

# CITY OF GRESHAM

## Neighborhood Associations

### **Administrative Procedures**

Updated March 2018

## **1. Purpose**

The Administrative Procedures for neighborhood associations and the Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations are meant to provide guidance for duties and responsibilities to neighborhood associations, the Coalition, and their leadership. To foster public participation and transparency, neighborhood associations and the Coalition shall conduct their affairs in meetings open to and provide adequate notice to the public and make their minutes available for public review in accordance with these procedures. A neighborhood association and Coalition must be recognized by the City of Gresham. To be recognized, a neighborhood association/Coalition must satisfy the standards of GRC Article 2.60. In addition, to be recognized as an active neighborhood association/Coalition by the City of Gresham, each association/the Coalition must satisfy these Administrative Procedures. The City Manager determines if an association/Coalition has met these standards.

## **2. Boundaries**

Boundaries of associations are determined by the association members. Boundaries must be mutually exclusive of other formally recognized associations (both active and inactive associations are considered to be formally recognized). Association boundaries shall be logical, contiguous, balanced in size with other associations and follow identifiable physical features such as streets, property ownership boundaries, topographic features, boundaries of political jurisdictions, or public rights-of-way. The Office of Neighborhood and Community Engagement (ONCE) shall maintain a current map of the association boundaries.

## **3. Membership**

Membership in associations is not limited by race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, limited English proficiency, marital status, religion, or disability. Any resident, business owner or owner's representative, non-profit organization, or property owner within the recognized boundary of an association is eligible for membership.

## **4. Bylaws and Board Contact Information**

Each neighborhood association and the Coalition must adopt and execute written bylaws that require:

- a) annual election of all officers;
- b) that meetings shall be conducted in conformance with these administrative procedures;
- c) provisions for adopting and amending bylaws;

- d) the establishment of a quorum of no less than 10 members for general association meetings, a majority of active associations for Coalition meetings and 3 Board members for Board meetings;
- e) a minimum of two general association/Coalition meetings per year;
- f) attending members/associations have one vote each and decisions shall be made by a vote that is at least a majority vote of those members/associations present.

## **New Bylaws and Amendments**

Associations and the Coalition shall provide a draft copy of any new bylaws or amendments to existing bylaws to the ONCE Manager for review no less than three weeks prior to adoption. The ONCE Manager will review and provide comment within two weeks of receipt of the new bylaws or amendments that are proposed to be adopted. New or reactivated associations can adopt bylaws without this review process, but should be prepared to edit bylaws if any issues are discovered during review. Associations should include a copy of the minutes of the meeting where the bylaws were voted on to confirm that they were properly adopted.

Within two weeks of the membership meeting adopting new bylaws or amendments, associations and the Coalition must provide an executed hard copy of bylaws to the Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement to be kept on file. Bylaws or amendments must be signed by at least one officer.

In addition, associations and the Coalition must provide an electronic copy of the bylaws to the ONCE Manager within one week of adoption. The electronic copy does not require a signature and must be submitted in searchable format (PDF or MS Word). A scanned version is not acceptable.

## **Bylaws Templates**

In an effort to provide consistency, a bylaws template has been established by the Coalition. This template can be used in its entirety or changed to meet individual association needs. However, it is highly recommended that bylaws be as consistent as possible throughout the City of Gresham neighborhood associations.

## **Board Contact Information**

A current list of the names, addresses and contact information of Board members are kept on file with the Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement and updated as soon as a new election is held, or changes occur. The names and contact information, as well as the current bylaws, will be available to the public via the City of Gresham website. No home addresses will be listed. It is the responsibility of each Board to inform the ONCE office of any new contact information or change in membership within one week of any changes.

