

BYLAWS

Community, Housing and Human Services Board

City of Spokane

Authorization:

[Ordinance C34900](#) and

[Spokane Municipal Code 04.34A](#) (as amended by ORD C36597)

Adopted April 6, 2013

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Revised July 6, 2022

Revised January 8, 2025

ARTICLE I – NAME:

The name of this Board is the COMMUNITY, HOUSING and HUMAN SERVICES BOARD (hereinafter “Board”) for the City of Spokane.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE:

The Community, Housing and Human Services Board (CHHS) makes recommendations to the Spokane Mayor, Administration, and City Council regarding community development, housing, and human service programs, and provides a forum for public comment related to the same. It also performs transparent, nonconflicted citizen review of applications for Federal, State and Local grants administered by the CHHS Department of the City of Spokane (hereinafter “Department”) to aid low- and moderate-income residents.

ARTICLE III - RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL:

The Board serves at the discretion of the Mayor and City Council. The Board may be asked to perform any duties necessary and proper to achieve the Mayor’s or the Council’s objectives regarding community, housing and human services. The primary channel within City administration is the CHHS Department. The primary interface with City Council is the Urban Experience Committee.

ARTICLE IV - POWERS AND DUTIES:

The Community, Housing and Human Services Board shall:

1. Advise the City on preparing reports and plans to conform with requirements of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce), including:
 - a) [Consolidated Plan](#)
 - b) [Citizen Participation Plan](#)
 - c) [Annual Action Plan](#)
 - d) [CAPER](#) (Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report).**document links are current at time of latest Bylaws update.*
2. Hold public hearings on the draft plans to obtain citizen comments prior to recommending adoption by City Council;
3. Make recommendations about funding priorities for housing programs and projects and social services utilizing Federal and State resources. Priorities must conform to HUD requirements of [24 CFR Part 91](#) together with Commerce guidelines;
4. Evaluate Federal and State funding applications for eligible activities and projects, and make funding recommendations to the Mayor and City Council in accordance with priorities established in the Consolidated Plan;
5. Make recommendations for awarding local grant dollars to the Mayor and City Council, in accordance with human services priorities communicated to the Board by City Council, if available;
6. Review contract performance data to identify potential reallocations from lower- to higher-performing projects, with the intent to optimize community value and impact;
7. Designate a member to participate with the [Spokane Regional Continuum of Care Board](#) and to assist in developing the [Five Year Plan to Prevent or Eliminate Homelessness](#)*.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP:

1. Interested candidates will apply using the [online form](#) for City Boards, accompanied by a conflict of interest statement.
2. Appointees to the Board shall serve three (3) year terms and may be eligible for one (1) reappointment for a three (3) year term.
3. Following a one-year absence, members may reapply for membership if there is a vacancy on the board.
4. The Board shall consist of:
 - a) Twelve (12) voting members recommended by the Board; nominated by the Mayor and appointed by the City Council. This shall include:
 - At least one (1) representative of a veteran service organization, employee of the Department of Veteran Affairs or an active duty military member based at Fairchild Air Force.
 - One (1) representative from the Community Assembly. This position is selected by the Community Assembly according to the process determined by the Community Assembly, then nominated by the Mayor and appointed by the City Council.
 - b) Four (4)) additional non-voting members as follows:
 - Two (2) representatives from the City Council selected by the City Council, appointed or reappointed for one (1) year terms.
 - One (1) elected official or policy-level decision maker to represent Spokane County, who shall be selected by the Spokane County Commissioners then nominated by the Mayor and appointed by City Council, appointed or reappointed for one (1) year terms.
 - The Chair or appointee of the Spokane Regional Coordination of Care (COC) Boar
5. A person seated on the Board as a representative of another body shall communicate important information back to those constituents to keep all stakeholders fully informed.
6. Members of the Board and Board committees shall include relevant representation in compliance with HUD and Commerce requirements. Membership shall reflect a broad range of opinion, experience, and expertise with the object of providing sound advice, representative of the citizenry. To achieve that purpose, the Board shall strive to include perspectives representing:

