

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

AGENT TO PROSECUTE AND DEFEND SUITS

The town agent to prosecute and defend suits (“town agent”) is an elected position which plays a limited role in town government. Although statute provides that a town agent shall be elected, no statute provides the agent with any independent authority to act. In fact, case law makes it clear that the town agent has no authority to originate suits in favor of the town or to settle or compromise suits in which the town has an interest. Instead, the agent’s duty consists merely of assisting when litigation is in progress. The fact that a town agent is elected does not remove the authority of the selectboard to hire an attorney to represent the town, to conduct litigation, and to settle suits on behalf of the town. Accordingly, many towns do not have active town agents, and those that do often limit the agent’s activities to picking an attorney for the town or acting as a liaison between the selectboard and the town attorney in particular matters. See 17 VSA §2646 for more information.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Conservation commissioners are expected to assist, during the monthly meeting and for a few additional hours each month, with the implementation of the following commission activities as the needs arise: inventories of natural heritage components (e.g. vernal pools, other wetlands, wildlife corridors, natural communities), water quality monitoring, educational and public services (e.g. workshops, seminars, displays), and advisory contributions to other town commissions and boards.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

The Development Review Board is a quasi-judicial board that hears land use cases for subdivisions, conditional uses, site plan review, variances, and appeals of decisions by the zoning administrator. The application or appeal is presented in a public hearing. Deliberations are in private and decisions are issued in writing.

There are seven regular members and three alternates appointed to three year terms. Currently meetings are every first and third Thursday at 7:00 pm as needed. Occasionally there are site visits at other times. For more information contact the Planning Office at 649.1419 ext. 107.

ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Norwich Energy Committee (NEC) advises the Planning Commission, Selectboard, and Town Manager on energy-related matters pertaining to town policy and the Town Plan. The NEC identifies opportunities and makes

recommendations to the appropriate town officials and committees regarding energy conservation and efficiency, nonfossil energy sources, and pollution reduction that addresses the environmental and fiscal benefits to the town's government, residents and businesses. The NEC educates the citizens and property owners of the town about energy conservation, alternative energy sources and other energy sustainability measures, and to increase public awareness of energy issues and build public support for energy efficiency and sustainable energy policies. It devises and implements programs in support of those measures with the assistance of other volunteers.

The NEC shall consist of at least five members, who shall be Norwich residents or property owners, appointed by the Selectboard to staggered three-year terms. Members serve without compensation. The members should bring to the committee diverse interests and expertise.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Has advisory oversight responsibilities in the creation of annual budgets for the Town of Norwich, the Marion Cross Elementary School and, together with the Hanover Finance Committee, the Dresden School District. Provides research into financial matters as requested by the Norwich Town selectboard and renders nonbinding advisory recommendations for action or non-action by that Board.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

All members of the Norwich Historic Preservation Commission (NHPC) shall have a demonstrated interest, competence, or knowledge in historic preservation. Of special interest are professionals from the disciplines of history, archaeology, architectural history, architecture, and historical architecture. Others representing other historic preservation related disciplines, such as urban planning, American studies, American civilization, cultural geography, or cultural anthropology, and lay members are encouraged. Terms are for three years and there are four to eight meetings per year. For more information contact the Planning Office at 649.1419 ext. 107.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is concerned with long-term planning and prepares the town plan for adoption by the Selectboard. The Planning Commission implements the town plan through zoning and subdivision regulations based on the recommendations in the town plan. Staff support is provided by the planner. There are seven (or nine) members appointed to four year terms. Currently, meetings are every second and fourth Thursday at 7:00 pm. Minutes, regulations, the town plan, and other documents are available on the Town website. For more information contact the Planning Office at 649.1419 ext. 107.

RECREATION COUNCIL

Council members sign up for three year terms. The Council meets monthly to advise and aide the Recreation Director. Council members help with seasonal in-person registrations; special community events such as Touch-a-Truck Day, Labor Day Road Race, Halloween Celebration, & the Family Skating Party; occasional special projects; and offering suggestions for recruiting volunteer team coaches.

SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE

The Solid Waste Committee's (SWC) purpose is to assist with the implementation and maintenance of a solid waste disposal plan in conjunction with the Town Manager, Director of Public Works, and Selectboard. The SWC will be composed of five residents each appointed by the Selectboard to serve a one, two or three year term. One Selectboard member may be appointed to the SWC by vote of the Selectboard. The SWC will investigate current practices as the Transfer Station with an emphasis on reducing the volume of material sent to the landfill and research alternatives to current practices. In addition, the SWC will review the current fee schedule and make recommendations for changes to that fee schedule.

TOWN SERVICE OFFICER

The town service officer is charged with assisting individuals within the town who require emergency food, fuel or shelter assistance. This official works in collaboration with the Town Manager to provide assistance when possible and appropriate.