

# Bemiss Neighborhood Council Bylaws

## Approved and Adopted 2016

1. SECTION ONE – NAME
  - A. This organization shall be known as the Bemiss Neighborhood Council (Bemiss NC)
  
2. SECTION TWO – VISION STATEMENT
  - A. The vision of the Bemiss Neighborhood Council is to collectively promote a positive attitude and respect among all members of the community. Our goal is to enhance our neighborhood, strengthen its opportunities and connect with and contribute to the City of Spokane through the Community Assembly (CA).
  
3. SECTION THREE – STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
  - A. The purpose of the Bemiss NC is to improve and preserve the quality of life in the Bemiss neighborhood through the following actions:
    01. Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council through the Community Assembly.
    02. Review and recommend actions, policies, or plans to the Community Assembly, the City and to any City agency, commission or board on any matter affecting the Bemiss neighborhood, other community groups, schools, non-profits, businesses and other neighborhood councils.
    03. To collaboratively assist City agencies in determining priority needs for the neighborhood.
    04. Review items for inclusion in the City budget and make recommendations relating to budget items for neighborhood improvements.
    05. Undertake to manage projects as may be agreed upon or contracted with public agencies.
    06. To source, secure, manage and disburse funds for projects, activities, or improvements that are outside of the Neighborhood Council program but are for the benefit of the neighborhood.
    07. Collaborate with city agencies in determining priority needs for the neighborhood.
    08. Actively solicit input from individuals, non-profits, other neighborhood councils and businesses, as well as community members.
    09. Review, comment and, if necessary take appropriate action, including but not limited to appeals of any proposed zoning changes, developments, plans,

proposed improvements, and other actions affecting the Bemiss  
Neighborhood

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY

The Bemiss NC works to be better informed when making decisions about issues originating from the CA level through the Representative and the Alternate, with the goal of improving the city of Spokane through citizen/resident participation. The Bemiss NC recognizes its ability to ask for funds; sit on CA sub-committees, provide liaisons to CA Standing Committees and to fulfill its power of Standing in a responsible and respectful manner in line with both the CA Policy and Procedures and the Bemiss NC bylaws..

5. NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

A. The boundaries of the Bemiss NC are as follows:

Spokane River on the South  
North on Crestline Street to Illinois Avenue  
West on Napa Street to Euclid Avenue  
West on Euclid Avenue to Perry Street  
North on Perry Street to Wellesley Avenue  
East on Wellesley Avenue to Haven Street  
South on Haven Street to Garland Avenue  
East on Garland Avenue to Market Street  
South on Market Street to Illinois Avenue  
West on Illinois Avenue to Smith Street  
South on Smith Street to the Spokane River

6. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- A. Council membership shall be open to any one at least 16 years old who lives in or, owns property in, operates a business in the neighborhood, or works within the Bemiss Neighborhood boundaries.
- B. Voting membership shall be granted to any individual who meets the above criteria and has attended three (3) monthly Bemiss NC meetings within a five (5) month period. Membership shall become effective at the third meeting and the new members name shall be noted in the minutes. Recorded attendance at any combination of regular and/or online conference meetings shall count towards membership, however, under no circumstances will full voting membership be granted without attendance for a full three month period beginning at the first meeting attended..

- C. Online membership requires joining the Bemiss NC. 'group' at Bemiss.NextDoor.com and participating in scheduled online conference meetings in accordance with section 6B, above. Online polling and/or voting will close the day prior to meetings and the tally added to the regular monthly meeting.
- D. There is no limit to the number of Neighborhood council meetings.
- E. The membership list shall be maintained and a copy sent to the Office of Neighborhood Services by March 1 and September 1 of each year.
- F. No member shall purport to represent the Bemiss NC unless authorized to do so by the Council.
- G. Upon request members shall receive a copy of the adopted Bemiss NC bylaws. The bylaws shall also be available on NextDoor Bemiss and on the Bemiss website and available for download.

7. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

- A. Associate membership shall be open to any person or business who does not meet the criteria for membership but is desirous of participating in the Bemiss Neighborhood Council.
- B. An associate member may serve on any committee, panel or program but may not hold any office and shall have no voting authority.
- C. There shall be no limit the number of associate members.

8. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS FROM THE BEMISS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL.

- A. An individual's voting membership on the council shall lapse on the end of the third successive month of *unexcused* absences unless extenuating circumstances exist which are approved by a majority of the officers, or if the member has not voted for 6 consecutive months within a calendar year.
- B. The secretary will make a note in the minutes of the names of individuals whose voting membership will lapse at the next meeting.
- C. The Bemiss NC reserves the right to request any unduly disruptive individual to remove themselves from meetings until such time as they are no longer disruptive to the group process.
- D. The same decorum is expected of online members as when attending the regular meetings. Not following the online guidelines for neighborly behavior and

disrupting or abusive posts will result in removal of the comments or commenter by the moderators.

9. MEETINGS

- A. Unless otherwise specifically defined in these bylaws, all affairs of the Bemiss NC shall be governed by the same discussion process used by the Community Assembly. (See Appendix)
- B. Regular Bemiss NC meetings shall be held monthly on the second Thursday at 6:00 PM at the North East Community Center 4001 Cook, Spokane, WA 99207 or at a place to be designated two weeks prior to the meeting. Notification should be by email, Next Door Bemis and the website.
- C. The schedule of online meetings will be established upon the implementation of said meetings and will be posted in the 'Documents' section of Nextdoor Bemiss. These online meetings will be scheduled approximately halfway between the regularly scheduled monthly meetings.
- D. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the chairperson, or upon request of the voting membership of the Council. The chair shall be obligated to call a meeting.
- E. Council meetings shall be open to the public. Visitors shall be invited to participate in the discussion of the matters at hand, but only qualified voting members of the Council can vote.
- F. A Quorum: The minimum number of Council members necessary to establish a voting Quorum at any regular meeting is one half plus one of the current eligible voting members.
- G. All approved meeting minutes, recordings and sign-in sheets or records of attendance must be kept for all meetings and shall remain on file with the secretary or chair, as well as with the Office of Neighborhood Affairs (ONS).
- H. Meeting Notification: all standing meetings will be considered as notified as they appear in the bylaws. A deviation from the standard meeting shall be publicized in the neighborhood by any reasonable means, including, but not limited to: flyers, mailings, newspapers, radio, television, NextDoor Bemiss, email and text message. Notices shall be distributed not less than seven (7) days before the meeting date.
- I. Failure to receive a meeting notice does not invalidate the meeting. However provisions of this section must be complied with in good faith.
- J. Executive Session: At any Bemiss Neighborhood Council meeting, as executive session may be called in order to discuss legal or other confidential matters.

10. OFFICERS AND DUTIES

- A. The Officers of the Bemiss NC shall be: Chair/Co-Chairs, Secretary, Treasurer (secretary and treasurer can be the same person), and Representative to the Community Assembly, an alternative Representative, and one or two members at large.
- B. Executive Committee: the Executive Committee shall consist of: Chair/Co-chairs, Treasurer/Secretary, the Representative and at least one member at large. The Executive Committee can do business, vote and expend funds when conditions make it difficult or impossible for the membership to meet when immediate responses are required. It may also act in matters specifically delegated to it and all such actions shall be reported at the next regular meeting. No action may be taken by the Executive Committee that is in direct conflict with the bylaws or policies formulated by the Bemiss Neighborhood Council.
- C. Duties of the Officers:
  - o The Chair/Co-Chairs shall be responsible for the operation of the Council pursuant to the bylaws. This includes: conducting meetings and setting the agenda, representing the neighborhood at official functions, appointing sub-committees, monitoring neighborhood expenditures as authorized by Council, and generally overseeing the business of the Council. Co-Chairs shall jointly have the primary responsibility for the long-term and short-term planning efforts of the neighborhood and shall also have specific duties as spelled out else where in these bylaws or as specifically designated by the Council.

Ideally the Co-Chair position will be staggered so that one person will be the lead chair, acting a a mentor to the following chair, ensuring that the person in the lead chair position has had a year of experience as an Officer. The non-lead can be responsible for the internet needs of the co0uncil if they have the required skill set or are willing to learn it.

- o The Secretary shall maintain the approved minutes and sign-in sheets and is responsible for sending them to the ONS by emailing them to [agenda@spokaneneighborhoods.org](mailto:agenda@spokaneneighborhoods.org), and ensuring that the Bemiss binder is maintained in the ONS office (agendas, minutes and any other relevant documents). The Secretary is also responsible for maintaining a current list of members in digital form as well as the current bylaws with any revisions or additions. The Secretary is *required* to keep a complete list of all passwords and other sign-in information for all the internet and social media sites. This information needs to maintained digitally and be shared with and accessible to other Officers.

The secretary will notify ONS, in writing, of the names and contact information of the newly elected Officers, along with the date they are due to take office.

