

DIVISION 5. - CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Sec. 2-477. - Commission established.

A conservation commission is hereby established pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §§ 3261—3263 to consist of seven members appointed by the city council, all of whom shall be residents of the city. The terms of office shall be three years except that initial appointments after the date of adoption of the ordinance from which this division derives shall be such that the terms of no more than three members shall expire in any single year. For that purpose, the city council shall initially appoint three members for terms of one year, two members for terms of two years, and two members for terms of three years, such that the terms of approximately one-third of the members shall expire each year. There shall be one ex-officio member of the board consisting of the city manager or his/her designee.

(Ord. No. 07-02022015, § 1, 2-17-2015)

Sec. 2-478. - Purpose.

The purpose of the conservation commission shall be to serve as a research, advisory and advocacy group on environmental and conservation issues relating to the city.

(Ord. No. 07-02022015, § 2, 2-17-2015)

Sec. 2-479. - Qualifications.

All members of the commission shall be selected upon the basis of their knowledge of or interest in conservation, environmental science or related fields.

(Ord. No. 07-02022015, § 3, 2-17-2015)

Sec. 2-480. - Powers and duties.

The commission:

- (1) Shall keep records of its meetings and activities and make an annual report to the city council;
- (2) Shall conduct research, in conjunction with the planning board, into local land areas, which shall be initiated by majority votes of both the commission and the planning board;
- (3) Shall seek to coordinate the activities of conservation bodies organized for similar purposes;
- (4) Shall keep an index of all open areas within the city, whether publicly or privately owned, including open marshlands, swamps and other wetlands, for the purpose of obtaining information relating to the proper protection, development or use of those open areas. The commission may recommend to the city council or to any board of the city or to any body politic or public agency of the state a program for the better protection, development or use of such open areas, which may include the acquisition of conservation easements;
- (5) May advertise, prepare, print and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets which it considers necessary, if municipal appropriations provide financial resources to do so;
- (6) Shall assist staff in the preparation of park and trail plans, the identification of new sites to be added to the park system, recommendations on designation of open space areas, and grant assistance;

- (7) Shall coordinate applications for grants from the federal or state governments, or private sources, to improve conservation assets for the city including parks, trail and the community forest.
- (8) Shall undertake any other conservation or environmental activity referred to it by the city council.
- (9) May recommend to the city council the acceptance of gifts in the municipality's name for any of the commission's purposes.
- (10) Shall develop a plan for and provide advice to city staff and agencies regarding the management of the community forest including the anticipated impact of proposed development;
- (11) Shall raise community awareness regarding the importance of the community forest;
- (12) May raise funds to establish a community forest trust fund;
- (13) Shall adopt by-laws to govern the internal affairs of the commission; and
- (14) May perform such other functions as are permitted by this Code.

(Ord. No. 07-02022015, § 4, 2-17-2015)

Sec. 2-481. - Officers, meetings and records.

- (a) The members shall elect from their membership a chairperson, treasurer, a vice-chairperson and a secretary. Officers shall serve two-year terms.
- (b) All meetings of the commission shall be open to the public, and notice, if required by law, should be provided to the public about such meetings.
- (c) Minutes shall be kept of all meetings.

(Ord. No. 07-02022015, § 5, 2-17-2015)

Sec. 2-482. - Committees.

- (a) Establishment: The chairperson may appoint special committees for purposes and terms approved by the conservation commission.
- (b) Lewiston-Auburn Community Forest Board: The Lewiston-Auburn Community Forest Board will be a standing subcommittee of the Auburn Conservation Commission. The purpose of the community forest board is to plan for and provide advice to city staff and the conservation commission regarding the management of the community forest. The conservation commission shall designate two members to serve on the Lewiston-Auburn Community Forest Board. The Lewiston-Auburn Community Forest Board shall develop and implement a community forest program that enhances, preserves, protects, and maintains the community forest. Primary activities are to:
 - (1) Advocate for the community forest;
 - (2) Develop a plan for and provide advice on the management of the public sector portion of the community forest;
 - (3) Educate the communities about the community forest and how to care for it;
 - (4) Raise funds, including grants, and establish a community forest trust;
 - (5) Develop and advise on policy changes for approval by the city councils;
 - (6) Advise and consult on community forest issues and projects;

- (7) Communicate and coordinate with city staff, planning boards, and other community programs to avoid duplications of efforts and to combine resources to meet goals.

(Ord. No. 07-02022015, § 6, 2-17-2015)

Sec. 2-482.1. - Limits of authority.

Nothing contained within this section shall supersede the provisions of the Charter or contrary provisions of the Code. No powers and duties which may be exercised by conservation commissions under state statute which are not explicitly provided in this article may be exercised by the commission created herein.

(Ord. No. 07-02022015, § 7, 2-17-2015)