



CONSERVATION COMMISSION OPERATING RULES

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be The Dover Conservation Commission of Dover, New Hampshire, hereinafter called THE COMMISSION.

Article II. Authority and Duties

- A. The Conservation Commission shall have the powers and duties established by state law pursuant to RSA 36-A and consistent with Dover ordinance Chapter 14. The Commission was created on February 14, 1973 by City Council Ordinance 2-73.
- B. The Conservation Commission may establish an Open Lands Committee as a subcommittee within its Rules subject to the appointing authority of the City Council and subject to the approval of the rules by the City Council.
- C. The Commission shall prepare a program of conservation and a program of watershed and open space protection for the City of Dover and, in undertaking this program, shall conduct research into local natural resources, watershed areas and open spaces, along with evaluation of the uses thereof. It shall keep an index of the open areas, swamps, wetlands and areas of unique natural value of ecological importance within the city. The Commission shall coordinate its efforts with the activities of other official or unofficial bodies conducting studies, research and evaluations for similar purposes.
- D. The Commission shall prepare, adopt and, from time to time, review and amend a conservation and open space plan and shall submit said plan to the Planning Board for consideration as part of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Dover. In preparation of said plan, the Commission shall also obtain information pertinent to the proper utilization of open areas in the city, including any lands owned by the city and by the state, and shall make recommendations for the better promotion, development or utilization of said natural resources and open areas in the city.
- E. The Commission shall inform itself of the ways and means by which its plans and programs may be achieved and shall advise municipal agencies, the City Council, private interests and the public of the manner in which these objectives may be accomplished. It may accordingly advertise, prepare, print and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets which in its judgment, it deems necessary for its work as defined herein.
- F. The Commission shall adopt bylaws and shall keep accurate records of its meetings and actions and shall file an annual report with the City Council which shall be included in the annual city report.
- G. The Commission may receive gifts of money and property, both real and personal, in the name of the city, subject to approval of the City Council; such gifts to be managed and controlled by the

Commission for the purposes of this section. It may also, subject to approval of the City Council, acquire by gift, purchase, grant, bequest, devise, lease or otherwise the fee in such land or water rights or any lesser interest, development right, easement, covenant or other contractual right, including conveyances with conditions, limitations or revisions, as may be necessary to acquire, maintain, improve, protect or limit the future use of or otherwise conserve and properly utilize open spaces and other land and water areas within the city. The Commission shall manage and control such property in accordance with the purpose of this chapter, subject to the review of the City Council.

- H. Any moneys received by the Commission shall be placed in a conservation fund and allowed to accumulate from year to year, and such moneys may be expended from said fund for purposes consistent with this chapter. The city may also make appropriations to the Conservation Fund. All moneys maintained or expended by the Commission shall be recorded in accordance with city accounting procedures, and any matters relating to personnel shall be governed in a manner consistent with the pertinent requirements of the City Charter and appropriate city ordinances.

Article III. Membership.

- A. **Official Members:** The Commission shall consist of seven (7) members, all citizens of Dover and all appointed by the City Council pursuant to Chapter 14-4 of the Dover ordinances. One member may be a member of the Dover Planning Board pursuant to RSA 36-A. Members shall be appointed to terms of three (3) years.
- B. **Alternate Members:** The Commission shall additionally have two alternates pursuant to RSA 36-A with the same requirements as regular members. Alternates shall attend meetings and when a regular member is unable to attend a regular or special meeting, the alternate shall be empowered to review and vote upon any such issue as may come before the Commission.
- C. **Attendance, Vacancies and Removal.** All appointments to the Commission shall serve for the terms appointed and until a successor shall have been appointed and qualified, unless any Commission member is absent for four (4) consecutive meetings or four (4) regular meetings in a calendar year, whereby a vacancy shall be created in the position, and said vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority. Appointments made to fill any vacancies shall be for full terms to begin the date of appointment by the appointing authority unless otherwise provided in state statute. Conditions for removal of any Commission member shall be defined by statute, ordinance or the Charter.

