



Code of Conduct Committee Meeting

November 27, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Attendance: Harold Garrett, Amber Soter, Nicole Draper, Yvon Dandurand, Chip Sawyer, Catherine Dimitruk (staff)

1. Welcome and Adjustments to the Agenda

Catherine welcomed members and noted that she will facilitate the meeting until agenda item #4. The main purpose of this meeting was to organize the committee so that they are ready to function if they receive a complaint under the NRPC Code of Conduct.

2. Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

3. Review draft operational guidelines

The committee reviewed the draft. Nicole asked how complaints are received. The Code of Conduct is silent on this, so the committee added clarifying language on how they will receive complaints. They also added language on the information to be provided to the Executive Committee and the timing of election of officers.

4. Election of chair and vice chair

Harold nominated Chip as Chair and Amber as Vice-Chair. Nicole seconded and they were elected unanimously.

5. Committee and Staff Announcements

No announcements.

Nicole moved to adjourn the meeting. Harold seconded. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

**NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
CODE OF CONDUCT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES
Adopted November 27, 2023**

Committee Purpose

The purpose of the Code of Conduct Committee (Committee) is to receive and review concerns raised under the Code of Conduct and make recommendations to the Executive Committee. Periodically, the Committee will review the Code of Conduct and if necessary, propose recommended amendments to the Board of Commissioners.

Advisory Role

The Committee shall be advisory to the Executive Committee, who shall have final authority over decisions related to the Code of Conduct.

Deliberations, Recommendations and Voting

Deliberations of the committee will be in public at a meeting, unless circumstances qualify for Executive Session in accordance with Vermont Open Meeting Law. Recommendations will be made by majority vote of Committee members at a public meeting. All recommendations will be forwarded by the next business day to the Executive Committee.

Meetings

The Committee will meet as needed at days and times convenient to staff and committee members. The Committee will meet to initiate a proceeding within 14 days of receiving a concern from the Executive Director, NRPC Board Chair, or NRPC Executive Committee. The Committee may also meet other times as needed, to carry out its stated purpose.

Officers/Elections

The Committee will elect annually a Chair and Vice-Chair who shall serve until the next election or until they are no longer a member of the Committee. The Chair will be responsible for running meetings, setting agendas in conjunction with NRPC staff and reviewing and signing correspondence on behalf of the Committee. The Vice-Chair will serve as Chair when the Chair is absent. If the Chair should resign before the term has expired, the Vice Chair shall serve as Chair until new elections are held.

Recommendations

Upon receiving a concern, the Committee will hold one or more meetings to develop recommendations for the Executive Committee. NRPC staff assigned to the Committee will

gather information as needed to aid in the development of a recommendation. Information forwarded to the Executive Committee will include a list of people providing information to the Committee, and the testimony taken, and any additional information used by the committee to make their recommendation. Potential recommendations include:

- No action
- Request member(s) receive specific training or education
- Arrange for additional training for the Board or Committee
- Request an apology or other restorative action
- Vote to censure any member
- Notify the appointing authority that their member(s) is in violation of the Code of Conduct Policy
- Request resignation of the member(s)
- Remove the member from the Board or Committee (when NRPC is the appointing authority)

Communication and Coordination

Notices of all special meetings shall be sent to Committee members, the NRPC Chair, and interested persons. Meetings shall be noticed and held in accordance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Minutes will be prepared by staff and made available to the public in accordance with Vermont's Open Meeting law. Committee members are encouraged to offer input on all matters before the Committee. Respectful public comment will be encouraged at all meetings of the Committee.

Conflict of Interest

In the event that any Committee member has a conflict of interest they shall recuse themselves from the proceeding, and participation shall be limited to the same rights of participation as a member of the public. Conflict of interest in this case means the Committee member has a personal or financial interest with any individual, partnership, firm, municipality or corporation included in the concern, or the Committee member is the subject of a concern. The Committee, through its own action, may also make a determination of conflict of interest and disallow participation and voting by a member if the majority of Committee members determines that a conflict of interest exists.

Adoption and Amendment

The Committee may, at any time, vote to amend these guidelines.