

**By-Laws  
Conservation Commission  
Inland Wetland Agency**



**Town of Watertown  
Connecticut**

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION/ INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY**

**Regular Members**

Ed Undercuffler, Chairperson  
Donato Orsini, Vice Chairperson  
Thomas Murphy, Secretary  
Joseph Polletta  
Michael A. Genovese  
Edwin Dalton  
Craig Palmer

**Alternate**

Richard Sarandrea  
Zaiga Antonetti

Adopted February 22, 1995  
Revised April 26, 1995  
Revised February 28, 1996  
Revised March 27, 1996  
Adopted April 24, 1996  
Revised March 10, 2011  
Revised March 14, 2013  
Revised March 13, 2014

## **Article I Purpose and Authorization**

The objective and purposes of the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency of the Town of Watertown, Connecticut, are those set forth in Chapter 440, Section 22a-36 through 22a-45, and Chapter 97 and 98, Section 8-131a, 7-148(8) (A) (B) (D) of the Connecticut General Statutes, latest revisions as amended, and those powers and duties delegated to Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency by Town Ordinance no. 10-15-90-168.

## **Article II Name**

The Commission shall be known as the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency, Town of Watertown, Connecticut.

## **Article III Office of Agency**

The Office of the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency shall be located within the office of the Wetland Enforcement Officer, Watertown, Connecticut, where all Commission records will be kept. Copies of all official documents, records, maps, etc., will be filed or recorded in the Office of the Town Clerk.

## **Article IV Membership**

The Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency shall consist of seven (7) regular members and three (3) alternate members who shall be electors of the Town of Watertown. The Town Council shall appoint regular members and alternate members for a term of three (3) years. Any vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the Town Council to serve the unexpired term of the member whose office has been vacated. Alternate members shall, when seated as herein provided, have all the powers and duties set forth in the Connecticut General Statutes or any special act relating to Watertown for the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency and its regular members. If a regular member is absent or disqualified, the Chairperson of the Commission shall designate an alternate to so act, choosing alternates in rotation so that they shall act as nearly equal a number of times as possible. If any alternate is not available in accordance with such rotation, such fact shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. All Alternates may be involved in discussions included on the agenda, but may not vote unless designated to act as a regular member by the Chairperson.

The Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency will request that the Watertown Town Council seek the resignation of any Commission member who fails to attend three (3) successive regular meetings without good cause. Such request will be made only after a 2/3 vote of the entire Commission (including alternates). "Resignations from the Commission shall be in written form. Upon receipt, the Chairperson shall provide a copy to the Wetlands Enforcement Officer, the Chairperson of respective Town Committees, and the Chairperson of the Town Council for acceptance". Sample letter of resignation on file in the Office of the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency

## **Article V Officers and Their Duties**

- Section 1.** The Officers of the Commission shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and a Secretary.
- Section 2.** The Chairperson preside at all meetings and hearings of the Commission and shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage on such Officers. The Chairperson shall have the authority to appoint committees, certify expenditures of funds to \$100 without prior approval of the Commission, call Special Meetings, and generally perform other duties as may be prescribed in these by-laws.
- Section 3.** The Chairperson shall be one of the Commission members and shall have the privilege of discussing all matters before the Commission and of voting thereon.
- Section 4.** The Vice Chairperson shall act for the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson, and have the authority to perform the duties prescribed for that office. The Vice Chairperson shall be a Commission member.
- Section 5.** The Secretary, with staff assistance, shall keep the minutes and records of the Commission, shall prepare the agenda of regular and special meetings under the direction of the Chairperson, shall provide notice of all meetings to Commission members, shall arrange proper and legal notice of hearings; shall attend to correspondence of the Commission, and shall perform other duties as normally carried out by a Secretary. The Secretary shall act for the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and shall have the authority to perform the duties prescribed for that office. The Secretary shall be a Commission member.
- Section 6.** In the absence of the Secretary, due to illness, personal or disqualification reasons, the Chairperson shall appoint a Secretary pro-tem.

