

Peterborough Recreation Committee By-Laws

Approved by Recreation Committee and Selectmen – January 2007

Revised per Town Counsel – April 2007

Finalized - Sept 2007

- I) GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
 - A) To help provide high quality recreation opportunities for all Peterborough residents
 - B) To foster community awareness regarding the role that recreation plays in the overall quality of life. The Peterborough Recreation Committee is a link between the Recreation Department and the community. Peterborough Recreation Committee members are advocates for recreation.
 - C) To protect, preserve, use and develop the town's recreation resources.
 - D) To evaluate the need for private or public property for the purpose of creating, enlarging, and improving public parks, recreation areas and facilities for Peterborough residents.
- II) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
 - A) Recommend and set recreation program and facility policy.
 - B) Review and recommend modifications on matters relating to rules, use policies, fee structures, etc. with respect to all recreation programming and recreation facilities.
 - C) Work cooperatively with other public and private organizations to provide recreation opportunities while avoiding duplication and overlap. To support the Department in their ongoing relationships with town officials, school officials, and community organizations.
 - D) Define and oversee implementation of a strategic Recreation Master Plan through periodic reviews, updates, and recommended revisions.
 - E) Advise in the planning of recreation programs for Peterborough residents.
 - F) Serve as a forum for introducing innovative and new ideas, concepts, programs, policies and procedures for recreation.
 - G) Initiate the planning for future recreational areas and facilities.
 - H) Review proposals and propositions for the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of public parks and recreational facilities.
 - I) Encourage individuals and citizen groups to give funds, property and manpower for the development and operation of recreation programs and facilities.
 - J) Foster the awareness of the social, cultural, economic, environmental and personal benefits of a comprehensive public recreation program.
 - K) Promote and support other recreational activities when such action is deemed in the best interest of the Town citizens
 - L) Review and approve annual budget and capital improvement program for presentation by the Recreation Director to the budget committee and Selectmen.
 - M) Oversee and set policy regarding the Recreation Revolving Fund.
 - N) Approve expenditures from Isabelle Miller Fund, Noone Fund, and other like recreation funds.
 - O) Make reports and recommendations to the Selectmen and other Town Committees on matters relative to recreation.
 - P) Promote professionalism and the recruitment of highly qualified employees to manage the Department.
 - Q) Represent the Department at official occasions.
 - R) Become informed about Parks and Recreation programs and issues at the local, state, and national level and advocate actions which will positively affect recreation for town residents
 - S) Represent the general public.
- III) MEMBERSHIP

- A) The name of the advisory Board to the Parks and Recreation Director shall be the Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC), also referred to as the Committee.
- B) The PRC will be made up of 5 members, elected to staggered terms as part of town elections.
- C) Committee members shall be residents of Peterborough interested in the development and maintenance of Recreation Facilities and Programs. Members should be willing to make the necessary time commitment, seek input from town residents, and work on projects and committees.
- D) The Peterborough Recreation Committee is empowered by the Town of Peterborough with full responsibility for the recreation program planning process and implementation thereof. The Selectmen and Town Administrator are responsible for all budgetary, policy, and personnel matters of the Town (MOU, 2002).
- E) The Peterborough Recreation Committee is committed to abiding by and upholding all the rules and regulations as outlined by the Peterborough Town Policy Manual. The PRC is committed to instituting recreation policies intended to provide for the "best interest" of all participants in public recreation in Our Town. (MOU, 2002)
- F) Each member will serve for a three-year term unless otherwise stipulated by a vacancy on the committee. If any member is no longer willing or able to serve on the Committee, the member shall send a letter of resignation to the PRC with a copy to the Selectmen.
- G) The Peterborough Recreation Committee will present and recommend to the Board of Selectmen for approval, a candidate to fill any vacancy should an elected PRC official not be able to fulfill his or her elected term. This appointment will last until the next scheduled election. (MOU, 2002)
- H) Members must notify the Chair or another PRC officer in advance of a scheduled meeting if they are unable to attend.
- I) Committee Members shall serve without compensation, but each member may be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses actually incurred in the discharge duties as a PRC member, only with prior approval of the Committee.
- J) If extenuating circumstances prevent one or more persons from physically attending a meeting of the PRC, then he, she or they may participate in a meeting of the PRC by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation in a meeting in this way shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

IV) OFFICERS

A) POSITIONS: Three Officers will be selected from the PRC members: Chairperson (also referred to as the Chair), Vice-Chairperson and Secretary.

