

# Constitution of the Strathcona Community Council

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## **Preamble**

- The organization shall be known as the Strathcona Community Council.
- The Strathcona Community Council is a neighbourhood association for the Strathcona Neighbourhood of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.
- The organization shall serve the neighbourhood within the boundaries of Main Street West north to the Hamilton waterfront, and Queen Street North west to the Highway 403.
  - The detailed geographic boundary of the neighbourhood of Strathcona shall be established thus: beginning at the intersection of Main Street West and Queen Street North, then travelling generally westernly along the centreline of Main Street West to the centre median of the Highway 403/Chedoke Expressway, then travelling generally north/north-westerly along the centre median of the Highway 403/Chedoke Expressway to the Desjardins Canal, then generally easterly through the centre of the Desjardins Canal to the shore of Hamilton Harbour/Burlington Bay, then generally south and easterly along the shore of Hamilton Harbour/Burlington Bay to a point generally even with Queen Street North, then south along Queen Street North to the point of commencement.
- For all terms marked \* please refer to the Terms of Reference
- From here on in this document the Strathcona Community Council will be referred to as the SCC.

## **Aims & Objectives:**

- 1) To promote cultural and political\* activity within the geographic area of the neighbourhood with the objective of encouraging participation by the greatest number of residents of the area and in all age groups.
- 2) To disseminate information relevant to the quality of living in the neighbourhood.
- 3) To encourage the concept of community within the neighbourhood.
- 4) To cooperate with existing groups engaged in cultural and political activity in the area.
- 5) To raise funds and gather resources for SCC activities
- 6) The SCC shall be open to all.
- 7) The SCC shall be Non-Partisan.

## **Membership:**

- 1) All members must reside within the geographic boundaries defined in the Preamble to this Constitution.

- 2) All members must be of voting age, presently set at 18 years of age.
- 3) All members must present their residential address and contact information.
- 4) All members may become an officer or an executive member.
- 5) Special membership can be extended to business owners, religious leaders, and organizational leaders if they are situated or regularly operate in the geographic boundary of the neighbourhood.
- 6) Special members' participation is restricted to members of a committee (see Voting for other restrictions).
- 7) There shall be no charge for membership.
- 8) In the event that a member has been removed from a position (i.e. officer, executive member, and/or committee member) by vote of the executive membership, said member shall not be permitted to hold any position in the future.

### **Officers & Executive Members:**

- 1) Officers shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Officer.
- 2) The Executive\* shall consist of the Officers and Members-at-Large.
- 3) All officer positions may be re-elected but may not serve more than three consecutive terms\*, except in the case where there are no candidates for an open position.
- 4) Only one member of a residential unit\* may hold office at the same time on the Executive. This does not include the position of Chair or committee membership.
- 5) Immediate family members\* may only hold one executive position at a time, even if they live in different residential units within the Strathcona neighbourhood.
- 6) New executive members are always welcome according to the needs of the positions available.
- 7) In the event that an officer resigns leaving a post vacant, the executive will, first, seek a replacement from within the existing Executive membership. If a replacement can not be found within the Executive then, secondly, a request will be extended to the general membership.
  - a. If the post is not filled within a month of the second request then it will be filled on a rotating basis by the Executive members until the following AGM.
  - b. A vote will be taken by the executive to elect the member for the vacant position.

### **Executive Structure & Responsibilities:**

#### ***Officers***

President (elected): represent the SCC by communicating with other political/non-political groups and community councils; liaise with the membership; chair the meetings or delegate an executive member to chair; manage the SCC email account; create the agenda for all meetings; be a signatory on the SCC bank account; and, provide an annual summation of SCC activities at the Annual General Meeting

Vice-President (elected): stand in for the president when needed; represent the SCC by communicating with other political/non-political groups; liaise with committee chairs

Secretary (elected): record the minutes\* of the meetings; manage the membership list; liaise with executive members on SCC activity.

Financial officer (elected): record the financial transactions of the SCC; advise and coordinate fundraising by the SCC; be a signatory on the SCC bank account; provide an annual report of all financial activity at the Annual General Meeting.

Communications Officer (appointed by Officers according to knowledge and skills): manage the social media accounts of the SCC, including the website, Facebook account, and Twitter account; develop posters and flyers for printing and posting online; develop online event pages for SCC activities. These tasks may be delegated to other executive members. Any division of responsibilities and tasks must be reported to the Executive.

### ***Executive Members***

Member-at-Large (elected): discuss and vote on executive issues and motions; participate on committees; assist and participate in SCC activities.

Chair of Committee (voluntary): lead committee activities; organize committee meetings; report to the Executive on committee activity. Note: non-executive members may serve as a chair of a committee. In this case then their participation on the Executive ends when they are finished as chair of the committee. Note: Chairs of Committees are exempt to the rule limit of 11 members on the Executive.

### **Meetings:**

- 1) The SCC shall hold an Annual General Meeting of all members.
  - a. Elections of executive membership are to take place at this meeting
  - b. Reports of Officers and Committee Chairs shall be made at this meeting.
  - c. All members of the SCC shall be notified of the date and agenda in writing at least thirty days prior to this meeting.
- 2) All SCC meetings will be administered according to Robert's Rules.
- 3) The default chair of SCC meetings shall be the President, though the President may delegate the responsibility of chairing meetings to any member of the Executive.
- 3) The chair of the meeting will have the discretion to permit all attendants of a meeting to speak multiple times on a motion.
- 4) The Executive shall meet monthly except during July and August. The months of July and August shall be optional.
- 5) Minutes will be taken at all meetings and made available online.

