

# CITY OF MERCER ISLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

## BYLAWS

Adopted 7/7/22

The Parks and Recreation Commission is an advisory board to the Mercer Island City Council as established by Ordinance No. 19C-01, passed by City Council January 2019, and codified in Chapter 3.53 of the Mercer Island City Code (MICC). These bylaws constitute a supplement to said documents, providing further statements of the organization, procedures, activities, and objectives of the Parks and Recreation Commission. In any instance in which these bylaws might be interpreted to be contrary to said documents, the latter shall govern.

### ARTICLE I – PURPOSE, DUTIES, & RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of the Parks & Recreation Commission is to serve in a policy advisory capacity to the City Council and any other board or commission of the city on matters involving the Mercer Island parks system, recreation programming, and the Mercer Island Community & Event Center. As an advisory board, the Parks & Recreation Commission shall not direct significant staff work outside the workplan, nor is the commission authorized to commit any funds of the City without approval from the City Council.

Pursuant to MICC 3.53.020, the duties and responsibilities of the Parks & Recreation Commission shall be to:

- Develop the parks, recreation and open space (PROS) plan as a component of the city's comprehensive plan and provide recommendations on periodic updates to the plan as directed by the city council.
- Provide a forum for the community to express their views on parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities.
- Advise and prepare recommendations on master plans for parks, trails, open space areas, and other recreation facilities and advise on the acquisition of park property.
- Make recommendations on the proposed budget for parks and recreation, pertaining only to programs, levels of service, and capital improvement projects.
- Promote park and recreation activities within the city.
- Support and foster inclusive programs and services that embrace and enhance the cultural diversity of the community.
- Explore opportunities to obtain private, local, state, and/or federal funds to support parks and recreation programs, services and facilities.
- Facilitate communication and cooperation with existing organizations including schools, businesses, nonprofits, organizations, foundations, and other community groups to collaborate on the delivery of parks and recreation services.
- Provide a forum for the community to express their views regarding library services on Mercer Island and serve in an advisory capacity to the King County Library System.
- Advise on other matters as directed by the city council.

## **ARTICLE II – ORGANIZATION**

### **1. MEMBERSHIP**

The Parks & Recreation Commission consists of seven persons recommended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and subject to appointment by the City Council. Commissioners serve a term of four years and may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Each commissioner's term shall expire on the last day of May pursuant to MICC 3.53.030.

### **2. OFFICERS**

The elected officers of the Parks & Recreation Commission shall consist of a Chair and Vice Chair. The term of office for Chair and Vice Chair is one year with the possibility of reelection. Each officer may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Officer terms take effect at the first meeting in June, and the election cycle is repeated annually.

If the Chair or Vice Chair vacates the position, the Parks & Recreation Commission will nominate and vote for a current member to fill the position at the Commission's next regular meeting. The new Chair will carry out the vacated position's term and a new Chair will be appointed at the next renewal.

#### **A. Election Process**

At the Parks & Recreation Commission's June meeting, the following process is followed to elect new officers:

- Place motion to elect Chair and Vice Chair on the agenda.
- Take nominations for the position of Chair from the floor.
- Nominations do not require a second vote.
- If no further nominations, the Chair declares nominations closed.
- Voting takes place in the order nominations are made.
- If there is only one nomination, board members will vote on that nomination by a voice vote.
- If there is more than one nomination, each will be voted on separately by a roll-call vote of the members present.
- Once a nominee receives a simple majority vote, the nominee is declared elected to the position.
- If none of the nominees receive a majority vote, nominations are requested again, and the process is repeated until a candidate receives a majority vote.
- The process is repeated for Vice Chair.

## **B. Officer Duties**

- Facilitate Commission meetings in a fair, efficient, productive, and informative manner.
- Act as the primary Commission representative to City Council.
- Serve as the primary line of communication to City staff.
- Work with City staff to schedule meetings and develop meeting agendas.
- Appoint committee chairs.
- The Vice Chair attends meetings with staff and the Chair and fulfills duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.

## **3. COMMITTEES**

The Parks & Recreation Commission may appoint various committees as needed. Committees may be appointed by the Parks and Recreation Commission Chair at any time or be appointed by a majority vote of members present at a Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, assuming there is a quorum. Committees are chaired by commissioners appointed by the officers, and committee members may be a combination of commissioners or other appropriate volunteers. Due to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 42.30 RCW), a committee shall contain fewer members than a quorum of the whole Parks & Recreation Commission.

