

COLCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

Amended June 9, 2025

Article I

NAME

The name of this society shall be COLCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Article II

PURPOSE

The purpose of this society shall be to bring together people interested in history, and especially the history of the Town of Colchester, Vermont. Understanding the history of our community is basic to our democratic way of life, giving us a better understanding of our state and nation, and promoting a better appreciation of our American heritage.

The society's major function will be to discover and collect any material which may help to establish or illustrate the history of the area; its exploration, settlement, development, and activities in peace and war; its progress in population, wealth, education, arts, science, agriculture, manufacturing, trade and transportation. It will collect printed materials such as histories, genealogies, biographies, descriptions, gazetteers, directories, newspapers, pamphlets, catalogs, circulars, handbills, programs and posters; manuscript materials such as letters, diaries, journals, memoranda, reminiscences, rosters, service records, account books, charts, surveys and paintings, portraits, scenes, and material objects illustrative of life, conditions, events and activities of the past and present.

The society will provide for the preservation of such materials and for its accessibility, as far as may be feasible to all who wish to examine or study it, to cooperate with officials in insuring the preservation and accessibility of the records and archives of the country and of its cities, towns, villages, and institutions, and to undertake the preservation of historic buildings, monuments, and markers.

The society will disseminate historical information and arouse interest in the past by publishing historical information; by holding meetings or programs with pageants, addresses, lectures, papers, and discussion; by marking historic buildings, sites and trails; and by using public and social media to awaken public interest.

The society will cooperate with the Vermont Historical Society to collect and preserve materials of state-wide significance so that these materials can be made available to students and scholars.

Article III

MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be of the following classes:

1. Individual members – Any person interested in the purposes of the society shall be eligible.
2. Student members – Any person interested in the purposes of the society and enrolled as a full-time student in a recognized educational institution shall be eligible.
3. Family members – Two adults and all children under the age of 18 residing in the same household shall constitute a family membership. Each such adult shall be considered an individual member.
4. Life members.

Article IV

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the society shall be held in the month of June.

Article V

OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The officers shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall be elected for a term of one year and three directors, who shall be elected for a term of three years, except that the term of the directors first elected shall be: one for one year; one for two years; one for three years.

Section 2. The officers and directors shall constitute the Board of Directors. The President shall serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Article VI

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. All officers and directors shall be elected by a plurality of votes cast at the annual meeting.

Section 2. The Board of Directors shall meet at least one month prior to the annual meeting to select a slate of candidates for election as officers and directors at the annual meeting.

Section 3. Nominations may also be made by any member of the society at any time prior to the balloting at the annual meeting. Any nomination made at the annual meeting shall be added to the slate of candidates upon being seconded by another member of the society. A candidate for election shall be a voting member as defined in Section 6 of this Article.

Section 4. Officers and Directors shall be installed at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected and shall serve until their successors have been duly elected and installed.

Section 5. In the event of resignation or incapacity of any officer except the President, or any director, the vacancy may be filled by a vote of the Board of Directors for the unexpired term of office. In the event of the resignation or incapacity of the President, the Vice-President shall become President for the unexpired term of office.

Section 6. A voting member of the society shall be any member who is current in the payment of their dues to the society. Dues are payable on July 1, the beginning of the society's fiscal year. A member is not current in the payment of their dues if more than 90 days have elapsed since payment became due.

Article VII

FEDERAL TAX REQUIREMENTS

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the society is organized exclusively for one or more of the purposes as specified in 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a society exempt from Federal income tax under IRC 501(c)(3) or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

No part of the net earnings of the society shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, officer of the society or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the society), and no member, trustee, director, officer of the society or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the society.

No substantial part of the activities of the society shall be carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided by IRC 501(h)) or participating in or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidates for public office.

In the event of dissolution all of the remaining assets and property of the society shall, after necessary expenses thereof, be distributed to another organization exempt under IRC 501(c)(3), or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws, or to the Federal government or state or local government for a public purpose.

Article VIII

AMENDMENT

This constitution may be amended at any regular meeting or adjourned meeting by two-thirds vote of those voting, provided notice was given to the membership at the previous meeting, or it may be amended at a special meeting called for that purpose by the Board of Directors with a notice to the membership at least thirty days and not more than 45 days prior to

the meeting and by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting. All proposed amendments shall be in writing and submitted to the Board of Directors for presentation to the membership in the manner prescribed in this article.