

Lyme Heritage Commission

RULES OF PROCEDURE

AUTHORITY: These Rules of Procedure are adopted under the Authority of the laws of the State of New Hampshire (RSA 673). The Lyme Heritage Commission was established under New Hampshire laws at Lyme Town Meeting in March 2011.

NAME: This organization shall be known as the Lyme Heritage Commission, and may be referred to as “the Commission.”

PURPOSE: The Heritage Commission shall work to raise awareness of Lyme’s historic assets in order to promote the preservation and protection of historic buildings and other features that contribute to the character of the Town. The Commission functions as a source of information on restoration and preservation of historic structures and pursues its mission by other means in accordance with the laws of the State of New Hampshire (RSA 673:1). The Commission has no regulatory authority and is strictly a source of information and advice.

MEMBERSHIP:

1. Composition:
 - a. The Commission shall consist of up to five members appointed by the Select Board, one of whom shall be a Select Board member (RSA 673:4-a and 673:5)
 - b. Two alternate members shall be appointed by the Select Board and shall be designated by the Board Chair to act in an absent or recused member’s place (RSA 673:4-a)
 - c. Members of the Commission may also serve on any other municipal board or commission as allowed by the laws of the State of New Hampshire (RSA 673:7)
 - d. Members of the Commission must be residents of the Town of Lyme.
2. Term: The term of office for a Heritage Commission member or an alternate shall be three years, except that the term of office of the Select Board member shall be decided by the Select Board in accordance with the laws of the State of New Hampshire (RSA 673:5)
3. Vacancies: Vacancies shall be filled at the time of their occurrences by Select Board appointment.
4. Duties and Responsibilities:
 - a. To attend meetings on a regular basis.
 - b. To visit sites of proposals being considered by the Commission.
 - c. To vote on all motions except in those cases where the member has a conflict of interest or is disqualified for any cause as found in the laws of the State of New Hampshire (RSA 673.14 - See Appendix).
 - d. To understand, appreciate and promote the purpose of the Lyme Heritage Commission.
 - e. To amend these Rules of Procedure as deemed necessary.

OFFICERS:

1. Election, term, and vacancies:
 - a. The officers of the Commission shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, and any other officer as the Commission deems necessary. (RSA 673:8)
 - b. The term of office for each officer shall be one year or until a successor is elected (RSA 673:9)
 - c. Election of officers will be held at the first meeting in April.
 - d. Any vacancy shall be filled by the majority vote of the Commission at the time of its occurrence, and the Selectboard shall be notified of the new member.
2. Duties and responsibilities:
 - a. The Chair shall preside over all meetings, shall appoint committees as directed by the Commission, shall affix his or her signature in the name of the Commission, and shall set the agenda for each meeting.
 - b. The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair and shall have full power of the Chair on matters which come before the Commission during the absence of the Chair.
 - c. If the Chair and Vice-Chair are both absent or abstaining and despite their absence a quorum is found to be present, the Commission will choose one of its members to act as Chair.

MEETINGS:

1. Time and place: The Commission shall hold at least one regular meeting in each month, generally on the fourth Tuesday, unless there is no business to consider.
2. Notification of meetings:
 - a. Notice of all meetings shall be given to each member at least 48 hours prior to the time of such meeting, and notice of each such meeting shall be posted in accordance with the laws of New Hampshire.
 - b. The agenda and basic information necessary for attending to the business at hand shall be distributed to members prior to each meeting.
3. Quorum: A majority of the membership, three members and alternates (minimum of one member) shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business.
4. Voting procedures:
 - a. Decisions shall be made by a majority of those members present and voting.
 - b. When the vote in question is evenly divided, the question shall be deemed to have been defeated with reasons stated.
5. Conduct of meetings:
 - a. The Chair, with the concurrence of the Commission, shall establish the procedure and order of business at each meeting.
 - b. A part of each regular meeting shall be devoted to public comment.
 - c. No new items shall be addressed by the Commission after 10pm

- d. All meetings will be held with the utmost consideration for all the people involved. If a discussion becomes argumentative, or threats or implications are made of taking the case to court, the meeting may be immediately adjourned by the Chair and continued to another time.
 - e. All present alternates are encouraged to participate in discussion.
6. Minutes of meetings:
 - a. A record of those present and of action taken at all meetings shall be kept. All votes taken shall be recorded, noting those in favor and those opposed to the motion.
 - b. The previous meeting minutes shall be approved or amended at the beginning of each meeting. Minutes shall be approved by voting members and alternates attending the meeting in question.
 - c. Minority opinions shall be recorded at the discretion of the Chair or by majority vote of the Commission.
 7. Records: Records of all meetings, transactions, and decisions of the Commission shall be maintained in the offices of the Town of Lyme.

POWERS AND DUTIES (RSA 674:44-B) -

The powers and duties of the Lyme Heritage Commission may include:

1. Survey and inventory historical and cultural resources
2. Conduct research and publish findings
3. Assist the Planning Board, as requested, in the development and review of those sections of the Master Plan which address historical and cultural resources
4. Advise, upon request, local agencies and other local boards in their review of requests on matters affecting or potentially affecting historical and cultural resources
5. Coordinate activities with appropriate service organizations and nonprofit groups
6. Publicize its activities
7. Hire consultants and contractors as needed
8. Perform a study to assess the value in creating a local (regulatory) historic district and prepare an ordinance for it
9. Receive gifts of money and property, both real and personal, in the name of the Town, subject to the approval of the Select Board, such gifts to be managed and controlled by the Commission for its proper purposes
10. Hold meetings and hearings necessary to carry out its duties.

COMMITTEES: Committees shall be appointed by the Chair as required by the Commission. Membership of committees need not be limited to members of the Commission. Committees shall maintain minutes of each meeting and shall report on activities and recommendations to the Commission.

OPERATING FUNDS: Funds for the conduct of business of the Board shall come from the Lyme Heritage Fund, established with private donations on behalf of the Lyme Heritage Commission and administered by the Select Board.

AMENDMENTS: The rules of procedure may be amended by majority vote at any duly notified meeting of the Commission, provided that proposed amendments are read at one meeting preceding the vote.

VALIDITY: If any portion of these rules of procedure shall be held to be invalid for any reason by any court, such holding shall not invalidate in any manner any other provisions contained here.

LEGALITY: If any portion of these rules of procedure shall be found to be in conflict with the laws of the State of New Hampshire, the State statute shall prevail.

ADOPTED: March 28, 2017