**Section 7.** In the absence of all elected officers of the Commission, the senior member of the Commission shall preside as Chairperson at a duly called meeting, and shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage of such Officer.

**Section 8.** The Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency shall have all powers and duties set forth in the Connecticut General Statutes or any special act relating to the Town of Watertown with respect to conservation and inland wetland matters

## **Article VI Election of Officers**

**Section 1.** An annual organizational meeting shall be held on the first meeting date in February, at which time officers will be elected and by-laws reviewed and be made a part of the minutes of the annual meeting. If for some reason elections of officers do not take place, then refer to Article V, Section 7 as to who will preside over the meeting.

**Section 2.** Two-thirds (2/3) or five [5] of the voting members must be present before election of n take place. If 2/3 of the members are not present, a special meeting shall be called on the first Thursday of March for the purpose of election of officers.

**Section 3.** Nominations shall be made from the floor at the organizational meeting and election of the officers specified in Section 1. of Article V shall follow immediately thereafter.

**Section 4.** A candidate receiving a majority vote from the voting membership of the Commission shall be declared elected and shall serve for one year or until a successor shall take office.

**Section 5.** Vacancies in offices shall be filled by regular election procedure described above in Sections 2, 3, and 4.

## **Article VII Meetings**

**Section 1.** Regular meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 P.M. at a place voted by a majority of members of the Commission. In the event of conflict with holidays or other events, a majority at any meeting may change the date of said meeting. The Secretary shall notify the membership of regular meetings not less than 48 hours in advance of such meeting.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, agendas for special meetings must be posted a minimum of 24 hours prior to a special meeting being held by the Agency. Special Meeting agendas may not be amended by the Agency at the special meeting once they are posted in the Town Clerk's Office.

**Section 2.** Four (4) voting members of the seven (7) regular members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum and the number of votes necessary to transact business. The notice of such a meeting shall specify the purpose of such a meeting, and no other business may be considered except by unanimous consent of the Commission. The secretary shall notify all members of the Commission in writing not less than 48 hours in advance of such meeting.

**Section 3.** All Commission meetings shall be open to the public when in session, and shall be open to the public when in executive session when so voted by the majority of the Commission members present and voting.

**Section 4.** Executive sessions may be held upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Commission present and voting taken at a public meeting and stating the reason for the executive session as defined in Section 1-18a (e-h) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

**Section 5.** A competent stenographer shall take the evidence or the evidence shall be recorded by a sound recording device at each meeting of the Commission. Proceedings of meetings shall be incorporated into the minute's book of the Commission to be a permanent part of the record.

**Section 6.** Unless otherwise specified, Robert's Rules of Order (latest revision) shall govern the proceedings at the meetings of this Commission.

**Section 7.** Field Inspections. When a wetland application requires a field inspection, the Commission shall set a time and place at the convenience of the members to gain on site knowledge of the proposed activity. The applicant or his agent shall be present. No testimony may be taken on the field inspection by the Commission.

## **Article VIII Order of Business**

**Section 1.** Unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson, the order of business at regular meetings shall be:

1. Call meeting to order
2. Roll call
3. Public participation

4. Action on minutes
5. Pending applications
6. New applications
7. Old business
8. New business
9. Communications and bills
10. Reports from officers and committees
11. Reports from staff
12. Public participation
13. Adjournment

**Section 2.** A motion from the floor must be made and passed in order to dispense with any item on the agenda or change the order of business.

**Section 3.** No new business submitted for action by the Commission shall be acted upon unless it is submitted at least three (3) or more days prior to a regular meeting date. Provisions of this section may be waived by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present.

## **Article IX Hearings**

**Section 1.** The Commission may hold optional public hearings, in addition to required hearings, when it decides that such hearings will be in the public interest.

