

Hillsborough County Commission on the Status of Women

Bylaws

Adopted on 1/24/2017

The Hillsborough County Commission on the Status of Women is dedicated to empowering women in achieving their fullest potential, to eliminating barriers to that achievement, and to recognizing women's accomplishments.

Hillsborough County Commission on the Status of Women

County Center

601 E. Kennedy Boulevard

Tampa, Florida 33602

(813) 276-2640

FAX: (813) 272-5248

WWW.HCFLGOV.NET/COSW

Article I – Name and Purpose

The name of this entity is the Hillsborough County Commission on the Status of Women (hereinafter the “Commission”). The Commission was created by the Board of County Commissioners, Hillsborough County, Florida, (hereinafter the “BOCC”) pursuant to Resolution R-03-074, adopted April 16, 2003 and corrected April 25, 2003. Nothing herein shall be construed to supersede any element Resolution R03-074. The Commission and its membership structure was amended on October 20, 2004 (Resolution R04-174) and further amended on March 21, 2007 (Resolution No. R07-059). (Resolution No. R13-171)

As stated in the aforementioned Resolutions the Commission shall serve in an advisory capacity to the BOCC, the community, and all agencies and persons in Hillsborough County, Florida. The Commission is dedicated to empowering women in achieving their fullest potential, to eliminating barriers to that achievement, and to recognizing women's accomplishments.

Article II – Duties

Section 1:

- A. It shall be the duty of the Commission to remain current on the changing and developing roles of women in Hillsborough County and make recommendations based upon those observations. This analysis shall include, but not be limited to the following areas:
 - 1. The socio-economic factors that influence the status of women.
 - 2. The development of individual potential.
 - 3. The encouragement of women to utilize their capabilities and assume leadership roles.
 - 4. The coordination of efforts of numerous organizations interested in the welfare of women.
 - 5. The identification and recognition of contributions made by women to the community.
 - 6. The implementation of paragraphs (1)-(5) where working conditions, financial security, and legal status of both sexes are improved.
- B. The Commission shall serve as a liaison between the BOCC and the County Administration, and consult with representatives of said bodies from time to time as requested and necessary in order to carry out the Commission’s tasks.

- C. The Commission shall establish annual goals and adopt a budget to implement those goals.
- D. The Commission shall monitor the progress of its goals.
- E. The Commission shall undertake the continued study of all existing county institutions, facilities and services, and programs dealing with women or affecting women, and consider the future needs of this County in respect to such institutions, facilities services and programs.

Section 2:

- F. The Commission shall report annually on July 1 to the BOCC.
- G. At the BOCC's discretion, funds may be appropriated for administrative expenses of the Commission in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.
- H. The Work Plan or Annual Report may be submitted by the 2nd week in February of each year. This time frame will ensure that if funds are needed in the prospective year, such request can be integrated into the BOCC's biannual budget or on the off year, in a supplemental budget request to the BOCC.

Article III – Hillsborough County Women's Hall of Fame

Section 1:

The Commission shall accept nominations for the Hillsborough County Women's Hall of Fame from November 1 to January 15 each year, and shall recommend for affirmation by the BOCC no more than three (3) women by February 15. In making recommendations, the Commission shall recommend women who were born in Hillsborough County or adopted Hillsborough County as their home county, and who have made a significant contribution to the improvement of life for women and for all citizens of Hillsborough County.

Section 2:

No sitting member of the Commission may be nominated for the Hillsborough County Women's Hall of Fame.

Article IV – Issues Forums

Section 1:

The Commission shall organize and implement an annual Issues Forums to identify and publicly highlight a critical issue impacting the women and children in Hillsborough County for the purpose of raising awareness and seeking comprehensive, community-based solutions.

The Commission will present a final report of the Issues Forums' results and recommendations to the BOCC to include specific proposals for County response and implementation.

Article V – Use of Independent Contractor

These Bylaws are for the benefit of the Commission. No third party is an intended beneficiary so as to entitle that person to sue for any alleged breach of these Bylaws. Any vendor or individual acknowledges and agrees that he or she is acting as an independent contractor in performing its obligations and not as an agent, officer or employee of the County.

Article VI - Membership

Section 1:

There are 15 total members to serve terms appointments as follows:

A. One appointment by each commissioner to serve for the term of the appointing commissioner. When a County Commissioner is no longer in office that County Commissioner's appointee shall continue to serve on the Commission until such time as the new County Commissioner reappoints that member or a new appointment is made to that position.

B. Four (4) year appointments by: the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, The Helen Gordon Davis Centre for Women, and the League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County, The Spring of Tampa Bay, Hispanic Professional Women's Association, Inc., and the Tampa Metro Section – National Council of Negro Women, Hillsborough Community College, and The University of South Florida, From time to time the COSW may submit a request to the BOCC to consider the addition of COSW-identified organizations for inclusion on the COSW.

Section 2:

Members of the Commission shall reside in Hillsborough County and shall reflect diversity of the County.

Section 3.

Members serve without compensation (travel shall be processed pursuant to §112.061, Florida Statutes).

Section 4.

Members of the Commission may be removed by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) without cause at any time.

Section 5.

Members who fail to attend three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission without prior approval of the chairman shall be removed from the Commission upon certification of the Commission's chairman to the BOCC. Such vacancy shall be filled for the remainder to the term in the same manner as the original appointment.

Article VII – Officers, Bylaws and Meetings

Section 1:

Membership shall appoint a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer (annual appointments) to preside over the meetings of the Commission.

Section 2:

Quorum shall reflect 7 members of the COSW.

Section 3:

The Commission shall adopt by-laws which shall identify additional officers, if any, and shall include the meeting schedule.

Section 4:

The Commission shall meet each month on a mutually agreed upon date and time unless otherwise amended by the Commission.

Section 5:

Unless in conflict with bylaws, *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the conduct of meetings.

Section 6:

The Commission must meet ten (10) times per year at a minimum. Emergency meetings may be held at the call of the Chairman or by four (4) members of the Commission.

Section 7:

Meetings of the Commission shall be staffed by County Administration.

Section 8:

The Commission designates a time for public comment. Speakers may address the Commission regarding any scheduled agenda item or any non-agenda matter (s) of personal or general concern. Each speaker may address the Commission for no more than three (3) minutes, although the Chairman has the discretion to grant additional time to any speaker.

Section 9

One or more members of the Commission may participate and vote in a meeting via telephone or other electronic means (i.e. Skype) as long as the following conditions are met:

- There is a physical quorum at the meeting;
- The absent Member can hear the dialogue of the Members who are present as well as any public comment;
- The present Members and the public can hear the absent Member;
- Any votes of the absent Member must be made verbally.

Section 10.

Commission members shall participate in and/or support activities endorsed or sponsored by the Commission and its committees. Commissioners, while representing the Commission in public, shall limit their comments to the policies and actions previously adopted by the Commission.

Article VIII - Duties of Executive Committee and Officers

Section 1: Duties of Executive Committee

- A. The Executive Committee shall comprise the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer and one member of the Commission appointed by the Chair.

- B. The Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the Commission between meetings of the Commission. The Chair of the Commission shall be the Chair of the Executive Committee.
- C. The Executive Committee shall exercise the powers of the Commission between meetings of the COSW; provided, however, that the Executive Committee shall not have the authority to:
 - a. Adopt, amend, or repeal the bylaws.
 - b. Approve any expenses, not already provided for in the annual budget, in excess of \$1,000.00
- D. The Executive Committee shall report at each meeting of the Commission on its activities since the last meeting of the Commission.

Section 2: The Chair shall:

- A. Preside at all meetings of the full Commission.
- B. Appoint committee chairs and committee members.
- C. Serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of all committees, standing and ad-hoc, with the exception of the Executive Committee. The Commission Chair shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee with all of the rights and privileges of committee membership, including the right to make motions and to vote.
- D. Evaluate Independent Contractor (s) based on agreed upon performance standards between the Commission and the Independent Contractor (s) as outlined in the official job description and make recommendations regarding the performance of the Independent Contractor (s) to the Executive Committee.
- E. Supervise the work of the Independent Contractor (s) with assistance from the Executive Committee.
- F. Approve all media events including but not limited to news releases and media conferences.
- G. Serve as official spokesperson for the Commission or designate a Commission member to serve in her/his place.

Section 3: The Vice-Chair shall:

- A. Preside in the absence of the Chair.
- B. Assist the Chair in the performance of her/his duties.
- C. Chair the Annual Report Committee and develop the annual report in conjunction with County staff.
- D. Serve on the Executive Committee.
- E. Coordinate the Issues Forum.
- F. Perform other duties as assigned by the Chair.

Section 4: The Secretary/Treasurer shall:

- A. Assist the County staff in preparing recaps of full Commission meetings.
- B. Review recaps of full Commission meetings for accuracy.
- C. Present recaps to the Commission.
- D. Serve on the Executive Committee.
- E. Chair the Finance and Budget Committee.
- F. Assist the Chair in preparing an annual budget.
- G. Monitor the budget and financial records on an ongoing basis.
- H. Present the budget for adoption to the Commission.
- I. Present the Treasurer's report to the Commission.

Section 6: The Immediate Past Chair shall:

- A. Preside in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- B. Serve on the Executive Committee.
- C. Serve as Chair of the Selection Committee.
- D. Participate in Commission activities as designated by the Chair.

Section 7:

In the event the Chair can no longer fulfill the duties of office the elected term of office shall be filled in succession as follows: Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, Secretary/Treasurer.

Article IX - Committees

Section 1:

The Commission shall establish functional committees each year as recommended by the Chair of the Commission and approved by the Executive Committee, to address the priority goals or issues identified by the Commission.

Section 2:

Each Commissioner may serve on at least two committees.

Section 3:

Each committee shall meet as needed in order to perform its functions. Committee meetings shall be noticed as required by law.

Section 4:

Written recaps of the committee meetings shall be provided to the Commission members at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

Section 5:

Unless otherwise provided for in the Bylaws or Policies & Procedures, no committee shall implement any program or take any action without first presenting program or action plans to the Commission for a majority vote of approval at a regularly scheduled or special meeting. After the initial approval, committees may act within the pre-approved scope.

Section 6:

Special committees shall be formed on an as-needed basis to perform a specific task and will cease to exist when the committee's final report has been presented to the Commission or upon a majority vote of the Commission.

Section 8:

A simple majority of appointed committee members, defined as half of the total members rounded up, shall constitute a quorum. For those committees that are comprised of five members or less, two members will constitute a quorum.

Article X – Ad Hoc Advisory Council Selection Committee

Section 1:

The COSW may wish to establish an Ad Hoc Advisory Council of interested persons and key stakeholders to provide community input and to assist with its annual Issues Forums, Workshops and special projects. The Ad Hoc Advisory Council would meet a minimum of twice a year.

To formally establish this Council by September 30 of each year, the Commission may elect an Ad Hoc Advisory Council Selection Committee of five members to review and recommend applications for the Advisory Council. A maximum of two members of the Executive Committee may be members of the Advisory Council Selection Committee. The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as Chair of the Advisory Council Selection Committee. If no Immediate Past Chair currently serves on the Commission, the Commission Chair shall appoint the Advisory Council Selection Committee Chair.

Section 2:

Advisory Council Selection Committee members shall have served on the Commission for a minimum of six months.

Article XI - Nominating Committee

Section 1:

By September 30 of each year, the Commission shall elect a Nominating Committee of five members to nominate a single slate for the offices of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer and two Members-At-Large. A maximum of two members of the Executive Committee may be members of the Nominating Committee. The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee. If no Immediate Past Chair currently serves on the Commission, the Commission Chair shall appoint the Nominating Committee Chair.

Section 2:

Nominating Committee members shall have served on the Commission for a minimum of six months.

Section 3:

Nominating Committee members may be nominated for office.

Article XII- Election of Officers

Section 1:

All Commissioners who have served for six months immediately prior to the election are eligible for nomination and election regardless of when her/his ends.

Section 2:

Officers shall be elected at the regular meeting in January and shall assume the duties pertaining to her/his office immediately. Each officer shall serve for a term of two years. In the event a Commissioner's appointment to the Commission expires prior to the completion of the elected office, she/he may remain in office to serve the remainder of her/his term unless removed by the BOCC or the appointing organization.

Section 3:

In the event an office becomes vacant, a special election will be held for the following offices: Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer. If the Chair does not complete his or her term, the Vice Chair shall complete that term. This service will not count as a full term.

Section 4: Special Election

In the event a special election is required, the Chair shall direct staff to notify the full Commission, in writing, of the vacancy and request volunteers to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. All Commissioners willing to fill the vacancy shall notify the Commission office, in writing. The full Commission shall, by a majority vote of a quorum present at a noticed meeting, select a Commissioner to fulfill the remainder of the vacancy

Article XIII Amendments

Bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of a quorum at any regular or special meeting of the Commission. The text of the proposed amendments shall be included in the meeting notice sent at least 10 days prior to the meeting at which such amendment(s) may be adopted. Amendments to these Bylaws shall become effective at the adjournment of the meeting at which they were adopted.

Article XIV- Parliamentary Authority

The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, amended and revised, shall be the parliamentary authority of the Commission, except where the Commission's Bylaws specifically state otherwise.