

PREAMBLE

The Capitol Hill Community Council (“CHCC” or “Council”) exists to serve the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle by providing a democratic forum for community voice, collaboration, and representation to governmental agencies and other institutions. These bylaws set forth the structure, rights, and responsibilities of the Council, its Board, committees, and members.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Capitol Hill Community Council (“CHCC” or “Council”).

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of the CHCC is to:

1. Promote inclusive participation in community issues and decisions.
 2. Provide a transparent, accountable forum for proposing and implementing policy.
 3. Represent community interests in dialogue with governmental agencies, institutions, and other organizations.
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ARTICLE III – BOUNDARIES

The Council represents the Capitol Hill neighborhood, bounded by:

- West: I-5 (just east of downtown)
- North: Roanoke Street and Interlaken Boulevard
- East: 23rd and 24th Avenue East
- South: E. Pike Street from I-5 to Broadway, then Broadway to E. Madison Street, then E. Madison Street to 23rd Avenue East

Both sides of boundary streets are included. Boundaries do not limit representation by other councils.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Bylaws proposed 9/24/2025

Section 1. Eligibility

Membership is open to individuals who:

- Live, work, or attend school in Capitol Hill, or have an ongoing personal connection to the neighborhood, and
- Are at least 16 years old.

How these criteria are determined to be fulfilled will be set by policy.

Individuals for whom membership is open are eligible if they actively participate in the Council as shown by:

- Attending at least two meetings in a 12-month period, or
- Participating in at least four committee activities in a 12-month period, or
- Attending at least one meeting and participating in at least two committee activities in a 12-month period

Attendance is recorded per Board policy.

Section 2. Member Rights

Members may:

- Serve on committees
- Propose motions for Board or membership votes
- Vote in Council elections
- Run for Board seats
- Participate in public comment and discussion

Non-members may attend meetings, serve on committees as non-voting members, and engage with the committee per CHCC and committee policy.

Section 3. Registration & Verification

- Membership is valid until April 1 of the next calendar year.
- The Council maintains a transparent registration and annual verification process.
- Membership for elections closes 24 hours prior to the vote.

Section 4. Member-Led Policymaking

All rights of the Board, except as specified herein, may also be executed by the membership through one of two routes:

- Petition: Petitions for member-initiated motions may be delivered during the public comment period of any public meeting. Petitions may collect electronic signatures and

the Board must verify eligibility within 5 business days using a published verification process. Members of a single committee cannot comprise more than 50% of the signatures. If the petition meets the petition threshold specified in these bylaws for an action, all members in attendance vote on approving to present the motion to the membership. The in-person vote must pass the required threshold specified for that action. After a motion is approved in this way, the Board must conduct a vote within 30 days. The membership must approve the motion at the required threshold. A petition materially similar to a failed petition cannot be voted on by the membership for six months.

- Community Governance: Member-initiated motions may be presented during the public portion of a Community Governance meeting. If the threshold required for that action is passed by the in-person membership, the Board has 30 days to conduct a vote. The membership must approve the motion at the required threshold.

If the Board fails to conduct a membership vote within 30 days, the motion is automatically added to the next Community Governance meeting agenda, which must be called by the Secretary within 45 days.

The membership shall annually approve a budget summary prepared by the Treasurer and Board, which shall set expenditure limits by category. Expenditures outside these categories require member approval.

Meetings and participation processes will strive to provide reasonable accommodations (language, disability, digital access), as the budget allows.

Section 5. Voting

All votes will allow for electronic and absent voting, aside from votes subject to the members present at a given meeting as specified in these Bylaws.

Section 6. Censure and Removal

- Members may be censured by a two-thirds Board vote.
- Two censures in 12 months results in a member's public commenting and questioning privileges restricted for 2 months.
- Three censures in 12 months results in a removal vote by two-thirds Board vote.
- Unanimous Board vote may remove a member immediately.
- Members must be notified promptly of any censure or removal.
- The petition threshold for censuring a member is 50 signatures or 10% of voting members, whichever is higher.
- The petition threshold for removing a member is 100 signatures or 20% of voting members, whichever is higher.
- Members may remove themselves from the membership rolls by notifying the Board according to policy. Self-removal is effective the date the notification is sent.

ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. Composition

The Board consists of seven members elected or appointed from the membership. For every 300 members above 300 members, there shall be two additional Board members, to be elected at the next regularly scheduled election after the threshold is passed. If membership falls below a threshold that had previously expanded the size of the Board, the existing Board members shall serve out their elected terms, after which the expanded seats will not be up for re-election.

Section 2. Quorum

- Quorum is a simple majority of Board members.
- Recused members for conflicts do not count toward quorum; if recusal drops voting members below a simple majority, remaining voting members constitute quorum. In case there are fewer than three eligible board members, that vote becomes a member vote that must pass according to the same thresholds as specified in these Bylaws and must be conducted within 30 days according to policy.
- If any power given to the Board cannot be fulfilled due to the lack of a quorum for any reason, that power may then be exercised by the Membership, including calling Special Elections, following the same voting thresholds, until such a time as a functioning Board may be elected.

Section 3. Duties and Powers

The Board shall:

1. Establish/dissolve committees and approve charters
2. Maintain bylaws, policies, and membership records
3. Oversee finances and legal compliance
4. Set agendas for public meetings
5. Resolve committee disagreements and take official actions for the Council

Official actions are any public statement on behalf of the Council or commitment of funds.

- No Board member may speak for the Council without Board authorization.
- A simple majority of members present (excluding abstentions) is required for most actions unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

Any member of the Board who has a financial or material pecuniary interest in an item, as defined by State, Federal or local laws, shall recuse themselves from voting on any item in question and shall not contribute to the formation of a quorum. The Board shall adopt a conflict

of interest policy with a simple majority. Changes to that policy require a two-thirds majority. This policy is subject to motions at Community Governance meetings.

Section 4. Terms and Elections

- Term: 2 years
- Max consecutive service: 6 years (excluding special elections or appointments)
- Election rotation: 3 seats even years, 4 seats odd years, held in May
- Candidates may self-nominate; further election rules set by policy excepting that the voting system shall be a version of ranked choice voting. Any change in the voting system requires a two-thirds board majority vote as well as a majority vote of the membership.

Section 5. Vacancies & Absences

- Board may appoint members to fill vacancies until the next election with a simple majority.
- Board may call a Special Election to fill a vacancy with a simple majority.
- Absence from four consecutive meetings (excepting committee meetings and Special meetings) triggers automatic removal vote for cause at the next Board meeting.

Section 6. Censure and Removal of Board Members

- Board may censure a Board member publicly; must be announced at the next non-Board meeting.
- The petition threshold for Board member censureship is 20 signatures or 5% of voting members, whichever is higher.
- Board removal with cause: majority vote of remaining Board members (10-day notice; member may respond)
- Board removal without cause: two-thirds vote
- Member recall: Members may initiate a recall election via petition with 50 signatures or 10% of voting members, whichever is higher. A two-thirds majority is required for a successful recall.

Section 7. Officers

Board elects officers from its members:

- Chair: Presides over meetings, sets agendas, serves as official liaison
- Vice-Chair: Acts in Chair's absence
- Secretary: Records and submits Board minutes. Shall act in the absence of both Chair and Vice-Chair.
- Treasurer: Oversees finances, reports annually
Chair and Vice-Chair cannot serve as Secretary; all members may serve as Treasurer

Membership does not have the right to appoint Board officers.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

Section 1. Establishment

Committees are the primary policy bodies of the Council.