## 5. Association/Coalition Meetings

Association and Coalition meetings must meet the following basic requirements. Associations and the Coalition can adjust their meeting format to suit their needs as long as they follow these rules:

- a) Neighborhood associations and the Coalition must have a minimum of two general meetings each year.
- b) Membership meetings and Coalition meetings must be open to public attendance, with notice provided and minutes taken as provided in these administrative procedures. Board and Subcommittee meetings are not required to be open to the public, but are required to be open to neighborhood association members. Notice to the neighborhood should be provided for these meetings as well, and notes should be taken.
- c) Neighborhood association meetings are to be held within the association's boundaries when possible and in a public location. If no public location is available within the boundaries, every effort must be made to find a public location as close to the boundaries as possible. City Hall may be used for meetings if/when no other public location is available.
- d) Coalition meetings are also to be held at a public location. Because the Coalition is made up of Board members from all neighborhood associations, City Hall is available for Coalition meetings.
- e) A public location is any facility open to the public that does not discriminate or disallow any member of the public. The facility must have restroom facilities and meet accessibility requirements. For example, this can include businesses, churches, libraries, schools, or retirement communities with enough meeting space to accommodate all members wanting to attend.
- f) Board and committee meetings may be exempt from public locations, as long as notice of the meeting has been given to members and items on their agenda are for planning purposes only. No vote or decisions, on behalf of the neighborhood association or Coalition, may be taken at non-public meetings.
- g) If possible, a regular meeting schedule with dates and locations should be created for the convenience of both members and outreach being done by the Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement. Consistency and regularity are beneficial to attendance.
- h) The Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement shall make a good faith effort to provide an interpreter for hearing-impaired people and for individuals who do not speak English as their primary language. In order to provide sufficient time to try to locate the necessary assistance, meeting notices should indicate that any special needs must be made known to the neighborhood association or Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement in a reasonable period of time before the meeting.

- i) All meetings will follow Parliamentary Procedures/ Robert's Rules of Order.
- j) Subcommittees without executive authority are not subject to quorum requirement or to the open meeting standards. They must, however, report the outcomes of their meetings to the general membership at the next opportunity.

## **Meeting Notice**

The Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement will provide 2 notification postcards per fiscal year (July 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>) for active associations. One of the cards will be used to notice the Annual Meeting and Elections. It is the responsibility of each neighborhood association to give meeting information, for each postcard, to the Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement at least 6 weeks prior to the meeting date. Neighborhood associations can determine how to best use the second card for notification of general meetings, picnics and other special occasions. Cards will be mailed to all addresses within association boundaries. All other notices, including social media posts, signs, or email notification, will be the responsibility of the associations.

All neighborhood associations shall make a reasonable effort to provide notice of all meetings as follows:

- a) Notice for an Annual Meeting, with elections, using one postcard, will be postmarked and distributed at least 15 days prior to the meeting.
- b) Bylaw changes require a 15-day notice prior to the meeting to members through the regular membership communications process.
- c) Notice of other non-emergency meetings, including Board and committee meetings, shall be made public at least 7 days prior to the meeting date.
- d) Notice for Emergency meetings shall be made public as soon as possible but not less than 3 days prior to the meeting date. If an Emergency meeting is called, notice must include why the subject matter is considered an emergency.
- e) Notice for all meetings, including Board and committee meetings, shall include the date, time, place and principal agenda items. Notice for Board meetings in a private home may exclude the address and instead offer contact information for providing the address.
- f) Reasonable effort for notification may include US mail, electronic mail, social media, phone calls, fliers, newsletters, public postings, websites or public meeting notice to the local media.

The Coalition shall make notice of meetings to members through advance email of the agenda and minutes to be approved. For Special and/or Emergency meetings of the Coalition, notice will be given as soon as possible but not less than 3 days prior to the meeting.

The Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement will also post meeting information on the City website calendar, the association/Coalition web page and in the Gresham Newsletter.

## **Minutes**

Minutes shall be taken at all meetings. Minutes do not have to be a verbatim transcript of the meeting but shall at least summarize discussion and actions. Minutes shall also include the following:

- a) All actions, motions, proposals, and resolutions stated in full and their dispositions; and
- b) Who made the motion and second; and
- c) Results of all votes taken, and a summary of minority opinions on all topics, on which a vote is taken; and
- d) The name and position of minute taker, date/location of meeting and meeting start/adjournment times; and
- e) The number of attending members at an association membership meeting and the names of attending members at Board, committee and Coalition meetings. A sign in sheet for all in attendance is required at each meeting. However, this will be kept by the Board and will not be considered part of the minutes. In order to maintain a communication list, a request for email addresses and/or phone numbers is encouraged. The sign in sheet will be used to prepare a list of the members (name and street only) in case of any challenge to the number for quorum at an association membership meeting.

Minutes shall be put in writing and made available to the public, within a reasonable time after the meeting (preferably 2-3 weeks following the meeting).

