

By-Laws of the Prince William County Racial and Social Justice Commission

ARTICLE I - Name

This public body's name shall be the Prince William County Racial and Social Justice Commission (RSJC).

ARTICLE II - Mission

Section 1. The Racial and Social Justice Commission's initial mission is to examine the state of racial and social justice for people of color in the areas of policing, the provision of government services, and public education, subject to the establishment of a partnership with the Prince William School System. The Commission will examine, among others the police department's policies and practices, including its hiring practices and use of force protocols. The Commission will assess how the county government delivers its services and the diversity and inclusion of the workforce providing these services. In partnership with the Prince William School System, the Commission will examine how the public school system's policies impact children of color. Meetings of the Commission are subject to the open meetings requirement of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and the records of the group are likewise subject to FOIA.

Section 2. To accomplish its mission, the Commission will:

Review the police department's policies, practices, and interactions with the communities of color, including its hiring practices and use of force protocols, by conducting activities that will help it understand the current policing perspective in Prince William County from the professional policing perspective and the community perspective.

Assess how the county government delivers its services and the diversity and inclusion of the workforce providing these services.

In partnership with the school system, assess how public education policies impact children of color in the areas of discipline, academic achievement, and access to resources.

ARTICLE III - Membership

Section 1. The Racial and Social Justice Commission shall have not more than twelve members. All members will serve without compensation. The County Board of Supervisors will appoint eight members, one per magisterial district and one at-large. The Prince William School system will appoint a representative and an alternate.

A. Ex-officio Members - The Chief of Police, the County Executive, and the Chair of the Human Rights Commission or their corresponding designees will be members Ex-officio of the Commission. All Ex-officio members and the school representative shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of other members except being elected Chair or Vice-Chair. The Commission will elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair among themselves. All Commission members serve at the pleasure of the Board of County Supervisors.

B. County's Office of Equity and Inclusion Officer - The County's Office of Equity Inclusion Officer shall serve as a subject matter expert (SME) to the Racial and Social Justice Commission with its mission to examine the state of racial and social justice for people of color in the areas of policing, the provision of government services and public education.

ARTICLE IV - Officers

Section 1. The Commission's officers shall be a Chair and a Vice-Chair who will be elected every year. The Commission may decide to have additional officers as necessary, including a secretary and a parliamentarian.

A. Chair - The Chair shall preside over the meetings of the Commission. The Chair shall present the Commission at whatever times and places appropriate to the Commission's objectives. The Chair shall be the primary spokesperson for the Commission and may, from time to time, designate other officers or members to speak for the Commission on specific matters.

B. Vice-Chair - In the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair shall assume all the duties and responsibilities of the Chair. The Vice-Chair shall also assume duties and responsibilities as the Chair may delegate to that office from time to time.

Section 2. The election of officers shall be elected annually to serve a term of one year or until their successors are elected.

ARTICLE V - Committees

Section 1. The Commission may create committees to assist in achieving its mission.

Section 2. The Commission Chair will appoint the committee members, its leadership and assign its tasks.

ARTICLE VI - Meetings

Section 1. Quarterly Meetings

The Commission will meet regularly, on a quarterly basis starting every year in March, at a place and time designated by the Commission. The schedule for the calendar year will be adopted at the annual meeting. The “annual meeting” is specified to be the first meeting after the election of new Commission members. The Commission may consider avoiding meeting dates that conflict with legal holidays or religious observances by members of the PWC community. Notice of such meetings shall be given to the public and all Commissioners at least three days in advance. The Commission may also hold special meetings at the Chair's call or request in writing of at least 2/3 of the Commissioners. The Chair may cancel a scheduled meeting for a good cause. Such cancellations should be notified to the Commissioners as soon as possible.

All Racial and Social Justice Commission meetings will start at 6:30 p.m. Meetings will adjourn no later than 10:00 p.m. The chair with the concurrence of the Commission can extend the meeting. Any agenda items not discussed by that time will be put at the top of the agenda for the next meeting.

Section 2. Agenda Planning Meeting

The Chair with the Vice-Chair shall prepare an agenda for each meeting.

A. The Chair and Vice-Chair will meet on the first Monday of each month for a set agenda planning meeting to prepare for the next Commission meeting.

B. Any agenda items to be added to the next month's agenda are to be submitted to the Chair by close of business on the fourth Friday of the month before the set agenda planning meeting.