The types of committees are:

- Standing: permanent
- Executive: Board-only, more than 2 members required
- Ad hoc: temporary, defined scope

Committees may be established in one of two ways

- Board-established committees: established through a majority vote of the Board. Must include more than 1 Board member, one of which must serve as co- or Vice-Chair.
- Member-initiated committees: petition threshold is more than 50 signatures or 10% of voting members, whichever is higher. These committees function as ad hoc committees for 1 year. The Board may convert them to a standing committee at any time provided a Board member offers to serve as co- or Vice-Chair on the committee, an additional Board member agrees to join, and the motion receives a majority vote. After one year, if not converted to a standing committee, they require reapproval of the membership or they dissolve. The originators of the motion to create a member-initiated committee must provide a proposed charter to the Board within 10 days.

Section 2. Membership & Leadership

- Members may serve on multiple committees.
- Committees must strive to maximize representation across neighborhood diversity.
- Committees appoint Chair and Vice-Chair; Board member required for quorum except in member-initiated committees.
- Committees define internal rules in a charter approved by the relevant body.

Section 3. Authority & Oversight

- Committees may act within their charter and speak externally as delegated.
- Decisions are binding unless rescinded by Board or membership.
- Committees must report actions:
 - To the Board within three days of taking them
 - Written quarterly to membership (schedule as given by the Board)

- Member-initiated: written reports must be provided before and given verbally at every Community Governance meeting
- Board may rescind an action and temporarily hold committee actions for up to 30 days for any type of committee for legal, financial, or reputational risk with a two-thirds vote; membership must confirm or reject with a simple majority vote within 30 days. This action cannot be member-initiated.
- Board may rescind an action of a non-member-initiated committee with a two-thirds vote. Upon such a vote, it is the responsibility of the committee Chair and any co-Chairs or Vice-Chair to disseminate notification of the rescission through all channels through which the original action was communicated. Membership must confirm or reject with a simple majority immediately following the next Community Governance meeting.
- Aside from the temporary hold, the Board has no rights over member-initiated committees.

Section 4. Censure, Removal, and Dissolution

- Board may censure committees/officers via a simple majority.
- Board may remove officers with a two-thirds majority vote except for member-initiated committees.
- Two censures in 12 months: removes the committee's representative authority 1 month, except in the case of Board censures of member-initiated committees
- Three censures: Board may vote to dissolve with two-thirds vote, except in the case of Board censures of member-initiated committees. The petition threshold for membership-initiated dissolution is 50 signatures or 10% of voting members, whichever is higher.

Section 5. Transparency

- Charters and minutes must be publicly available as specified by policy.
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ARTICLE VII - CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Board shall adopt a conflict resolution policy, providing informal mediation before escalating censures or removal.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section 1. Types

- Community Governance: at least 2 per year, focused on member-led policy and committees

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- Regular: include presentations, discussions for community benefit, and a public comment period. Shall be held at least once in every three-month rolling period, with a goal of monthly meetings. These meetings shall be held on a regularly scheduled day. Community Governance meetings count as a Regular meeting.
- Committee: per the committee's charter
- Board: monthly
- Special: called by majority Board vote

All public and Board meetings must provide for a remote participation option, if technically available.

Section 2. Notification

- Governance meetings: notice 14 or more days before
- Special meetings: notice 24 or more hours before
- Notices posted per policy and emailed to members

Section 3. Code of Conduct

- Board-approved code displayed at all meetings. This shall include anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies.
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ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

- Board or members may propose amendments.
 - Member-initiated petition threshold is 100 signatures or 20% of voting members, whichever is higher. A Governance Meeting entertaining the amendment must be held within two months.
 - One month public comment period is required before either a Board or membership vote.
 - Approval: two-thirds vote of the relevant body. Board votes must take place at a Community Governance meeting.
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ARTICLE X – PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

- Board minutes and annual financial reports are publicly available per policy.
 - Minutes shall be preserved for a period of three years.
 - Financial records shall be preserved for a period of 7 years or as required by law, whichever is longer.
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ARTICLE XI – INDEMNIFICATION

- Members, committee officers, and Board members are protected from personal liability for actions carried out in good faith within their authority.