Neighborhood associations and the Coalition are required to forward copies of their meeting minutes to the Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement. The minutes will be posted to the association/Coalition web page on the City of Gresham website. They will be posted as DRAFT until approved and accepted at next meeting.

When Special or Emergency meetings are held, minutes shall document the reason for such a meeting and specify the nature of any emergency.

## **Decisions Shall Be Made at Meetings**

“Decisions” includes all decisions and policy recommendations, except routine day-to-day decisions that include planning for future events or meetings, creating agendas, discussing

details of the way decisions will be implemented or duties required or authorized by the bylaws.

An association meeting these Administrative Procedures and the standards of GRC 2.60.040 and the Coalition meeting these Administrative Procedures and the standards of GRC 2.60.080 may make official recommendations to the council, its commissions, committees, the City Manager and the Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement Manager on any matter affecting the neighborhood or the city, including but not limited to, land use, community facilities, traffic and transportation, police and fire service, and city processes. When making official recommendations, associations and the Coalition shall provide a record of meetings held, including a record of attendance and results of any vote.

Members/associations attending these meetings have one vote each and decisions and recommendations shall be made by a vote that is at least a majority vote of those members/associations present.

Members/associations may gather informally but shall not make or deliberate toward a decision.

The general membership shall make all decisions/recommendations and conduct all deliberations toward a decision at meetings open to the public at which a quorum is in attendance and for which notice was given according to these administrative procedures, except in the following case:

In the event of a need for an immediate decision or land use appeal, a Special and/or Emergency membership meeting may be called by the Board and notice must be given in accordance to the Notice section of this document.

If there is no quorum of members at the called meeting, but there is a quorum of the Board, a decision may be made by a vote of the majority of all members in attendance. Such decisions must reflect and be supported by the membership. Therefore, the decision must be reported to the membership as soon as possible and later confirmed at a meeting of the general membership.

## **Public Participation**

The chair of the meeting controls the extent of public (vs. member) participation in a membership meeting, subject to any controlling bylaws or other rules of the association/Coalition. It is recommended that, for each general meeting, the agenda offer a chance for non-member comment. Participation from the public is not required. Allowing an opportunity for members to comment and participate is required, however.

Neighborhood associations and the Coalition are not required to allow public or member participation in Board or committee meetings, although members are entitled to be present. To ensure members a right to attend Board and committee meetings, advance notification to the membership is required.

Executive sessions or closed meetings are not allowed. Neighborhood association members have the right to be present and participate in all member meetings, and the right to be present at all Board meetings.

## **6. Voting**

Voting at meetings may be done orally, by a show of hands, by standing, or by a written ballot that contains the name of the member voting and the vote of that member. Upon the request of any voting member, a show of hands shall follow an oral vote. Anyone wishing to see written ballots may do so at the meeting or anytime thereafter before the ballots are discarded. Proxy voting, voting by mail and secret ballots are prohibited.

## **7. Termination of Recognition**

Formal recognition of an association/Coalition may be terminated by the City Council if the association or Coalition fails to abide by the standards in the Gresham Revised Code (GRC 2.60.040 and GRC 2.60.080), as well as these administrative procedures. Before the Council terminates recognition, it must hold a public hearing to determine the standards or administrative procedures violated and allow representatives of the association or Coalition reasonable opportunity to be heard.

### **Inactive Status**

Neighborhood association participation may ebb and flow over the years, and at times a neighborhood association may not meet all the requirements of Gresham Revised Code Article 2.60 and these Administrative Procedures. For example, a neighborhood association may not have enough members at an election meeting to achieve a proper quorum, may fail to hold two meetings per calendar year, or may have board resignations that leave the board with fewer than 3 members. In this type of situation, the ONCE Manager may place the association on an “inactive” list until the association can meet the requirements of the Administrative Procedures. To be considered “reactivated” an association must hold a properly noticed election and adopt appropriate bylaws, either using the existing bylaws template, using the old bylaws from when the association was active, or creating new bylaws.

While in the Inactive Status, any Early Neighborhood Notification (ENN) processes will proceed as normal, except that there will be no association board members to be contacted ahead of time to assist with scheduling the ENN meeting or to receive code-specified land use

notices and documents. Inactive neighborhood associations are also unable to appeal land use decisions, make recommendations on behalf of the neighborhood, or participate as a voting member of the Neighborhood Coalition.

