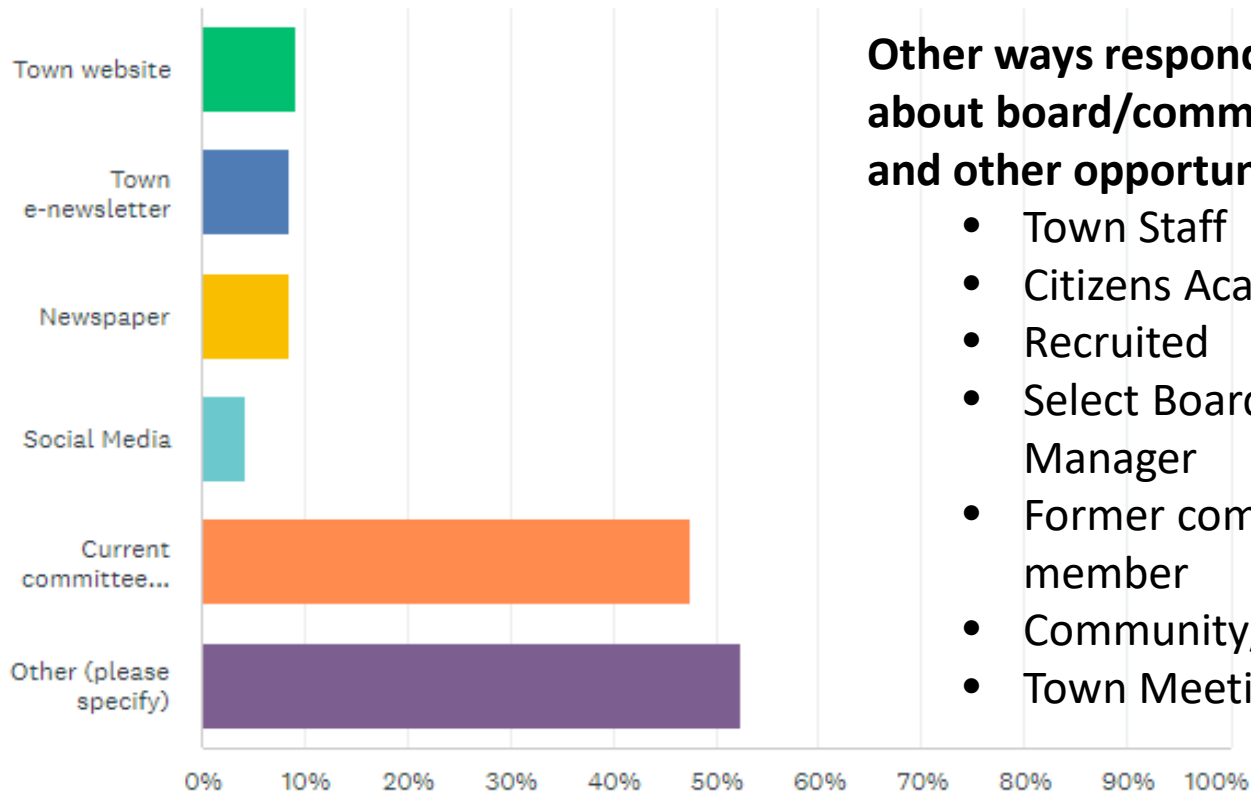
**5+ = 1**

# **How long have you served on a Board(s) or Committee(s) in Lexington?**

<b>&lt; 1 year</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>1-2 years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2-3 years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3-4 years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4-5 years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5-10 years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>16-25 years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>25+ years</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>No answer</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>2</b>

# How did you hear of Board/Committee Opportunities in Lexington?

- **About 50% of respondents learned of board/committee opportunities from a current member.**



**Other ways respondents learned about board/committee vacancies and other opportunities:**

- Town Staff
- Citizens Academy
- Recruited
- Select Board/Town Manager
- Former committee member
- Community/affinity group
- Town Meeting

