



## Mayor's Equity Advisory Council

DRAFT: Bylaws

### Article I: Purpose

The purpose of the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council (MEAC or Advisory Council) is to advise the Mayor and work on issues of equity regarding quality of life and public safety in the Borough of Highland Park. MEAC recognizes equity as the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the full participation of some groups. Improving equity requires increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of Borough institutions or social systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. The members of MEAC shall provide expertise, resources and support for the duties ascribed in Article II.

### Article II: Duties

1. Advising the Mayor and making recommendations on equitable policies and practices on matters related to public safety and quality of life.
2. Promoting a culture of transparency and accountability with and within the Highland Park Police Department, including advising the Mayor and Chief of Police regarding the development and implementation of policies, procedures, and training.
3. Advising the Mayor on the formation and implementation of a Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) and studying the existing internal complaint review procedures of the Highland Park Police Department.
4. Advising the Mayor on collection and analysis of public safety data for the Borough, to include recommendations on new areas of data collection.
5. Advising the Mayor on allocation of public safety budgetary resources for the Borough.
6. Developing and administering ongoing community education and dialogue and creating a semi-annual report of findings.
7. Advising the Mayor on any issues of bias and equity that may be brought to the attention of the MEAC by the Mayor, the Borough Council, or the public.
8. Performing other related duties as directed by the Mayor.

### Article III: Membership

1. **Appointment.** The Mayor shall appoint all members to the Council, upon conferring with the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council and subject to confirmation by Borough Council. To be eligible to be appointed, members shall be residents of the Borough of Highland Park. Members of the Advisory Council shall be varied in experience and representative of the Borough as a whole. A diversity of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, social class, religious and non-religious practice, immigration status, and experience with civic engagement is desired among members.



2. **Number of Members.** In accordance with the *Resolution Concerning Mayor's Equity Advisory Council*, the number of voting members on the Board is ten (10) members, two (2) of which will be members of the Highland Park Human Relations Commission.
3. **Term of Membership.** Members shall serve a term of one (1) year. The term begins on the first day of the first month. A member may serve for a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms before rotating off the Advisory Council for at least one (1) year.
4. **Attendance.** All members shall regularly attend meetings. Except for medical leave, a member may be removed by the Mayor, upon conferring with the Advisory Council Co-Chairs, if a member has missed more than 50 percent of regular meetings in a calendar year, whether or not the absences were excused or unexcused. An absence is "unexcused" if the member does not notify the Advisory Council Secretary about an absence prior to the meeting.
5. **Vacancies.** The Mayor shall appoint another member to the Advisory Council if there is a vacancy. The Mayor shall appoint the member through a process used to appoint the original members of the Advisory Council. The member filling the vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.
6. **Resignation.** Advisory Council members are requested to give at least thirty (30) days notice of their decision to resign in order to give time to identify a replacement. During this time, the member who gave a resignation notice should try to complete his/her/their obligation on the Council.
7. **Removal.** Upon the majority vote of all of the voting members, the Advisory Council will consider removal of a member. Grounds for removal includes, but is not limited to: absenteeism, non-residency, derogatory behavior, and failure to adhere to Advisory Council bylaws.
8. **Alternates.** There may be a maximum of two (2) alternates on the Advisory Council appointed by the Mayor. Alternate members shall serve a term of one (1) year and are non-voting members, except as designated by the Co-Chairs to serve in the place of a regular member who is absent or disqualified. Any alternate member who has been designated to serve in the place of an absent or disqualified regular member shall, during the period of his/her/their service, enjoy all of the rights and privileges and shall be subject to all of the duties pertaining to regular members, but no alternate member shall be eligible to serve as Co-Chairs or Secretary of the Advisory Council. Alternate members are encouraged to attend Advisory Council meetings to become familiar with processes in preparation for potential future appointments to the Council.



