

## **Human Rights Commission Bylaws and Rules of Procedure**

### **Article I - Meetings**

***Section 1 - Regular Meetings.*** The Commission may decide the time and place within Salem for the holding of regular meetings of this Commission. All meetings of the Commission and any subcommittee shall comply with Oregon public meetings law requirements.

***Section 2 - Special Meetings.*** Special meetings of the Commission may be called by or at the request of the Chair or any two members. The person authorized to call special meetings of the Commission may fix any place within Salem for holding any special meeting of the Commission.

***Section 3 - Special Meeting Notice.*** Notice of any special meeting of the Commission shall be given at least 24 hours before by written or verbal notice delivered personally or left at the residence or business address of each member. Written public notice shall be provided at least 24 hours in advance of such meeting.

***Section 4 - Quorum.*** A majority of the members currently appointed to the Commission shall constitute a quorum but, if less than a majority of the members are present at any meeting, a majority of the members present may adjourn the meeting. Members may gather in groups not constituting a quorum and discuss information without further action consistent with Oregon public meetings law.

***Section 5 - Manner of Acting.*** Any action taken at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be considered an act of the Commission, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by these bylaws.

***Section 6 - Voting.*** The vote of each member on any major question pending before the Commission shall be recorded in the minutes of the Commission.

### **Article II - Membership**

***Section 1 - Responsibilities.*** Members will attend regular and special meetings unless excused and will carry our assigned tasks.

***Section 2 - Vacancies.*** Any vacancy occurring in the Commission and any membership to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of members shall be filled by the Mayor of the City of Salem. The Commission shall assist the Mayor in the filling of vacancies. All applicants are urged to attend at least one meeting of the Commission before accepting the appointment. A member appointed to fill a vacancy shall be appointed for the unexpired term of their predecessor in office.

***Section 3 - Absences.*** The Chair, upon notice of two unexcused absences within a given quarter during a year, will ask the staff person of the HRC to contact the commissioner to impress upon them the importance of fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. If following such contact, the commissioner has two more unexcused absences within a given quarter, the Commission may act to request that the member resign. Further unexcused absences shall be grounds for removal by the Mayor and City Council pursuant to City ordinance.

***Section 4 – Confidentiality.*** The Commission may receive information submitted to the City or

Commission with the expectation of confidentiality, and that confidential information will be distributed only to Commission members, City staff, and other designated individuals who have a need to know the information. Commission members shall keep such information confidential, and shall not disclose confidential information without the express consent of the party who provided it. The City and Commission members shall maintain the confidentiality of information received subject to the requirements of Oregon public records law.

### **Article III - Officers**

***Section 1 - Officers.*** The officers of the Commission shall be a Chair and a Vice-Chair.

***Section 2 - Election and Term of Office.*** The officers of the Commission shall be elected annually by the Commission. New offices may be created and filled at any meeting of the Commission. Each officer shall hold office until their successor can assume the duties of that office.

***Section 3 - Removal.*** Any officer elected or appointed by the Commission may be removed by a majority vote of the Commission, whenever in the Commission's judgment the best interests of the Commission would be served.

***Section 4 - Vacancies.*** A vacancy in any office because of the death, resignation, removal or disqualification of the incumbent may be filled by the membership for the unexpired portion of the term.

### **Article IV - Duties of Officers**

***Section 1 - Chair.*** The Chair shall be the principal officer of the Commission and shall supervise the business and affairs of the Commission. The Chair shall preside at meetings of the Commission and shall perform all duties. The Chair shall work with staff to prepare and distribute a written agenda for each regular meeting of the Commission to each member at least 23 hours prior to the meeting. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall represent the Commission in all appearances before the Council unless an alternate has been designated for that purpose.

***Section 2 - Vice-Chair.*** In the absence of the Chair or in the event of inability to act, the Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair. The Vice-Chair shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chair. The Vice-Chair shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Chair or the Commission. The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in carrying out the responsibilities assigned.

### **Article V - Committees**

***Section 1 – Committees and Task Forces of Members.*** The Commission, by adoption of a motion, may designate one or more committees, each of which shall consist of two or more members. Committees and task forces shall carry out all tasks assigned to them by the Commission and may, if authorized, have and exercise the authority of the Commission. Nothing in this section shall limit the authority granted under the charter and ordinances of the City of Salem relating to the Commission's charge. Committees shall be established for ongoing work objectives. Task forces shall be established when the objectives are time-bound with a short term anticipated.

***Section 2 – Committees and Task Forces with Partners.*** Additional committees and task forces, not having and exercising the authority of the Commission, may be created by simple majority vote of the Commission. Unless otherwise specified, members need not be Commissioners, and the Chair of the Commission shall appoint members to these committees. Any members may be

removed when the Commission decides it is in the best interests of the Commission to do so.

**Section 3 - Term of Office.** Each member of each committee shall continue at the discretion of the Commission.

**Section 4 - Chairperson.** One member of each committee shall be appointed chairperson by the Commission Chair. For committees running longer than one year, the appointment of chairperson shall be revisited annually.

**Section 5 - Vacancies.** Vacancies in the membership of any committee may be filled by appointments made in the same manner as provided in the case of the original appointment.

