

3/19/2013

**CITIZENS FOR A BETTER CITY (CBC)**  
**in the City of Falls Church, Virginia**

**REVISED BYLAWS**  
**APPROVED 3/7/13**

**CBC BYLAWS**

**PREAMBLE**

Citizens for a Better City (CBC) is a civic and non-partisan political organization in the City of Falls Church, Virginia. It is a successor to Citizens for a Better Council, an informal organization of several hundred Falls Church City voters who joined together to support candidates for the Falls Church City Council at the June, 1959, election.

**CBC's objective is good City government, responsive to the needs and interests of Falls Church City residents.**

*To protect and improve the quality of life in our community, to promote good government and to sustain Falls Church's status as an independent City, CBC is guided by these **principles** in all its activities:*

**Citizen Participation:** *Encouragement of residents to register and vote in all elections and to participate fully in public affairs.*

**Conduct of Public Business:** *Open and public consideration of City government policies, with courteous attention to the views of all citizens, forthright communication between citizens and officials, and maximum use of citizens' talents.*

**Education:** *Preservation of the independent status of our public school system and the continuing provision of a first-class education to all members of its diverse student body.*

**Public Services:** *Development and maintenance of high quality public services, supported by prudent City financial planning, based on equitable taxation at the lowest possible rates.*

**Organization and Administration:** *Diligent enforcement of ordinances, sound organization of the City government, and effective performance of public services, based on modern methods of municipal administration and subject to continuing, critical evaluation.*

**City Boards and Commissions:** *Appointment of able, qualified persons who will serve the best interest of the City of Falls Church.*

**Planning and Zoning:** *Policies to assure that residential and business development will be compatible with the predominantly residential-and the small town character of Falls Church City, while generating adequate revenue to support excellence in City schools and community services.*

**Beautification and Conservation:** *Actions to enhance the appearance of the City, inspire a sense of overall design in public and private development, conserve our trees, open spaces, watershed and other natural resources, protect our environment against pollution, and reduce our carbon footprint through increased energy efficiency and renewable energy to help create a sustainable community.*

**Regional Cooperation:** *Collaboration with other jurisdictions in the metropolitan area to solve common problems.*

**Equal Opportunity:** *Encouragement of the exercise of the basic right of all to join fully in the life of the City, regardless of race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, socio-economic status, or religion.*

## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The organization shall be known as the Citizens for a Better City (CBC), in the City of Falls Church, Virginia.

## **ARTICLE II - FUNCTIONS OF CBC [See exception to ARTICLE II (a) in ARTICLE XII]**

- (a) To select able and qualified persons to run as CBC candidates for the Falls Church City Council and the Falls Church City School Board, and to seek their election.
- (b) To keep its members and the public informed about issues facing the Falls Church City government and school system, as well as CBC objectives, principles and activities.
- (c) To promote civic engagement.

## **ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

(a) Any person at least 17 years of age residing in the City of Falls Church, Virginia, who supports the principles set forth in the preamble and pays the membership dues may be a member of the organization.

(b) Membership dues for shall be fixed by the Executive Committee. The membership year begins on January 1, and dues are accepted throughout the year.

## **ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES**

(a) President - Shall serve as principal executive officer of the organization, preside at meetings of the membership and serve as Chair of the Executive Committee. At a Nominating Convention the President serves ex officio as presiding officer pending election of the Permanent Chair of the convention. The President of CBC and the First Vice President when acting as President shall refrain from activities that would tend to identify publicly herself/himself, the office, or CBC as an organization, with any partisan political party, campaign, or candidates.

(b) First Vice President - Shall act for and serve in the absence of the President.

(c) Second Vice President - Shall perform such duties as may be specified by the President.

(d) Secretary - Shall take minutes and maintain the official records of all meetings of the membership and of the Executive Committee. The Secretary shall keep a list of all voting members on the Executive Committee for the purpose of determining a quorum.

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(e) Treasurer - Shall be responsible for receipt and disbursement of all funds of the organization and for maintaining its financial records. As described below, the CBC Campaign Committee financial records shall be maintained separately by the CBC Campaign Committee Treasurer, consistent with ARTICLE VIII, Section (e), who will also file the required reports to the Virginia State Board of Elections.

#### **ARTICLE V - THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

(a) The Executive Committee shall be composed of at least eleven and no more than nineteen voting members elected by the general membership: the five Officers, the immediate Past President, representatives of each of the three wards and multiple neighborhoods, and members at-large who are members of CBC. Whenever possible, these voting members should include at least one former President of CBC, one former member of the Falls Church City Council, and one former member of the Falls Church City School Board.

(b) The Executive Committee shall transact all business referred to it by the membership, perform the functions of CBC between meetings of the membership, make arrangements for meetings of the general membership, and authorize or approve expenditures of the organization.

(c) The Executive Committee shall meet, upon reasonable notification, at the call of the President or at the request of five or more of its members. These meetings are open to the general membership and invited guests.

(d) A quorum shall consist of at least half the voting members of the Executive Committee. Voting members of the Executive Committee must maintain regular attendance at the meetings and may miss no more than three meetings in a row, or they will be considered to have tendered their resignation unless they have contacted the President to explain any special circumstances.

(e) In cases where timely action is required on a matter and it is infeasible to call a meeting of the Executive Committee, the President may conduct a remote (unassembled) meeting of the Executive Committee using available information technology (telephone, fax, email, etc.). When responses from a majority of the Executive Committee members produce a consensus for action, the President may proceed to act accordingly. The President shall report on actions taken as a result of a remote meeting at the immediately following Executive Committee meeting, and the minutes of that meeting shall include a record of the remote meeting and actions taken.

