



THE VILLAGE OF GRASS LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION BY-LAWS & RULES OF PROCEDURE

Article I: AUTHORITY

Section 1:

These rules of procedure are adopted by the Village of Grass Lake Planning Commission (hereinafter referred to as "commission") pursuant to MCL - Act 33 of 2008 (Michigan Planning Enabling Act), MCL - 110 of 2006 (Michigan Zoning Enabling Act), MCL – Act 267 of 1976 (Open Meeting Act), and the Village of Grass Lake General Ordinance 30.02 "The Village of Grass Lake Planning Commission Ordinance."

Section 2: Governance Responsibilities

The commission bears the responsibility to provide guidance for land use and development within the village. Both the master plan and the zoning ordinances are valuable tools and will be accurately followed and applied fairly and consistently. These tools will help in providing an improved quality of life, more efficient use of financial and other resources, a cleaner environment and an economically healthier community.

Article II: PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Section 1: Membership & Responsibilities

- A. The Grass Lake Village President shall appoint members of the commission subject to approval by a majority vote of the members of the Grass Lake Village Council ("village council"). To be qualified as a member the candidate shall meet the following qualifications:
 1. All but one (1) member shall be a qualified elector of the village.
 2. Shall not be a declared candidate for any political office, except this condition shall not apply to the village council representative to the commission.
 3. After an individual's first appointment and before reappointment, shall have attended training for commission members pursuant to village ordinance 30.02D.
- B. The number of members shall not be less than five (5) and no more than nine (9) and shall be fixed by resolution of the village council.
- C. The Grass Lake Village President shall automatically be an ex-officio member.
- D. The membership shall be representative, to the extent practicable, of the important segments of the community, such as the economic, governmental, educational and social development of the village, and as a secondary consideration, be representative of the entire geography of the village.
 1. Ex officio members shall include the chief elected official (the president) or one (1) designated member of the village council.
 2. Ex officio members shall not comprise more than one-third of the total membership.
- E. Liaisons to the commission shall include village manager, zoning administrator, Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and a village council representative (excluding the president). The purpose of liaisons is to provide the village and quasi-village officials the ability to participate in discussion with the commission, in addition to speaking in public participation, and nothing else.

- F. Each member shall avoid conflicts of interest and incompatibility of office and shall not be appointed to another outside position that would conflict with commission duties.

Section 2: Terms

- A. Members shall serve for a three (3) year term running January through December, or until his or her successor is appointed; an ex-officio member's term coincides with the election of the public office.
- B. Members will serve on a staggered year basis.
- C. A term commences January 1 upon appointment by village council unless a vacancy occurs mid-term, then the newly appointed member shall complete the partial term and then seek reappointment for the next full term.
- D. A member is eligible for consecutive terms upon approval of village council.

Section 3: Officers (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary)

- A. The term of each officer shall be one (1) year, elected annually (at the December meeting, Article 3, Section 2B) by the general membership, with an opportunity for reelection.
- B. Ex-officio members of the commission are not eligible to serve as the chairperson.

Section 4: Duties of Officers

- A. Chairperson
 - 1. Shall call and chair all meetings in accordance with the outlined procedures.
 - 2. Oversee the preparation and distribution of meeting agendas in a timely fashion.
 - 3. Shall appoint any special committees and task groups.
 - 4. Schedule public hearings.
 - 5. Work closely with the village manager, clerk, and other village staff.
- B. Vice-Chairperson
 - 1. Shall act in the capacity of the chairperson in their absence.
 - 2. Succeed to the office of chairperson in the event of a vacancy.
- C. Secretary
 - 1. Shall prepare minutes of all meetings (See Section 9A for details).
 - 2. Deliver all communications, petitions, reports and related items of business to the Village of Grass Lake Clerk for the purpose of safe keeping, archiving, updating public records, and other duties as for which the Village Clerk is responsible.
 - 3. Perform related administrative duties to ensure efficient and informed commission operations.

Section 5: Removal

- A. A member may be removed by village council, prior to the end of their term, upon written charges and after a public hearing due to:
 - 1. Unexcused absences from three consecutive, regularly scheduled meetings.
 - a. The secretary of the commission shall report any member who has missed three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings to the village council.
 - 2. Nonfeasance (failure to act) in office.
 - 3. Misfeasance (the performance of a lawful action in an illegal or improper manner) in office.

4. Malfeasance (wrongdoing or misconduct especially by a public official) in office.

Section 6: Resignation

- A. A member shall resign by written or verbal notice.