## 8. Parliamentary Procedure

In an effort to help make meetings run efficiently, the following information regarding Parliamentary procedures/Robert's Rule of Order is provided for assistance.

Robert's Rules of Order is the short title of a book containing rules of order intended to be adopted as a parliamentary authority for use by a deliberative assembly. In short, it is a set of rules for conducting business at meetings and public gatherings.

### Why is parliamentary procedure important?

Because it allows everyone to be heard and it allows the group to make decisions without confusion.

Parliamentary procedure means:

- Democratic rule
- Flexibility
- Protection of rights
- A fair hearing for everyone

### Follow a Fixed Agenda

A Fixed Agenda or order of business should be followed. Agendas should be printed and distributed prior to the start of the meeting. Make sure to put an estimation of how much time a topic should take. This will help manage the meeting time. Meetings should last between 1 ½ - 2 hours. Here's a typical example of what should be listed on the agenda:

**Call to order:** if a quorum is present, the chairperson says, "the meeting will come to order."

**Introductions:** of Board members and welcome new members

**Minutes:** the secretary may read, or members may be asked to read a record of the previous meeting. If there are no changes or corrections, a motion is made to accept the minutes, or if no changes, can be adopted without a vote. Draft minutes should be distributed prior to the meeting to minimize time spent reading minutes at the meeting.

**Officers' reports:** this is often limited to a report from the treasurer, but all other Officers and Land Use Chair may report at this time.

**Committee reports:** first, reports from standing (permanent) committees, then from special (temporary) committees.

**Special orders:** this is important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting.

**Unfinished business:** this is business that has carried over from the previous meeting.

**New business:** topics that are not on the agenda. Can be for discussion at the meeting or asked to put on next meeting agenda.

**Announcements:** these inform the assembly (the people at the meeting) of other subjects and events. A good practice is to include any announcements on the back of the agenda. Also, list the time, date and location of the next meeting scheduled at the bottom of the agenda.

**Adjournment:** the meeting ends by a motion and vote, or by general consent (or by the chair's decision if the time of adjournment was set by an earlier vote).

## **Giving Members Their Say**

Members are allowed to raise issues for future consideration. Members make motions. A motion is a proposal that the assembly takes a stand or takes action on some issue. Members have a right to:

**Present Motions** (make a proposal): "I move that..."

**Second Motions** (express support for discussion of another member's motion): "Second."

**Debate Motions** (give opinions on the motion): "I think..."

**Vote on Motions** (decide): "All those in favor..."

## **Presenting a Motion**

Here's what happens when you want a motion considered:

### **You obtain the floor**

- Wait until the previous speaker is finished.
- Rise and address the chair (the chair needs to recognize you before you speak).

### **You make your motion**

- State your motion affirmatively. Say, “I move that we do...” instead of “I move that we do not...”
- The Chair cannot make a motion, but can call for a motion (“Do I have a motion to.....”).
- Another member may make the Chair’s suggested motion by saying, “So moved” or may make a different motion.

### **You wait for a second**

- Another member will say, “I second the motion.” Or, “second”.
- Or, the chair will call for a second. The chair may second a motion if no one else does.
- If there is no second, your motion will not be considered.
- Motions which are made at the direction of a board or committee (of more than one person) does not require a second.

### **The chair states your motion**

- The chair must say, “It is moved and seconded that we...”
- After this happens, debate or voting can occur.
- Your motion is now “assembly property,” and you can’t change it without consent (majority vote) of the members.

### **You expand on your motion/discussion by members**

- As the person who made the motion, you are allowed to speak first.
- Direct all comments to the chair.
- Keep the time limit for speaking.
- You may speak again after all other speakers are finished.
- You may speak a third time by a motion to suspend the rules with a 2/3 majority vote.

### **The chair puts the question**

- If there is no more debate, or if a “call for the question” to stop debate is adopted, a vote is taken. The chair, alone, may not close discussion.
- If no member “calls for the question (vote)”, the chair may ask, “are you ready for the question?”

### **The chair announces the results**

## **Voting on a Motion**

How a motion is voted on depends on the situation and the bylaws of your organization. You may vote by:

**Voice:** The chair asks those in favor to say “aye” and those opposed to say “no” (for majority votes only – define majority via your neighborhood bylaws). A member may move for an exact count.

