



NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BYLAWS

ARTICLE I **PURPOSES OF THE PROGRAM**

- A. The City Council of the City of Oxnard (the City) established the Neighborhood Council Program (the Program) and approved these Bylaws for adoption by each of the Neighborhood Councils that participate in the Program.
- B. The purposes of the Program are to:
 - 1. Encourage neighborhood residents and property owners to take action to improve their neighborhoods.
 - 2. Foster cooperation and goodwill within neighborhoods.
 - 3. Promote greater understanding of the needs and expectations of the City's neighborhoods and of the City's responsibilities.
 - 4. Provide a structure for advocacy of neighborhoods' interests.
 - 5. Facilitate communication within neighborhoods and between neighborhoods and the City.
 - 6. Allow neighborhoods to participate in City decisions affecting neighborhoods.
 - 7. Help the City identify neighborhood problems and needs; and to provide a process for neighborhoods and the City to respond to such problems and needs.
 - 8. Provide a mechanism to facilitate two-way communication between residents and City government.
 - 9. Encourage residents and property owners to undertake action programs to improve the physical and social environment of their neighborhoods.
 - 10. Serve as an advocate of the interests of a neighborhood before any agency, public or private, or before any group or individual requesting the view of that neighborhood.

ARTICLE II **CITY INFORMATION AND SUPPORT OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS**

- A. Each Neighborhood Council adopting these Bylaws acknowledges that the City Council defines neighborhoods for purposes of the Program. The City Council may define neighborhoods, as they are identified in the City's 2020 General Plan or otherwise.
- B. A neighborhood, as defined by the City Council for purposes of the Program, may form a Neighborhood Council and participate in the Program and in the Inter-Neighborhood Council Forum (INCF) if the City Council certifies that within forty-five (45) days before such certification at least eleven (11) persons eighteen (18) years of age or older who reside or own real property in the neighborhood attended the formation meeting, that a majority of those persons approved these Bylaws, and that an Interim Executive Board of at least three (3) persons has been selected for the proposed Neighborhood Council.

- C. The persons constituting the Interim Executive Board shall meet the qualifications for Executive Board members set out in these Bylaws. Such persons may volunteer or, on request of any person present at the meeting at which the Interim Executive Board is selected, shall be selected by written ballot. Within one year after City Council certification, the Neighborhood Council shall conduct a regular election of Executive Board members as set out in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE III
POWERS OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

- A. A Neighborhood Council may only conduct official business at General Membership meetings and Executive Board meetings called and conducted in accordance with these Bylaws.
- B. A Neighborhood Council may address the needs of the neighborhood by any lawful means.
- C. A Neighborhood Council may raise funds to support its activities.
- D. A Neighborhood Council may initiate direct action programs, working alone, or in cooperation with private or public agencies, to respond to the needs of that neighborhood.
- E. A Neighborhood Council may submit recommendations to the City Council and City staff concerning matters of interest to the neighborhood.
 - 1. Recommendations adopted by majority vote of the General Membership shall be submitted in writing or presented verbally by the Chair or another member of the Executive Board designated by the Chair.
 - 2. Recommendations submitted in writing to City staff shall be directed to City staff assigned to the Program with a copy to the City Manager.
 - 3. Recommendations submitted in writing to other agencies shall include submitting a copy of each recommendation to City staff assigned to the Program.
 - 4. Recommendations of the Executive Board, which require transmittal to the City before a General Membership meeting is held, may be submitted as provided in subsection E (1) of this article, accompanied by the written or verbal statement that such recommendations were approved by the Executive Board, but have not been acted on by the General Membership.
 - 5. Any person who submits a recommendation to the City or another organization/person without the approval of the Executive Board or General Membership shall state that the recommendation is made on behalf of that individual, and not on behalf of the Neighborhood Council.

ARTICLE IV
ORGANIZATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

- A. **General Membership**
 - 1. For purposes of determining the vote of the General Membership, the General Membership consists of all persons eighteen (18) years of age or older who reside or own real property in the neighborhood and who are present at the General Membership meeting when the vote is taken.