B) DUTIES

1) Duties of the Chairperson:

- (a) Preside at all meetings of the Committee
- (b) Set agendas for all meetings of the Committee
- (c) Provide instructions to all ad hoc Committee chairpersons
- (d) Attend appropriate town meetings as the PRC representative
- (e) Maintain regular communication with the Town Administrator. (MOU, 2002)
- (f) Call special meetings and order executive sessions of the PRC within the limits of state or local law.
- (g) Identify the Minute Taker for each meeting
- (h) In addition to the duties and powers set out elsewhere in these by-laws, the PRC Chairperson shall be the official and public spokesperson of the PRC; provided that the Chair may designate another voting member of the PRC to act as the official and public spokesperson of the PRC as to a specified topic or issue. In

no event shall the official and public spokesperson of the PRC represent a policy position or vote as being that of the PRC unless the PRC has formally approved such policy position or has formally taken such vote. The PRC Chair may execute documents or correspondence on behalf of the PRC, provided that the requirements of this paragraph are not violated.

- 2) Duties of the Vice-Chairperson: In the absence of the Chairperson from any meeting or in case of disability of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson.
 - 3) Duties of the Secretary:
 - (a) In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from any meeting, the Secretary shall assume the duties of the Chairperson for the duration of that meeting.
 - (b) Conduct necessary correspondence on behalf of the PRC with outside organizations (i.e. thank you notes, formal requests)
 - 4) Duties of the Minute Taker
 - (a) Keep minutes of all meetings of the Committee.
 - (b) Post notice of regular and special meetings of the Committee in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.
 - 5) Relation of Director of Recreation to the PRC:
 - (a) The Director is an ex-officio member of the PRC, with the responsibility to participate in discussions but without the right to vote. The Director should be present at all meetings of the PRC, as an advisory officer, except when matters pertaining to the Director's employment are being considered.
 - (b) The Director is responsible for distribution of the agenda and notification of PRC Members of all meetings.
 - (c) The Director is responsible to keep PRC Members informed on department projects and activities; shall furnish copies of all pertinent documents to each PRC member for each meeting; and shall make regular reports concerning department activities at PRC meetings.
 - (d) The Director is the communication link between the Department and the PRC.
 - (e) The Director maintains all permanent records for the PRC.
 - (f) As the PRC's Professional advisor, the Director is expected to keep abreast of technical advances, Park and Recreation techniques, to participate in professional Park and Recreation organizations, and to attend conventions and meetings of said organizations as approved by the PRC.
 - 6) Financial Responsibilities of the Finance Director of the Town of Peterborough shall be the ex-officio treasurer of the PRC and shall track income and disbursements of the PRC as well as the Recreation Department. As provided by law, the PRC may accept and disburse any funds it may receive by gift, bequest or devise for park or recreational purposes.
- C) ANNUAL SELECTION OF OFFICERS
- 1) The PRC officers are chosen annually
 - 2) The term of office shall run from the first meeting following town elections and expire approximately one year later at the meeting where new officers are chosen.
 - 3) When the office of any officer becomes vacant because the person is unable to complete his or her term of office, the committee shall elect a successor as soon as practicable for the remainder of the term.

