

**The Somerset County
Cultural and Heritage Commission
Bylaws
(As Amended 2022)**

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this Commission shall be the SOMERSET COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE COMMISSION, hereinafter referred to as the “C&H Commission”.

ARTICLE II: AUTHORITY

The C&H Commission is organized under and authorized to exercise the authority granted in R.S. 40:33A-1, hereinafter referred to as the “Statute,” and a resolution pursuant to said Statute of the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Somerset adopted August 2, 1983, hereinafter referred to as the “Resolution”.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERS, OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

Section 1. Membership and Length of Appointments

- A. In accordance with the Statute and the Resolution, the C&H Commission shall consist of nine (9) members, hereinafter referred to as “C&H Commissioners” appointed by the Board of County Commissioners for terms of five (5) years.
- B. Each C&H Commissioner shall be entitled to one (1) vote. The President shall have the right to vote as a C&H Commissioner on all issues.

Section 2. Governance

- A. Five C&H Commission members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.
- B. All motions shall be enacted by a majority vote of C&H Commissioners present who are entitled to vote, unless otherwise provided in these bylaws.
- C. No activity using the name of the C&H Commission may be undertaken unless authorized by the C&H Commission.
- D. All matters involving the Board of County Commissioners or Somerset County procedures shall be referred to the County Commissioner Liaison for approval.
- E. All legal matters shall be referred to the County Counsel for an opinion.

- F. The C&H Commission may put forth resolutions at its discretion, when appropriate, so long as it does not conflict with the Board of County Commissioners.

Section 3. Absences and Termination

- A. Three (3) consecutive absences from meetings or missing 30% of the C&H Commission's regularly scheduled annual meetings shall cause a vacancy in that member's office. After two (2) consecutive absences or 20% of regularly scheduled annual meetings, a letter of notification should be forwarded to the member. If the member does not attend the following meeting, a letter of recommendation for termination should be forwarded to the County.

Section 4. Officers

- A. The officers of the C&H Commission shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- B. The C&H Commissioners shall elect the officers from its members at the annual meeting.
- C. Each officer shall hold office for a term of one year, taking office at the next regular meeting following the annual meeting, and serving until his successor has been elected at the next annual meeting.
- D. In case of a vacancy in any office, the C&H Commission shall hold an election to fill the vacancy at the next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. All members, including those presently in office, may be considered for election to the vacant position.

Section 5. Duties of Officers

- A. The President shall:
 - 1. Preside as President at all C&H Commission meetings;
 - 2. Approve the agenda for each C&H Commission meeting;
 - 3. The president shall serve on the finance committee to establish annual budget priorities;
 - 4. Propose the establishment of committees, appoint C&H Commissioners to committees and designate the chairman of committees.
- B. The Vice President shall:

1. Preside at C&H Commission meetings during the absence of the President;

2. Perform such duties as may be prescribed by the President.

C. The Secretary shall:

1. Preside at meetings during the absence of the President and Vice President;

2. Make or cause to be made minutes of all C&H Commission meetings including the statements required under R.S. 10:4-10 and R.S. 10:4-14;

3. Take or cause to be taken all actions required to ensure that C&H Commission meetings are conducted in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

D. The Treasurer shall:

1. Serve as chair of the budget committee, along with the President and Staff to establish annual budget priorities

ARTICLE IV: COMMITTEES

A. At any meetings of the C&H Commission, the C&H Commission may establish any committee it sees fit to establish.

B. At least one member of the C&H Commission will serve on each of the committees.

C. The C&H Commission may abolish any previously established committees at any meeting.

E. Unless otherwise directed by the C&H Commission, each committee shall determine the procedures by which it shall conduct business.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

A. The C&H Commission shall hold an annual meeting in January of each year, at a time and place determined by the C&H Commissioners, for the election of officers.

B. In addition to the annual meeting, the C&H Commission shall meet at least three other times a year, at times and places determined by the C&H Commissioners.

- C. In addition to the meetings required by Paragraphs A and B of this Article, special meetings of the C&H Commission may be called at any time by the President or by any two (2) C&H Commissioners, provided that the President or the C&H Commissioners calling the special meeting notify all C&H Commissioners in writing no less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting.
- D. At each meeting, all members of the C&H Commission shall be given an opportunity to present to the members such matters as they may wish to have considered.
- E. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act R.S. 10:4-6 et. seq., all meetings shall be open to the general public, and public notice of meetings shall be provided in accordance with R.S. 10:4-9. Participation by citizens shall not be in order except with the sanction of the C&H Commission.
- F. All meetings shall proceed as follows:
 - 1. Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, announce Board policy, i.e., no new business will be heard after 11:00 pm, and no new testimony will be heard after 11:30 pm, and adjournment will be at or before 12:00 am.;
 - 2. Pledge of Allegiance;
 - 3. Roll Call;
 - 4. Approval of minutes;
 - 5. Correspondence;
 - 6. Staff Reports/Old Business;
 - 7. New Business/Action Items;
 - 8. Commissioner Reports;
 - 9. Advisory Committee Reports;
 - 10. Open for Public Comment;
 - 11. Adjournment.
- G. Continuance, dismissals and/or adjournment requests with or without prejudice shall be at the discretion of the C&H Commission in any matter for good cause shown.

H. Public Attendance and Comments

1. All meetings shall be open to the general public. Public comments are limited to five (5) minutes each.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICE AND STAFF

- A. The business office of the C&H Commission shall be located at a place designated by the Board of County Commissioners.
- B. The Board of County Commissioners shall assign the C&H Commission staff.
- C. The staff will be responsible for such matters designated by the Board of County Commissioners or their designee, including:
 1. Serving the County and C&H Commission, translating the goals, objectives, and policies of the Commission into programs, projects, and activities;
 2. Preparing the C&H Commission's annual budget with discussion and priorities discussed with the budget committee to be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners, and managing the C&H Commission's budget in accordance with applicable statutes;
 3. Consulting with the President in the preparation of an agenda for each C&H Commission meeting, and distributing meeting agenda, minutes, and related material as directed by the C&H Commission;
 4. Maintaining C&H Commission files and records;
 5. Applying for and administering grants as directed by the County and C&H Commission;
 6. Assisting in assessing the needs and desires of the community relative to the mission and objectives set forth by the C&H Commission;
 7. Keep or cause to be kept a current list of C&H Commissioners including names, addresses, telephone numbers, date of appointment, and length of membership term;
 8. Send or cause to be sent to C&H Commissioners and County Commissioner liaison written notices specifying time and place of all C&H Commission meeting and of other events requiring their attendance, or of interest to, such members.

ARTICLE VII: COMMISSION FUNDS

C&H Commission staff shall set and expend dedicated Cultural & Heritage funding in accordance with County procedure.

ARTICLE VIII: ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- A. Members of an Advisory Committee may be nominated by each of Somerset County's municipalities and appointed by the Board of County Commissioners for a term of two (2) years.
- B. Duties should consist of bringing to the Cultural and Heritage Commission matters relating to their municipality, as well as disseminating pertinent information/news from the Commission back to their municipality.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

Any provision of these bylaws may be amended or repealed upon the vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the C&H Commissioners, provided that a written notice of the proposed change has been served upon the C&H Commissioners at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be taken. Each amendment and repeal shall be submitted to the County Counsel and shall be void ab initio if Counsel opines that such amendment or repeal is not in accordance with applicable law.