

Seattle Community Involvement Commission Bylaws

Adopted on December 18th, 2017

Article I – Establishment

Whereas the Seattle Community Involvement Commission (“the Commission”), a sixteen-member volunteer Commission established to advise the Mayor, City Council, and City Departments on equitable civic engagement and public participation, is authorized by Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 3.62.050 to organize, elect officers, and adopt such rules and administrative procedures consistent with the City Charter and said Municipal Code as are necessary for the conduct of its affairs and performance of its functions and responsibilities prescribed in said Municipal Code; now, therefore, the rules and administrative procedures of the Commission shall be as follows:

Article II – Role

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Commission is to “advise and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the development of plans, policies, regulations, strategies, and community grant funding processes that advance equitable public engagement and civic participation in The City of Seattle.”¹ The Commission, in its advisory capacity, shall “provide advice on priorities, policies, and strategies related to equitable civic engagement and public participation in City decision-making processes. This includes review of proposals brought forward by the City, as well as ones identified by the Commission.”² Additionally, the Commission shall advise the Department of Neighborhoods on the review of community grant processes.

The Commission shall act in an advisory capacity only.

The Commission acts in accordance with the rules and policies outlined in:

- Enabling legislation - Ordinance 125192
- Seattle Municipal Code 3.62 and 4.16
- Federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to appointed advisory bodies of public agencies.

Article III – Membership

3.1 The Commission consists of 16 members

- Seven members appointed by the Council, representing one of each City Council district
- Seven members appointed by the Mayor
- One member appointed through the Get Engaged Program (by the Mayor)
- Two members selected by the Commission

All appointments are subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the Council.

¹ SMC 3.62.010

² SMC 3.62.040

Appointments shall be made, to the extent possible, so that the Commission membership reflects the current demographics of the City, including consideration of historically underrepresented communities.³

3.2 Terms of Service

Commissioners will serve a two-year term, with a limit of two consecutive two-year terms. For the initial round of appointments, odd numbered positions will serve one-year terms and even numbered positions will serve two-year terms.⁴

3.3 Expectations

The expectations of Commissioners are as follows:

- A. Attend Commission meetings, functions, and events.
- B. Read and review Commission Bylaws.
- C. Be informed about the Commission's purpose and policies.
- D. Review agenda and supporting materials prior to Commission and committee meetings.
- E. Serve on at least one Commission committee.
- F. Understand that the individual Commissioner has no specific organizational authority except as delegated by the Commission and that the overall authority is the Commission as a whole.
- G. Understand that Commissioners are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Commission unless designated by the Commission. A Commissioner not so delegated to speak on behalf of the Commission may indicate by stating that the Commissioner is acting or speaking in his, her or their personal capacity.

3.4 Time Commitment

The estimated time commitment is four to six hours per month. This commitment of time includes reading email correspondence, reviewing meeting notes and handouts, committee meetings, and attending additional meetings as needed.

3.5 Membership in Good Standing

All Commissioners shall be aware that they represent the community at all times. If it is found that a member exhibited behaviors that reflect negatively on the Commission, actions up to and including recommendation to the Council or Mayor for removal from the Commission may result.

3.6 Attendance

Commissioners are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission, including committee meetings on which the Commissioner serves.

3.6.1 Absences

To have an absence excused, Commissioners shall notify the Chair(s) prior to the meeting. The absent Commissioner should contact the staff coordinator and any committee of which they are a part to receive updates and send in contributions and responses to work done during the missed meeting.

Three consecutive absences from regular meetings may result in termination of membership.⁵

³ SMC 3.62.020

⁴ SMC 3.62.030

⁵ SMC 3.62.060

3.6.2 Unexcused Absences

When any Commissioner has an unexcused absence, the Commissioner shall be notified in writing by the Chair(s).

Additional unexcused absences may result in recommendation to the Mayor or Council that the member be removed from the Commission.

Article IV – Meetings

4.1 Regular Meetings

The Commission shall meet monthly at such time and place as the Executive Committee shall designate. Commission meetings are open to the public and shall be advertised a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting date. Meetings of the Commission will be open to the public and recorded, when possible, and subject to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

4.2 Quorum

A quorum is required to conduct business and make official decisions on matters before the Commission. A quorum is defined as 50% of appointed membership, plus one (e.g., if there are 16 appointed members, the quorum would be 9).