### **Selection of Committee Chairs and Members**

Once a committee is created, The Parks and Recreation Commission Chair will determine committee chair and member appointments. Committee chairs and members assume duties for a duration established by the Parks and Recreation Commission Chair.

Any standing committees will follow the above process annually at the May meeting. Chair and member appointments will be announced at the June meeting.

## **ARTICLE III - OPERATIONS**

### **1. MEETINGS**

#### **Regular & Special Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Parks & Recreation Commission convene at 5:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month at Mercer Island City Hall in the Council Chambers or to be convened remotely or within a hybrid meeting model as directed by the City Manager, and in consultation with Commission Officers. Special meetings may be called as required by the Commission Chair, or a quorum of the Parks & Recreation Commission, by giving at least 24 hours advance notice to members and the City's paper of record in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. The notice must specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted at the special meeting.

Staff is responsible for distributing all meeting notices and cancellations to the public as well as generating and updating the website calendar for upcoming Parks & Recreation Commission meetings.

### **Officer Meetings**

Generally, the Chair, Vice Chair, and staff liaisons shall meet at least one week in advance of the regular Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to determine the meeting agenda.

## **2. ATTENDANCE**

Each commissioner should strive to attend all Parks & Recreation Commission meetings, to read materials beforehand, and to participate fully. Except in instances of sudden illness or other unforeseen hardship, commissioners should advise the staff and the Chair/Vice Chair of their intended absence before 4:30 p.m. on the day prior to the regular meeting. Excused absences will be noted for the record at the beginning of the meeting.

A commissioner shall forfeit his/her position by failing to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Commission without being excused by the Chair.

## **3. QUORUM/VOTING**

A quorum consists of a simple majority of the appointed members of the Parks & Recreation Commission. No formal action of the Commission may be taken at any meeting where a quorum is not present. If a quorum is not reached at the start of a meeting, the Chair may choose to excuse the meeting.

An action shall be approved by a majority vote of members present assuming there is a quorum.

## **4. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair may adjust or amend the order of business as needed. The Parks & Recreation Commission's regular meetings normally use the following format:

- Call to Order & Roll Call
- Appearances
- Director's Report
- Approval of Minutes
- Regular Agenda Items
- Other Business (Commissioner Absences & Planning Schedule)
- Adjourn

The Chair shall conduct meetings in an open, fair, and transparent manner. In the event of a procedural question, the Chair will refer to Robert’s Rules of Order for guidance.

**ARTICLE IV – CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

If an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists that affects the work of the Parks & Recreation Commission, it is each commissioner’s responsibility to openly describe the issue and refrain from any subsequent commission participation, deliberation, or voting on the subject.

**ARTICLE V – RESIGNATIONS**

In the event that a commissioner wishes to vacate his/her term early, resignation should be tendered in writing to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and staff liaison. The City Clerk will then recruit for a new member to fill the vacancy through the City’s established board/commission vacancy process.

**ARTICLE VI – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION**

The goal of the Parks & Recreation Commission is to provide recommendations to the City Council. Recommendations to the council will be made following a vote by the commission. Majority as well as minority views on any recommendation may be included. To document the actions taken by the Commission, staff will prepare a written statement or memorandum, including the facts, findings, and rationale for the final recommendations. The Chair, in cooperation with the staff liaisons, will present the recommendations to the City Council on behalf of the Commission.

**ARTICLE VII – PUBLIC REPRESENTATION AND STATEMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION**

Any commissioner has a right to express personal views and opinions. However, statements representing the views or recommendations of the Parks & Recreation Commission must be authorized by a majority or consensus of the Commission. Consultation with staff on messaging is required.

**ARTICLE VIII – REVIEW OF BYLAWS**

The Parks & Recreation Commission shall review bylaws annually at the regular meeting in July. Proposed amendments must be approved by a majority.

**ARTICLE IX - CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Parks & Recreation Commission developed the following “group norms” to define the expectations for conduct by commissioners and the interaction among members. These are intended to be simple, self-explanatory, and self-enforced. The Chair is empowered to remind members as the need arises to employ these norms.

- Everyone contributes.

- Foster a collaborative environment.
- Hold each other accountable.
- Get to know each other and the community.
- Be transparent and accessible.

Commissioners will demonstrate respect for members of the public, staff, and other commissioners by:

- Attending each meeting and arriving on time (if late arrival is necessary, please call or email ahead).
- Reading materials in advance, coming to the meeting prepared and submitting questions in advance.
- Respectfully and attentively listening to the speaker (avoid side discussions).
- Speaking respectfully to and about the public, staff and other commissioners.