#### **ARTICLE VI - ELECTION AND TENURE OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

(a) Officers and members at-large of the Executive Committee shall serve two-year terms or until their successors are elected. They shall take office at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.

(b) Officers and members at-large of the Executive Committee shall be elected from among members of CBC who are qualified voters in the City of Falls Church, provided that 17-year-old

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members and members who are foreign-born residents pending citizenship by naturalization may be elected as officers or members at-large of the Executive Committee; such elections shall be at meetings of the membership designated for that purpose. The Nominating Committee shall bring forth a slate of nominees endorsed by the sitting Executive Committee, and nominations may also be accepted from the floor.

(c) In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the First Vice President shall succeed to that office for the remainder of the term. A vacancy in any other office or among members at-large of the Executive Committee shall be filled by the Executive Committee and the person so designated shall serve for the unexpired term.

(d) Any officer or member at-large of the Executive Committee may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a duly called meeting of the general membership, provided that no such removal may be considered unless proposed by the Executive Committee or in a petition signed by ten members of the organization, and unless made known to the membership in the manner provided for proposed amendments to the bylaws in ARTICLE XI hereof.

#### **ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

(a) A meeting of the general membership, known as the annual meeting, shall be held each year, cognizant of election cycles as well as school, religious and community calendars, generally in January. Every two years, at such meetings, the officers and the members at-large of the Executive Committee shall be elected for the terms specified in ARTICLE VI. At each annual meeting an annual report of the activities of the organization shall be presented by the President.

(b) Other meetings of the general membership shall be held as determined by the Executive Committee or upon petition of not less than ten percent of the membership.

(c) All meetings of the general membership shall be open to the public.

(d) Twenty-five members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business at any meeting of the general membership.

(e) A public announcement and a notice to the general membership of the time and place of any meeting of the general membership shall be made at least one week prior to the time such meeting is held.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - NOMINATING CONVENTIONS AND CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE [See exception to ARTICLE VIII in ARTICLE XII]**

(a) CBC Nominating Conventions shall be held in local election years for the purpose of selecting CBC candidates for the Falls Church City Council and the Falls Church City School Board; such conventions shall be held not later than ten days prior to the date that candidates are required by law to file for the nomination with the election officials in elections at which members of the Falls Church City Council and the Falls Church City School Board are elected. The CBC

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Nominating Conventions shall be open to the general public.

(b) The Executive Committee may direct either:

(1) that any particular convention shall have the characteristics of a Town Meeting open to all persons who will be of voting age at the time of the next City Council/City School Board election and residing in the City of Falls Church, Virginia; such persons may participate fully in each convention and vote on the nomination of candidates for City Council or City School Board, as the case may be, or

(2) that only members of CBC shall be eligible to vote at the conventions.

(c) A public announcement of the time and place of the conventions shall be made in media outlets focused on the City of Falls Church and a notice of the time and place of the conventions shall be sent to the general membership at least one week prior to the time such conventions are held.

(d) The purpose of the CBC convention is to nominate candidates who will uphold CBC Principles and who have demonstrated significant leadership, sound judgment, adherence to ethical standards, integrity and a commitment to good governance on City boards and commissions, school associations, other governance bodies, and/or in community, citizen and professional organizations, along with relevant skills and experience.

(e) A CBC Campaign Committee shall be established following the Nominating Conventions. The President of CBC shall be an ex officio member of the CBC Campaign Committee. Other committee members shall be named by the nominees of the CBC Nominating Conventions. The Campaign Committee shall seek the election of candidates nominated at the CBC Conventions. It is empowered to receive political contributions for the purpose of electing those candidates in the next municipal election of the City of Falls Church. These contributions, together with any other funds received for use in the election of such candidates, shall be maintained in a bank account separate from other funds of CBC. The Treasurer of the Campaign Committee shall be responsible for making such reports and statements of campaign and election contributions and expenditures as are required by State law, and making a report to the CBC Executive Committee upon conclusion of each campaign.

## **ARTICLE IX - OTHER COMMITTEES**

(a) A Nominating Committee shall be established prior to each annual meeting at which an election is held for officers of the organization and for members at-large of the Executive Committee; such committee, consisting of five members appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Committee, shall propose nominees for the posts to be filled at such meeting. Nominations for such offices may also be made from the floor.

(b) An Audit Committee shall be established at each annual meeting; such committee, consisting of three members appointed by the President but not members of the Executive Committee, shall audit the books of the organization not later than sixty days after the close of the fiscal year and

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upon a change in the office of the Treasurer. The findings of each audit shall be reported to the membership.

(c) The Executive Committee may establish such other standing or temporary committees as it deems appropriate. Members of such committees shall be appointed by the President.

#### **ARTICLE X - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern in all meetings of the membership and of the Executive Committee where applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at any meeting of the general membership, provided that the proposed amendment has been made known by written communication to the membership at least seven days in advance of the meeting at which it is presented for adoption. In order to be considered, a proposed amendment to the bylaws must be proposed by the Executive Committee, or proposed in a petition signed by at least ten members of the organization and transmitted to the Secretary at least three weeks prior to the meeting at which it is proposed to be offered.

#### **ARTICLE XII –ALTERNATIVE ELECTION ACTIVITIES**

Prior to any Falls Church City Council and School Board election, and not later than ten days prior to the date that candidates are required by law to file with the election officials, the Executive Committee shall determine and announce publicly that CBC will participate in the forthcoming election in the manner prescribed in these Bylaws or, alternatively will participate without regard to ARTICLE II – FUNCTIONS OF CBC, section (a), and ARTICLE VIII – NOMINATING CONVENTIONS AND CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE.