

Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission Bylaws (amended in 2023)

Section I. The officers of the Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.

Section II. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

Chair:

1. The Chair shall be charged with HPC administrative affairs.
2. The Chair shall preside over all HPC meetings.
3. The Chair shall appoint committees of the HPC with the advice and consent of the HPC.
4. The Chair shall attend all Township Board meetings to present the minutes of HPC meetings and to be available to the Township Board on HPC matters. If the Chair cannot attend a Township Board meeting, another HPC member will be designated by the Chair to attend.

Vice-Chair:

1. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair during absence of the Chair.

Secretary:

1. The Secretary shall record, submit to the Florence Township website, and keep on file the minutes of all HPC meetings.
2. The Secretary shall make the minutes of all HPC meetings available to the Chair for use at the next Township Board meeting following any HPC meeting.
3. The Secretary shall prepare and receive correspondence for the HPC and maintain proper files and records.
4. The Secretary shall prepare an annual report to be sent to the Township Board as of the March meeting summarizing the activities of the HPC.
5. The Secretary shall publish the date, time and place of all HPC meetings in compliance with Public Open Meeting laws.
6. The Secretary shall update the HPC webpage with member contact information, term dates, pertinent documents and announcements.
7. The Secretary shall notify the Town Board of any vacancies on the HPC.

Section III. Election of officers

1. HPC officers shall be elected at the annual meeting and serve until the next annual meeting.
2. The annual meeting shall be the HPC's scheduled May meeting.
3. HPC officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present.

Section IV. Quorum

1. The HPC shall consist of seven members, including a liaison to the Goodhue County Historical Society and a liaison to the Town Board. At any meeting of the HPC, a quorum shall be the majority of the active members (members with active appointed terms) including ex-Officio members, i.e., the Town Board liaison and the Goodhue County Historical Society liaison. Members may attend the meeting remotely if unable to attend in person.
2. No action shall be taken in the absence of a quorum except to adjourn the meeting.

Section V. Voting

1. Each HPC member is entitled to cast one (1) vote. Voting shall be by voice.
2. In the event that any HPC member believes that they have a conflict of interest, they shall voluntarily excuse themselves, vacate their seat, and refrain from discussing and voting on said item. The secretary shall then record in the minutes that no vote was cast by the member.
3. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members present (or tuned in remotely) and voting shall be necessary for the adoption of any resolution or other voting matter. Ex-officio members are accorded the same privileges of debate, including the right to vote as all other members.

Section VI. Rules of procedure (adapted from the Minnesota Association of Townships)

1. Convening and running the meeting: The HPC chair will convene and run the meeting. Meetings should be convened at the time provided in the notice, but only if a quorum is present. If no quorum exists, the meeting will either be delayed until a quorum arrives, or canceled and rescheduled. Because state law does not create the chair's position, it is up to each commission to determine how it will decide who will be the chair. In the absence of the chair, the remaining commissioners will need to decide who will run the meeting. Chairs have the same authority

to participate in the meeting as any other commissioner. This means that, absent some express reason to the contrary (i.e., local by-laws, conflicts of interest, etc.), the chair can make motions and vote on any issue. It is traditionally the chair's role to recognize speakers, to make sure that everyone is clear on an issue, and to call for any vote. It is also the chair's discretionary duty to end discussions as needed to keep order, and to keep the meeting moving at a good pace while allowing complete discussions on each issue.

2. Agenda: There is no statutory requirement that an agenda be prepared for a commission meeting. It is, however, a good way to help inform audience members of what will be discussed. An agenda can also help keep the meeting orderly and thus more time-efficient.

3. Parliamentary Procedure: Neither Robert's Rules of Order, nor any other parliamentary process, is statutorily imposed on townships. This means that from a purely legal perspective, township commissions may conduct their business in just about any manner they choose. A town board and its commissions do not need to worry about what motion should precede what other motion, etc. The Minnesota Association of Townships discourages townships from officially adopting a formal process, such as Robert's Rules, by name. The reason for this is that once adopted by the board, that process becomes binding, and any deviation can be grounds to challenge the validity of an action taken by the commission. Because few people know all of the intricacies of Robert's Rules of Order, mistakes can easily occur, subjecting an otherwise valid decision by a commission to possible challenges based on a technicality.

Section VII. Committees

1. The HPC may establish standing committees for a term of one year. After a term of one (1) year, such committees may be re-established. The HPC may appoint ad hoc committees as needed to address various issues. Members of the ad hoc committees need not be voting residents of the township. However, such members will not be allowed to vote on the issue.

Section VIII. Attendance

1. Any HPC member who will not be able to attend a scheduled HPC meeting shall notify the Secretary as soon as possible. The Secretary will notify the Chair if the projected absence will produce a lack of quorum. (As stated elsewhere in these bylaws, it is permissible to attend a meeting remotely.)

2. Four consecutive unexcused absences could result in a member's removal at the Town Board's discretion.

Section IX. Vacancies

1. Should vacancies occur on the HPC, immediate notice shall be given to the Town Board. Should a vacancy occur among HPC officers, that office shall be filled at the next HPC meeting.

Section X. Ordinance recognized

1. The ordinance establishing the Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission is hereby recognized, along with all amended ordinances, and all provisions of said ordinances will be complied with.

Section XI. HPC meetings

1. Regular meetings shall be on the second Tuesday of each month.
2. All meetings will be at the Florence Town Hall except when the HPC may adjourn to some area for the purpose of viewing said area.
3. All meetings shall be public meetings except in those instances where the HPC decides that a public hearing is indicated.
4. The Chair may, at their discretion with at least three (3) days' notice, call a special meeting by notifying the members and posting a notice at the Town Hall and on the Florence Township website indicating the time and subject of the meeting.

Section XII. Bylaw amendments

1. These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Florence Township HPC by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members provided that notice of such amendment is given to each member in writing at least three (3) days before said meeting. These amendments are not finalized until approved by the Town Board.

Section XIII. Public hearings

1. Public hearings may be held at the discretion of the HPC. If a subject brought before the HPC is deemed controversial, the HPC may decide to examine the subject at a public hearing rather than at its regular public meeting, in which case the procedures outlined for public meetings must apply.