

## **BYLAWS AUSTIN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Pursuant to Ordinance 512, adopted by the City Council of Austin on July 19, 2004 and updated on September 8, 2008 relating to and providing for the establishment, appointment, organization and responsibilities of Austin Human Rights Commission, the said Commission does hereby adopt the following bylaws and rules for the conduct of its affairs.

### **Article I. Policy**

It shall be the public policy of the Austin Human Rights Commission to fulfill its responsibility as a partner with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights to contribute in securing all citizens equal opportunities provided by Minnesota statutes and to work consistently to improve the human rights climate of Austin.

The Austin Human Rights Commission shall possess the right to refer any complaint brought to the Commission for investigation to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.

### **Article II. Membership**

The Commission shall consist of nine members who shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by a majority vote of the Council. A reasonable effort will be made to seek a cross section of representation of all citizens within the City of Austin. Members of the Commission shall be appointed for terms of three years so that the terms of no more than three members of the Commission shall expire in any single year. Any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which their predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of such term. Commission may serve consecutive terms. Commission members shall serve without compensation and may be removed from office for cause by the Mayor and Council.

### **Article III. Officers**

The officers shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson (two co-chairpersons are permitted if agreed on by the Commission for that year), and a Secretary.

Officers shall be elected for a term of one year at the first meeting of each year. Action on this item may be deferred to a subsequent meeting.

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson and perform duties delegated by the Chairperson. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings. The City Liaison shall finalize and mail all correspondence determined necessary for its functions, including notice of meetings.

#### **Article IV. Duties of the Commission**

As defined under City Code 2.52 (Human Rights Commission), Subd. 7.

No member or officer of the Commission shall represent or act on behalf of the Commission without specific authorization of the Commission, with the exception of gathering information for Commission input and consideration.

#### **Article V. Committees**

The Commission may form and dissolve committees at its discretion to fulfill the responsibilities of the Commission.

#### **Article VI. Meetings of the Commission**

There shall typically be at least one (1) regular meeting per calendar month, unless the Commission conducts a different activity (including but not limited to training, conferences, special events, etc.) during the month or if such a meeting is deemed unnecessary at the discretion of the Chairperson.

The Chairperson or any two (2) members of the Commission shall have the authority to call special meetings of the Commission. Written notice of special meetings shall be given to all members setting forth the purpose of the special meeting and no other matters shall be considered at the meeting without the unanimous consent of all members present.

Five (5) members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum to conduct official business. Each member of the Commission, including the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary, shall each have one (1) vote on all Commission matters acted upon by the Commission. Simple majority of those present shall pass a motion.

All meetings are open to the public. Upon recommendation from legal counsel, the Commission may move into closed session upon an appropriate motion. The agenda and/or the minutes of the meeting must reflect the reason for closing the meeting to the public. The meeting shall only be closed in so long as the issues to be discussed conform to the State of Minnesota Open Meeting Law. All public participants or observers will be asked to provide signature and address at each meeting. Public participation and input in Commission discussion and the conduct of official business are at the discretion of the Chairperson and the Commission as circumstances dictate.

All meetings will be conducted according to the spirit of Robert's Rules of Order – Latest Revision.

#### **Article VII. Community Involvement**

The Commission may, at their discretion, periodically invite community members and organizational representatives to share information or insights into the needs of the community at large in the areas of securing all citizens equal opportunities provided by Minnesota statutes. If

the Commission and other community organizations want to take on a joint project, they may form sub-committees or task forces for this purpose. This input will help the Commission to determine goals or projects that may be undertaken.

#### **Article VIII. Confidentiality**

The Commission and all its members shall make every reasonable effort to protect the privacy of individuals according to the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

#### **Article IX. Amendments to Bylaws**

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Commission at any regular or special meeting of the Commission, if notice of the proposed amendment was provided to Commission members.

Passed and adopted by the Human Rights Commission on this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September, 2008 with the following vote: Yeas 7; No 0; Absent 2.

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Secretary

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Chairperson