

Bristol Conservation Commission

Bylaws / Rules of Procedure

ARTICLE I. Name of Organization

The name of this organization shall be the Bristol Conservation Commission, hereinafter called the Conservation Commission.

ARTICLE II. Statutory Authority

The Bristol Conservation Commission was duly organized in 1966, named and authorized pursuant to NH RSA 36-A by the Town of Bristol for the proper study, recognition, use and protection of the Town's natural and watershed resources.

These bylaws/rules of procedure are established in accordance with the powers granted under the authority of New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated RSA 36-A {regarding "Conservation Commission" and pursuant to RSA 31:110-113 with regard to "Forestry"}. Nothing in these bylaws / rules of procedure is intended to conflict with NH RSA 36-A or any Town ordinance(s) established for the protection of Bristol's natural and watershed protection.

ARTICLE III. Principal Place of Business

The principal place of business of the Conservation Commission shall be in the Town Office Building of the Town of Bristol, Grafton County, New Hampshire. The mailing address of the Commission shall be: Bristol Conservation Commission, 5 School Street, Bristol, NH 03222.

ARTICLE IV. Mission

The Bristol Conservation Commission will endeavor to ensure the proper protection, promotion, utilization, and management of all-natural resources within the Town of Bristol (Town). To achieve this, the Conservation Commission will:

- foster awareness of conservation practices and policies to achieve natural resource preservation for present and future residents.
- educate and encourage the public to make informed decisions about utilization and protection of natural and watershed resources.
- assist and advise other Town boards, State and local officials, developers, and landowners regarding natural resource preservation and protection.
- work with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and other government entities / agencies to assure related regulations and requirements are followed to protect and preserve natural and watershed resources.
- Assist applicants with the NHDES Wetlands and Shoreland Permit application process.

ARTICLE V. Membership

The Conservation Commission welcomes those who have an interest in conservation and a willingness to commit time to the work of the Conservation Commission. There are no specific education or knowledge requirements to become a member. Once appointed, members are encouraged to participate in their choice of conservation related education activities and programs to enhance their contribution to the Conservation Commission and the Town.

Conservation Commission membership is established pursuant to NH RSA 36-A:3.

- The Conservation Commission membership is set by Town Meeting vote and members are appointed by the Select Board. Current membership set by 2022 Town Meeting is five (5) regular members. (Amended 2022)
- Alternate Members may be appointed by the Select Board in the same manner as Members. Alternate Members will only have full voting rights at regularly called Commission meetings if serving in the absence or disqualification of a regular Member.
- All Members and Alternate Members must be residents of Bristol.
- Members of the Conservation Commission also may serve on other municipal boards, commissions, or committees.
- One Member may be a member of the Planning Board.
- Terms of Members shall be for three (3) years.
- Any vacancy occurring other than from expiration of a term shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Select Board.
- Any appointed Member may, after a public hearing, if requested, be removed for cause by the Select Board

ARTICLE VI. Organization

Election of Officers:

Following the yearly scheduled Select Board appointments (usually coinciding with Town Meeting), at their next meeting, the Conservation Commission shall elect officers by a majority vote.

- Officer positions will consist of Chair and Vice-Chair
- Officer terms will be for one (1) year, after which all shall be eligible for re-election.
- Officer positions will be held by Members only (not Alternate Members)
- A recording secretary may be employed by the Conservation Commission to record meetings and produce minutes for its meetings and hearings.

Responsibilities of Officers:

Chair:

Will preside over all meetings and Public Hearings of the Conservation Commission; shall sign all correspondence; and will serve as the official spokesperson for the Conservation Commission. Other responsibilities of the Chair include:

Responsibilities of Officers (continued):

- Timely Agenda preparation and distribution to members and other Town officials, in coordination with the Land Use Manager and / or designee
- Proper storage of records in the Town Offices
- Receipt of all correspondence, permit applications, and other documents
- Communication with Land Use Office to ensure the following items are addressed:
 - Proper posting of meetings, public hearings, and minutes per NH RSA 91-A
 - Noticing of meetings to Members
 - Oversight of the application process and any other business coming before the Conservation Commission.
- Establishment of sub-committees and assignments as needed.