2. Only a general member who is present at a General Membership meeting may vote at the meeting.
3. Persons who conduct or are employed by businesses located within the neighborhood, but do not reside or own real property in the neighborhood, are not general members and may not vote. However, such persons may attend meetings of the General Membership and participate in discussions as members of the public.

B. Executive Board

1. The Executive Board consists of the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and/or Treasurer, and may include from one to three Members-at-Large. As so constituted, the Executive Board shall consist of at least three (3), but not more than seven (7) members.
2. Each member of the Executive Board shall reside in the neighborhood, provided, however, one Member-at-Large may be an owner of real property in the neighborhood who does not reside in the neighborhood.
3. No member of the Executive Board may hold an elected office with any public agency.
4. Each member of the Executive Board who is present at a meeting of the General Membership or the Executive Board may vote.

C. Election of Executive Board

1. Each year City staff assigned to the Program shall prepare a written notice for each Neighborhood Council announcing that neighborhood's annual election. Such neighborhood shall advise City staff of the date, time and location of the meeting.
2. At least three (3) days, but not more than thirty (30) working days, before the annual election meeting, such notice will be distributed, as determined by the current Executive Board, by leaving a copy of the notice at each residence in the neighborhood.
3. Failure of any person to receive notice shall not be grounds to cancel the annual election meeting or invalidate any vote taken at such meeting.
4. At the annual election meeting, general members and Executive Board members may nominate persons for a specific office who are eligible to hold such office and who are present at the meeting or who have notified an Executive Board member they will accept nomination. Executive Board members shall be elected by majority vote of those eligible to vote.
5. The current Secretary shall prepare and submit to City staff assigned to the Program the minutes of the annual election meeting, which shall include election results. If the election of the Executive Board is not completed at the annual election meeting, the Neighborhood Council shall hold such additional General Membership meetings as are necessary to complete the election, within thirty (30) working days of the date of the annual election meeting. The new Executive Board shall take office when all new members have been elected.

6. The Secretary, or the Treasurer if no Secretary was elected, shall make a list of each person attending the annual election meeting who is eligible to vote. At the discretion of the general members present, votes may be taken by group voice vote, individual voice vote or written ballot. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.
7. The name, address, telephone number and position of those elected must be submitted to the INCF Executive Secretary within ten (10) working days after the election. A copy of the sign in sheet from the annual election meeting shall be included.

D. Term of Office

Each member of the Executive Board shall serve until a new Executive Board takes office, as provided in Article V, Section B. The term shall be for one year, unless a successor is not elected at the annual election meeting. An Executive Board member elected to fill a position that was vacated after the annual election meeting shall serve the remainder of the term.

E. Duties

1. The duties of the Chair are to:
 - a. Preside over all regular and special meetings of the General Membership and of the Executive Board.
 - b. Appoint all committees with the approval of a majority of the Executive Board.
 - c. Dissolve any committee with the approval of a majority of the Executive Board.
 - d. Be an ex-officio member of all standing committees.
 - e. Respond to questions concerning procedures and business of the Neighborhood Council.
 - f. Perform other acts not in conflict with these Bylaws.
2. The duties of the Vice Chair are to:
 - a. Perform the duties of the Chair in his or her absence.
 - b. Promote participation in the Neighborhood Council.
3. The duties of the Secretary are to:
 - a. Prepare and distribute an agenda for each meeting of the General Membership and of the Executive Board.
 - b. Keep minutes of all meetings of the General Membership and of the Executive Board, including whether a quorum is present and if so the names of the persons constituting the quorum.
 - c. Record motions made and whether the motions passed or failed.
 - d. Note in the minutes any action taken on items on or not on the agenda.

- e. Carry on the official correspondence of the Neighborhood Council, and to note in the minutes any correspondence received.
 - f. Sign all minutes after approval by the General Membership or the Executive Board.
 - g. Perform the duties of the Treasurer if none is elected.
4. The duties of the Treasurer are to:
- a. Account for and secure any funds.
 - b. Spend such funds only as authorized by majority vote of the General Membership or the Executive Board.
 - c. Prepare and present a statement of the finances to the Executive Board or to the General Membership at each meeting.
 - d. Perform the duties of the Secretary if none is elected.
5. The duties of Members-at-large are to undertake special projects as directed by the Executive Board.
6. The duties of the Executive Board are to:
- a. Plan and direct the work of the Neighborhood Council.
 - b. Represent the Neighborhood Council before any group or individual, subject to the direction and review of the General Membership.