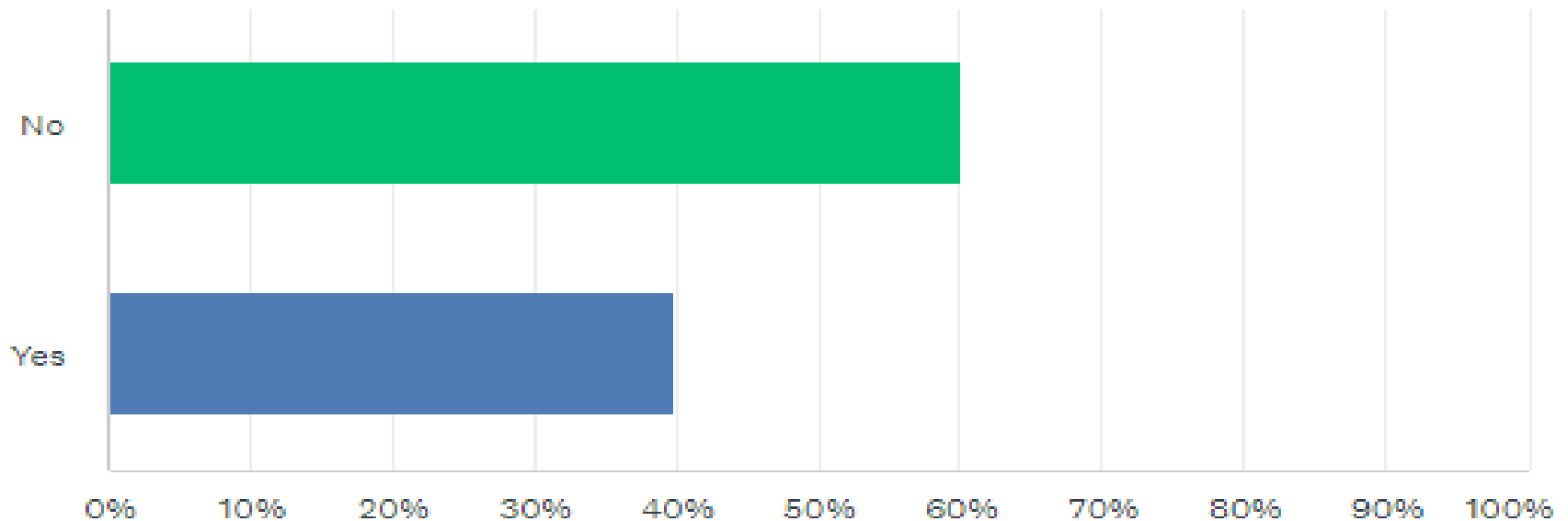


# **Do you feel reappointment should be Automatic or should you have to Reapply?**

- **44% of respondents believe that reappointment should not be automatic and that members should have to reapply.**
  - Respondents commented that requiring members to reapply opens up opportunities for new members, who bring with them new ideas and energy.
  - Others suggested that members should have to reapply only after their second or third term because it can take almost two terms to see projects completed or to understand the role and function of the board/committee.
  - In addition, requiring members to reapply reaffirms their commitment, and allows the appointing authority to evaluate the effectiveness of that particular member.
- **21% of respondents believe reappointment should be automatic.**
  - Respondents feel that automatic appointments are beneficial because it's hard to find qualified people who are willing to dedicate their time to serve on these boards/committees.
  - Respondents also felt continuity is important as well as it is hard to get work done and make an impact in a single term.
- **The remainder of respondents commented that whether reappointments should be automatic or not is dependent on the board/committee.**

# Would you be in favor of Term Limits for Volunteer Board/Committee Members?

- Only 40% of respondents would be in favor of term limits for members.