#### **Article IV: Officers**

1. **General.** The officers of the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council shall be Co-Chairs and a Secretary.
2. **Term.** The term of office for an officer begins with the first Advisory Council meeting in January and lasts for one year. The first term of the Council's original officers began upon their selection and will end at the first meeting of January 2022.
3. **Duties.**
  - 3.1. **Co-Chairs.** The Co-Chairs shall preside at all regular meetings, call special meetings as deemed necessary, and be responsible for preparing the agenda for meetings with the assistance of the Borough staff liaison. The Co-Chairs shall represent the Advisory Council to the public and may give presentations and provide testimony. The Co-Chairs may not serve longer than two (2) consecutive years without rotating from a leadership role for one (1) year.
  - 3.2. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall record the minutes of each regular meeting and prepare written minutes to be given to the Co-Chairs and Borough staff liaison at least two weeks before the next regularly-scheduled meeting. The Secretary shall record, prepare, and maintain minutes consistent with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act. However, the MEAC can decide to make the role of Secretary a rotating one, to be fulfilled meeting by meeting by members of the Advisory Council other than the Co-Chairs.
4. **Election of Officers.** At an Advisory Council meeting scheduled between November and January, Council voting members shall elect officers. Nominations shall come from Advisory Council members. The officers shall be elected in the order of: Co- Chairs and Secretary. In the event of a tie vote, one revote shall take place among the tied vote receivers. In the event of a second tie, the office shall be decided by a flip of a coin. The Borough staff liaison shall administer the election process at the meeting.

#### **Article V: Quorum & Voting**

1. **Quorum.** A majority of the voting members of the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business.
2. **Voting.** The concurrence of a majority of the voting members of the Advisory Council present and voting is necessary to determine any question before the Advisory Council. When public spaces are closed or members experience occasional schedule conflicts and cannot attend in person, Advisory Council members may be permitted to join by teleconference and may vote on any issues presented. However, voting by proxy is not permitted.

#### **Article VI: Meeting**

1. **Regular.** The Mayor's Equity Advisory Council shall meet at least monthly. All meetings of the Advisory Council will be conducted as public meetings subject to the New Jersey



Open Public Meeting Act. Meetings open to the public will include on the agenda one public comment period where any person may comment on agenda items or other topics related to the work of the Advisory Council. It is understood that the work of the MEAC requires a significant amount of time and that voting members should devote time for research and review outside of scheduled meetings.

2. **Special.** The Co-Chairs may call special meetings, if necessary. If the Co-Chairs call a special meeting, he/she/they shall inform the staff liaison about the request to call a special meeting. The staff liaison shall provide reasonable notice of the meeting to members and to the public, but in no instance will there be less than 48-hours' notice. The notice shall provide the time, place, and purpose of the special meeting.
3. **Executive session.** A majority of the voting members present at a meeting (whether regular or special) may vote to enter the Executive or Closed Session. Ex-officio members may only attend an Executive Session at the specific invitation of the majority of the voting Advisory Council. Members of the public and media are not permitted to attend Executive Sessions. The MEAC will provide the Mayor, Borough Council, and public with a short summary of the Executive Committee meeting.
4. **Subcommittees.** A subcommittee may be formed by a motion and simple majority of the voting members of the full Advisory Council. The motion should include a description of the purpose, scope, number of members, and duration of the subcommittee.
5. **Minutes.** The Secretary shall record minutes of each meeting, and shall maintain the minutes in accordance with New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act.
6. **Agenda.** Only the Advisory Council Co-Chairs or a majority of MEAC members may cause an item to be placed on, or removed from, the agenda for meetings.

#### **Article VII: Staff & Council Liaison**

1. **Staff Liaison.** The Mayor will assign a Borough employee to act as a staff liaison to the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council. The staff liaison shall ensure Advisory Council notices, agendas and minutes of all MEAC meetings are published and maintained as part of the Borough's records; and provide information about relevant Borough policies, procedures, plans, and other external resources available to the Advisory Council. The staff liaison is not a member or officer of the Advisory Council.
2. **Council Liaison.** The Borough Council liaison serves as an intermediary for communication between the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council and the Borough Council; provides procedural guidance and communicates the Borough Council's position to the Advisory Council; assists the Advisory Council in resolving any questions about the role of the Borough Council and municipal government; maintains contact with the Advisory



Council Co-Chair; and assists the Advisory Council in training new members by providing suggestions and relevant information.

**Article VIII: Amendments to bylaws**

1. **Proposal.** A majority of Advisory Council voting members may propose to amend the MEAC bylaws at a regularly scheduled meeting, provided that the meeting agenda specifically mentions the proposed amendment to the bylaws.