

BRISTOL HARBOR COMMISSION - BYLAWS

Adopted: _____, 2025

Article 1 – Name.

The name of this Commission shall be the Bristol Harbor Commission, herein referred to as the ‘Commission.’

Article 2 – Authority.

The Commission exists under the authority of the Bristol Town Council, pursuant to Article 9, Sec. 908 of the Bristol Town Charter. The Commission shall act in accordance with this authority and under these Bylaws. Nothing herein shall be construed to contradict or amend the Bristol Charter or Code of Ordinances, nor the application or interpretation of the laws by Courts of proper jurisdiction.

Article 3 – Duties of Commission.

1. The Commission shall perform the duties and exercise the powers conferred upon it by Rhode Island Law and the Bristol Charter & Code of Ordinances.
2. In compliance with state law and regulations promulgated by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and Coastal Management Resources Commission (CRMC), the Commission shall provide structure to the operation and regulation of the Town’s coastal resources by helping to implement the ordinances of the Town in furtherance of the Harbor Management Plan.

3. The Commission shall monitor the Town's coastal resources such as docks, bulkheads, and boat ramps, and shall make annual recommendations to the Town Administrator and Town Council for the maintenance, repair, and improvement of those resources.
4. The Commission may also recommend harbor improvement projects to be funded by grants and, with approval of the Town Council, may apply for such grants.
5. The Commission may also work with RIDEM, CRMC, and other State-level regulators to ensure that the Town's plans and operations comply with changing state laws and regulations.
6. The Commission may provide recommendations to the Town Council regarding appointments to the Harbor Commission Advisory Board.

Article 4 – Membership.

1. Appointment of Commission members.
 - a. The Commission shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Town Council to serve for three-year staggered terms. The Town Council may appoint up to two (2) auxiliary members to serve for three-year staggered terms. Said auxiliary member or members shall sit as active members when and if a temporary vacancy or vacancies so require, upon request of the Chairperson of the Commission.
 - b. Each member of the Commission is subject to reappointment and may continue to serve until a successor is appointed.

- c. Commission members who do not attend four (4) or more scheduled meetings within a year's time, and/or do not attend three (3) consecutive meetings, may be recommended for replacement by a vote of the sitting membership of the Commission, subject to action by the Town Council.
- d. The Town Council may provide notice of vacancies on the Commission and applications may be made available to the public at the Town Hall and/or on the Town's website.
- e. Members of the Town Council may interview and appoint Commission members.

Article 5 – Officers.

1. Officers

- a. The officers of the Commission shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary.

2. Nominations of Officers

- a. Each year in November, the Commission shall elect officers, each of whom shall serve as officers for a one-year term.

3. Duties of Officers. The duties shall be those prescribed by these Bylaws and the parliamentary authority adopted by the Commission and all officers shall have the right to vote as individual members.

- a. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Commission and shall decide all points of order and procedure, unless directed otherwise by a majority of the Commission in session at the time. The Chair, with the assistance of Town

staff, shall prepare the agenda for each meeting (including posting and distributing the agenda in accordance with the open meetings law), and prepare the annual report of the Commission.

- b. The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson in their absence and in the event of their death or resignation shall become the Chairperson for remainder of the term.
- c. The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of the meetings of the Commission, with the assistance of Town staff (including posting and distributing the minutes in accordance with the Open Meetings Act), shall keep the records of the Commission and a roster of membership, and conduct correspondence not otherwise provided for.

Article 6 – Meetings.

1. The Commission shall meet at least ten (10) times per year, typically monthly, at dates and times to be selected by the Commission.
 2. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or by any three (3) members of the Commission to address time-sensitive or emergency situations.
 3. The meeting notice shall be posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.
 4. All meetings of the Commission are open to the public.
 5. The Commission shall keep minutes of its meetings reflecting the matters considered, members absent and present, and all votes taken. Access to the Commission's records shall be provided pursuant to the Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act.
- Requests to view the Commission's records shall be made to the Town Clerk.

6. Quorum. A majority of the Commission members, which may include alternates, shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business at any Commission meeting.
7. As deemed necessary, subgroups of less than a quorum of Commission members may be formed and may meet to discuss the projects they are undertaking for the Commission. Subgroups shall report to the full Commission on their activities at regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission, and the Commission shall approve actions proposed by subgroups.

Article 7 – Ethics.

1. Members of the Commission are bound by and shall adhere to the Rhode Island Code of Ethics, including both statutes enacted by the General Assembly and regulations enacted by the Ethics Commission. A copy of the Code of Ethics can be found at <http://www.ethics.ri.gov/code/>.

Article 8 – Parliamentary Authority.

1. The rules contained in Roberts' Rules of Order, 12th Edition, shall govern the Commission in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they do not conflict with these Bylaws.

Article 9 – Miscellaneous.

1. These Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Commission by a 2/3 vote, provided an amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.

2. The provisions of these Bylaws are severable; if any such provision or provisions shall be held invalid or unconstitutional by any decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not impair or otherwise affect any other provision of these rules and regulations.

References:

- Bristol Home Rule Charter, Article 9, Sec. 908 (Harbor Commission authorized/created)
- Bristol Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8 (Boats, Docks and Waterways)

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