F. Committees

- 1. The Chair, with the approval of a majority of the Executive Board, may appoint standing or ad hoc committees to consider matters likely to be of interest to the Neighborhood Council.
- 2. Committees shall present their findings and recommendations to the General Membership and/or the Executive Board at each meeting.
- 3. No committee or member thereof shall purport to represent the Neighborhood Council or present any findings or recommendations of the committee to any entity, except as directed by the General Membership.
- 4. The majority of the committee shall decide whether meetings of standing or ad hoc committees shall be open to the public.
- 5. At the annual election meeting, all committees whether standing or ad hoc, are deemed dissolved.

ARTICLE V
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

- A. A Neighborhood Council shall hold at least two (2) General Membership meetings each calendar year; including one meeting designated as the annual election meeting.

- B. Each January, City staff assigned to the Program shall prepare and distribute to each Neighborhood Council a schedule of dates for the annual election meeting of each Neighborhood Council. At the annual election meeting, the Neighborhood Council shall elect a new Executive Board, which shall take office at the end of the meeting; the current Executive Board shall report on its year's activities; and the current Treasurer shall prepare a Treasurer's report.
- C. Notices of the meetings shall be distributed throughout the neighborhood by leaving a copy of the notice at each residence. Failure of any person to receive notice shall not be grounds to cancel the meetings or invalidate any vote taken at the meetings. At such meetings, in addition to any other business, the General Members by majority vote may fill vacancies in Executive Board positions.
- D. On written request submitted to the Chair and signed by at least eleven (11) General Members or Executive Board members of the Neighborhood Council, the Chair shall call and give notice of a General Membership meeting and hold such meeting within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of such written request.
- E. A quorum for a General Membership meeting shall be eleven (11) members of the Neighborhood Council.
- F. The General Membership may by majority vote place an item on the agenda of a General Membership meeting.

ARTICLE VI
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

- A. Meetings of the Executive Board shall be scheduled at the request of the Chair or of a majority of the Executive Board. Failure of any Executive Board member to receive notice shall not be grounds to cancel the meeting or invalidate any vote taken at the meeting.
- B. A quorum for an Executive Board meeting shall be a majority of the Executive Board members.
- C. All Executive Board meetings shall be open to all residents and property owners of that neighborhood.
- D. Any three (3) General Members of the neighborhood may request a meeting with the Executive Board of the neighborhood.

ARTICLE VII
RULES OF PROCEDURE

A. Open Meetings

All meetings of the General Membership shall be open to the public. No such meeting is subject to Government Code section 54950 et seq. (the Ralph M. Brown Act).

B. Records Available for Inspection

All minutes of General Membership and Executive Board meetings and all financial records of the Neighborhood Council shall be made available for inspection within seven (7) working days after receipt of a written request from any General Member of the neighborhood.

C. Orderly Conduct At Meetings

Persons attending General Membership meetings and Executive Board meetings shall not disrupt the orderly conduct of the meetings. The Chair shall direct persons to refrain from disrupting, delaying, preventing or disturbing the meeting and from addressing anyone other than the Chair. By majority vote of the General Membership present at a General Membership meeting or the Executive Board present at an Executive Board meeting, persons failing to comply with such direction shall be required to leave the meeting.

D. Removal of Executive Board Members

1. A petition signed by eleven (11) General Members of that neighborhood shall direct the Secretary, or the Secretary/Treasurer, to place on the agenda of a General Membership meeting a recall of a member of the Executive Board. This General Membership meeting must be held within thirty (30) calendar days of the date the Secretary or Secretary/Treasurer receives the petition.
2. At a General Membership meeting a motion may be made for recall of any member of the Executive Board. If a majority votes in favor of the request, the recall shall be placed on an agenda within thirty (30) calendar days.
3. At the meeting, proponents of the recall may address the General Membership concerning the reasons to vote for the recall. Opponents of the recall may then address the General Membership concerning the reasons not to vote for the recall. The Chair shall allow each person no more than five minutes to address the issue of recall. Rebuttals shall be allowed by majority vote of the General Membership.
4. A vote shall then be taken. If a majority votes for recall such Executive Board member(s) shall be deemed recalled.
5. The vacated position shall be filled by majority vote of the General Membership at the recall election meeting. The recalled person(s) may not be elected to that position for one (1) year.

