

## EASTON PLANNING BOARD RULES OF PROCEDURE

Adopted August 3, 2017

**676:1 Method of Adopting Rules of Procedure.** – *Every local land use board shall adopt rules of procedure concerning the method of conducting its business . . . and . . . placed on file with city, town . . .*

*Formulation of these rules are guided by the NH OEP Planning Board Handbook*

### Procedural:

- Meetings and Agenda:
  - Regularly scheduled Meetings will be on the first Thursday of the month, unless otherwise noticed. All meetings will be properly posted according to Statute.
  - The Board shall consist of 4 voting members elected by the Town for staggered 3-year terms, plus one *ex officio* member selected annually by the Selectboard.
  - A quorum will be 3 members present. Alternates may make a quorum. For the present, there will be no attendance by electronic means.
  - Roberts' Rules of Order will guide motions and voting.
  - An Agenda will be distributed by the Secretary, preferably before a meeting. It will be followed, but may be altered by agreement. The Agenda will be set by the Chair from items agreed to at the previous meeting, items received during the month, and items requested by members.
  - In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will preside.
  - Approval with amendments of previously unapproved Minutes will be the first order of business at each regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The Secretary will have copies of these available, plus copies of the Agenda.
- Special Meetings:
  - If it is necessary to call one, noticing will follow the RSA 91-A:2 provisions, and only the posted subject of the meeting will be discussed.
- Minutes:
  - A paid Secretary will take Minutes and perform duties assigned by the Board.
  - In the Secretary's absence, Minutes will be taken by a Board Member designated by the Chair. This temporary assignment will be unpaid. Distribution time requirements shall apply.
  - Draft Minutes will be signed and submitted to the Town Clerk by the Secretary within 5 business days of each Meeting, with a notation that they are Draft.
  - The Secretary will e-mail a copy of the Draft Minutes to each Member and Alternate at the same time that they are sent to the Town Clerk.

*p. 1 of 4*

- Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

- At the first meeting following Town elections a Chair and Vice Chair will be nominated from the floor and elected by majority voice vote of the Board. The Secretary will open this meeting and preside until a Chair is elected.
- In the absence of a Secretary, the longest-standing Board member will open the meeting and preside over the vote for Chair.
- Alternates:
  - The provisions of RSA 673:6 shall prevail for Alternates.
  - A legal resident of the Town can volunteer to be an Alternate via the Chair, or can be recommended.
  - Alternates will be elected by majority vote of the Board.
  - There can be up to five Alternates appointed for three years each for staggered terms.
  - The Chair will appoint an Alternate to fill a vacancy at a Board meeting.
  - Appointments will usually be on a rotating basis.
  - At regular meetings Alternates will have a seat at the table and may fully participate in the business of the meeting except they cannot participate in a vote unless they have been appointed at that meeting to sit for an absent member.
  - At a public hearing the Alternates will sit with the public unless they are serving in place of an absent Board member.
  - The Alternate for the Selectboard *ex officio* member will be designated by the Selectboard.
  - In the case of a permanent vacancy, the Chair will appoint the longest serving Alternate to fill the vacancy until the next Town election. If that Alternate cannot fill the position, the next Alternate in line will be seated.
- Hearings and fees
  - Hearings follow RSA 675:7 for public noticing and procedure.
    - The count of days do not include the day notice is posted or the day of the public hearing.
    - Notice of each public hearing is published in a paper of general circulation in the area and is posted in at least 2 public places.
    - The outside and inside Town Hall Bulletin Boards are suitable public places for posting.
  - A flat fee published in the Annual Report covers standard subdivision filing costs such as public notices for hearings and filing with the registry of deeds.
  - There is a \$10.00 per abutter notice mailing fee.
  - The applicant should receive a receipt for payment of fees.
  - The Town Clerk may assist the applicant in compiling the abutter list, and checks to see that the list is inclusive.
  - Public notices should identify the day, date, time and location of the hearing, lot number and location of the parcel to be discussed, the purpose (what the applicant proposes), and what action the Planning Board will take.

Policy:

- Speaking for the Board
  - Members shall not speak independently for the Board.
  - Individuals can always quote published Ordinances, Regulations and Procedures.
- E-mails and Right to Know Laws
  - E-mails to more than one member should be sent to the Secretary for distribution, since “reply all” e-mails legally may be considered “a meeting.”
  - E-mail communications cannot be a platform for electronic discussion.
  - E-mails can include material for discussion at a properly noticed public meeting.
- Public comments –
  - The Board welcomes comments.
  - The Chair may set content and time limits on public participation.
- Joint meetings –
  - A joint meeting may be requested by an applicant.
  - Boards retain discretion as to whether or not to hold a joint meeting, taking into consideration that good communication between Boards promotes understanding of issues, but that a formal joint meeting may not be the best course of action.
  - The Planning Board Chair shall chair applicant-requested joint meetings.
  - The Planning Board’s meeting rules shall apply.
- Site Visits –
  - A Subdivision Application signed with an authorized signature gives permission for site visits authorized by the Board. When the Board deems them necessary, the Board will notify the landowner that a site visit will occur.
    - Two Board members may inspect a site at the same time without violating the Right-To-Know law. (NH Municipal Assoc.)
    - If a quorum of the Board visits at the same time, the visit is considered a Meeting that must be duly noticed and Minutes must be taken.
- Consideration of Subdivision Applications –
  - Board actions will follow the Town’s current Subdivision Regulations and the provisions of RSA 676, including but not limited to the following:
    - The Board will complete the Application checklist.
    - Except for general guidance at Preliminary Conceptual Consultations, no consideration will begin until signed applications are accepted as complete.
    - All fees must be paid before an application can be complete.
    - Whenever a plat is recorded the final written decision, including all conditions of approval, shall be recorded on the signed plat. (676:3, III)
  - A recorded plat may be revoked if the provisions of RSA 676:4-a (2015) apply.

**RESOURCES for ASSISTANCE in NH State Agencies:**

CONCORD, NH 03302

Homeland Security & Emergency Management

33 Hazen Drive                      271-2231                      [www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/hsem](http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/hsem)

Dept of Environmental Services (DES)

29 Hazen Drive ,                      271-3503                      [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)

Dept of Resources & Economic Development (DRED)

172 Pembroke Rd,                      271-2411                      [www.dred.state.nh.us](http://www.dred.state.nh.us)

Dept of Transportation

7 Hazen Drive                      271-3734                      [www.nh.gov/dot](http://www.nh.gov/dot)

CONCORD, NH 03301

Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) *\*Guiding resource for these procedures*

107 Pleasant Street                      271-2155                      [www.nh.gov/oep](http://www.nh.gov/oep)

Dept of Justice,

33 Capitol Street                      271-3658                      [www.doj.nh.gov](http://www.doj.nh.gov)

Public Utilities Commission

21 South Fruit Street                      271-2431                      [www.puc.nh.gov](http://www.puc.nh.gov)

Cultural Resources Division of Historical Resources

19 Pillsbury Street                      271-3483                      [www.nh.gov/nhculture](http://www.nh.gov/nhculture)