Vice-Chair:

In the absence of the Chair, will assume the responsibilities of the Chair; Other responsibilities of the Vice-Chair include:

- Development and Oversight of educational and promotional projects of the Conservation Commission
- Representing the Conservation Commission other local or state agencies, officials, or committees in areas of conservation education and promotion, should opportunities arise to further the education / awareness goals of the Conservation Commission.

Special Committees:

The Chair, with concurrence of the Members of the Conservation Commission, may establish Special Committees, whose members may or may not be members of the Conservation Commission, who are interested in a specific matter. Such a committee may also include persons knowledgeable in the specific matter. Such Special Committees would provide recommendations and information relative to the specific matter before the Conservation Commission and should represent a diversity of perspectives and opinions, to the extent possible. These Committees shall be responsible to communicate with the Land Use Office per NH RSA 91-A, to post their meeting notices, record minutes and make reports for the Conservation Commission.

Meetings & Hearings:

Meetings of the Conservation Commission shall be called by the Chair and held monthly and at other times as deemed necessary. Proper notice will be posted for meetings. A majority of Regular Members shall constitute the quorum necessary to transact business at meetings. Alternate Members may at times take the place of an absent Regular Member by request of the Chair and will have voting rights if so and will be counted in order to constitute a quorum to transact the business of the Commission. Should there not be a majority present at a Regular or Special Meeting, no business can be transacted, and the meeting must be terminated.

Meetings & Hearings (continued):

- A. Regular Meetings: Held 1st Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm at the Town Offices.
- B. Special Meetings: From time to time a special meeting may be called by the Chair for special purposes.
 - a. A 48-hour notice shall be given to all Regular Members and Alternate Members.
 - b. The meeting will be given proper public notice of date, time, and location following the requirements of NH RSA 91-A:2.
 - c. At any special meeting, no business other than that specified in the notice may be considered.
 - d. Special meetings may also be called by the Chair upon written request of two (2) Regular Members.
- C. Public Hearings: As may be required with certain permitting and other procedural applications, property acquisition by gift, purchase or easement, or other business before the Conservation Commission, Public Hearings shall be held with proper public notice, of date, time, and location following the requirements of NH RSA 91-A:2.
- D. Non-Public Session: All meetings of the Conservation Commission will be open to the public except where there may be an issue that should be discussed or acted on in non-public session pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3.

ARTICLE VII. Conflict of Interest

- No member of the Conservation Commission shall introduce, speak on, or vote on any motion, resolution, or issue in which that member has a direct or indirect personal, special, or pecuniary interest. The Member is, however, allowed to remain at the Meeting.
- A Member shall inform the Conservation Commission of any potential Conflict of Interest immediately (if the Conflict is realized during a meeting), or if realized between meetings, at the next meeting after the Member's Conflict of Interest is realized.

ARTICLE VIII. Duties/Powers/Functions

The Conservation Commission shall have advisory authority generally with specific powers and duties designated by NH RSA 36-A, RSA 91-A, WT 703.01, and RSA 155-E.

ARTICLE IX. Amendments to the Bylaws

- These By-laws and procedures are to be reviewed annually and may be amended at any Regular Meeting.
- These bylaws and rules of procedure may be amended by a majority vote of the Conservation Commission at a Regular Meeting.
- Any proposed amendments must be presented to the Commission at the preceding Regular Meeting.
- Alternate members may not substitute for Members for this purpose.

ARTICLE X. Adoption of Bylaws

These By-laws supersede and replace, in entirety, any previous By-laws or rules of procedure previously adopted and are hereby adopted by the Bristol Conservation Commission at a lawfully called and posted meeting on the date specified below and are effective on and after that date. These are to be placed on file with the Town Clerk for public inspection.

Date of Adoption: March 6, 2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Batchelder", is written over a horizontal line.

Richard Batchelder - Chair