Section 7: Vacancies

- A. Vacancies shall be filled as necessary appointment of the village president, subject to approval by a majority vote of the village council, utilizing the procedures outlined in the Village of Grass Lake Planning Commission's Recruitment & Appointment Process outline.

Section 8: Compensation

- A. Commission members shall receive compensation for their services equal to or less than the per diem of the village council members per meeting, plus mileage.
- B. Commission members shall be compensated for expenses incurred for travel, including but not limited to, attendance at conferences, workshops, educational and training programs.
- C. The commission shall have authority to apply for and receive grants from any government agency, the federal government, and to receive gifts related for the betterment of the commission.

Article III: MEETINGS

Section 1: Notice of Meetings

- A. All meetings (regularly scheduled and special) shall be posted by the village clerk held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.
 1. The notice shall include the date, time and location of the meeting.
 2. Meeting dates and times are also posted on the Village of Grass Lake's website, and at the Village of Grass Lake village offices.

Section 2: Times and Places of Meetings

- A. Regular meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 P.M.
- B. All meetings (regular and special) shall be held at the Grass Lake Village Hall, 119 N. Lake St. Grass Lake, MI 49240.
- C. Required meetings (per Act 33 of 2008) will take place in March, June, September, and December. Additional regular meetings will take place only if business warrants.
- D. If the first Thursday of the month falls on or when a legal holiday is observed, the regular meeting will be scheduled for the next available Thursday of the month.
- E. Any deviations from this schedule will be posted appropriately.

Section 3: Special Meetings

- A. A special meeting may be called by the chairperson; or by two (2) members upon written or verbal request to the secretary.
- B. The secretary or chairperson shall send written notice to the commissioners and the village clerk not less than forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting.
- C. The village clerk shall post the special meeting to the village website calendar and to the building a minimum of 18 hours before the special meeting.

Section 4: Quorum

- A. A quorum at any meeting shall consist of the majority of the total number of members regardless of vacancies or absences.
 - 1. An affirmative vote by the quorum shall be necessary for the adoption, or recommendation for adoption, of any plan or amendment to a plan.
 - 2. When a quorum is present, action by a majority of the quorum shall be considered an action by the entire commission.
- B. When a quorum is not present, no deliberations or official action may be taken except for the closing of the meeting.
 - 1. Commission members may discuss matters of interest but can take no action until the next regularly scheduled or special meeting.
 - 2. All public hearings without a quorum shall be scheduled for the next regular or special meeting and no additional public notice is required, provided the date, time and place are announced at the meeting.

Section 5: Public Hearings

- A. Hearings shall be scheduled by the chairperson, and the hearing information shall be posted by the village clerk in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. The notice shall include the date, time, and location of the meeting. Hearing dates and times shall also be posted on the village's website, and on public display at the physical location of the village office.
- B. General rules for conduct during a public hearing:
 - 1. At the beginning of the meeting, it should be clearly stated what the roles of the commission and the village council are in regard to the hearing process and when a decision can be expected.
 - 2. The chairperson may limit the amount of time allowed (generally 3-5 minutes) for each person addressing the commission; additional speakers that provide consensus of several people may be allotted extra time.
 - 3. All comments are to be addressed to the chairperson.
 - 4. All public hearings without a quorum shall be scheduled for the next regularly scheduled or special meeting. No additional public notice is required provided the date, time and place is announced at the initial public hearing. Future meetings on the subject should be noted and the chairperson will determine if additional public notice will be provided in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

Section 6: Motions at All Meetings

- A. Motions shall be restated by the chairperson before a vote is taken.
 - 1. The name of the maker and supporter of the motion shall be recorded by the secretary.
- B. All administrative actions taken shall include the following parts:
 - 1. Finding of fact. Listing what was determined to be relevant facts in the case in order to eliminate misleading statements, hearsay, and untrue statements.
 - 2. Conclusion. Listing the factual reasons for the action(s) that are directly related to a finding of compliance or noncompliance with ordinance standards.
 - 3. Action. Recommendation of position e.g. approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval.

