

City of Beacon Commission on Human Relations

**CITY OF BEACON
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
ONE MUNICIPAL PLAZA
BEACON, NEW YORK 12508**

Version 8: BY-LAWS ***** (“Proposed” on 2/4/04)

Article I - Name of the Commission

The name of this commission shall be **THE CITY OF BEACON COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS** (COB COHR) as created by Part I/Chapter 5/Article II/Section 5-8 in the City of Beacon Code.

Article II - Authority

The authority for **Section 5-8 Commission on Human Relations** in the City of Beacon Code is conferred by **Article 12D - Commissions on Human Rights Law** contained in the New York State General Municipal Consolidated Law Code.

Article III - Rules and Regulations of Commission

This Commission shall have the power to adopt its own rules and regulations with regard to its proceedings, the gathering of complaints, the requesting and receiving of funding, grants, and monies for its operations within the mandate of its committees, and shall be guided by its own by-laws.

Said Commission shall conduct all proceedings under Robert’s Rules or Order, keep minutes of its meetings showing the vote of each member upon every question, and maintain records of all official action.

Article IV - Purpose of the Commission

SECTION A - General Duties

1. In accordance with Section 239-q of Article 12-D of the General Municipal Consolidated Law Code of New York State, this Commission shall have the general duty to address the following broadly defined human rights issues within the Beacon community:
 - a. To foster mutual respect and understanding among **all** persons in **all** groups, with specific sensitivity to Beacon’s diverse racial, religious, and nationality (ancestral) groups.
 - b. To identify and evaluate any areas of human relationship within Beacon that will aid in achieving the general duties of this Commission.

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- c. To inquire into incidents of tension and conflict among or between any groups (with particular emphasis on racial, religious, and nationality groups), and to take actions designed to alleviate these tensions and conflicts.
 - d. To conduct and recommend educational programs that, in the judgment of this Commission, will increase goodwill among the residents of Beacon and open new opportunities into all phases of community life for all inhabitants of Beacon.
2. In addition to the “General Duties” described in Section 239-q of Article 12-D of the New York State General Municipal Consolidated Law Code, this Commission shall have the power:
- a. To report allegations of unlawful discriminatory practices under Article 15 of the New York State Executive Consolidated Law Code to both the Dutchess County Human Rights Commission and the New York State Division of Human Rights.
 - b. To administer, manage, and dispense monies, goods, or services obtained through city funding, public grants, private gifts, donations, or bequests, independent of any other provision of law.

SECTION B - Specific Duties

The City of Beacon Commission on Human Relations shall discharge the following specific duties:

3. To receive complaints of alleged discrimination because of race (~~e.g. African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Indian~~ *****), religion (creed), ~~skin color~~, ***** national origin (ancestry), sex, age, disability, marital status, arrest record, conviction record, sexual orientation, and family status.
4. To seek the active assistance of the Dutchess County Human Rights Commission and the New York State Division of Human Rights in the solution of complaints which fall within the jurisdiction of the New York State Division of Human Rights and to prepare its own plans in the case of other complaints with a view toward reducing and eliminating such alleged discrimination through the process of conference, conciliation and persuasion.
5. To hold public meetings in the interest of the constructive resolution of racial, religious, nationality, ~~skin color, and~~ ***** age group, **disability, and sexual orientation******* tensions and the prejudice and discrimination such tensions can produce.
6. To issue publications and reports of investigations as in its judgment will tend to achieve the goals of this Commission.
7. To enlist the cooperation and participation of the various racial, religious, and nationality groups, community organizations, industry and labor organizations, media or mass communication, fraternal and benevolent associations, and other groups in an educational campaign devoted to fostering among the diverse groups of the community mutual esteem, justice, and equity and opening new opportunities into all phases of community life for all individuals.

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8. To encourage and stimulate agencies under the jurisdiction of the City of Beacon to take such action as will fulfill the purpose of this Commission as described in Article II of these By-laws.
9. To submit an annual report to the Beacon City Council, prior to its first meeting in September. In addition, a copy of this report will be furnished to both the Dutchess County Human Rights Commission and the New York State Division of Human Rights before the end of September.