### **Committees:**

- 1) The Executive shall define and assign committees by motion. Said motion will take the form of a By-Law.
- 2) The Executive shall require all committees to make regular reports on the progress of the activities conducted by them on the responsibilities assigned to them and shall require a proper accounting of all funds allocated to such committees.

- 3) Within the confines of its purpose a committee may organize its own proactive activities in the name of the SCC.
- 4) Committees are not permitted to commit the SCC to any expenditure without the prior approval of the Executive.
- 5) Programs or projects of the Executive may not infringe on the areas under the responsibility of any other committee without the consent of the President.
- 6) Representatives of the SCC may be assigned to committees or organizations outside the SCC by a voluntary process. If more than one member volunteers, the president will call a vote by executive members to decide who shall serve as representative.

### **Finances:**

- 1) Fundraising will be conducted by the SCC with the assistance of the Committee members, for the purpose of use of the organization, providing said donations do not interfere with the aims and objectives of the SCC.
- 2) All funds collected by the Executive or a Committee must be turned over to the SCC Treasurer.
- 3) All approved expenses incurred by Committees must be paid by the SCC.
- 4) The SCC may make donations, providing said donations do not interfere with the aims and objectives of the SCC.
- 5) The SCC shall have two signing authorities, with all expenditures approved by the Executive by vote.

### **Quorum:**

- 1) The status of quorum shall be determined by the Executive at the beginning of term.
  - a. A motion can not be passed unless quorum is achieved.
  - b. Quorum can be achieved through online participation.

### **Amendments to the Constitution:**

- 1) Notice of any amendments to the Constitution must be in writing and given to the Executive one month prior to the annual meeting, and be passed by two thirds vote of those present at the meeting. The notice calling the annual meeting shall refer to any proposed amendments.

### **By-Laws:**

- 1) The Executive shall have the power to establish, amend, or delete by-laws pertaining to the day-to-day functions of the SCC at any point during their term.
- 2) The intention to add, amend, or delete any by-law shall be made to the executive one meeting prior to any debate and vote on said actions.
- 3) By-laws may be approved by a simple majority vote (50% + 1) of the executive.
- 4) By-laws shall be posted on the SCC's website for the membership to consult.
- 5) By-laws shall not be passed that conflict with or alter any sections of the Constitution.

## **Calendar:**

1) The official calendar year for the SCC will be from Annual General Meeting until the next Annual General Meeting in the following year. The first meeting of the year will be held within two months of the Annual General Meeting.

## **Executive Action:**

1) The Executive shall have the power to deal with any business that may arise during the term between general meetings for all membership.

2) To partner with another organization for an event/action requires a motion presented and voted on by the Executive.

a. A partnership is permitted when the event/action is in accordance with the aims and objectives of the SCC.

b. A partnership can consist of, but is not limited to: the use of the SCC logo and name, the use of the SCC social media and membership newsletter for promotion, and, shared financial contributions and benefit.

3) Actions pertaining to political issues that affect the whole neighbourhood and/or extending beyond the boundaries of the neighbourhood must be first presented in writing to the whole membership seven days before action.

a. The presentation of the issue will include a polling of the membership that consists of a clear and concise question on what action to take.

b. Majority rules when a minimum percentage of members have responded to the poll.

c. The minimum percentage will be 25 percent: that is one quarter of the total membership at that time.

d. A response will be considered any answer to the question of the poll.

e. Actions can be deferred to later time, when possible, if a majority of responses request further information or a public forum.

## **The Record of the Minutes:**

1) The Secretary has the responsibility to record and keep the minutes for all executive meetings and the like, for the SCC.

2) The role of recording minutes can be taken on by any member if the secretary is unavailable.

3) The minutes will be considered a draft and open for correction until they have been approved by the executive at the subsequent executive meeting.

4) Once the minutes have been approved they are to be posted on the SCC webpage for public viewing.

## **Voting:**

1) All executive members shall have one vote on an executive motion.

2) All members of the SCC shall have one vote on all motions presented to the whole membership during Annual General Meetings.

3) Special members do not have a vote. They shall be kept apprised of and involved in the activities of the SCC and all votes.

### **Elected Representatives and Public Employees:**

1) Elected representatives to the City Council, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, the Conseil scolaire Viamonde, the Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir, the Ontario Legislature, and/or the Federal Parliament may not hold office or be elected to the Executive of the SCC.

2) Any Executive member who holds an appointed or paid position with the Municipal, Provincial, or Federal governments shall make their position known to the Executive at the first regular Executive meeting of the year.

3) All elected officials are welcome to attend all meetings as guests of the Executive.

### **Terms of Reference:**

*AGM:* The Annual General Meeting is the meeting that will be held annually to elect officers and executive members and make changes to the constitution. The AGM is expected to occur in November.

*Executive:* This is the body of members consisting of the officers and the members-at-large. This body shall be elected and announced at the AGM, excepting those circumstances where a position has been left vacant, or, a member requests to join before the next AGM.

*Immediate Family:* Immediate family is usually defined as one's spouse, partner, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, siblings and immediate in-laws. Adopted children and stepchildren also count as immediate family members.

*Minutes:* The record of the agenda, attendance, and actions of a meeting.

*Politic/political:* The involvement of community members in decisions that pertain to the spending of public money, actions of city council, and issues that affect the population and the physical landscape.

*Residential Unit:* A single private dwelling, i.e. house, condo, apartment, rented room.