**Section 6 - Quorum.** Unless otherwise provided by resolution, a majority of the whole committee shall constitute a quorum and the act of the quorum shall be the act of the committee.

**Section 7 - Rules.** Each committee may adopt rules for its own government consistent with these bylaws or with rules adopted by the Commission.

#### **Article VI - Books and Records**

The Commission shall keep accurate and complete books and records of the Commission and committee meetings in the office of the staff support of the City of Salem. All books and records of the Commission may be inspected by any person during the normal working hours of the staff person assigned. Official books or records of the Commission may be copied as permitted by law. Every precaution shall be made to protect such books and records against loss, destruction or alteration.

#### **Article VII - Staff**

**Section 1 - Staff Support.** The City of Salem shall provide staff support to the Commission on a continuing basis. Secretarial assistance shall be provided for all regular and special meetings of the Commission to ensure a complete and accurate record of the proceedings of the Commission.

**Section 2 - Attendance at Meetings.** Staff shall attend all regular and special meetings of the Commission and such additional functions as may be directed by the Commission, unless excused by the Chair or the Commission.

**Section 3 - Work Assignments.** In the performance of their responsibilities, the primary staff person to the Commission shall engage in such activities as may be decided by a majority of the members present at any meeting of the Commission. In the absence of an official directive of the Commission, the primary staff shall accept work assignments in the following order of priority:

1. Requests from the Chair in their official capacity,
2. Requests from individual members of the Commission directed to the Chair and/or Vice-Chair,
3. Requests from the Personnel Division of the City of Salem.

Whenever conflicts arise regarding these assignments, the Chair, in the absence of an official directive of the Commission, shall determine the priority given each matter. Requests from others shall be directed to the Commission or the Chair for appropriate disposition.

**Section 4 - Participation at Meetings.** Staff to the Commission may participate in the discussion of matters before the Commission, may offer suggestions, identify alternatives, and present all information needed to resolve issues before the Commission. Staff shall be responsible for making all necessary arrangements for meetings and shall prepare and make available to the members any background information, written communications or resolutions relating to items on the agenda of any regular or special meeting. Staff shall also monitor agenda and minutes of the Council and bring to the attention of the Commission any matters relating to the concerns and jurisdiction of the Commission as needed to assist the Commission in the official performance of its duties.

## **Article VIII - Procedures**

**Section 1 - Privilege of the floor.** Any member may be extended the privilege of the floor to discuss a question before the Commission, after first obtaining recognition from the Chair.

**Section 2 - Chair.** The Chair may speak and vote on all matters before the Commission. When a roll call is taken, the Chair shall be called last. The Chair may make a motion in the same manner as other members of the Commission.

**Section 3 - Motions.** All motions shall require a second. When the Chair has entertained a motion, the person placing the motion shall be entitled to speak to the question first. No member may address the issue more than once until each member has had an opportunity to speak on the issue. The Chair may limit debate on a motion, but in no case shall a member be allowed less than three minutes to speak on a motion.

**Section 5 - Public Comment.** A portion of the agenda at each regular and special session of the Commission shall be set aside for comments from members of the public wishing to appear before the Commission. The privilege of the floor may be extended to members of the public or other persons who are not members of the Commission by unanimous consent of the members.

**Section 6 - Adjournment.** The Commission may fix a time to adjourn or may on motion (non-debatable), vote to adjourn a meeting. A majority vote by the Commission will be required in either case. Upon request by any member, the roll shall be called and the meeting shall not be adjourned until the pending question is decided.

**Section 7 - Conflict of Interest.** If a Commissioner has a conflict of interest regarding a matter before the Commission, they shall declare a conflict and abstain from both discussion and voting on the issue.

**Section 8 - Complaints.** The Commission receives complaints pursuant to Chapters 8 and 97 of Salem Revised Code. Staff to the Commission will serve as the regular point of intake for complaints and may provide service to complainants between meetings. Service may include, but is not limited to providing information and referral, fact-finding, mediation, and discussion with all parties concerning the complaint, consistent with that authority provided to the Commission. Staff shall provide to the Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting a written summary of each complaint, a recommendation as to whether the complaint has a reasonable basis under SRC Chapter 97 and whether additional steps are needed to resolve the complaint. The Commission shall direct staff accordingly. Nothing in this section shall preclude a complainant from filing a complaint directly with the Commission.

### **Article IX - Work Plan**

The Commission shall adopt a work plan which identifies its objectives and designates activities to achieve those objectives during each twelve-month period. The work plan may be modified by a majority vote of the members of the Commission present and voting. The Commission shall undertake such additional activities not identified in the work plan as needed to perform responsibilities.

### **Article X - Amendments to Bylaws**

These bylaws may be suspended, amended, or repealed by a two-thirds majority of the members at any regular or special meeting.

### **Article XI - Robert's Rules Revised**

In all cases not provided for in these bylaws and the charter and ordinances of the City of Salem, the Commission shall be governed by the law and practice laid down in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

#### Change History:

Edits adopted June 2, 2015

Edits adopted May 2, 2017

Edits adopted March 5, 2020

Edits adopted May 8, 2024