C. After the agenda has been approved by the Chair and publicly posted, any Commissioner seeking to add an agenda item must submit a written request from two or more members of the Commission, and the Chair shall add the requested agenda item to the next month's agenda, except that an agenda item can be added with the approval of a majority vote of the Commission at any duly called Commission meeting.

D. Any Commissioner having matters to be considered by the Commission, as well as any invited presenter shall submit their presentation materials to the Commission no later than the Friday prior to the monthly meeting, which shall include any written or graphic materials, and/or audio or video recordings of any kind to be read, viewed, heard, observed, and/or considered by the Commission at any point during the meeting, shall submit them to the Chair and Vice Chair for inclusion on an appropriate agenda item, and such materials shall be included with the other materials dispatched to the Commission's members and the public for that meeting's agenda in preparation for the meeting.

Section 3. Minutes

The Commission shall keep minutes of its proceedings. Minutes will include members in attendance, the place and date of the meeting, and a summary of the Commission's actions. After approval, the minutes will be posted on the website.

Section 4. Quorum

To conduct Commission's business, a majority of the members of the Commission must be present, excluding any vacancies.

ARTICLE VII - Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the conduct of meetings of the Commission in all cases where they are not inconsistent with these bylaws or any special rules of order by the Commission.

ARTICLE VIII – Action

Section 1. Motions

If action is required on matters simply stated, the Commission may act on oral motion only. Any oral motion made and seconded, including any procedural motions pursuant to these Rules, shall be voted on by the Commission and fully recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Section 2. Votes

Votes shall be taken only upon motions made and seconded. Votes shall be taken in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, 2.2 - 3707 VA Code Ann. All voting shall be taken by roll call vote on any motions.

(a) Tie Votes. In the event of a tie vote, the motion under consideration shall be deemed defeated.

Section 3. Restating the Question

The Chair may restate the question or ask the Commission Secretary to restate the question prior to the taking of a vote provided, however, that the request of the Chair, a Commissioner member may restate the question if it is the opinion of the Chair that such procedures will expedite the decision of the question.

ARTICLE IX - Decorum

Decorum of Commissioners shall be maintained in order to expedite disposition of the business before the Commission. All Commissioners should always treat each other with due respect. The Racial and Social Justice Commission will follow Robert's Rule of Order, Chapter 20, Common Disciplinary procedures.

A. Persons Addressing the Commission - Persons addressing the Commission shall limit their presentations to the time allotted by the Chair unless the Commission extends such time by unanimous consent.

B. Recognition - Recognition shall be given only by the presiding officer. No person shall address the Commission without first having been recognized. Commissioners should address the Chair and not each other when debating an issue, asking a question, or raising a point of order.

C. Questions - Questions by members of the Commission shall be reserved for the end of a presentation to avoid interrupting the speaker, disrupting the time-keeping process, and duplicating ground the speaker may cover. Questions by members of Commission regarding the presentation or item of business pending will not be counted toward the time for discussion and debate as discussed below. Statements regarding the presentation or item of business pending shall be reserved for Commission Discussion as discussed below.

D. Commission Discussion - Discussion and debate by the Commission shall be conducted following any presentation or an oral motion. Commissioners should not speak to an item or motion until recognized by the Chair. A Commissioner who has spoken to the item or motion shall not again be recognized until each other member desiring to speak shall have an opportunity to speak. A Commissioner may only speak three times in discussion and debate of an item or motion on the floor and may speak up to three minutes each time; merely asking a question or making a brief suggestion is not counted as speaking in a debate, nor is the making of a secondary motion counted as speaking in debate, so long as in making the motion the Commissioner makes no comment on the then-pending question. Commissioners may not save time for another item, or transfer (yield) time to another Commissioner. Discussion and debate by the Commission shall be germane to the item or motion pending.

ARTICLE X – Amendments

These bylaws may be amended from time to time at any general or special meetings of the Commission if notice is given to the Commissioners at least five days before the meeting, specifying the time, place, and specific language of the proposed amendments. The amendment will be approved if it receives at least 2/3 of the members' affirmative votes at the meeting, provided there is a proper quorum.

Adopted February 4, 2021
Amended April 21, 2022
Amended June 16, 2022
Amended July 21, 2022
Adopted August 18, 2022
Amended June 15, 2023