

BYLAWS
OPEN SPACE COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF OLD LYME

Article I - Purpose and Authorization

The Open Space Commission is established pursuant to Section 7-131- p of the Connecticut General Statutes. The objectives and purposes of the Open Space Commission of the Town of Old Lyme are those set forth in the Ordinance authorizing the establishment of an Open Space Commission having an effective date of January 21, 2011.

Article II - Name

The Commission shall be known as the Open Space Commission of the Town of Old Lyme.

Article III - Office of the Agency

The office of the Open Space Commission shall be at the Old Lyme Town Hall where all Commission records shall 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 membership of the Commission and terms of office shall be as specified in the above-stated ordinances establishing the Commission.

Article V - Officers and their Duties

Section 1.

The officers of the Commission shall consist of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary. The positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman may alternatively be filled through election of two Co- Chairmen. The powers of the Chairman, as outlined elsewhere in these bylaws, shall then be equally shared by the Co-Chairs.

Section 2.

The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Commission and shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage on such office. The Chairman shall have the authority to appoint committees, incur on behalf of the Commission and certify expenditures of funds up to \$2000.00 without prior approval of the Commission, call special meetings, and generally perform other duties as may be prescribed in these Bylaws.

Section 3.

The Chairman 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 Chairman shall act for the Chairman in the Chairman's absence and have the authority to perform the duties prescribed for that office. The Vice Chairman shall be a commission member.

Section 5.

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Commission and, with the assistance of such staff as is available, shall prepare the agenda of regular and special meetings under the direction of the Chairman, provide notice of all meetings to the Commission members, and perform such other duties as are normally carried out by a Secretary.

Section 6.

In the absence of the Secretary, due to illness, personal reasons, or disqualification, the Chairman shall appoint Secretary pro tem.

Article VI - Election of Officers

Section 1.

An annual organization meeting shall be held as part of the regular Commission meeting following the meeting at which the Selectman make appointments, at which time officers will be elected and the Bylaws reviewed.

Section 2.

Nominations for office shall be made from the floor at the annual organization meeting and elections of the officers specified in Section 1 of Article V shall follow immediately thereafter.

Section 3.

A candidate receiving a majority vote of five (5) members of the Commission present and voting shall be declared elected and shall serve for one year commencing immediately after the adjournment of the meeting at which such candidate was elected and shall continue to serve until his or her successor shall take office.

Section 4.

Vacancies in offices shall be filled by a majority vote of five (5) members present and voting at an election held for that purpose.

Section 5.

Resignations from the Commission shall be in written form and submitted to the First Selectman. The Chairman shall be sent a copy of any resignation.

Article VII - Meetings

Section 1.

Regular meetings will be held on a day, time and location approved by a majority of members and published in the annual meeting schedule. The Secretary will publish a schedule of meeting dates at the last meeting of the calendar year that takes into account any conflicts with holidays. The Secretary shall notify the membership of regular meetings not less than 48 hours in advance of such meeting.

Section 2.

Special Meetings, i.e., those that occur outside the regular meeting schedule, must be noticed at least 24 hours in advance. The agenda for a special meeting cannot be changed during the meeting.

Section 3.

A majority of the voting membership of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, and the number of votes necessary to transact business shall be those of a majority of the members present and voting, except as otherwise provided by Statute or by these Bylaws. Notice of meetings shall be given in accordance with Section 1-21 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 4.

All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public when in session. Executive sessions may be held upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Commission present and voting taken at a public meeting at which one or more reasons for the executive session explicitly permitted by Section 1-18a (e) of the Connecticut General Statutes shall be stated on the record.

Article VIII - Order of Business

Section 1.

The order of business at regular meetings shall be according to the published agenda.

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.

New business submitted for action by the Commission, but received less than five (5) calendar days before the scheduled meeting date, shall be received but may not be acted upon until the Commission's next regular meeting at the discretion of the Chairman.

Article IX - Employees

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. Appointments shall be made by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any duly constituted meeting. The Chairman may be authorized to sign contracts for employing personnel and the Commission may approve contracting for services as needed.

Article X - Committees

Section 1.

The following standing committees may be appointed at any regular meeting by majority vote of the members present and voting, the duties of such committee to be prescribed by the Commission at the time of its appointment or at a subsequent regular meeting.

- Land Stewardship Committee
- Open Space Plan Update Committee

Section 2.

The standing committees shall be appointed to serve until the next organization meeting of the Commission and shall consist of not more than (2) members. Vacancies shall be filled immediately by the Chairman of the Commission. The Chairman may terminate any committee once it has performed its function and reported to the Commission.

Section 3.

Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the Chairman for purposes and terms which the Commission approves.

Article XII - Public Relations

Section 1. The Chairman or a duly appointed Commission member shall act as public relations or publicity director for the Commission. The duties of this position include the preparation of all news releases to be distributed to the communications media. All information releases shall reflect the thinking of a majority of the members of the Commission present and voting at the meeting at which the matter being reported on was considered.

Article XIII - Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of five (5) members of the Commission present and voting at any meeting after the proposed change has been read and discussed at a previous regular meeting. They may also be changed at any meeting by the unanimous vote of five (5) members of the Commission present and voting.

Article XIV - Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order (revised) shall govern meetings of the Commission in all cases in which they are consistent with these Bylaws and the laws of the State of Connecticut.

Adopted February 10, 2011,

Amended December 14, 2018 – *Allowed election of co-chairs in lieu of a chair and vice-chair*

Amended November 12, 2021 – *Removed specific meeting provisions to allow flexibility in addressing Commission business. Set notice requirements for special meetings per the FOIA.*

Amended December 14, 2022 – *Corrected typographical error.*