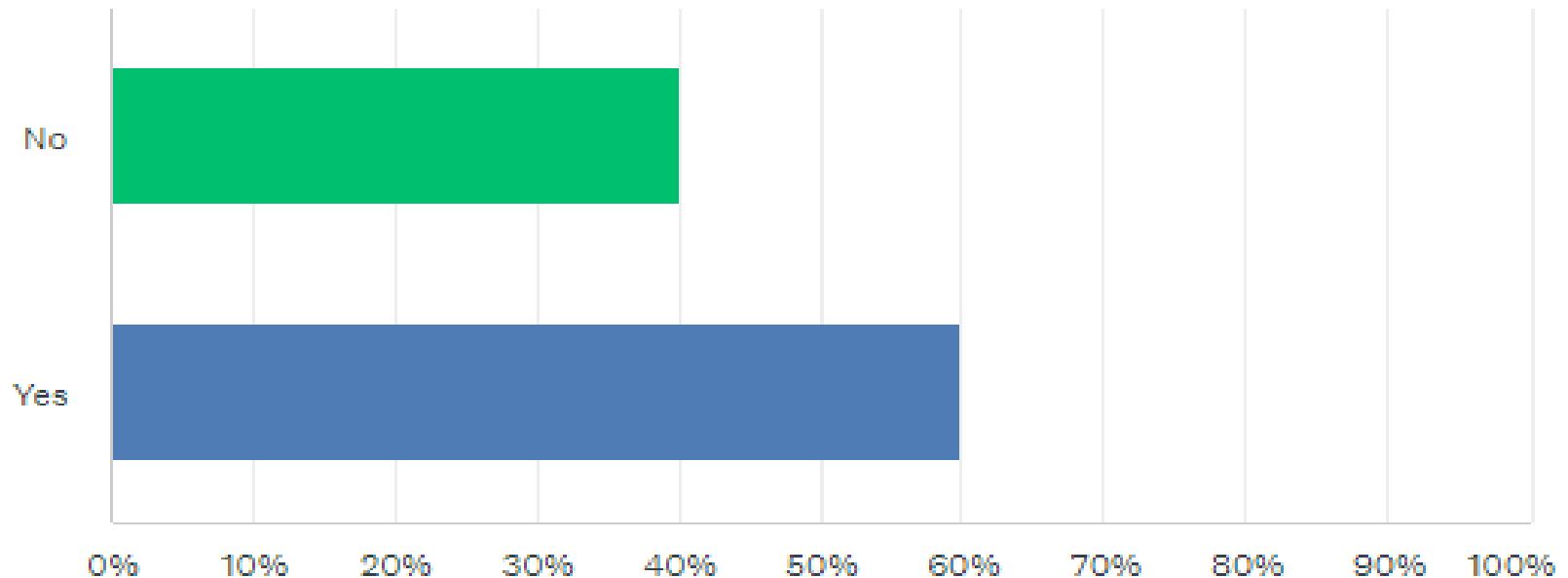
# Proposed Length of Term Limit for Volunteer Board/Committee Member

- **Proposed length of term:**
  - A majority of respondents are in favor of a 10-year term limit for members.

Responses	Term Limits
4%	2 years
7%	4 years
7%	5 years
15%	6 years
2%	7 years
26%	10 years
2%	12 years
2%	2-3 years
4%	3-4 years
2%	4-6 years
4%	5-8 years
2%	10-12 years
4%	2 terms
2%	2-3 year terms
9%	3-3 year terms
7%	3 terms

# Would you be in favor of Term Limits for Volunteer Board/Committee Chairs?

- 60% of respondents would be in favor of term limits for Chairs.



# Proposed Length of Term Limit for Volunteer Board/Committee Chair

- **Proposed length of term:**
  - A majority of respondents would be in favor of a 2 or 3 year term limit for the Chair.

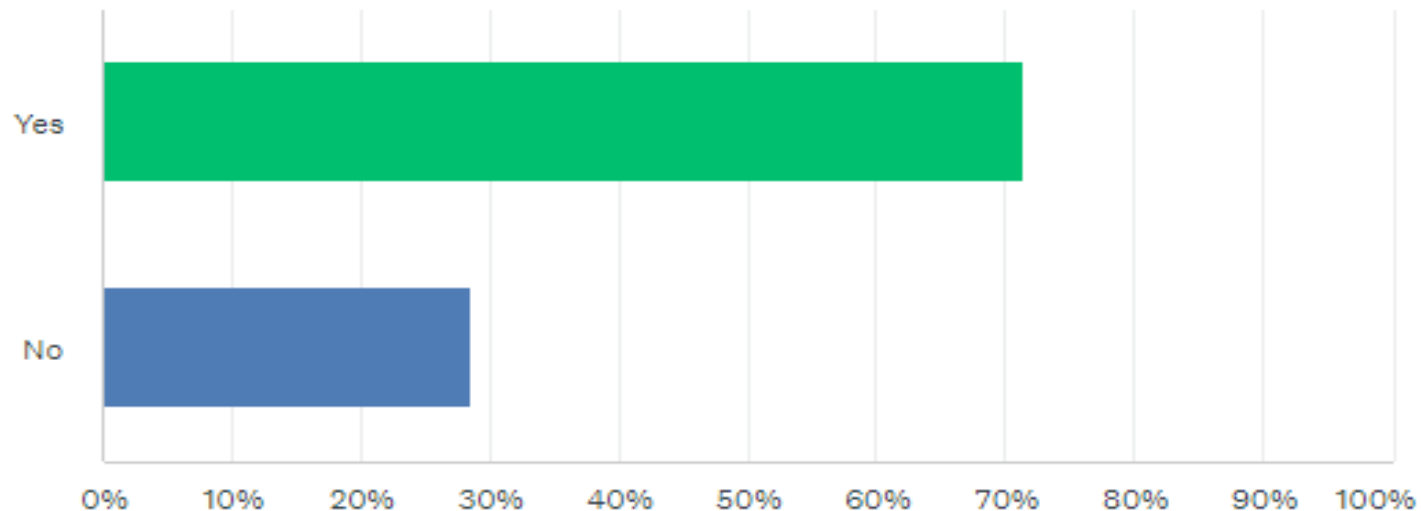
Responses	Term Limits
4%	1 year
18%	2 year
18%	3 year
12%	4 year
9%	5 year
9%	6 year
2%	7 year
2%	9 years
4%	10 years
4%	1-2 years
4%	3-4 years
4%	3-5 years
2%	6-8 years
2%	8-10 years
5%	2 terms
5%	3 terms

