

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
FOR  
EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE  
TO  
EVALUATE THE TERMS, GOALS, VISION, AND STRUCTURE OF AN ETHICS & EQUAL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

1. Purpose. The purpose of this exploratory committee to evaluate the terms, goals, vision and structure of an Ethics & Equal Rights Committee (the name of which may change as part of the evaluation), is to review and evaluate other jurisdictions' (both within and outside of Washington) committees which address equal rights, human rights, discrimination and other similar social justice issues and report to the City Council as to whether such a committee should be permanently formed within the City of Yakima, and the parameters of such committee, as further outlined herein.

2. Membership.

- a. Qualifications. Members of the exploratory committee shall be residents of the City of Yakima. The members of the committee should reflect the diverse backgrounds of residents within the City, including, but not limited to, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.
- b. Number of members. There shall be seven (7) members on the committee. Members shall apply for appointment using the application provided by the City, and appointment shall be made by a majority vote of the City Council. At least one member should have a background in the law. No city employees, elected or appointed officials may serve on the committee.
- c. Length of appointment. Due to the limited role of the exploratory committee, committee members will be appointed for a one year term, or until the committee has made its Final Report and the City Council has terminated the committee, whichever comes first, as outlined further herein in Section 7.
- d. Removal. Committee members may be removed from the committee for any reason upon a majority vote of the City Council.
- e. Vacancies. The Chair shall report any vacancy to the City Council, who will then appoint a new member to the Committee.

3. Internal organization.

- a. At the committee's first meeting, which should be held within thirty (30) days of the effective date of creation of the committee and appointment of the minimum number of members, the committee members shall choose a Chair by majority vote.
- b. The Chair's role is to effectively and efficiently run the meetings of the committee, using Robert's Rules of Order, or any other meeting rules or procedures agreed upon by the committee.
- c. The Chair shall also provide a proposed agenda before each meeting, which will be distributed to the committee members, the public, and any person making special request for meeting notice.
- d. The Chair shall be the official spokesperson of the committee and shall make and sign all necessary reports to the City Council.
- e. At the committee's first meeting, it shall also appoint a Secretary by majority vote. The Secretary shall be responsible for taking notes and all other administrative duties associated with the Committee.

4. Meetings.

- a. Meeting conduct. Committee members shall conduct themselves in a respectful manner towards other committee members and the public during meetings. The Chair should maintain order and ensure that respect is provided to all those in attendance.
  - b. At the first committee meeting, the committee members shall determine their meeting schedule. The committee should meet monthly, at a minimum, during the term of the committee.
  - c. Robert's Rules of Order should be used during meetings. It is understood that in some circumstances these rules will not be advantageous to facilitating discussion among community members and committee members. In those cases, the committee can move to suspend the rules for purposes of discussion, or move into study session to facilitate more open discussion. Respect should still be shown during these more informal situations.
  - d. A committee member at any time can move to create additional rules of procedure, which must be approved by a majority of the committee members.
  - e. Meetings shall be open to the public and occur in the City Council chambers or other room open to the public at City Hall.
  - f. If any resident needs the services of an interpreter, a request shall be made to the City Clerk's Office a minimum of 24 hours before the start time of the meeting.
5. Staff Assistance. A City Staff member will serve as a liaison between the committee and the City. Copies of all documents, including, but not limited to email related to the business of the committee, shall be provided to the staff liaison for Public Records Act and retention purposes. Other than serving as a liaison with the duties outlined herein, the staff liaison will have no other role in the committee.
6. Actions to be taken by the committee.
- a. The committee is tasked with providing a final report to the City Council with its recommendation on whether or not a permanent committee should be created to address equality, discrimination and other similar matters in the City of Yakima.
  - b. Background Information. The committee is tasked with exploring and evaluating what issues are occurring in Yakima that would fall under such a committee, as well as what other jurisdictions, cities and counties in Washington State and elsewhere are doing to address these issues. Some issues for consideration include: wage theft, tenant rights, and discrimination in the City of Yakima. This list is not exclusive and is intended to give the committee some ideas and starting points to evaluate. The committee is encouraged to speak with community members to determine what other issues may be affecting residents that would fall under the purposes of this committee.
  - c. Reporting. The committee is required to provide a written report to the City Council on a quarterly basis, the first of which will be due three (3) months after the committee's first meeting. The report shall contain a summary of the action items taken to date, a list of action items that are pending, and a summary of the findings made as of the date of the report. The report will be disseminated to the City Council in their council materials. The Chair of the committee is responsible for writing the report and the Secretary is responsible for forwarding it to the staff liaison.
  - d. Final Advisory Report. Upon completion of research, evaluation and discussion, and when a decision has been made as to what the exploratory committee will recommend to the City Council as to a permanent committee, the Chair shall draft a Final Advisory Report. This

Report should provide Findings of Fact, with details of how those findings were made, examples of code sections or procedures from other jurisdictions that the committee found most useful or should be used as a model, a summary of the public comments made during the process, and the committee's conclusions regarding the permanent committee. There should also be a section with the committee's recommendations as to the permanent committee, as well as a recommendation for the name of the permanent committee.

- e. The Chair shall present the final advisory report to the City Council during a regularly scheduled City Council meeting. The City Council may accept it for consideration, or may send it back to the exploratory committee with additional questions to be answered or issues to be addressed.
7. Termination of the exploratory committee. This exploratory committee shall terminate at the end of one year after the first meeting of the committee, or upon acceptance of the Final Advisory Report by the City Council, whichever occurs first.
8. All meetings of the exploratory committee shall be open to the public.
9. All documents formulated by the committee or committee members are considered public records. Committee members shall follow the Public Records Act rules and regulations of the City of Yakima.