Section 7: Voting and Conflict of Interest

- A. An affirmative vote of the majority of commission members who are physically present, or a majority of the quorum, whichever is greater, shall be required for the approval of any requested action or motion.
- B. Voting shall be verbal. A roll call vote shall be required if requested by any commission member, or if directed by the chairperson.
- C. All members of the commission, including the chairperson shall vote on all matters. The chairperson shall vote last.
- D. Members must be present to cast a vote; proxy voting is not permitted.
- E. Conflict of Interest. A commission member shall declare a conflict of interest and abstain from participating in deliberations if excused from voting, only if that member has a Bonafide conflict of interest. Failure of a member to disclose a potential conflict of interest as required by this subsection constitutes malfeasance in office (see section 6.A(4)). A conflict of interest is defined as:
 - 1. An immediate family member is involved in any request brought forth where a decision has to be made.
 - a. "Immediate family member" is defined as an individual's spouse, parent, child (includes step or adopted), dependents, siblings (includes step or adopted), and a relative of any degree residing in the same household.
 - 2. A member has business or financial interest in the property involved in the request, or in the applicant's company, agency, or association.
 - 3. A member owns or has a financial interest in neighboring property.
 - a. For purposes of this section, a neighboring property is defined as any property falling within the notification radius for the application or proposed development as required by the zoning ordinance.
 - 4. There is a reasonable appearance of a conflict of interest as determined by a majority vote of the remaining commission members.

Section 8: Order of Business

- A. Regularly scheduled meetings shall have a written agenda prepared and followed by the chairperson. The order of business shall be:
 - 1. Call to Order.
 - 2. Pledge of Allegiance.
 - 3. Roll Call.
 - 4. Public Hearing (if necessary).
 - 5. Approval of Agenda.
 - 6. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes.
 - 7. Reports.
 - a. Zoning Administrator
 - b. DDA Executive Director
 - c. Village Council
 - d. Village Manager
 - e. Other
 - 8. Public Comments.
 - 9. Correspondence.
 - 10. Unfinished Business.

11. New Business.
 12. Pending Business.
 13. Adjournment.
- B. Special meetings shall have a written agenda prepared and followed by the chairperson however, the agenda does not have to follow the format as outlined in Section 8A.
- C. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted parliamentary procedure, as governed by “Roberts Rules of Order.”
- D. A written notice containing the commission’s decision(s) shall be sent to petitioners and/or originators of a request.

Section 9: Minutes

- A. The secretary of the commission shall prepare minutes for all meetings pursuant to the Open Meetings Act. All communications, actions, and resolutions shall be attached to the minutes, and the official records deposited with the village clerk. At a minimum the minutes shall contain:
1. Record of attendance.
 2. Brief synopsis of the meeting highlights.
 3. Summary of public comments.
 4. Complete restatement of all motions and recording of votes including:
 - a. Type of vote (e.g. roll call or verbal).
 - b. Findings of fact.
 - c. Complete statement of the conditions or recommendations made on any action.

Section 10: Annual Report

- A. The commission shall file an annual report of activities with the village council by December 31st of each year. The report provides the status of planning activities and includes recommendations to village council on planning and development.

Section 11: Preparation and Adoption of a Master Plan

- A. The commission shall make and approve a master plan as outlined under MCL 125.3831 – 125.3883.
- B. Review of the master plan shall occur at least every five (5) years per Act 33 of 2008 (Michigan Planning Enabling Act) as amended.
- C. All proposed changes to the master plan must be submitted to village council for review and approval before the plan with changes can be adopted by the commission.

Section 12: Committees

- A. Appointments to committees, and length of their term, shall be at the discretion of the chairperson (with input from commission members). Less than a quorum of commission members may serve on a committee.
1. Ad Hoc Committees - The chairperson may appoint temporary committees to address special or specific needs as they arise.
 2. Citizen Committees - The chairperson may appoint temporary committees to increase citizen participation, to use individual’s knowledge or expertise on a particular issue, or better represent interest groups within the village.

Section 13: Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Provisions

- A. All meetings shall be open to the public and shall be held at the Grass Lake Village Hall 119 N. Lake St. Grass Lake, MI 49240.
- B. All deliberations and decisions shall be made at meetings that are open to the public.
- C. A person shall be permitted to address a hearing of the commission as outlined in Section 5, or to address the commission concerning non-hearing matters as outlined in Section 8.4(8).
- D. A person shall not be excluded from any meeting of the commission except for a breach of the peace committed at the meeting.
- E. Any writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by a commission member in performance of an official function shall be made available to the public in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246. FOIA requests must be submitted in writing to the village clerk and may require a fee to cover processing charges.

Section 14: Amendments

- A. Commission members may amend or repeal these by-laws as an agenda item during any regular meeting. Proposed amendment(s) shall be provided to all members no less than three (3) days prior to the meeting where such amendment(s) are to be considered.

Original bylaws adopted January 4, 1990

Amended September 2, 2010

Re-written & adopted January 8, 2026 by Resolution 2026-01-08