**Section 2.** All public hearings prescribed by law shall be held in accordance with the requirement set forth for such hearings in Chapter 440, Section 22A-36 through 22a-45 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

**Section 3.** The matter before the Commission shall be presented in summary by a member of the Commission designated by the Chairperson or staff members and parties in interest shall have the privilege of the floor.

**Section 4.** A competent stenographer shall take the evidence or the evidence shall be recorded by a sound recording device at each hearing before the Commission in which the right to appeal lies to the superior court. Proceedings of the hearing shall be incorporated into the minute's book of the Commission to be a permanent part of that record.

## **Article X Conducting The Public Hearing**

**Section 1.** The Chairperson of the Commission shall preside at the public hearing, or if absent, the Vice Chairperson or a duly appointed Commission member shall act as a presiding officer as set forth in Article V of the By-Laws.

**Section 2.** The Secretary shall read the legal advertisement and note the dates and the newspapers in which the advertisement appeared.

**Section 3.** A summary of the question or issue shall be stated by the presiding officer at the opening of the public hearing. Comments shall be limited to the subject advertised. In any event, the Commission shall have the privilege of speaking first. The Chairperson shall describe the method of conduct of the hearing.

**Section 4.** The Chairperson shall first call for statements from the proponents. The opponents shall be given equal opportunity to comment. The order is reversible, at the discretion of the Commission prevailing. Whichever the case may be, each group shall make its presentation in succession without allowing an intermixture of comments pro or con.

**Section 5.** It shall be made clear to the hearing that all questions and comments must be directed through the chair only after being properly recognized by the presiding officer.

**Section 6.** All persons recognized shall approach the hearing table in order to facilitate proper recording of comments. Before commenting in the matter before the hearing, each person shall give his name and address.

**Section 7.** The presiding officer shall assure an orderly hearing and shall take necessary steps to maintain the order and decorum of the hearing at all times. In the event the hearing becomes unruly or unmanageable, the presiding officer shall reserve the right to act in accordance with Section 1-21h of the Connecticut General Statutes to restore order or adjourn the hearing to another time or place.

**Section 8.** The show of hands by those persons present shall not be allowed on any general questions presented at the public hearing. The hearing shall be conducted only for the purpose of taking testimony to be considered in the deliberations of the regular meeting of the Commission. If a general consensus of the meeting is desired, the Commission may provide properly identified sheets on which the electors may signify in writing their opinion as either in favor or opposed to the question before the public hearing.

## **Article XI Wetland Enforcement Officer**

**Section 1.** The Wetland Enforcement Officer or his designated agent shall carry out the duties as directed by the Chairperson of the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetland Agency upon majority vote of the Commission.



**Section 2.** Within the limits of the funds available for its use, the Commission may employ such staff, personnel and/or consultants as it deems fit to aid the Commission in its work.

**Section 3.** The Wetland Enforcement Officer or his delegated agent shall attend all Commission meetings.

## **Article XII Committees**

**Section 1.** The following standing committees may be appointed as needed at a regular meeting of the Commission by the Chairperson. The duties of each committee shall be prescribed by the Commission.

- a. Budget and Administration Committee
- b. Legal Committee
- c. Public Relations Committee
- d. By-Laws Committee

**Section 2.** Special committees may be appointed by the Chairperson for the purposes and terms which the Commission approves.

## **Article XIII Public Relations**

**Section 1.** The Chairperson or a duly appointed Commission member or staff personnel shall act as public relations or publicity director for the Commission. His duties include the preparation of all news releases to be distributed to the communications media. All information releases shall reflect the thinking of the majority of the Commission.

**Section 2.** In the matter of the press, radio and television representatives, the Commission shall comply with Section 1-21a of the Connecticut General Statutes as amended.

## **Article XIV Amendments**

These By-Laws may be amended by five (5) or more affirmative votes of the entire membership of the Commission, only after the proposed change has been read and discussed at a previous regular meeting.