

**Sunset Advisory Commission
2022 Board and Commission Questionnaire**

The Sunset Advisory Commission reviews every State board and commission and takes testimony regarding whether each board or commission should continue to operate or be eliminated and whether the powers and duties of any board or commission should be revised. Each board and commission has the burden of justifying its continued operation.

Please answer the following questions about the specific board or commission under review. If asked to testify before the Sunset Advisory Commission, please plan to provide concise recommendations regarding the continued operation of the board or commission under review and any revisions to its powers, duties, or membership.

1. In general, how often does the board and commission meet? Provide specific information on how often the board or commission has met in the past two fiscal years. Provide information on where agendas and minutes of meetings can be found.

It does not appear that the Natural Gas and Oil Resources Board has met in several years.

2. Provide the names of members of the board or commission, their term length and expiration, their appointing authority, and the amount of any per diem they receive.

29 V.S.A. § 504 states that the Governor shall appoint five members with the advice and consent of the Senate, each for a term of three years. The statute does not specifically authorize a per diem for Board members.

The following is the most up-to-date information regarding members of the Board and their term expirations.

BOARD MEMBER NAME	TERM EXPIRES
<i>Catherine Dimitruk</i>	<i>2/29/2019</i>
<i>Donald Marsh</i>	<i>2/28/2017</i>
<i>Mary Just Skinner</i>	<i>2/28/2018</i>
<i>Aaron Melville</i>	<i>2/28/2012</i>
<i>VACANT</i>	<i>2/28/2014</i>

3. Provide an overview of the board or commission's purpose.

The Natural Gas and Oil Resources Board was created to oversee natural gas and oil exploration and extraction, including resolving disputes regarding lease rights.

4. Is that purpose still needed? What would happen if the board or commission no longer fulfilled that purpose?

The Board is no longer needed. It appears that the Board was developed during a time when oil and gas exploration was being contemplated in Vermont. The absence of any commercially viable oil or gas deposits, combined with the 2011 ban on hydraulic fracturing, indicates that a Board designed to review oil and gas rights is not necessary.

5. How well is the board or commission performing in executing that purpose? What evidence can you provide to substantiate that performance?

The Board is no longer necessary.

6. If the purpose is still needed, can State government be more effective and efficient if the purpose was executed in a different manner?

The Board is no longer necessary.

7. If the purpose is still needed, do any of your board or commission's functions overlap or duplicate those of another State board or commission or federal or State agency? If so, is your board or commission still the best entity to fulfill the purpose?

The Board is no longer necessary.

8. Does the board or commission's enabling law continue to correctly reflect the purpose and activities of the board or commission?

The Board's enabling law continues to reflect the purpose of the Board; however, because there is no commercially viable natural gas or oil deposits in Vermont the overall purpose of the Board is moot.

9. Provide a list of the board and commission's last fiscal year expenditures including staffing costs. How are these funded?

It is unclear if the Board was ever actually stood up or staffed, and there are no fiscal expenditures for the last several years, at least.

10. Is the board or commission required by law to prepare any reports or studies for the Legislature, the Governor, or any State agency or officer? If so, have those reports or studies been produced? Does the board or commission have ongoing reporting obligations?

29 V.S.A. § 531(c) requires that biennially, the Board, and each State Agency that owns land: "prepare and submit to the General Assembly a proposed four-year oil and gas leasing and management program and a report on all leasing and management activities undertaken during the preceding two years."

This is an ongoing reporting requirement exempt from "2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports)."

It is unclear when the last reports required under this Section were submitted.