- a) Diverse neighborhoods. City residency is not a requirement due to the regional nature of some of the duties and responsibilities of the Board;
 - b) Diverse and relevant professional backgrounds;
 - c) Neighborhood or community involvement;
 - d) Constituencies that make up Spokane's low and moderate income populations;
 - e) BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, youth and/or those with personal experience of poverty or homelessness.
7. Each September, if there are anticipated Board vacancies for the calendar year ahead, the Chair will appoint an *ad hoc* Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will interview applicants and propose a slate of board candidates, including backup candidates, at the November Board meeting. The Board shall vote on the slate of candidates at its December meeting.
 8. Applicants selected by the Board shall be sent to the Mayor for nomination, and then forwarded to City Council for appointment. If vacancies remain, or an unexpected vacancy occurs during the year, backup applications that were approved by the Board may be forwarded to the Mayor for nomination at the time of vacancy.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS:

1. The officers of the Board shall consist of the immediate Past Chair, Chair, and Chair-Elect.
2. The Chair shall perform all the duties and have all of the powers commonly incident to the office of the Chair, such as:
 - a) General supervision over the business and affairs of the Board
 - b) Preside at meetings
 - c) Act as the spokesperson for the Board
 - d) Appoint ad hoc committees and workgroups
 - e) Appoint Board representatives to other bodies for the purpose of regional coordination
 - f) Consult with the Executive Committee and Department Director to prepare Board agendas
 - g) Perform such other duties and have such other powers as the Board shall properly designate
3. The Chair-Elect shall perform the duties and have the powers of the Chair during the absence or disability of the Chair.
4. In the event of a vacancy of the Chair position, the Chair Elect shall automatically succeed to the position of Interim Chair. The Chair Elect position may remain vacant for the remainder of the calendar year, or it may be replaced by appointing an *ad-hoc* Nominating Committee as in subsection VI.7 herein.
5. The Past Chair, Chair, and Chair-Elect shall each hold office for a term of one year beginning at the January Board meeting. Except in case of early resignation, or sooner removal in accordance with these Bylaws:
 - a) The Chair-Elect shall automatically succeed to the office of Chair in the following year.
 - b) The Chair shall automatically succeed to the office of immediate Past Chair in the following year.
6. Officers missing three (3) or more Board meetings in a 12-month period may be relieved and replaced by a majority vote of the Board. Leaves of absence will be decided by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis.
7. Each September, the Chair shall appoint four Board members to serve as the *ad-hoc* Nominating Committee for election of Officers. At the November meeting, the committee shall bring forward their nominee(s) for the Chair-Elect and any other officer vacancies. The Chair will then call for nominations from the floor. The Board shall vote on the slate of officer candidates at its December meeting.

ARTICLE VII – BOARD OPERATION:

1. Board business shall be conducted only when:
 - a) A simple majority of current voting members (a quorum) is present, and
 - b) A public meeting is properly announced.
2. Whenever a quorum is present, discussion or communication regarding Board business is prohibited outside a public meeting.
3. The Board approves recommendations to the City Council and other actions by simple majority vote of the quorum present. Each Board member has one (1) vote on all matters brought before the Board. The Chair will not vote except to break or make a tie.
4. The Board will utilize a committee structure to assist with its functions. Committees will be comprised of Board members and other citizens with experience and expertise in the subject matter of the committee.
5. The Board will vote at the first meeting of the year to empower the Executive Committee to approve emergency actions that might be required by the Department. Any such actions will be presented at the next regularly scheduled meeting for final Board approval.
6. CHHS Department director and staff will:
 - a) Attend Board and committee meetings to provide information and support;
 - b) Convey recommendations from the Board to the city Administration and the Council via its Urban Experience Committee;
 - c) Facilitate compliance with the [Open Public Meetings Act](#);
 - d) Publish agendas and minutes on the CHHS Board webpage, and maintain Board documents as required by the [Public Records Act](#).

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS:

1. The Board is subject to the [Open Public Meetings Act](#). The public is invited to attend any meeting when a quorum is present. Public comment is invited regarding any topic on the agenda at the beginning of each public meeting and during public hearings.
2. Meetings are held monthly unless there is a month where the business of the Board is not required. Meeting notices and agendas will be posted by the Department, consistent with the [Open Public Meetings Act](#).