Article IV. Officers and Staffing

- A. **Officers.** The Officers of the Commission shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary. These members will be appointed regular members and shall be elected by the Commission members at the annual meeting.
- B. **Duties of the Chair.** The Chair shall set the agenda, preside at all meetings of the Commission having such powers and duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage on that office including directing the work of the Commission.
- C. **Vice Chair.** The Vice Chair shall function as the Chair, if the Chair is unable to be present with all powers and duties of the Chair.
- D. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall act as recorder and correspondent for the Commission; and shall keep accurate minutes of the meetings of the Commission and provide the City Clerk with a copy of "approved" minutes. It shall also be the duty of the secretary to post notices of meetings at least five days prior and to notify each member prior to each meeting. Correspondent duties shall also be to communicate to the various applicants and agencies actions taken in regard to cases reviewed.

- E. **Staff.** The City of Dover may provide staff support to the Commission for meeting notification, typing, copying, and information gathering to the extent permitted by the city budget. All staff shall remain under the direction of the employer.

Article V. Procedures

- A. **Meetings.** The Commission shall hold meetings at least once a month at a time and place designated by the Chair at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting time. From time to time the Chair may also call special meetings to conduct application and/or site reviews to meet the scheduling requirements of applicants, the Dover Planning Board, or state agencies.

An annual meeting will be held as part of the first meeting in January at which time nomination and election of officers will occur. Candidates for any office receiving a majority vote of the entire membership of the Commission shall be declared elected. The elected candidate shall take office immediately. Vacancies in offices shall be filled at the next regular meeting by the regular nomination/election procedure.

Workshop Sessions may be scheduled to be held as requested by the Chair. The purpose of workshop meetings is to allow in-depth evaluations of topics and issues significant to the training of Commission members.

- B. **Quorum.** A majority of the membership of the Commission shall constitute a Quorum. Whenever a quorum is not present at a regular meeting or special meeting, the meeting will be considered adjourned and will be rescheduled to the following month or to such other time and place as the Chair may deem appropriate.
- C. **Parliamentary Authority.** The conducting of business shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order generally and the order of business shall be as specified on the agenda but shall also make provision for new business that any member may introduce. Actions shall be taken on the basis of a motion duly seconded by a member of the Commission.
- D. **Minutes.** Minutes shall be kept for all meetings of the Commission. The minutes shall include the names of the members in attendance, all actions, motions and resolutions coming before the public body including the votes of the members, and a summary of all discussions. Draft minutes shall be provided to the City Clerk within five (5) business days of each meeting for posting on the city website in draft form. Draft minutes shall be clearly marked "DRAFT". Draft minutes with or without revisions shall be approved by the Commission at the next meeting of the Commission, or as soon as possible. Final approved minutes shall be provided to the City Clerk for posting on the city website.
- E. **Recording of Meetings.** The Commission shall arrange for video recording of all meetings. If video is not available, meetings shall be recorded using audio equipment. All recordings shall be provided to the City Clerk within five (5) business days of the meeting.
- F. **E-mail accounts.** Commission members may obtain a City of Dover e-mail address to facilitate communications regarding meetings, agendas and the dissemination of information. Commission members shall refrain from using e-mail to discuss issues with other members where the e-mail discussion directly or indirectly involves a quorum of the Commission. In addition, Commission members shall refrain from conducting the official business of the Commission outside the view of the public and the press unless permitted by state law.
- G. **Nonpublic meetings.** The Commission may conduct nonpublic meetings pursuant to the laws of the State of New Hampshire. The Chair shall conduct nonpublic meetings utilizing the Checklist prepared by the General Legal Counsel for nonpublic meetings.
- H. **Committees.** Special purpose and study committees as the Commission may from time to time deem necessary in order to conduct its business effectively in accordance with its duties and

responsibilities shall be appointed by the Chair. All members shall be subject to committee appointment from time to time.

- I. **Amendment of Rules.** The Commission may suspend any of these rules by a unanimous vote at any regular monthly or special meeting. These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Commission by a two-thirds vote of the entire regular membership. Amendments present at any regular meeting may not be voted until the next regular meeting.