- The Treasurer shall maintain an accurate accounting of all expenditures that have been directly ordered by the Chair or authorized by council. The Treasurer works with the Organizations of Northeast Spokane (ONES) treasurer as long as ONES is our fiscal agent to ensure that the records are accurate and available. The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that there is a monthly statement of account shared at each meeting.
- The Representative to the Community Assembly and the alternate shall be responsible to attend the monthly CA meetings on a regular basis, acting as a Liaison between the Bemiss NC and the CA. The Representative shall share with the Bemiss NC via monthly report, what is happening at the CA, bringing back issues to be discussed and/or voted on by the Bemiss NC and then take the Bemiss NC responses back to the CA – voting the will of the Bemiss NC. The Representative is authorized to do emergency votes, using their best understanding of what would be best for the Bemiss Neighborhood and the most likely will of the Bemiss NC. Any such actions need to be reported at the next Bemiss NC meeting.
- Members at Large will be elected from the membership to ensure a variety of representation on the board.
- Internet Responsibilities: the maintenance of the Bemiss website, Bemiss NC group on Nextdoor Bemiss, social media, and the Bemiss Facebook page are the responsibility of the Officers. The exact person responsible shall be determined by the Officers depending upon the skill set available, if no Officer has the required skill set, then a member can be appointed to work under the direction of the Officer. This includes keeping all of the above sites up to date, and the posting of all public documents and notices.

#### 11. NOMINATION, ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICERS

- A. A Nomination Committee will be formed in September to select candidates and ensure that all candidates are qualified voting members of the Bemiss NC.
- B. Officers shall be elected by voting Council members in December.
- C. Voting shall be by a simple majority (one half, plus one of the voting members present).
- D. Officer terms shall be for one (1) year. Officers may serve for three (3) consecutive terms.

12. REMOVAL AND VACANCIES OF OFFICERS

- A. Any elected officer may be removed from office for good cause. Removal shall be debated by the Council and shall require a one half plus one vote of the voting members, providing that a resolution proposing the consideration of the removal has been adopted at a preceding meeting and that notice of the vote for removal has been included in the call to the meeting at which the vote shall take place.
- B. Should vacancies occur outside the normal election process, candidates for the unfilled term shall be nominated from the floor as long as they are proper voting members of the Council, and elected at the next scheduled meeting following the vacancy. The person elected to the vacated office will serve for the remainder of the term.

13. COMMITTEES

- A. The Council chair, may appoint standing committees to help conduct the business of the Council.
- B. The chair may appoint special or sub-committees to help conduct specialized business of the Council as the need arises.
- C. Committees shall report to the Council and these reports shall be entered into the minutes.
- D. If the need to address an issue that is in response to the Standing of the Council then the Council may create a committee to address that particular purpose. That committee acts under the direction of the Council and will report its progress at each meeting. These reports shall be entered in to the minutes.

14. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended by a one half plus one majority vote of the voting members, providing that a resolution proposing the amendment has been adopted at a preceding regular meeting and that notice of the proposed amendment has been given in the call for the meeting at which the amendment shall be voted upon.