3. An annual Board retreat may be held in lieu of a monthly meeting.
4. An agenda with meeting materials is published at least 48 hours before each meeting. Board members are expected to review the materials before the meeting.
5. Any member of the Board may propose an item for the agenda at any meeting and may speak to any issue before the Board.
6. Board members may participate remotely in all or part of a Board meeting if:
 - a) All persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time;
 - b) The member participating remotely shall have reviewed all of the applicable material and participated in the relevant portion of the meeting related to any topic that the member is voting on;
 - c) There are no technical prohibitions or difficulties that prevent all parties from adequately communicating with one another.
7. A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chair or by a majority of the members of the Board, by delivering notice via electronic mail to each member of the Board.
 - a) Notice of a special meeting called under subsection (7) of this article shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted. Final disposition shall not be taken on any other matter at such meetings by the Board.
 - b) Notices required under subsection VIII.7 must be delivered or posted as follows, at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time of meeting specified in the notice:
 - Delivered to each local newspaper of general circulation and local radio or television stations that have on file with the Department a written request to be notified of such special meeting or of all special meetings;
 - Posted on the Department web site;
 - Prominently displayed at the main entrance of Spokane City Hall and the meeting site if it is not held at City Hall;
 - c) Notices provided in this section may be dispensed with in the event a special meeting is called to deal with an emergency involving injury or damage to persons or property or the likelihood of such injury or damage, when time requirements of the notice would make notice impractical and increase the likelihood of such injury or damage.

ARTICLE IX – RULES OF ORDER:

1. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* is the parliamentary authority for the Board.
2. A quorum consists of a simple majority of the voting Board members (7 if all seats are filled).
3. Bylaws are reviewed every two years by the Board. Any revisions and/or amendments to the Bylaws are transmitted to the Board two (2) weeks before the regular monthly meeting and are approved by simple majority vote of the quorum present at the next meeting. Bylaws, with revisions/amendments noted, are provided to the City Council for its information.

ARTICLE X – CODE OF CONDUCT:

1. This Code sets a minimum standard for proper performance of duties and continuation of service. CHHS volunteers must commit to the highest standards of ethical conduct in the performance of their responsibilities in order to:
 - a) Promote public confidence in the integrity of the Board and its processes; and
 - b) Avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest.
2. Ethical Conduct: Each member of the CHHS Board and its Committees shall:
 - a) Faithfully abide by the CHHS Bylaws;
 - b) Serve without compensation or financial incentive;
 - c) Attend 75% of all Board or Committee meetings within any consecutive 12-months;
 - d) Exercise integrity, objectivity, reasonable care, and good faith when acting on behalf of the Board and its Committees;
 - e) Promote an environment with staff, stakeholders and fellow members that values fairness, transparency, respect, and diversity of opinions;
 - f) Respect the sensitivity of information known due to CHHS service;
 - g) Refer questions or comments to the Department rather than engage in communication related to CHHS with any applicant, during a RFP application or review period in which the applicant is involved.
3. Conflict of Interest (see also: [City of Spokane Conflict of Interest policy](#)) Board and Committee members shall:
 - a) Sign a Conflict of Interest statement annually,
 - b) Fully disclose, at the earliest opportunity, information that may result in a perceived or actual conflict of interest.
 - c) Recuse themselves from participation in all processes where a potential conflict exists.
 - d) No employee, agent, officer, or official of any agency receiving HUD funds, or likely to apply for federal funding in the future, may serve on the CHHS Board or its committees without first being granted a HUD exception which waives the conflict pursuant to [24 CFR 570.611\(d\)](#).
 - e) A conflict of interest exists if:
 - The person or a member of their immediate family currently, or within the last year has been, or has a current agreement to serve in the future as, a board member, staff member or paid consultant of an organization making a request for funding to CHHS; or
 - The person's employer or an organization on whose Board of Directors the person sits has now, or within the last year has had, a contractual relationship with an organization making a proposal for recommendation of a grant. (However, if the Member's employer, or the organization on whose Board of Directors the person sits, is a funding entity or organization whose mission includes providing services and/or funding to other service providers, no conflict exists); or

