

HARTLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION BYLAWS

As adopted July 25, 1989. Reviewed and approved, March, 2017.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Commission is:

- a) To develop and maintain an inventory of the Town's natural and community (cultural, recreational, historical) resources and to assist in the planning and preservation of those resources for the continuing benefit of the townspeople,
- b) To facilitate the protection and preservation of the Town's natural and community resources,
- c) To protect the watersheds and wetlands,
- d) To increase the awareness of conservation and recreational goals in overall land use planning and zoning,
- e) To promote recreational uses on acquired land which are consistent with conservation goals and have a minimum impact on the land;
- f) To educate townspeople on issues which have an impact on natural and community resources, and
- g) To make recommendations to and cooperate and communicate with town officials and commissions, groups with similar concerns and with appropriate agencies of the regional, state and federal government.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Commission shall consist of nine members, recommended by the Commission to be appointed by the Selectboard. Each member shall be a resident of the Town. All members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed by the Town for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the course of their duties. Appointments filling vacancies shall be for the remainder of the original term of appointment. Appointments shall be for four years. The Selectboard may remove any member if just cause is stated to that member in writing and after a public hearing on the matter, if that member requests one.

3. OFFICERS

The Commission shall elect the following officers annually at the first meeting of the group after the scheduled appointments:

A. The **Chair** shall preside at all meetings of the Commission, and shall direct the work of the Commission. The Chair may appoint chairs of those standing committees provided under Article 6. Working with the Clerk, the Chair shall submit a brief annual report to be included in the annual Town Report, describing the activities of the Commission during the past year and plans and prospects for the next year. The Chair shall ensure continuing liaison between the Selectboard, Planning Commission, and other Town agencies.

B. The **Clerk** shall keep minutes of all meetings and proceedings of the Commission and record any action taken by the Commission. The Clerk shall post public notices of the Commission meetings and actions in accordance with prevailing Vermont Open Meeting Law. In the absence of the Chair, the Clerk shall assume the duties of the Chair, including presiding at meetings. The Clerk shall assist the Chair in preparing the annual report.

C. The **Treasurer** shall recommend action on all bills received by the Commission. The Treasurer shall ensure the authorization of payment on any bills over (\$100), as voted by the Commission, for submission to the Town Treasurer for payment. The Conservation Commission Treasurer shall prepare a financial report annually to be presented at a Commission meeting and shall report to the Commission on financial matters as requested by the Chair or any other member.

4. MEETINGS

The Commission meetings shall be open to the public, and held at a regular time and place when possible. The time and place of each meeting shall be posted in accordance with prevailing Vermont Open Meeting Law. All records and minutes of any Commission meeting or action shall be filed with the Town Clerk and be available to the public. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

5. INVENTORIES

a) The Commission shall develop and maintain an inventory of the natural resources of the Town. This inventory shall include but not be limited to prime agricultural and forest lands, soil capabilities, water resources, floodplains, known mineral resources, unique or fragile biological sites, scenic and recreational resources, and other open lands. A separate inventory shall be prepared of the land-related community resources of the Town, including those lands which have historic, educational, cultural, scientific, architectural, or archaeological values to the public.

b) These inventories shall be updated as needed and submitted to the Planning Commission to be available as guides in planning. The Commission may recommend any amendments to the Planning Commission at any time based on these inventories or studies which it feels are needed to implement the purposes of the Commission.

c) The Commission is authorized to designate or hire any person, partnership, company or corporation to give necessary specialized assistance in preparing the inventories.

6. COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission may establish Committees from time to time, as needed, to accomplish its purposes. The Chair of the Commission may appoint Chairs of any Committees from the membership of the Commission, but committee members can be enlisted from outside the Commission.

7. FINANCES

a) Operating expenses - The Commission shall have the authority to request appropriations from the Town for its operating, land management, inventory, education and information expenses.

b) Conservation Trust Fund - Any other funds appropriated to the Commission shall be carried in a public trust fund called the Conservation Trust Fund. This Fund shall be under the charge and management of the Selectboard. This Fund shall accrue from year to year for the use of the Commission solely for the purposes set forth in Article 1 of these bylaws and the Land Conservation Policy attached as an addendum to these bylaws. The Commission shall have the authority to receive gifts, grants and money from any sources for those purposes. Any funds from private, state or federal sources which impose any obligation on the Town shall be accepted only by the consent of the Selectboard.

8. PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

a) The Commission shall represent the public interest in any matter having a potential adverse impact on the natural or community resources of the Town to the extent permitted by law. It shall make recommendations to any town, regional, state or federal body which it feels are needed to implement the purposes of the Commission.

b) The Commission shall review the Town Plan and any future land use plan or proposed amendments and shall provide input to the appropriate authority.

9. AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Commission by a two-thirds vote of the Commission. Written notices of intent to amend these bylaws shall be publicly posted in accordance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law, and sent to each member of the Commission, and to the Chairman of the Selectboard at least seven days prior to the meeting at which the proposed action is to be taken.