## Appendix

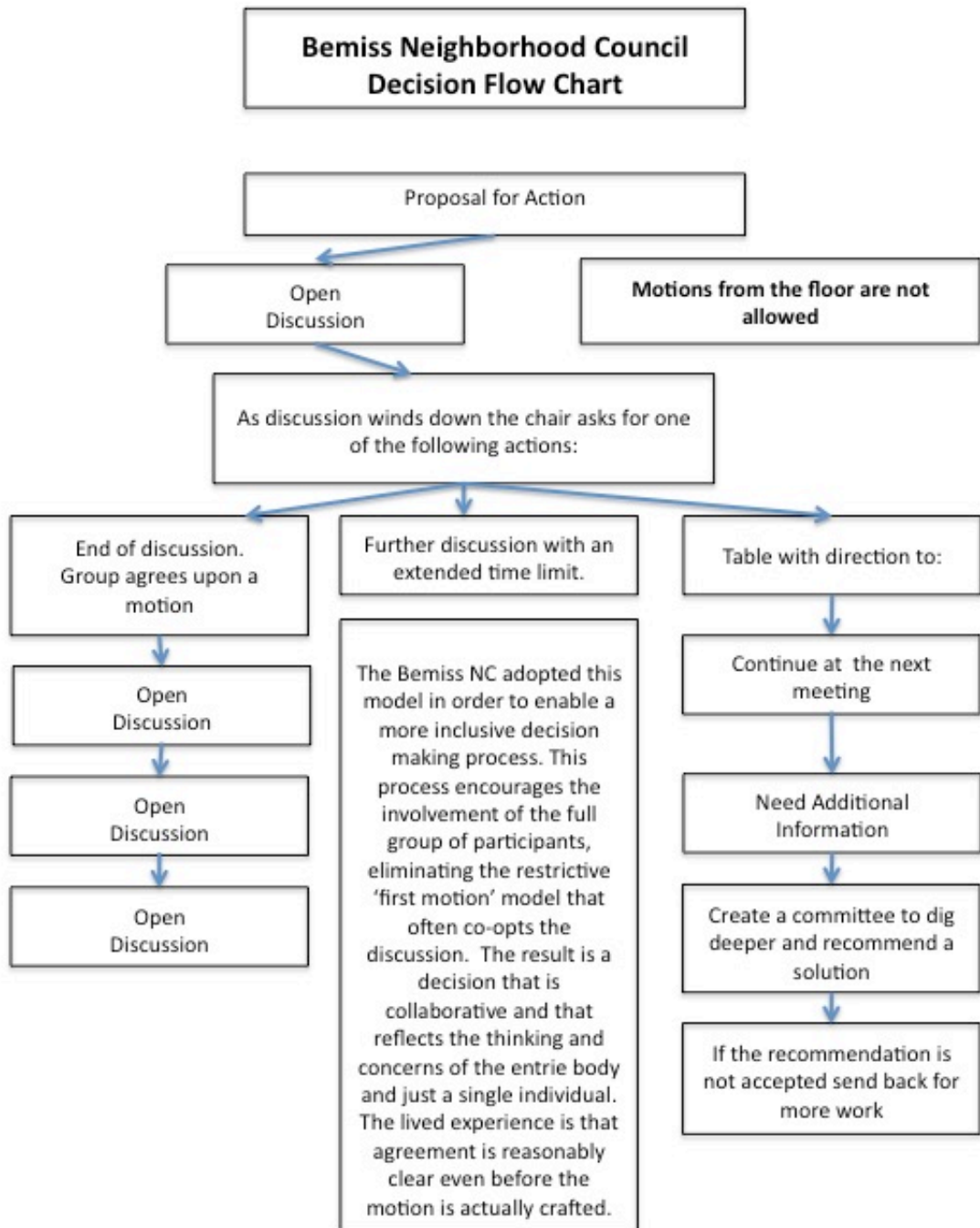
### Discussion and Decision-Making Process

D. Bemiss will use the same decision-making process as the Community Assembly:  
(See figure below for a graphical depiction of what follows.)

1. The chair will facilitate meetings
2. To speak at a meeting, a person must be recognized by the chair and only one person can be recognized at a time. Each speaker has two minutes. When all who wish to speak have been allowed their time, the rotation may begin again.
3. When a proposal for action is made, open discussion shall occur before a motion is formed by the group.
4. As part of the final time extension request, the chair shall request a show of hands by the representatives to indicate which of the following actions the group wants to take:
  - a. End discussion and move into forming the motion and voting,
  - b. Further discussion,
  - c. Table discussion with direction,
  - d. Request time to continue discussion at next meeting,
  - e. Request additional information from staff or committee, or
  - f. Send back to the appropriate committee for additional work.

This process allows for discussion *before* a motion is made which allows for a more complete exploration of the issue. The content of the motion will be determined by the discussion.





5. All other questions regarding the running of the meeting shall be decided by the chair. If someone speaks out of turn or disrupts the meeting, the chair

can rule that person out of order. If anyone objects to any decision by the chair, that person can challenge the ruling of the chair. When this occurs, each member and the chair, can speak to the challenge once and for only one minute. Then debate is ended and a vote is taken immediately to either uphold or reject the decision of the chair.

6. Meeting timetable protocol:

- a. When a presenter has one minute left in the time allotted, the chair shall raise a yellow card and indicate a verbal notice.
- b. Should any representative wish to extend the time of the presentation or comment/question period, they may make a motion to extend the time by five (5) minutes.
- c. An immediate call shall be made for a show of hands in support of the extension of time. With a simple majority (50% plus 1) concurring, the time shall be reset by the amount of time requested.
- d. Extensions shall be limited to two (2) or until a request fails to show a simple majority approval.
- e. After two (2) extensions, if a motion is on the table, the facilitator shall call for a vote on the motion. The membership can approve, not approve, or table the discussion.
- f. If there is no motion on the table, a request may be made to either reschedule the presenter to a later meeting, or ask the presenter to stay and finish at the end of the agenda.
- g. When the allotted time has expired, a red card and verbal notice shall be given.

This process allows for discussion *before* a motion is made which allows for a more complete exploration of the issue. The content of the motion will be determined by the discussion.