- V) MEETINGS AND GOVERNANCE
- A) SCHEDULE

- 1) PRC meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise voted by the PRC.
 - 2) The Chairperson may call special meetings at any time provided that notification to the public and press is made in accordance with applicable state laws. Two members of the Committee can also call a special meeting if submitted in writing to the Chairperson.
 - 3) Meetings must follow the provisions of the NH Right to Know Law.
 - (a) Meetings must be posted at the Town House at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
 - (b) No business or decisions can take place via email. All business must take place at a posted meeting.
 - 4) Ad hoc Committees: The Committee may create such ad hoc committees as the business of the Committee may require, each of which shall exist for such period and have such authority and perform such duties as the Committee may from time to time determine.
- B) PROCEDURES
- 1) The Committee must establish Quorum at a meeting in order to conduct business. Quorum will be established when a simple majority of members are present.
 - 2) Motions
 - (a) The PRC shall take action by way of motions. Motions may be made by any PRC member when recognized by the Chairperson. No motion may be acted upon until a PRC member has duly seconded the motion. The vote on all motions shall be by “yes,” “no” or “abstain” and will be taken by voice vote. Following each vote, the Chairperson will announce that the motion carried or failed and the vote tally. The minutes shall indicate whether the motion carried or failed. Each PRC member shall have the privilege of explaining, for the record, any vote.
 - (b) Split votes shall be noted by name.
 - (c) Except as otherwise provided, a motion approved by a simple majority of a quorum shall carry. A motion not approved by a majority of a quorum shall fail.
 - (d) Any PRC member may declare a conflict of interest and decline to vote on an issue. In this event, the member’s vote shall not be counted. The minutes will reflect that the Member declared a conflict of interest and declined to vote on the matter.
 - (e) No member shall be excused from voting except on matters involving the consideration of his own official conduct or where his financial interests are involved or unless excused by the PRC for other valid reasons by a majority vote. Any member refusing to vote shall be entered on the record as voting nay.
 - 3) Voting Parameters
 - (a) Each Committee member shall be entitled to one vote.
 - (b) There shall be no vote by proxy or absentee ballot.
 - (c) The Chairperson shall be allowed to vote on any and all agenda items.
 - 4) Minutes
 - (a) Minutes need to be kept for all meetings in alignment with NH RSA 91-A:2.
 - (b) A copy of all approved minutes should be provided to the Town Administrator.
 - (c) Unless the Chairperson orders specific wording, motions shall be taken in substance, and the Minute Taker shall word the motion in the minutes giving the findings and reasons within the spirit and intent of the PRC action.
 - 5) Agendas
 - (a) At least five days before each regular meeting the Recreation Director shall send a copy of the agenda of the meeting to each Committee member and members of the public who have requested in writing to receive the PRC meeting agendas.

- (b) Committee members shall also receive the printed materials referenced in the agenda, and these materials shall be available for public review at the Recreation Department Offices.
 - (c) Agenda Deadline: Any person including PRC Members desiring to present a subject for the PRC's consideration shall advise the Recreation Director in writing no later than noon (12:00 p.m.), on the Monday preceding the Friday on which the agenda is distributed.
 - (d) Postponement of Action: Action on any new matter of business not specified on the agenda shall be postponed until the next regular PRC meeting unless it is declared an emergency by majority; then immediate action can be taken only upon a majority vote of PRC members. Any PRC member may request that action on any new business be held over until the next regular meeting.
 - (e) Oral Presentation by Director: Matters requiring the PRC's attention or action which have developed since the deadline for delivery of written communication to the PRC, may, upon approval of the PRC, be presented orally by the Director. If formal PRC action on a subject is required, such action shall be delayed until the next meeting, except that immediate action may be taken if approved by an affirmative a majority of the Committee and in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.
 - (f) Peterborough Resident Presentation. The PRC will allow resident requests to appear on the meeting agenda. However, the following guidelines must be followed:
 - (a) The Chairperson may, in his/her sole discretion, limit a presentation to five (5) minutes in length.
 - (b) Residents should complete an agenda request and submit the same to the Director ten (10) days before the respective Committee meeting and furnish all support materials in advance, or such person may be denied the opportunity to speak, at the discretion of the Chairperson.
 - (c) Other guests may be allowed to speak at the PRC's discretion.
- 6) Meeting Procedure
- (a) The parliamentary procedure for meeting and operations of the Committee shall be the responsibility of and within the authority of the Chairperson. In the event there is a disagreement or objection to the procedures pursued by the Chairperson, Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall constitute the authority.
 - (b) Rules of Debate. When a member desires to address the Committee, the member shall seek recognition by addressing the Chair and, when recognized, shall proceed to speak, confining comments to the question before the Committee. No discussion shall take place until a resolution or the agenda item has been introduced.
- C) ORIENTATION FOR NEW MEMBERS
- 1) Prior to the first regular meeting following their election, new members shall be provided with copies of pertinent documents including: current budget, current programs, and these bylaws.
 - 2) The Director and Chairperson are responsible for the PRC orientation program.
- VI) ANNUAL TIMELINE
- A) CAPITAL AND OPERATING BUDGET
- 1) The Committee is responsible for reviewing the operational budgets submitted by the Recreation Director, setting priorities, and approving final budget numbers before submission to Town Administration.