# **Do you feel you receive adequate training from the Town to serve on a Board/Committee?**

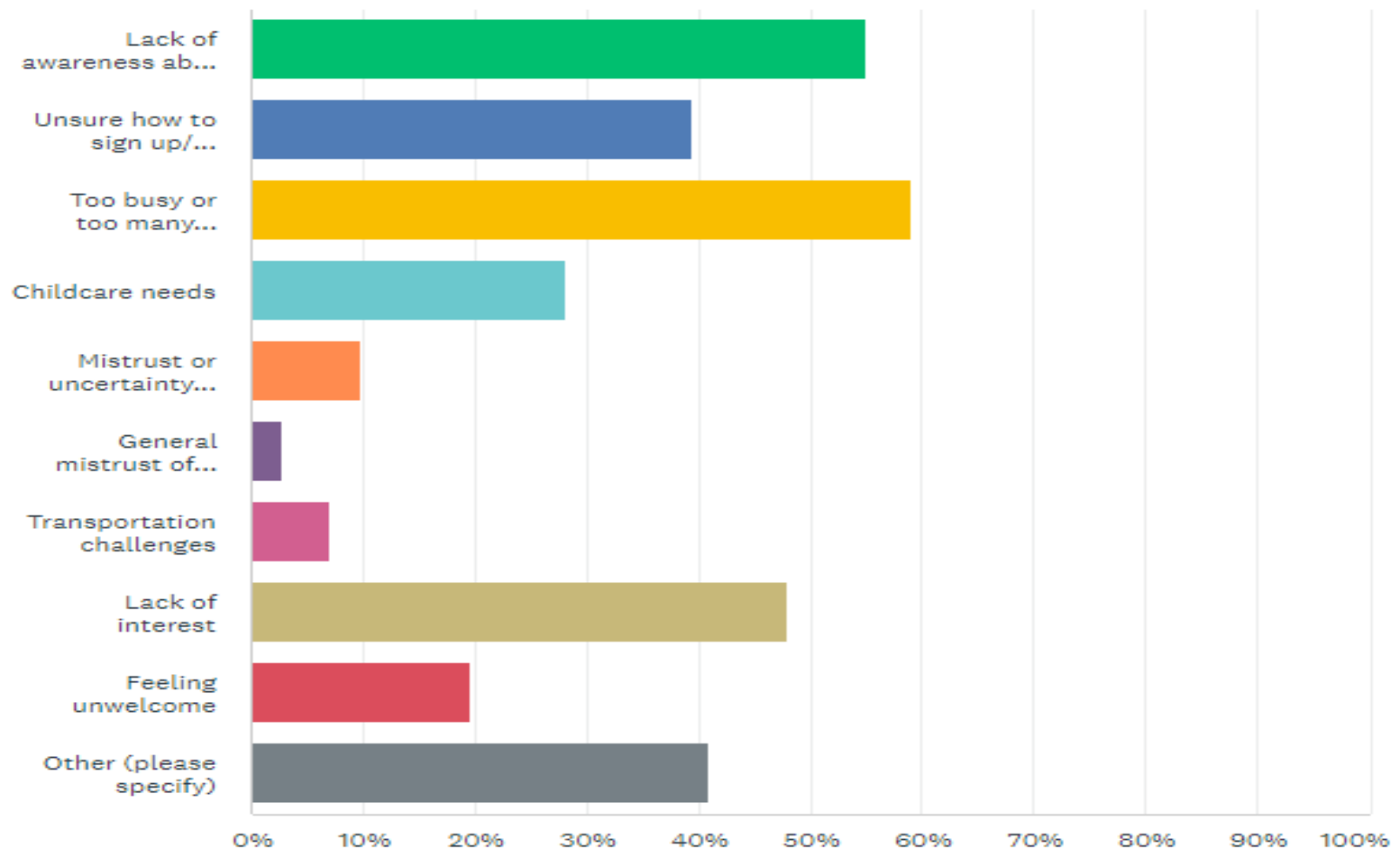
- **63% of respondents felt they received proper training from the Town.**
  - Respondents commented that a lot of training happens “on the job” with the help of the Chair or other committee members.
  - Some respondents expressed it would be helpful to learn more about how the Town functions and the roles and responsibilities of their respective board/committee, the Select Board and Town Meeting.
  - Others commented that DEI and Roberts Rules of Orders training would be beneficial to their role.

