

Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Rivers Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council

Meetings and Meeting Notice

Approved 8/20/20

All regular meetings of the NSN WSR Stewardship Council (the Council) shall be open to the public. Except in cases of emergency, the Council will provide the public with notice of its meeting 48 hours in advance, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.

Meeting Notices

Meeting notices must be in a legible, easily understandable format; contain the date, time, and place of the meeting; and list all topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting. The list of topics must be sufficiently specific to reasonably inform the public of the issues to be discussed at the meeting. Where there are no anticipated topics for discussion in open session other than the procedural requirements for convening an executive session, the Council should list “open session” as a topic, in addition to any executive session, so the public is aware that it has the opportunity to attend and learn the basis for any executive session.

Meeting notices must also indicate the date and time that the notice was posted, either on the notice itself or in a document or website accompanying the notice. If a notice is revised, the revised notice must also conspicuously record both the date and time the original notice was posted as well as the date and time the last revision was posted. If a discussion topic is proposed after a meeting notice is posted, and it was not reasonably anticipated by the chair more than 48 hours before the meeting, the Council should update its posting to provide the public with as much notice as possible of what subjects will be discussed during the meeting or else postpone that discussion topic to the next meeting. Notice of Special Council meetings (including emergency meetings) must be posted as soon as reasonably possible prior to the meeting.

Posting of Meeting Notices

Council meeting notices must be posted at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Meetings shall be posted on the Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Rivers Wild and Scenic Stewardship Council website <https://www.wildandscenicnashuarivers.org/>. A copy of the notice shall be kept by the chair of the Council or the chair’s designee.

Subcommittee Meetings

Subcommittee meetings may be open to the public at the discretion of the Subcommittee Chair, but are not subject to the same notice requirements as Regular and Special Council meetings.

Executive Session

While all meetings of the Council are open to the public, certain topics may be discussed in executive, or closed, session. Before going into an executive session, the chair of the Council (or, in the chair's absence, person chairing the meeting) must first:

1. Convene in open session;
2. State the reason for the executive session, stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called;
3. State whether the public body will reconvene in open session at the end of the executive session; and
4. Take a roll call vote of the body to enter executive session.

When the Council plans to host an executive session, it must be listed as a topic on the posted agenda in accordance with the requirements of this policy. For additional details on executive sessions, refer to Article 5, Section 4 of the Council Bylaws.

Remote Meeting Participation

Remote participation may be used during a meeting if any members are not able to attend the meeting in person. Acceptable means of remote participation include telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing, or any other technology that enables the remote participant and all persons present at the meeting location to be clearly audible to one another. Text messaging, instant messaging, email and web chat without audio are not acceptable methods of remote participation.

At the start of any meeting during which a member of the Council will participate remotely, the chair must announce the name of the member; such information must also be recorded in the meeting minutes. Council members who participate remotely may vote and shall not be deemed absent. In addition, members who participate remotely may participate in executive sessions but must state at the start of any such session that no other person is present or able to hear the discussion at the remote location, unless the Council has approved the presence of that individual. If technical difficulties arise as a result of utilizing remote participation, the chair (or, in the chair's absence, person chairing the meeting) may decide how to address the situation. The Council will suspend discussion while reasonable efforts are made to correct any problem that interferes with a remote participant's ability to hear or be heard clearly by all persons present at the meeting location. If a remote participant is disconnected from the meeting, the minutes must note that fact and the time at which the disconnection occurred.

Meeting Accessibility

The Council will make every effort to abide by all applicable state and federal laws that govern accessibility for persons with disabilities. These laws include the Americans with Disabilities Act, the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and state constitutional provisions.

NASHUA, SQUANNACOOK & NISSITISSIT RIVERS

WILD AND SCENIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 5 – MEETINGS

Section 1: Regular Council meetings shall be held at least eight times per year and shall be open to the public. Special Council meetings may be held should it be necessary to transact the business of the Council between regular meetings. The Chair, or the Vice Chair at the request of the Chair, or two voting core member entities may call meetings. Notice of meetings shall be provided 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Section 2: Meetings may be held in person, by conference call, by video conferencing, or by any combination thereof at the discretion of the Chair.

Section 3: A majority of Council voting members (51%) shall be required to form a quorum for Council meetings. The Council shall endeavor to act by consensus whenever possible. Formal votes may be taken from time to time at the discretion of the Chair or by request of any voting member. On the occasions when votes are needed, a 2/3 vote of the voting members present is required to pass. If the representative and alternate of a voting member disagree, the representative's vote shall prevail.

Section 4: In the event an issue of confidential nature comes before the Council, an Executive Session may be called. Specific purposes of an Executive Session may include, but are not limited to: personnel matters; land negotiation and acquisition; and legal issues. In order for an Executive Session to be called, a 2/3 vote of the core voting member entities present at the meeting shall be required. All non-Council attendees shall leave the meeting unless specifically requested to remain by the Council. Resulting votes taken in Executive Session shall be disclosed either (1) when the meeting is re-opened to the public, or (2) when such votes can be disclosed without affecting the public interest. Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, all discussions in Executive Session and minutes thereof shall be confidential.