- Any other circumstance exists which impedes the person's ability to objectively, fairly and impartially review and rank proposals for funding.
4. Public Meetings:
 - a) No member of the Board shall discuss or communicate on matters of Board business when a quorum is present, except in a properly announced public meeting.
 - b) Upon appointment or reappointment, each Board member must complete education on the [Open Government Training Act](#) as required by Spokane's [Administrative Policy No. 0520-17-06](#).
 5. Public Statements and Media Response:
 - a) Only the Board Chair or those empowered by the Chair shall make public statements or speak to the media on behalf of the Board.
 - b) Other Board and Committee members will make clear that they are speaking in their own name.
 6. [Spokane Municipal Code - Section 04.25.540](#) lays out the indemnification of individuals serving on City boards and committees. CHHS Board or Committee members acting under their scope of authority in conducting city business, and acting in good faith and reasonably believing the conduct to be in the city's best interest, are covered under this section.
 7. Code of Conduct Violations: The Executive Committee may:
 - a) Approve a Board member's requested Leave of Absence up to 6 months on a case-by-case basis.
 - b) Dismiss or reprimand a Committee member if the Code of Conduct is violated.
 - c) Recommend dismissal of a Board member for violating the Code of Conduct to the Mayor or Council, at whose discretion the Board and its members serve.

ARTICLE XI – COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

1. There are three (3) standing committees:
 - a) Executive Committee
 - b) Affordable Housing Committee (AHC);
 - c) Human Services Committee
 - d) Additional standing committees may be developed by the Executive Committee, in cooperation with the CHHS Department, as needed to accomplish the work of the Board.
2. The Board Chair may establish *ad hoc* committees and workgroups and appoint members as required to carry out its functions.
3. The Executive Committee and CHHS Director will oversee systems and processes to ensure communication and coordination between committees and with the Board.

ARTICLE XII – COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE

1. Committee Officers:
 - a) The Board Chair and Chair-Elect shall serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee, respectively.
 - b) The Chair and Vice-Chair of other standing committee are current Board members, recommended by the Executive Committee and approved by the Board.
 - c) Terms: The Board will review Standing committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and members annually in December, with new one-year terms beginning in January. There is no limit on consecutive terms served.
 - d) Committee Chairs are current Board members who:
 - Work with CHHS staff to set committee agendas.
 - Arrange and facilitate meetings.
 - Ensure committee is meeting objectives.
 - Function as liaison to the Board.
 - Report updates on Committee activities at each Board meeting,
 - Participate with Executive Committee to identify action items for the monthly Board meeting agenda.
 - Recruit committee members and submit recommended applicants to the Board for approval.
 - Develop the Vice-Chair for eventual succession to the Chair position.
 - e) Committee Vice-Chairs are current Board members who:
 - Assume duties above if the chair is absent.
 - Serve as interim Chair for the remainder of the year in the event of committee Chair vacancy.

2. Committee Membership:

- a) Application for committee membership shall be open to interested parties upon vacancy. Potential committee members will apply using the [online form](#) for City Boards, accompanied by a conflict of interest statement.
- b) Standing Committees shall have from four (4) to thirteen (13) members. The number of Board members serving on a committee must never exceed a Board quorum.
- c) Members of standing committees shall be recommended by the committee Chair and approved by the Board. Candidates will be selected for their:
 - Knowledge of the community's needs;
 - Ability to donate their time for review and evaluation;
 - Qualifications and background needed to evaluate applications and recommend funding (see subsections 6.b and 7.b below);
 - Sensitivity to the needs of the low and moderate-income individuals;
 - Diverse representation as described in subsection V.5 herein;
- d) The Board Chair may serve as a non-voting *ex-officio* member of each committee, or may have full membership on a committee if approved by the Board.
- e) Committee members may serve unlimited one-year terms, subject to annual Board approval at its December meeting. Meaningful attendance and participation, as determined by the committee Chair, is required for continued membership.
- f) Committee members are required to comply with the Code of Conduct, Section X herein, and to be familiar with Article XII of these Bylaws.