4.3 Minutes

Official minutes shall be taken at every regular and special meeting of the Commission. The minutes shall record Commissioners in attendance, Commissioners not in attendance, wording of agreements and actions taken, and dissenting opinions on actions may be noted upon Commissioner request.

Committees shall prepare meeting notes of their respective meetings to be included in regular Commission meeting agenda packets.

4.4 Advance Notice of Agenda

Notice of full Commission meetings and agendas shall be sent to Commissioners before each meeting.

Article V – Governance

5.1 Decision-Making Process

5.1.1 Consensus

In developing recommendations, the Commission shall work by consensus; a method of making decisions through which a group strives to reach substantial, though not necessarily unanimous, agreement on matters of overall direction and policy which can be supported by all.

5.1.2 Fist-to-Five Method

The Commission shall come to consensus utilizing the fist-to-five method. Commissioners use specific hand signals to: block consensus (fist), express having strong reservations and propose changes (one finger), express having some reservations and discuss minor issues (two fingers), pass without further discussion (three fingers), strongly support (four fingers), or champion the decision and volunteer to take a lead in implementing it (five fingers). If a proposal receives three or more fingers from all seated members, it is approved. If not,

members who held up fewer than three fingers voice their concerns to be taken into consideration when revising the proposal. Votes shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Decision-making on all resolutions, statements, and policy decisions must take place in an open meeting of the Commission pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act. Decision-making may not be conducted by electronic means, although information related to the Commission may be exchanged by email. Any and all email communication conducted on the Commission's listserv may be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Disclosure Act.

5.2 Proxies

Members may not vote by proxy at Commission meetings.

5.3 Officers

5.3.1 Election of Officers

The Commission shall elect, on an annual basis, Commissioners who will serve as Chair(s) of the Commission. The position of Chair may be shared by no more than four individuals serving as Co-Chairs.

Commissioners may self-nominate or be nominated by a fellow Commissioner. Any Commissioner nominated by another person must accept the nomination before voting begins. Commissioners need not be present to be elected. A Commissioner absent on the day of the elections but who desires to be considered for an executive committee position must provide written documentation denoting their acceptance of a nomination for the position.

5.3.2 Duties of Chair(s)

The Chair(s) shall preside at all meetings of the Commission, shall sign all official documents of the Commission, and shall serve on the Executive Committee. Within a month of the election of any new Chairs, the Chairs shall create a plan for division of work and communication, to be shared with the Commission.

5.3.3 Terms of Office

The terms of office shall be for one year. In the case of a permanent vacancy, a Commissioner shall be elected to fill the unexpired term.

5.4 Committees

5.4.1 Purpose

The Commission shall create and disband committees as it deems necessary and appropriate. The Commission may delegate certain duties and authority to committees, and committees shall advise the Commission.

5.4.2 Advisory Capacity

All committees of the Commission shall serve in an advisory capacity only. No committees or workgroups shall have the authority to approve or execute decisions or actions on behalf of the Commission unless explicitly given that authority by the Commission.

5.4.3 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the Chair(s) and a representative from each committee. Executive Committee responsibilities include creating regular meeting agendas, receiving proposals from commissioners or committees, and deciding whether to bring proposals to the full Commission for discussion and/or decision.

Executive Committee members are expected to attend an approximately 1-hour monthly meeting to conduct this business.

Article VI – Bylaws Adoption and Amendment

6.1 Adoption

These Bylaws shall be adopted by consensus of the seated membership of the Commission. Upon adoption, these Bylaws shall replace any prior Bylaws governing the Commission.

6.2 Maintenance

These Bylaws are a living document, and are intended to be updated as needed. Bylaws must be reviewed by a committee of the Commission at least every two years, beginning from the date of adoption.

6.3 Amendment

Proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee, to be included on the Commission agenda, and be sent to the Commissioners with regular meeting announcements and meeting materials.

The Bylaws may be amended at any time, provided that any proposed change to the Bylaws may not be acted on until the regularly scheduled monthly Commission meeting. Amendments to these Bylaws shall be adopted by consensus of the seated membership of the Commission.