- 2) The Committee is responsible for setting capital priorities and budgets for the Recreation Department in conjunction with the Recreation Director.
 - 3) PRC Members are expected to participate in the presentation of the budget to the Town Administration and Budget Committee.
 - 4) The PRC shall present its budget in gross budget fashion (pursuant to state law) in which both expenses and all offsetting revenues are clearly denoted (RSA 32:5) to both the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee per town policy. Once money has been appropriated the PRC can spend said money in accordance with town policies and procedures. (MOU, 2002)
- B) TOWN MEETING
- 1) As necessary, the PRC may be required to participate in Town Meeting in discussions involving Recreation (i.e. warrant articles, budget)
- VII) AD HOC COMMITTEES/ SUBCOMMITTEES
- A) The Committee, by majority vote, may establish sub-committees or working groups to conduct special assignments as required by the Committee.
 - B) The Chairperson and the Director shall be ex-officio members of all committees and may attend any or all meetings, be notified of meetings, and will provide necessary resources to subcommittees
 - C) When subgroups are established, the committee must:
 - 1) Provide a clear purpose and develop goals for sub-committees and working groups
 - 2) Establish sub-committee and working group membership. Members are not required to be members of the Committee but must be residents in good standing for a town committee or residents of the defined region for regional committees
 - 3) Put forward a timeline for the sub-committee or working group being established
- VIII) EMPLOYMENT/PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF DIRECTOR
- A) The Town of Peterborough shall employ a Director of Recreation who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Recreation Department.
 - B) The Town Administrator, with input from the PRC, shall review the performance of the Director of Recreation. (MOU, 2002)
 - C) A committee, comprised of PRC members, a Selectman and/or Town Administrator, shall review candidates for the position of DOR. Their finalist shall be presented and recommended to the Board of Selectmen for approval. (MOU, 2002)
- IX) REVIEW/ AMENDMENT PROCESS
- A) These bylaws shall be reviewed every two years and may be amended at any time at any regular or special meeting.
 - B) Amendments shall become effective upon approval by a majority of PRC members
- X) GUIDING PRINCIPLES
- A) GENERAL CHARACTER
 - 1) Elected officials are often called upon to make decisions that affect various groups and individuals adversely. Balancing diverse constituent interests is a difficult task. While someone will always be disappointed in decisions, officials shall adhere to ethical standards that eliminate disappointment borne of dishonesty, conflicts of interest, unfairness or illegality. Preservation of public trust is critical for the preservation of democracy.
 - 2) A certain amount of detail is required in any code of ethics so that it serves as a clear guide. However, at the core of ethical behavior are some basic standards that officials shall use to reach a level of conduct that strives to be beyond reproach. Treating

others as you would have them treat you is always a good ethical test. Another standard is to reflect on how your actions or decisions might be viewed by persons you or the public holds in high regard because of their ethical integrity.

- (a) **Honesty and Integrity.** Honesty and integrity shall be the primary values in all issues. The public trust in the Committee can be a reality only when public officials are truthful.
 - (b) **Fairness and Respect.** All issues and citizens shall be handled with fairness, impartiality and respect. PRC members have an obligation to treat all citizens fairly, such as by dividing time reasonably among potential speakers on an issue at a public hearing or meeting. In reviewing, discussing and deciding issues, PRC members have an obligation to be accessible, open and direct, not only with the other members of the PRC, but also to the citizens who appear before them. The public is entitled to communicate with their public servants and understand the position of the PRC on public issues.
 - (c) **Effort.** PRC members have an obligation to attend meetings and to be prepared. It is expected that these officials will review the materials, participate in discussions and make an informed decision on the merits of the issue.
- 3) Other personal characteristics are important for the overall success of the PRC and the Recreation Department.
- (a) **Problem-Oriented:** Since the PRC makes decisions collaboratively, It is important that all members be problem-solvers that address items with an open mind and objectivity.
 - (b) **Building Relationships:** The relationships within the Committee and between the PRC and the community are essential.
 - (c) **Continuous Improvement:** PRC members should look for opportunities to improve programs and access to programs within Recreation. Criticism should be constructive and oriented at improvement.
- B) **COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES:** These guidelines are to help PRC members interact with each other and with Department staff. These guidelines are intended to promote a positive PRC-staff relationship and create a professional atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation.
- 1) Be open and honest while always remembering to respect the point of view of other members and staff even though it may be different than your own.
 - 2) Actively support department programs and initiatives whenever possible.
 - 3) PRC Members are not authorized to issue instructions to employees. The Director is responsible to direct the Department's operations and staff.
 - 4) The Director should be aware of any communication that takes place between a PRC member and staff member.
 - 5) PRC members and Department staff must maintain professional and ethical decorum in their dealings with each other.

