

Environmental Management Council
By-Laws
June 4, 2016

Article I: Name

1. The name of the organization shall be the Schuyler County Environmental Management Council, referred to in these By-Laws as “the Council”.

Article II: Purpose

1. As stated in Section 47-0107 of Article 47 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law, the Council's powers and duties shall be to:
 - a. The council may advise the county legislature on all matters affecting the preservation, conservation, and ecologically suitable use of the natural resources of the county.
 - b. The council shall review the state of the county environment as a whole, and shall prepare and submit an annual report of its findings to the county legislature. This report also shall include an account of the council's activities and accomplishments which shall be based on accurate records of its meetings and other works.
 - c. The council in cooperation with the county planning agency and other appropriate agencies, shall prepare a plan for the protection of the county's environment and the management of its natural resources, and shall transmit it to the county legislature as soon as practicable after the effective date of the establishment of the council. In addition, each such council shall obtain from the department of environmental conservation a copy of the state environmental plan. To the extent practicable, the preparation, content and subsequent revision, if any, of the county environmental plan shall be coordinated with the state environmental plan and a copy of said county plan and any subsequent revision shall be filed with the state commissioner of environmental conservation.
 - d. It shall investigate and recommend to the county legislature ecologically sound methods of planning the use of the county's resources.
 - e. The council shall keep an index of all open areas within the county, with the plan of obtaining information pertinent to sound ecological utilization of such areas including land owned by any municipality within the county. It shall keep an index of all open marsh lands, swamps, and all other wet lands in a like manner, and may recommend a program for their ecologically suitable utilization.
 - f. The council shall develop and maintain an inventory of natural resources within the county and such other environmental information as may be appropriate. Said inventory shall include wetlands and open spaces and may include, but not be limited to, factors relating to geology, soils, slope, water resources, vegetation, wildlife habitat, unique natural areas, and scenic, historic, and archaeological sites.
 - g. The council may cooperate with and assist such other governmental or non-governmental boards or organizations in the preparation of plans or reports or the review of proposals or applications as the county legislature may direct.
 - h. The council may also conduct research into the land area of the county and may seek to coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes. It may advertise, prepare, print and distribute books, maps, charts, and pamphlets if in its judgment it deems them necessary for its work, and subject to the county's purchasing and auditing policies and procedures.

Article III: Membership

1. The voting membership of the Council shall consist of the following:
 - a. Eight (8) members representing the Schuyler County community. Membership will be comprised of one (1) member from each town within Schuyler County to be appointed by the local municipality.
 - b. One (1) member representing the Schuyler County Planning Commission, recommended by the Chair of the Schuyler County Planning Commission and appointed by the Schuyler County Legislature.
 - c. One (1) member representing students within the Schuyler County community, appointed by the Schuyler County Legislature whose term shall be one (1) years.
 - d. In the event any town or village shall establish a conservation advisory council pursuant to ECL Article 47, the voting membership shall be increased to add a representative from any such town or village conservation advisory council at the commencement of the next calendar year following such establishment and the quorum will be adjusted accordingly.
2. Non-voting (ex-officio) members shall consist of the following.
 - a. One (1) member representation of the Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation District, appointed by the Schuyler County Legislature.
 - b. One (1) member of the Schuyler County Legislature shall be appointed an Ex-Officio member each year by the Chairperson of the County Legislature.
 - c. The Schuyler County Planning Director shall be appointed an Ex-Officio member for the duration of that person's time in the position.
3. The maximum number of voting Council members shall not exceed 14 members.
4. All appointees to and members of the Council shall serve at the pleasure of the Schuyler County Legislature and for a term not to exceed three (3) years and four (4) consecutive terms unless otherwise noted above. However, one calendar year after the completion of four consecutive terms or a uncompleted term, a member shall again become eligible for Council Membership
5. Vacancies on the Council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment except that a vacancy occurring through circumstances other than by expiration of term of office shall be filled only for the remainder of the unexpired term.
6. Selection Criteria
 - a. An applicant should have demonstrated environmental involvement and knowledge
 - b. Each applicant will submit an application and resume

Article IV: Voting Privileges

1. All members of the Council with the exception of Ex-Officio members shall have one vote.
2. Ex-Officio members, as designated by the County Legislature, shall have no vote.

