



So you are a
Neighborhood Council
board member...



Now what?



Bylaws Workshop



Housekeeping Rules

Good evening! Welcome!

We look forward to your participation in today's workshop.

Please enter any questions in the Q & A box.

We will answer them directly in the Q&A box and live during the meeting or during the Q & A portion of the Module at the end of today's training.

After the meeting, we will make recording and Q&A report available.

There will be no break in this module. Chat has been disabled. Closed Caption is available in Spanish.

Thank you so much for your leadership and service in the Neighborhood Council system!

Normas de Organización

¡Buenas noches! ¡Bienvenido!

Esperamos su participación en el sesión de aprendizaje sobre la modificación de los estatutos y la estructura de la junta de hoy.

Introduzca cualquier pregunta en el cuadro de preguntas y respuestas.

Subtítulos ocultos en Español esta disponible.

Las responderemos directamente en el cuadro de preguntas y respuestas y en vivo durante la reunión o durante la parte de preguntas y respuestas del módulo al final de la capacitación de hoy.

Después de la reunión, pondremos a disposición la grabación y el informe de preguntas y respuestas.

No habrá interrupción en este módulo. El chat ha sido deshabilitado.

¡Muchas gracias por su liderazgo y servicio en el sistema del Consejo Vecinal!



Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

EmpowerLA

Opening Remarks

Carmen Chang, General Manager

Gibson Nyambura, Director of Policy, Government and Innovation

Thomas Soong, Managing Director of Programs



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Neighborhood Council Bylaws



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What are the bylaws?

Charter Section 906 defines the purpose of NC Bylaws

(a) **By-laws.** Each neighborhood council seeking official certification or recognition from the City shall submit an organization plan and by-laws to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment showing, at a minimum:

- (1) the method by which their officers are chosen;
- (2) neighborhood council membership will be open to everyone who lives, works or owns property in the area (stakeholders);
- (3) assurances that the members of the neighborhood council will reflect the diverse interests within their area;
- (4) a system through which the neighborhood council will communicate with stakeholders on a regular basis;
- (5) a system for financial accountability of its funds; and
- (6) guarantees that all meetings will be open and public, and permit, to the extent feasible, every stakeholder to participate in the conduct of business, deliberation and decision-making.



What are the bylaws?

- Guide the board's actions and decisions
- Helpful in preventing or resolving conflict and disagreements.
- Governing Document at the NC level
- Help stakeholders to understand how the Neighborhood Council works
- Living Document



Governing Documents Hierarchy

⇓ U.S. Constitution

⇓ California State Constitution

⇓ State Laws

⇓ City Laws (Municipal, Admin and electoral Code)

⇓ [BONC policies](#)

⇓ **NC Bylaws** ⇐

⇓ NC Standing Rules



BYLAWS TEMPLATE

The Department, in partnership with the Office of the City Clerk and the Office of the City Attorney has updated the bylaws template.

It is available at:

<https://neighborhoodempowerment.lacity.gov/self-serve/>

under Administrative Forms and Templates

Along with the Bylaws Amendment and Board Structure Change Application



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When the Bylaws are Silent



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When the bylaws are silent (Standing Rules)

Standing rules typically refer to a set of rules or procedures that an organization or group adopts to govern its day-to-day operations and activities. These rules are distinct from the organization's bylaws, which are usually more formal and outline the fundamental structure and governance of the group. Standing rules are often more flexible and can be changed more easily as circumstances require.

Here are some common characteristics and examples of standing rules:

Meeting Procedures: Standing rules may specify how meetings are conducted, including the order of business, time limits for speeches, and rules for making motions and voting.

Membership Requirements: They can outline the qualifications and criteria for membership in the organization, attendance requirements, or participation expectations.

Committee Procedures: Standing rules can define how committees are formed, their responsibilities, and the process for appointing or removing committee members.

Event Planning: Standing rules can govern the planning and execution of events or activities,, or social gatherings.

Record Keeping: They may outline requirements for maintaining records and documentation of the organization's activities and decisions.

Amendments and Changes: Standing rules can be amended any time and does not need to be sent to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment for approval. Standing rules cannot contradict the bylaws.,

WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND: Standing Rules should be on NCs Website along with other governing documents.

When Bylaws are silent (leaves of absences)

3. Article V Governing Board Section 7: Absences

We noticed a lot of NC bylaws do not have language that addresses excused or leaves of absence. For excused absences, our recommendation is that you provide a definition of an excused absence and how such excused absences are requested, received, and memorialized. If you would like to allow for leaves of absence, we put this language in the bylaws template:

"When a Board Member advises the President that they will have a temporary absence of more than three months, the President may nominate an alternate to fulfill the obligations of the absent Board Member until said Board Member returns. The alternate must take all the necessary trainings in order to vote". -Park Mesa Heights Bylaws

For your consideration...



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Staggered terms

2. Article V Governing Board Section 4: Term and Term Limits

If you are establishing staggered terms for the first time, please indicate which seats are up for election in 2025 and which seats are up in 2027. This will help us and the City Clerk determine which seats will appear on the ballot for future elections.

Examples of good staggered term descriptions:

[Arleta Neighborhood Council](#)

[CANNDU](#)

Outreach

4. Article V Governing Board Section 11: Community Outreach

Each bylaw should have a description on how your NC will be engaging your stakeholders. Please review this section and see if your NC has a plan in place. In the template, we provided some optional language for you to consider:

The Council shall have a standing Outreach Committee, which will report its activities and recommendations to the Board monthly at the Council meeting.