E. Interpretation of Bylaws

1. The Chair, directed by majority vote of the General Membership, shall make a written request of the INCF to interpret any portion of these Bylaws that is unclear or ambiguous. The request shall identify the portion in question, and describe the different interpretations.
2. The General Membership may, by majority vote, appeal the interpretation of the INCF to the City Council. The appeal shall be in writing, directed to the City Clerk, and shall state the reason for the General Membership's disagreement with the interpretation of the INCF. Copies of the request from the Neighborhood Council to the INCF and the INCF's response shall be attached to the appeal.

F. Amendment of Bylaws

1. By majority vote of the General Membership, a Neighborhood Council may request that the INCF recommend the City Council amend these Bylaws. The request shall be in writing, directed to the INCF Executive Secretary, and shall identify the portion of the Bylaws to be amended, describe the reason for the amendment, and attach the proposed wording of the amendment.
2. The INCF Executive Secretary shall place the amendment request on the agenda of an INCF General Membership meeting to be held within sixty (60) calendar days of the date received.
3. If a majority of the INCF General Membership votes in favor of the request, the INCF Executive Secretary shall forward the request to the City Council with a letter stating that a majority of the INCF General Membership recommends the City Council grant the request.
4. The City Council shall decide to approve or disapprove the amended Bylaws.

G. Adoption of Additional Policies and Procedures

These Bylaws are intended only to provide a structure for the Program, not to provide detailed rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings or other business of Neighborhood Councils. Neighborhood councils are authorized and encouraged to adopt, by majority vote of the General Members, additional written policies and procedures that are consistent with these Bylaws. The General Membership by majority vote may interpret and amend policies and procedures so adopted.

ARTICLE VIII **INTER-NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL FORUM**

- A. All Neighborhood Councils are encouraged to seek assistance from the INCF and to attend and participate in INCF meetings.
- B. The General Members of the INCF are the Chairs of all the Neighborhood Councils or their designees, as set out in the INCF Bylaws. Each General Member may vote at INCF meetings, as set out in the INCF Bylaws.

ARTICLE IX **CITY SUPPORT**

- A. Consistent with the stated purposes of the Program and recognizing the special insight, which its participants can provide, the City Council agrees to solicit and consider carefully information and recommendations from each Neighborhood Council regarding matters affecting the neighborhood.
- B. Staff members of City departments will furnish information and assistance to the Program upon written request of any Neighborhood Council within ten (10) working days.
- C. City staff will provide, supporting-staff services, including, but not limited to, staff services and advice as may be required to establish and maintain an active meaningful Program.
- D. In adopting the City's annual operating budget in future years, the City Council shall appropriate funds to the Program sufficient to meet reasonable expenses for paper, duplicating and postage.

ARTICLE X
DEEMING NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL INACTIVE

- A.** The Executive Board of the INCF shall deem a Neighborhood Council to be inactive after finding either that such Neighborhood Council's annual election was not conducted and completed in accordance with these Bylaws or that such Neighborhood Council did not conduct at least two (2) General Membership meetings in a calendar year.
- B.** An inactive Neighborhood Council may not participate in the Program or receive funding or staff support from the City.
- C.** The Chair of an inactive Neighborhood Council is not a member of the INCF.
- D.** Persons who reside in or own property in a neighborhood with an inactive Neighborhood Council are welcome and encouraged to attend INCF General Membership meetings, but shall not vote at the meetings.
- E.** Persons who reside in or own property in a neighborhood with an inactive Neighborhood Council are encouraged to bring to the INCF any matters they would like to be addressed concerning their neighborhood.
- F.** City staff assigned to the Program shall be custodian of all funds for an inactive Neighborhood Council until reactivated.
- G.** An inactive Neighborhood Council may be reactivated and restored to participation in the Program by the procedure set out in Article II, Section B of these Bylaws.

- End -