Article V - Membership

- A. The Commission shall consist of not less than 5 nor more than 15 members.
- B. The term of each member shall be for a period of 2 years.
- C. Any member of the Beacon City Council may nominate any resident of Beacon or owner of any business located within Beacon, other than current council members, for membership on this Commission. Selection and appointment shall be by a majority vote of the City Council. In selecting members to this Commission, the Beacon City Council shall take into consideration the various racial, religious, nationality, business, political and age groups in the city.
- D. Excessive absenteeism: It is the responsibility of each commissioner to provide advance written or verbal notification to the Chairperson should they be unable to attend a Commission meeting. In addition, it is the obligation of each commissioner to provide written notice to the Chairperson if they have been absent from, or anticipate being absent from, two or more consecutive monthly meetings of this Commission. Failure to meet these obligations will constitute an unapproved absence. The accumulation of three or more “unapproved” absences during any two year term shall be considered excessive absenteeism subject to termination by the Commission.
- E. Membership Termination: Any excessively absent member shall be considered officially resigned from the Commission. A written notice of termination from the Commission, sent via certified mail with a return receipt request, will be provided to the affected member by the Chairperson. Should the affected member desire reconsideration of their termination, an opportunity to address the Commission at the next meeting will be offered in the termination notice. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to notify the Mayor of such terminations.
- F. In the event of any vacancy, the Mayor shall appoint a successor for the unexpired term.
- G. Member compensation, if any, shall be determined by the Beacon City Council.
- H. Reimbursement, if any, of personal expenses by a member of this Commission in service to this Commission shall be made at the discretion of the Chairperson consistent with the budgetary constraints imposed upon this Commission by the City Council of Beacon and/or Article IV Section A Part 2b of these By-laws.

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Article VI - Officers and Employees

Section A - Officers

The officers of this Commission shall be the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson, and the Secretary. The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Beacon City Council. The Vice Chairperson and Secretary are to be nominated by members of the Commission and elected to a one year term in September by a majority of the appointed members serving on the Commission. Officers can be reelected.

1. Duties of the Chairperson

- a. Preside over meetings of the Commission
- b. Appoint all committees subject to final approval by a simple majority vote of the Commission.
- c. A sitting member of all committees.
- d. Advise Commission as to current community concerns.
- e. Screen complaints and where appropriate forward them to the Commission.
- f. Make referrals to proper agencies.
- g. Compile written reports.
- h. Make Commission members aware of current articles and publications helpful in achieving the goals of this Commission.
- i. Arrange Commission meetings and workshops.
- j. Prepare annual report for Beacon City Council at conclusion of one year term.
- k. Specify duties of Commission employees.

2. Duties of the Vice Chairperson

- a. To assist the Chairperson in meeting his/her official obligations.
- b. To assume the duties of Chairperson in his/her incapacitation or absence.

3. Duties of the Secretary

- a. Record minutes of Commission meetings.
- b. Provide a printed itinerary of meetings at start of each meeting.
- c. Read and correct the minutes.
- d. Distribute a copy of previous meeting minutes to membership by mail or e-mail at least one week prior to next meeting.
- e. Notify membership of meeting time and date by mail or e-mail at least one week prior to each meeting.

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- f. Distribute reports, articles, publications to Committee members and the Beacon Community at the behest of the Chairperson.

Section B - Employees

The duties of commission employees shall be set forth by the Commission Chairperson.

Article VII - Commission Meetings

Section I - Regular Meetings

The regular meeting of the Commission shall be held monthly.

Section II - Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or upon the written request of any three members of the Commission. Scheduling of the meeting shall be arranged by the Chairperson.

Section III - Quorum

A quorum at all meetings shall consist of a majority of the appointed members serving on the Commission.

Article VIII - Committees

A. List of Permanent Committees

1. Education
2. Youth
3. Public Relations.
4. Police-Community Relations
5. Employment
6. Housing
7. Health, Aging, and Disability

B. List of Temporary Committees:

1. By-laws/Resolutions
2. Budget/Finance
3. Membership Nominating

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4. Other Committees: The Chairperson of this Commission has the authority to create temporary committees in order to meet the needs of the Commission.

Article IX - Amendments

Amendments to these By-laws must be submitted in writing and circulated to the membership at least 10 days prior to a regular or special meeting with a two-thirds affirmative vote of the entire commission membership required for passage.

By-laws Adopted: August 7, 2002

Amended (By-laws Version 6): March 12, 2003

Amended (By-laws Version 7): February 4, 2004

Amended (By-laws Version 8): MMMMM DD, 2004 *****