Article V: Meetings

1. All meetings of this Council shall be open to the public.
2. The Council shall meet at a minimum of quarterly, or at the discretion of the Council. Meetings may also be called at the request of the legislature to address matters affecting the preservation, development, and use of the natural and man-made features and conditions of the county.
3. Special meetings, that is, meetings in addition to those regularly scheduled, may be called by the Chair or at the request of at least four (4) members, including ex-officio members. Special meetings should be limited to the discussion of a single topic.
4. To the greatest degree possible, Council meetings shall be conducted according to the standard format as stated in Robert's Rules of Order. This shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. The meeting shall be called to order by the Chair or Acting Chair.
 - b. The existence of a quorum shall be determined.
 - c. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

- d. Minutes of the previous meeting shall be presented, amended as needed, and approved by the Council members present.
 - e. Old business.
 - f. New business.
 - g. Adjournment by Chair.
5. A majority of all voting member of the Council positions shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article VI: Officers and Duties

- 1. The first meeting of the calendar year shall be designated as the annual organizational meeting. At the organizational meeting:
 - a. Members of the Council shall elect a Vice-Chairperson and Recording Secretary to begin serving a one-year renewable term, and nominate (recommend) a Chairperson for appointed by the Chair of the County Legislature.
 - b. Standing committees shall be formed based on the needs and interests of the Council. Committee chairs shall be appointed by the Chair of the Council to begin serving a one-year renewable term. Ad Hoc committees may be appointed as deemed necessary.
- 2. The duties and powers of the offices of the Schuyler County Environmental Management Council shall be as follows:
 - a. Chairperson
 - i. Preside at all meetings of the Council.
 - ii. Call special meetings of the Council in accordance with the bylaws.
 - iii. Sign documents of the Council.
 - iv. See that all actions of the Council are properly taken.
 - b. Vice Chairperson

In the event of the absence, disability or disqualification of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall exercise or perform all the duties and be subject to all the responsibilities of the Chairperson.
 - c. Recording Secretary

The secretary may serve as recording secretary for the Council or this function may be delegated. The secretary shall sign all approved minutes, along with the recording secretary. The secretary shall also sign resolutions and shall ensure that all records are being kept in a responsible manner to ensure due process.
 - d. Volunteer Status of Members

As stated in Section 8 of the Schuyler County Local Law E, of 2016, Council members shall not receive salary or compensation for their services.

Article VII: Attendance

- 1. Three (3) missed meetings by a Council member without prior notice (unexcused) will constitute removal from the Council.
- 2. Missing more than 75% of meetings with an excused absence will constitute removal from the Council.

Article VIII. Records and Reports.

- 1. Minutes of meetings of the Council, together with all pertinent supporting materials, shall be filed with the Planning Department and available to the public in accordance with the provisions of the freedom of information law and/or open meetings law within two weeks from the date of such meeting except that minutes taken in executive session shall be so filed and available to the public within one week from the date of the executive session.
- 2. The Council shall also submit an annual report to the County Legislature no later than the first day of February of each year, concerning the activities and work of the Council, and from time to time shall

submit such other reports and recommendations to the County Legislature as are necessary to fulfill the purposes of Local Law E of the year 2016.

3. The Council also shall prepare a report on the state of the natural and man-made environment in the county. Such report shall include a plan for protection of the county's natural and man-made environment and for management of its natural resources, The report and the action plan contained therein shall be prepared in cooperation with the County Planning Commission and with full consideration of related local and regional plans and reports and shall be submitted by the Council to the County Legislature as soon as practical, but not later than three years after the effective date of this local law, Thereafter this report and the plan shall be revised by the Council and resubmitted to the County Legislature at regular intervals not exceeding three years.

Article IX: County Code of Ethics; Conflict of Interest

1. All members of the Council shall be subject to the Schuyler County Code of Ethics. Any member of the Council may participate in any deliberations and discussion of the Council concerning any item brought before the Council, but when said issue is of particular and special interest to a member, or may result in significant personal gain for a member, that member shall recuse his or herself from all deliberations and discussion and any votes of the Council concerning that issue.

Article X: Organizational Structure

1. Staff Support
 - a. The Schuyler County Planning Department will provide staff support to the Environmental Management Council
 - b. All requests for information and communication with other agencies will be coordinated through the Schuyler County Planning Department.
2. Communication with Legislature
 - a. The Community Development and Natural Resources (CDNR) Committee will be the jurisdictional committee for the Council.

Article XI. Maintenance of Bylaws

1. The Council shall review the bylaws annually, and update as needed. All updates will be subject to approval of the Schuyler County Legislature.