# Do you feel the Board/Committee you serve on are representative of the residents of Lexington?

- **About 72% of respondents felt the volunteer boards/committees are representative of the residents of Lexington.**



# What do you think are barriers for participation by community members?





# **What do you find most rewarding about the Board/Committee work you are engaged in?**

- Being involved and engaged in the community
- Making a difference
- Serving the community
- Connecting with the community
- Giving back to the Town
- Making Lexington a better, more inclusive and welcoming community
- Protecting Lexington's character, open space, and other assets
- Influencing the future of the Town
- An opportunity to use my expertise and experiences to make Lexington better

# **What do you find most challenging about the Board/Committee work you are engaged in?**

- Too many meetings; in time it wears folks down.
- Rigorous time commitment.
- Sometimes it appears that the board wants to expand its reach further than they are charged with for their specific committee.
- Not always clear on support of Town staff or funding for committee activities or projects.
- The inability to accomplish objectives in a timely manner.
- Concerns about what voices we are not hearing.
- Some committees aren't always clear as to their mission.
- Finding enough people of varied backgrounds to participate.
- Lack of progress.
- Occasional overreach by other boards and committees.

# **Volunteer Non-Elected Board/Committee Member Survey Data Review**

**Questions??**

# **Surrounding Town Board/Committee Survey**

- **Sent to 12 Towns via email on 9/10/21:**
  - Andover, Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Concord, Dover, Lincoln, Needham, Sudbury, Wellesley, Weston, Winchester
- **Responses from 11 Towns or 91.6%**

# Recruitment/Advertising

- **All** the communities surveyed advertise board/committee vacancies on their municipal website.
- There is an increase in the use of social media and listservs to advertise vacancies among some of these communities.
- Some communities even still publish vacancies in the local newspaper.

# Appointments

- **80% *require*** applicants to attend meetings before appointment.
- Some communities ***recommend*** applicants attend meetings, but they are not mandated to.
- **80%** of the communities' appointing authorities consider input from Board/Committee chairs on applicants prior to appointment.
- **90%** conduct formal interviews of applicants before appointment.
  - Interviews vary and are conducted by either the appointing authority, Town staff, or the Board/Committee
- **36%** interview applicants in Select Board Open Session.

# Term Limits

- **Less than 20%** have term limits for their Board/Committee chair.
  - Concord only allows chairs to serve for two terms.
  - Belmont does not have a formal policy, but their Select Board have been working to replace members who have served multiple terms with a new member.

# Board/Committee Charges

- **Less than 20%** have a policy or deadline for reviewing or updating board/committee charges.
  - The Town of Bedford has practiced reviewing board/committee charges on an annual basis.



# Training

- **36%** offer some sort of online training or mentoring for board/committee members.
- Most offer just Open Meeting Law (OML) and Public Records Law trainings.

# Vacancies

- **More than half** of communities surveyed have trouble filling vacancies on their Boards/Committees.
- **Some** communities have been actively trying to recruit younger residents to fill these vacancies.
  - Concord has been expanding their outreach and updating their website more vigorously and frequently to get the word out.
  - Dover expressed that they are trying to actively recruit younger volunteers to serve on their boards/committees.

# Liaison

- **All** of the communities reported that their Boards/Committees have a dedicated liaison from the Select Board.

# Board/Committee Health

- The average number of boards and committees of the communities surveyed is **54**
  - The majority being appointed by the Select Board.
- Only 3 communities have pursued a “Committee diet,” meaning they have gone through the process of reducing or streamlining the number of board and committees.

# **Surrounding Town Board/Committee Survey**

**Questions??**