

TOWN OF SHARON

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title of Position: Conservation Administrator

Department/Appointing Authority: Conservation Commission

Date : December 2019

Originator: Margaret Arguimbau, Chair and Conservation Commission members

1. Summary Description

- Professional, technical, and administrative work coordinating, facilitating, and promoting conservation of the town's wetlands, waterways, natural resources and conservation parcels by coordinating and administering the activities of the Conservation Commission and enforcing all state and local conservation laws and regulations.
- Serve as Co-Development Review Coordinator with staff of the Town Engineering Department to review development/construction proposals resulting in an organized and streamlined permit process.
- Manage the Massapoag Brook Watershed area by monitoring and controlling up to four outflow structures balancing competing recreational uses and ecological needs. This includes the day-to-day management of Lake Massapoag levels with regard to amount and volume of flow according to the Lake Level Policy, as well as the need for and tracking of Chapter 91 permits.

2. Essential Functions

The essential functions listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.

For the Conservation Commission:

- Advises the public about the applicability of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) and the Sharon Wetland Protection Bylaw (the bylaw) in conjunction with land development and/or construction projects; responds to inquiries from the public regarding statutes, filings, and general information questions. This may require judgment and initiative in determining courses of action which are guided by statute, established guidelines, or precedents. Individual must be able to make reasoned and defensible judgments, often on-site.
- Conducts timely review of applications made to the Conservation Commission pursuant to the WPA and the bylaw, including field inspections.
- Reviews delineations of wetland resource area boundaries and classifications under the WPA and the bylaw; recommends to the Conservation Commission the classification of any wetland according to the guidelines provided by the law and through field observation. Advises the Conservation Commission of the impacts of particular proposals on the town's natural resources, in particular wetland resource areas, and recommends special conditions for the Commission to incorporate into orders it issues.
- Conducts site inspections of construction sites to confirm compliance with the Conservation Commissions orders; meets with site contractors, engineers, environmental consultants and property owners as needed, or required.

- Drafts decisions, issues permits, writes letters and other correspondence on behalf of the Conservation Commission, including contracts and/or land use agreements.
- Drafts budget, reviews with Commission members, and submits to Select Board.
- Receives and investigates complaints of violation(s) of the WPA and the bylaw and, if necessary, administer enforcement orders.
- Plans, coordinates and performs management and maintenance on Town Conservation land including, but not limited to monitoring of Conservation Restrictions held by the Commission, trail clearance, field mowing, and removal where necessary of fallen trees and/or branches from storm damage.
- Frequently required to move objects weighing up to 60 pounds, such as turning weir gates, inserting or removing “flash boards”.
- Duties often require physical agility to access all areas of inspection sites, which may include rough terrain, marshy areas, and/or uneven ground. May spend several hours walking or standing.

For the Conservation Commission Office:

- Administers the daily operation of the office including purchasing, answering and returning calls, preparing packets for the Commission’s meetings and drafting agendas; oversees Conservation Commission budget and processes all expenses; makes photo copies and assists citizens.
- Has access to department-oriented confidential information, such as personnel files, lawsuits, and Conservation records. The Conservation records include such things as filings before the Conservation Commission, information regarding land purchases, violations of Enforcement Orders and other town land violations. Though a matter of public record, discretion must be exercised in handling any of this information.

Cross-Board interaction:

- Acting as the Town’s Co-Development Coordinator, conducts technical review of other permit applications such as: building permits, septic permits, site plan approval, subdivision applications, Zoning Board variances, and Board of Health permits when wetlands are in proximity to proposed septic system. Performs related site visits in a timely manner.
- Reviews water quality testing and outfall components of MS4 permits working in conjunction with the Town Engineer’s review of the other MS4 components. Meets with project proponents during planning stages and advises them regarding town regulations.
- Acts as a liaison between the Conservation Commission and state and federal agencies, as well as other town departments and boards, providing guidance, technical assistance and /or written assessments regarding development proposals where environmental concerns and regulations may overlap; attends meetings on behalf of the Commission with other town departments and with state and local organizations.

Must have excellent communication skills and be able to effectively coordinate with town officials, town employees, the general public, attorneys, engineers, consultants, and governmental agencies. Candidate must be able to explain complex environmental laws to the general public.

3. Supervision

Supervises one administrative assistant (Clerk) and volunteers.

4. Reporting Structure

Works under the administrative direction of the Conservation Commission Chair. Meetings with the Chair prior to Commission meetings to discuss agenda and organize any needed information for the meeting.

5. Physical Environment

- Some work is performed under typical office conditions. More frequently, work is performed in the field with exposure to various weather conditions and the hazards associated with site work and construction sites, such as uneven terrain, open holes and pits, and hazardous materials.
- Required to work outside of normal business hours during cyclic or seasonal periods. Required to attend night meetings of the Conservation Commission. Frequently may need to attend meetings of the Zoning Board of Appeal, or other town boards and commissions, or to meet with applicants for permits, such as home owners, builders, etc.

6. Education/Basic Knowledge

- Degree in an environmental field such as forestry, botany, environmental planning, or related field; or an equivalent combination of education and experience as described in #7 below.
- Membership in the Association of Wetland Scientists preferred.
- The ability to operate pick-up truck, tractor, mowers, chainsaws as well as hand tools, soil auger, weir wrench and wheel, and various surveying equipment.
- Working knowledge of Federal and State laws, including the Massachusetts WPA and associated regulations and guidelines applicable to the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission, as well as knowledge of biology, geology, and hydrology.
- Working knowledge of the principles and practices of wetland delineation, including botany, soils, and other technical methods approved by the State.
- Knowledge of environmental management.
- Familiarity with permit and grant writing, and other documents required by the Town and/or mandated by State Law, including working on the Town's Open Space and Recreation Master Plan updates.
- Ability to visualize terrain from maps and plans, and interpret complex engineering drawings.
- Ability to communicate clearly in written, oral and graphic form.

7. Experience

Bachelor of Science degree in an environmental field strongly preferred. Equivalent experience in environmental management, wetlands, and conservation of natural resources, land conservation or related field will be considered.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and is subject to change by the employer, as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.