

STRATHAM HERITAGE COMMISSION PROCEDURAL RULES

The Stratham Heritage Commission (henceforth referred to as the “Commission”) shall be governed by Chapters 673 and 674 of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, as amended, and by Warrant Article 12 (1997) of the Town of Stratham.

MANDATE: The Town established the Commission for the “proper recognition, use and protection of resources” that are “valued for their historic, cultural, aesthetic or community significance.”

I. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Commission shall consist of five voting members
 - 1. Three at-large members appointed by the Select Board to 3-year rotating terms.
 - 2. One member of the Select Board.
 - 3. One member of the Planning Board.
- B. There may be up to three 3-year term alternates, appointed by the Select Board. An alternate is a non-voting member except in the absence of a voting member when he/she may vote in place of the absentee. Selection of a voting alternate member is determined by longest length of time since his/her appointment.
- C. To resign a member shall submit written notification to the Select Board.
- D. In the event of the resignation of a voting member the alternate members, in order of seniority, shall be given the opportunity to submit their names to the Select Board for appointment.
- E. Persons working on projects or events with the Commission will be considered volunteers, not members.

II. OFFICERS

- A. A Chair, Treasurer and Secretary shall be elected from appointed members in May by a majority vote of the Commission. Terms shall begin immediately following the vote. Each officer shall serve for one year and be eligible for re-election with no term limits.

B. The Chair shall prepare for and preside over meetings, appoint such committees/groups as directed by the Commission and affix his/her signature in the name of the Commission. The Chair shall appoint a member to preside over meetings in the event of his/her absence.

C. The Treasurer shall keep reports on financial transactions for the Commission's Town Budget account and any special restricted fund(s) established in the name of the Commission, and provide a quarterly meeting status on income and expenses.

D. The Secretary shall take and file minutes, keep all records and manage the clerical work of the Commission.

III. FUNDING

1. Heritage Commission Budget (General Fund Operating Budget)

- a. The General Fund Operating Budget includes appropriations for the Heritage Commission annual operating expenses.
- b. The Heritage Commission Treasurer and Chair shall prepare an annual budget for presentation, discussion and voting at the Commission's November meeting.
- c. The Chair or Treasurer shall submit the Commission's recommended budget to be reviewed by the Select Board and the Budget Advisory Committee and subsequently included in the operating budget warrant article at the March Town Meeting.
- d. Expenditures greater than \$250 must be approved by a majority of the Commission voting members.
- e. Approval for expenditures is subject to any limitations required by the Select Board.
- f. Heritage Commission approved invoices and requests for reimbursement, with relevant receipts, shall be presented to the Finance Office to process payment.

2. Heritage Fund

- a. NH RSA Title 64 Chapter 676 Section 673:4-a & 674:44-b provides local governments the ability to protect historical and cultural resources by establishing a Heritage Commission, and

also allows municipalities to establish a non-lapsing Heritage Fund which the Heritage Commission can expend for any purposes for which it has authority, including to acquire property and property interests (easements, etc.) The Heritage Fund is a non-lapsing fund that receives donations and proceeds from fundraising activities as well as any money appropriated to it in any year.

- b. The Town of Stratham established a Heritage Fund upon voter approval of Article 12 of the 1997 Town Meeting Warrant under NH RSA 673:4-a.
- c. The Heritage Fund may be expended upon approval of a majority of the Heritage Commission without any further approvals unless the expenditure is for the purchase of property. RSA 674:44-b states the local governing body (Select Board) must approve any purchase of property and also requires a public hearing in accordance with RSA 675:7.
- d. The Heritage Fund remains in the custody of the Town Treasurer. Invoices shall be presented to the Finance Office to process payment.

3. Heritage Preservation Fund (CRF)

- a. The Town established the Heritage Preservation Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) under the provision of NH RSA 35:1 in warrant article 18 of the 2011 Town Meeting. Capital Reserve Funds are non-lapsing and are intended to provide long term savings to use for the purpose as designated in the article as voted.
- b. The Heritage Commission Treasurer and Chair shall on an annual basis prepare a capital reserve fund request for appropriations to the Heritage Preservation CRF, for presentation, discussion, and voting at the November meeting of the Heritage Commission.
- b. The Chair or Treasurer shall submit the capital reserve funding request to the Select Board and Budget Advisory Committee for consideration and inclusion in the Town Warrant. Upon approval of the voters, these funds are transferred by the Town to the Trustee of the Trust Funds.

- c. The Fund was established for the purpose of preserving historical and cultural resources and properties. The Select Board are designated as agents to expend. Funds in the Heritage Preservation Fund come from taxes raised via the annual budget appropriation at Town Meeting and the Trustees of the Trust Funds maintain custody of the funds.
- d. Funds shall be disbursed upon a majority vote of the Heritage Commission and subsequent approval by the Select Board. Requests for disbursement shall be presented to the Finance Office, who will initiate a written request signed by the Select Board to the Trustees of the Funds.

IV. MEETINGS

- A. Monthly meetings shall be held at the Municipal Center (or other designated publically accessible location) at an established time determined by the membership at the May meeting of each year. Meeting notices and agendas shall be posted in the Municipal Center and on the Town website at least two days before each meeting. Meeting notices and agendas shall be given to members and, as relevant, to volunteers, Town staff, and chairs of other Town commissions, boards or committees at least two days prior to a meeting.
- B. The Chair may call additional meetings provided notice to each member and the public is given at least 24 hours (excluding Sundays and legal holidays) prior to such meetings.
- C. Cancellation of meetings may occur if there is no business to come before the Commission. The Chair may cancel a meeting by notice to the members at least 24 hours prior to the set meeting time.
- D. A quorum shall be a majority of the Commission's voting members. Alternate member(s) shall be appointed by the Chair to vote at any meeting where voting member(s) are absent or abstain due to conflict of interest.
- E. A vote by the majority of the voting members shall be sufficient to decide any matter before the Commission.
- F. No Commission member or alternate shall participate in discussion or decision of any matter in which he/she has a personal or financial interest.

V. MINUTES AND RECORDS

A. Draft minutes shall be filed with the Chair and open for public inspection within 5 business days of each meeting. The Chair shall send the draft minutes to all members prior to the subsequent meeting for review.

B. Minutes are final after a vote of approval by the membership. Minutes, including any approved changes, shall be sent to the Town Administrator and to the Administrative Assistant for website posting.

VI. AMENDMENTS

A. Public notice must be given of proposed amendments to these procedures.

B. A majority vote of the voting members is required for adoption of an amendment.