**Show of hands or standing:** Members raise their hands or stand to verify a voice vote, or as an alternate to it. This does not require a count. A member may move for an exact count.

**Roll call:** If a record of each person’s vote is needed, each member answers “yes”, “no” or “present” (indicating the choice not to vote) as his or her name is called.

**Ballot:** Members write their name and vote on a slip of paper.

**General consent:** When a motion isn’t likely to be opposed, the chair says, “If there is no objection...” Members show consent by their silence. If someone says, “I object,” the matter must be put to a vote.

All votes to make a decision or recommendation to the city must be taken so that the results can be listed in the minutes, either as a count of for-against-abstentions or as unanimous approval.

## **More About Voting...**

- A question (motion) is pending when it has been stated by the chair but not yet voted on.
- The last motion stated by the chair is the first pending.
- The main motion is always the last voted on.

### **A motion to lay on the table**

- This motion is used to lay something aside temporarily to take care of a more urgent matter. It should not be used to prevent debate or to kill a question.
- Members can “take from the table” a motion for reconsideration. This must happen by the end of the current or next session (depending on how soon the next session is scheduled).

### **A motion to postpone indefinitely**

- This is parliamentary strategy – it allows members to dispose of a motion without making a decision for or against.

- This is useful in case of a badly chosen main motion for which either a “yes” or “no” vote would have undesirable consequences.

## **Minutes**

There are several reasons why good minutes of all meetings are important:

- They are the only record of the work done and decisions made by the board, committees and general membership.
- They are the written history of the association.
- They keep those not in attendance informed.
- They are essential in continuity for succeeding board and committee members.
- They are required by the City’s Administrative Procedures.

## **Helpful Tips for the Secretary**

- Have the agenda in front of you while you take minutes.
- It is not necessary to write everything that is said, but do record the pros and cons presented. Summarize them briefly, but as completely as possible.
- Record all motions, including name of member making the motion and name of second. State the motion and whether it was carried or failed. Record the vote tally, include any abstentions. It may be helpful to request that any lengthy, involved motions be written out and given to you.
- If a special lengthy report is given, obtain the notes from the person giving the report and summarize it. It is not necessary to record reams of information, especially if the information is available in the files of another committee. For example: refer to the research committee minutes of March 1, 2011, for further information.
- Write up the minutes as quickly as possible after the meeting, while your notes still make sense. It is perfectly acceptable to record your meetings and create minutes from the recording. It is still a good idea to take some notes during the meeting.
- Refer to the Minutes section in the Administrative Procedures for more information

## **9. Board Procedures**

The following outlines specific procedures for association boards. Each association may adopt additional procedures.

### **Leaves of Absence**

From time to time, it may be necessary for Board Members to step away from their duties. In such situations, Board Members can take a leave of absence. If a Board Member needs to take a

leave of absence longer than three months, it is suggested that they resign for the remainder of their term and run again at the next election if they wish to return.

In order to take a leave, the Board Member will submit written notice (letter or email) to the Board, with a copy to the ONCE Manager, stating the Member's intention to take a leave of absence, the specific date when it will begin and an estimated date of return. When the Member is ready to return, the Member shall submit a written notice (letter or email) to the Board and ONCE Manager stating the Member's intention to return and a specific date. The Member shall be considered reinstated on the date specified in their return notice. No vote is necessary to either accept the leave of absence or accept the return of the Board Member.

Depending on the length of absence, Boards may choose to leave the position vacant for the duration of the leave of absence or appoint someone on an interim basis. If Board membership will fall to fewer than three members, the vacancy should be filled as soon as possible. A vote of the Board or the membership is required to appoint an interim Board member, but no vote is necessary once the person on a leave wishes to be reinstated.

### **Preconditions for running for Board Positions**

In general, care should be taken to ensure that barriers are minimized for people to run for their association board. Some preconditions to running may be justified, however. For example, a rule requiring regular attendance, or the submission of a candidate statement may be worthwhile preconditions. Any preconditions should be carefully discussed with the Board and the ONCE Manager should be informed, preferably well before the 3-week notice required by these procedures for bylaws changes. The ONCE Manager shall have the discretion to accept or not accept any preconditions that do not have a sound reasoning, or which present an undue barrier to entry.