3. Conduct of Committee Meetings:

- a) Committees Chairs will determine frequency of meetings to accomplish their tasks.
- b) Prior to a meeting, all committee members will receive a written agenda via email.
- c) The number of Board members attending a committee meeting must not comprise a quorum of the Board.
- d) Conduct of meetings will be guided by a consensus process.
- e) Committee reviews and recommendations regarding RFP applications will be informed by:
 - Objective scoring of application content;
 - Information relevant to the RFP and applications provided by the Department;
 - Priorities for Federal and State funding in conformance with guidelines of HUD ([24 CFR Part 91](#)) and Commerce, where applicable;
 - Priorities identified by City Council for Local funding of human services.
- f) Committee actions and recommendations are determined by a simple majority vote of those present at the meeting.

4. Role of CHHS Staff:

- a) The CHHS Department will maintain a master calendar of Board and Committee activities, to meet essential timelines and prevent conflicts.
- b) The CHHS Director will assign a CHHS staff member to support each standing committee. The CHHS staff member assigned to each committee will:
 - work with the committee Chair to set agendas;
 - assist with data and presentations;
 - facilitate committee logistics; and
 - provide underwriting or pass/fail threshold reviews of funding applications being reviewed.
- c) Facilitate a feedback session when requested by an applicant with questions concerning a committee funding recommendation, or refer the applicant to City Council if they wish to appeal a funding decision.

5. Executive Committee duties and responsibilities:

- a) Purpose: Oversee all operations to promote Board stability and sound functioning, with an eye to future needs of the Board and of low- to moderate-income Spokane residents.
- b) Members:
 - Board Chair
 - Immediate-Past Chair
 - Chair-Elect
 - Chairs of Standing Committees
- c) Duties:
 - Authorize urgent action on behalf of the Board when necessary
 - Set Board meeting agendas
 - Coordinate plans and activities with the Department
 - Oversee Board and Committee performance
 - Research and recommend implementation of best practices to further the goals of the CHHS Board.
 - Address needs and challenges of the Board
 - Assign Committee chair/vice-chair roles annually

6. Affordable Housing Committee duties and responsibilities:

- Purpose: Provide expertise on activities and funding in the area of affordable housing, capital, and housing repairs.
- Members: Committee will seek diverse representation which may include appraisers, property managers, housing developers, bankers, service providers, contractors, economists, planners, real estate, loan management expertise, disabled constituents, low-income constituents, and housing experts.
- Duties:
 - Convey and seek out timely and transparent communication with stakeholders.
 - Assist the CHHS Board to identify needs, funding priorities, and strategies for community development and affordable housing.
 - Research and recommend implementation of best practices to further the goal of affordable housing for low-mid income residents.
 - Consult with the Department on design of RFPs, applications and scoring tools.
 - Evaluate applications to recommend allocation of funds for affordable housing, housing rehabilitation, and capital improvement projects to benefit low to moderate income individuals.

7. Human Services Committee duties and responsibilities:

- a) Purpose: Advise the Board on Human Services funding priorities, allocation of funds, alignment of resources, and contract performance.
- b) Members: Committee will seek diverse representation which may include educators, health and social service professionals, and community advocates for families and vulnerable populations. Additional Participants may be recruited by the committee Chair for the review of proposals during complex RFP processes, as deemed necessary.
- c) Duties:
 - Convey and seek out timely and transparent communication with stakeholders.
 - Assist the CHHS Board to identify needs, funding priorities, and strategies for human services.
 - Research and recommend implementation of best practices to improve quality of life for low-mid income residents.
 - Consult with the Department on design of RFPs, applications and scoring tools.
 - Evaluate applications and make recommendations for allocation of funds for human service projects to benefit low to moderate income individuals.
 - Review annual reports provided by the Department on funded programs including performance, effectiveness and funding utilization.
 - Identify potential funding reallocations based on performance, to ensure most effective use and community impact.

8. Ad hoc Committee duties and responsibilities:

- a) Nominating Committee: The Board Chair will appoint an ad hoc Nominating Committee each September to bring forward candidates for Board and Officer positions.
- b) Bylaws Committee: The Board Chair will appoint an ad hoc Bylaws Committee in June of even-numbered years to review and update the CHHS Board Bylaws.
- c) Special ad hoc committees: The Board Chair may appoint a short-term committee or workgroup to investigate an assigned topic identified by the Executive Committee, and bring back recommendations to the Board.