

Town of Granite Falls Planning Board

Rules of Procedure

Adopted March 11, 2021

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Town of Granite Falls Planning Board is to act in an advisory capacity to the Granite Falls Town Council involving matters related to land use, environmental concerns, recreational uses, and infrastructure development including but not limited to subdivision of property, water, sewer, stormwater, and road construction.

The Board in performing its duties shall strive to cooperate and coordinate its planning responsibilities. This coordination of efforts shall include but not be limited to other municipalities, county, state and federal agencies.

II. VISION STATEMENT

The mission of the Town of Granite Falls Planning Board is to assert visionary leadership in the area of comprehensive planning for both the corporate limits of the Town of Granite Falls and its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). Through responsible stewardship of the natural environment the Board shall work towards an attractive community that is harmonious with both the environment and also economically successful.

III. GENERAL RULES

The Town of Granite Falls Planning Board shall be governed by the terms of Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes and any other general or special state laws relating to planning in the Town of Granite Falls as well as by the resolution by which the Board was established.

IV. OFFICERS AND DUTIES

The Board shall have three officers, Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. Their duties shall be as follows:

Chairperson: The Chairperson shall be elected by a majority of the full membership of the Board. The term shall be for one (1) year or until an election for Chairperson can be held. It shall be the Chairperson's duty to set the agenda and determine all points of order and procedure, unless directed otherwise by a majority of the Board in session. The Chairperson shall have the authority to appoint committees as deemed necessary to research matters and report findings to the Board.

Vice-Chairperson: The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by a majority of the full membership of the Board. The term shall be for one (1) year or until an election for Vice- Chairperson can be held. In the absence of the Chairperson the Vice-Chairperson shall have the same authority as the Chairperson.

Secretary: The Secretary of the Board shall be the director and staff of the Planning Department. A member of the Board may be elected to serve as secretary in lieu of staff if the Board member is elected by a majority of the full membership of the Board. The term shall be for one year or until an election for Secretary can be held. The Secretary shall keep all records and minutes of regular and special meetings, shall conduct all correspondence (subject to direct), and shall generally supervise the clerical work of the Board. The Secretary shall be responsible (in cooperation with the Chairperson) to prepare the agenda of regular and special call meetings, provide notice of Board meetings to the members, arrange proper and legal notices of meetings and hearings, and such other duties as are generally preformed by a Secretary.

V. ELECTIONS AND PROCEDURES

The election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary shall be held at the first regularly scheduled meeting in July of each year, or the first meeting following approval of Board Appointments by Granite Falls Town Council and Caldwell County Commissioners, unless otherwise agreed upon and deferred by a majority of the Board present.

Voting procedure for officers shall be as follows:

- If there is one nomination for an office, then the Chairperson shall call for a voice vote.
- If there is more than one nomination, then the Chairperson shall call for a ballot vote immediately after closure of nominations. The votes are then counted and then winner is announced. The winner must have a majority of those voting.

VI. MEETINGS

- A. Regular Meetings: Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m., in the Town Council Chamber located at 4 South Main Street, provided that the Chairperson so directs, meetings may be held at any other place within the County. Regular meetings may be rescheduled at the direction of the Board.

- B. Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairperson. At least seventy-two (72) hours notice shall be given of the time and place of the special meeting, by the secretary or by the Chairperson, to each member of the Board; provided, that this requirement may be waived by action of a majority of all the members.
- C. Cancellation of Meetings: Whenever there is no business for the Board, the Chairperson may dispense with a regular meeting by giving notice to all members not less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the time set for the meeting.
- D. Quorum: A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the members of the Board.
- E. Conduct of Meetings: All meetings shall be open to the public. Parliamentary procedure shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.
- F. Conflict of Interest: A Board member shall not vote on any advisory or legislative decision regarding where the outcome of the matter being considered is reasonably likely to have a direct, substantial and readily identifiable financial impact on the member.

Further, a Board member shall not vote on any zoning amendment if the landowner of the property subject to a rezoning petition or the applicant for a text amendment is a person with whom the member has a close familial (as defined in NCGS Chapter 160D-109f), business or other associational relationship.

Resolution of Objection: If an objection is raised to a Board member's participation at or prior to the hearing or vote on that matter and that member does not recuse himself or herself, the remaining members of the Board shall by majority vote rule on the objection.

If a member abstains from voting, the member is not part of the voting body. A member with a conflict shall announce this fact at the beginning of the discussion related to the item of conflict and shall abstain from any and all discussion or participation.

- G. Vote: Each member of the Board including the Chairperson shall have an equal vote and for any motion to pass it is necessary that a quorum be present to favorably pass a motion.
- H. Minutes: All minutes of the Planning Board shall be approved by a motion and seconded and a concurring vote of the majority of members present. Such minutes with all necessary supporting data shall be recorded

permanently in the Planning Board Minute Book, also they shall be submitted to the Town Manager and Town Council.

- I. Attendance. Regular attendance shall be expected of all members, whether regular members or alternate members. Attendance at less than fifty (50%) percent of the meetings (special & regular) during one calendar year shall constitute grounds for removal from the Planning Board. Notice will be given to the Town Council to act at their discretion. However, the Board may grant a leave of absence due to any particular hardship which would preclude the Board member's regular attendance.
- J. Public Input:
 - 1) Prior to the beginning of each regular meeting, the Secretary shall place in a conspicuous location, a sign-up sheet, which shall state the name of the speaker, and the specific agenda item which the speaker will address. The secretary shall bring the sheet to the Chairperson at the time the meeting is called to order.
 - 2) At the beginning of each agenda item, the Chairperson may, at that time, recognize those who have signed up to speak to that specific item. The Chairperson shall first recognize those who are a scheduled party to that agenda item (i.e., applicant, agent, public official, etc.) and shall state the number of citizens who have signed up to speak on that particular item.

Speakers will be acknowledged to speak in the order in which their names appear on the sign-up sheet.
 - 3) The Chairperson shall, in the interest of time, have the right to limit any unscheduled speaker who has signed up under "public input," to no more than five (5) minutes. An unscheduled speaker may not dedicate their allocated time to another speaker without unanimous consent of the Planning Board.
 - 4) In the interest of time, the Chairperson may require that groups of individuals with similar comments appoint a spokesperson to represent them. The time limit for the spokesperson(s) and for all other speakers may be extended beyond five (5) minutes with Board consent.
 - 5) Speakers are asked to be courteous in their language and presentation. Profanity, other inappropriate language or personal attacks on Board members, staff or other members of the audience will not be tolerated.
 - 6) In order to provide for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the meeting, the Chairperson may declare any person who fails to comply with this policy as being "out of order". The Chairperson shall caution any such person to abide by the provisions of this policy. Refusal to abide by the provisions of this policy shall be grounds for removal from the meeting.

VII. COMMITTEES

Special committees may be appointed by the Chairperson for purposes and terms approved by a majority of the Planning Board members present.

VIII. AMENDMENTS

These Rules of Procedure may be amended from time to time. Amendment(s) shall be approved by an affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 members of the Board, provided that such amendment shall have first been presented to the membership in writing at a regular or special meeting preceding the meeting at which the vote is taken.

These Rules of Procedure were officially adopted on March 11, 2021.