- *The Council shall maintain a website presence to disseminate information to Council Stakeholders and others interested in the Council.*
- *In addition, the Board shall create, or shall cause to be created, a marketing plan to solicit participation from Stakeholders. The plan may include, for example, the creation of flyers, postcards, pamphlets and other related materials. It may also include email blasts to various organizations including a regularly scheduled e-blast to local government officials and to the Chamber of Commerce, Neighborhood Watch, Home Owners' Association and other local organizations as determined by the Board.*
- *Outreach also should be undertaken at public events and shall be coordinated with other Neighborhood Councils when appropriate.*



Training Compliance

Article XIV Compliance Section 2: Training

Board members must complete four required trainings—Ethics and Funding (every two years), and Anti-Bias and Gender Expression/Identity (one-time)—along with acknowledging the Code of Conduct within 30 days. Members who have not completed all trainings and the Code of Conduct are not eligible to vote. There is no grace period for funding items, while non-funding items may allow a grace period as defined in Article XIV, Section 2 of the bylaws. Continuing members have no grace period once trainings expire, and boards may establish deadlines through a Standing Rule or bylaws amendment.



Submitting your Bylaw Amendments



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Bylaw Amendment Submission

When submitting a bylaw amendment. Please submit it in the following format to the Department.

- **Red font** for any new language being added to the bylaws
- **Strikethrough** for any language being removed from the bylaws.

Bylaws amendment application

Article VIII. MEETINGS

Brown Act Compliance: All meetings required by the Brown Act to be conducted openly shall be open to the public and shall comply with all other provisions of the Brown Act pertaining to open meetings. All meetings, as defined by the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Section 54950.5 et seq.), shall be noticed and conducted in accordance with the Act, the Neighborhood Council Agenda Posting Policy, and all other applicable laws and governmental policy.

Section 1 Meeting Time and Place

All meetings shall be held within the HCNNC boundaries at a location, date and time set by the Board. A calendar of regular meetings shall be established by the Board at its first regular meeting of each calendar year.

- A. Regular Meetings - ~~Regular Council meetings shall be held at least once per quarter and may be held more frequently as determined by the Board. Prior to any action by the Board, there shall be a period of public comment. The Board shall determine the length of time and format of the public comment period as appropriate. Regular HCNNC meetings shall be held throughout each calendar year. Each calendar year should hold at least nine (9) meetings and may be held more frequently as determined by the Board. Prior to any action by the Board, there shall be a period of public comment. The Board shall determine the length and format of the period as appropriate.~~
- B. Special Meetings - Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by a majority of the Board.

Board Structure Submission

Documents that need to be provided

- Bylaw Amendment Application
- Bylaw Amendments with the changes indicated, Article V, Section 1 and Attachment B

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E-mail: NCsupport@lacity.org www.EmpowerLA.org



Neighborhood Council Board Structure Change Request Form

Requests for changes in Board structure must be reviewed by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (Commission). If the Commission approves the request, the Applicant's bylaws will be deemed formally adjusted upon such action of the Commission. Should the Commission act to disapprove the request, the Applicant may, within five (5) meeting days of the City Council, during which the Council has convened in regular session, file an appeal with the City Council. The appeal will automatically be placed on the Council's next regular agenda for consideration. The City Council may, by ten (10) votes, sustain, reverse, or modify the Commission's decision.

After completing this form, please submit it by email along with a completed Bylaw Amendment Application to NCsupport@lacity.org. You may also fax or deliver the documents to our office. We will provide notification to the Neighborhood Council of the date the Commission will review the request. Please note that the information submitted on this form is public information.

Please contact the Neighborhood Council Support Help Line at (213) 978-1551 or by email at NCsupport@lacity.org if you have any questions.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Neighborhood Council Name: **Echo Park Neighborhood Council**

Primary Contact:
Darcy Harris **Chair**

NAME TITLE PHONE EMAIL

Current Number of Board Seats: **21** Quorum: **11**

What type of Board Structure Change is being requested?

Reduction in Board Seats to: _____ (insert total number after proposed reduction)

Change in Board Structure. Please describe:

A Youth Representative seat will be added, and the number of At-Large seats will be reduced from 9 to 8. The Youth Representative seat will be for a two year term, and open to 14-19 year olds. All other seats will remain 4 year terms, staggered (6 At-Large and 12 District seats - 2 for each of 6 districts.)

Other. Please describe:

What are the reasons for the change to the Board Structure?

We want to add a seat to encourage participation by and representation of our younger stakeholders. The Youth seat term will only be two years, recognizing that participants may age out and/or have other obligations (e.g. moving away for college, etc).

Describe your Neighborhood Council's demographics. Please note sources of demographic information provided, e.g. 2000 census, Healthy City, etc., and attach any related documentation.

Echo Park NC Demographics by Age*

Total Population: 43,738; Under 18: 8,013; 18-39: 18,386; 40-64: 13,066; 65 and over: 4,274

*from EmpowerLA NC Demographic Data Report sent October 2019 (p. 30 of 111).

Explain what outreach has been conducted to fill existing seats. Please attach any supporting documentation, e.g. flyers, agendas, etc.

We announce vacancies at Board meetings, for the next Board meeting, and post a notice on our website, as well as include an announcement via the Matchup email sent out to our stakeholder mailing list. We also post announcements on Social Media (Facebook, Instagram). The item for filling the vacant seat and procedure for doing so is set forth in the Board meeting agenda, which is posted on the website, sent via email and physically posted as per the Brown Act.

In addition, all Board members are encouraged to announce vacancies as part of their ongoing outreach efforts - both interacting with the community in person and through their personal social media and email networks.



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► **Questions Received**



Question 1

How do you turn designated seats to at large seats and how do you reduce the Neighborhood Council size?

Question 2

Can you set limitations on Terms of Officers?

Question 3

What are the key differences of accountability between the Bylaws and Standing Rules of a NC?

▶ Question and Answer Session



**Thank you for attending
tonight's workshop!**

