

Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights Bylaws

Article I *PURPOSE*

SMRR is dedicated to maintain and enhance the unique quality of life for all residents in the City of Santa Monica. In order to achieve this goal, we resolve:

1. To support and defend local rent control laws.
2. To run campaigns to elect progressive candidates to local offices.
3. To support progressive public officials and promote accountability to the public by public officials.
4. To open the democratic process to all citizens without regard to race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or political belief.
5. To seek to improve social services including child care and services for the elderly.
6. To improve and increase open space.
7. To support planned growth while protecting neighborhoods from overdevelopment.
8. To increase and improve access to affordable housing for persons of limited income.
9. To enhance the safety of residents and reduce crime.
10. To increase public participation in government by supporting community organizations.
11. To support efforts to ensure a safe and clean environment.
12. To improve the educational opportunities for all age levels.
13. To support human rights including reproductive rights.

Article II *MEMBERSHIP*

Section 1 - Eligibility

Any person over the age of 18 who subscribes to the purpose of SMRR and who pays annual dues as provided for in these bylaws shall be a member in good standing.

Section 2 - Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated for non-payment of dues or for conduct which the Steering Committee finds contrary to the stated purpose of the organization. Termination for a reason other than a failure to meet the requirements of Section 1 above shall require a due process procedure and a 2/3 vote of the full Steering Committee.

Section 3 - Powers of Membership

The membership may, by majority vote, amend or repeal any act of the Steering Committee.

Section 4 - Voting Rights

Members of record shall be eligible to vote on the endorsement of candidates and ballot issues which affect their district or community, the election of Steering Committee members, resolutions and any other business brought before the membership. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Section 5 - Date of Record

The date of record for members eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting and for candidate endorsements shall be ninety (90) days prior to the meeting. The date of record for other meetings at which voting occurs shall be twenty-one (21) days prior to the meeting or for a lesser time provided the Steering Committee takes specific action.

Article III STEERING COMMITTEE

Section 1 - Number and Manner of Selection

The Steering Committee shall consist of fourteen (14) members to be selected in odd-numbered years in the following manner:

- a. Eleven (11) elected by the membership at large at the Annual Meeting in odd-numbered years.
- b. Three (3) appointed by a majority of the elected members of the Steering Committee. Special consideration shall be given to providing balanced representation with respect to geography, ethnicity, gender, and age.

Section 2 - Qualifications

Steering Committee members must be members in good standing and residents of Santa Monica. Elected officials are ineligible for elective positions on the Steering Committee.

Section 3 - Nominations

Candidates for election to the Steering Committee by the membership shall be nominated by means of a petition signed by ten (10) SMRR members in good standing and submitted not less than seven (7) days prior to the date of the election. The petition will be available at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting and may be submitted in person to one of the Co-Chairs or mailed to SMRR at the official address listed on the petition, so long as it is postmarked seven days prior to the election.

Section 4 - Election

Voting for the elected members of the Steering Committee shall take place by written ballot. Candidates receiving the highest number of votes and at least a majority plus one of the number of ballots cast shall be elected on the first ballot. If seats remain unfilled after the first ballot is counted, a second ballot shall be cast for the remaining seats. This ballot shall be limited to twice the number of candidates as there are seats remaining: additional candidates who receive the fewest number of votes during the first ballot shall be eliminated from the second ballot if necessary. Candidates who receive the highest number of votes on the second ballot shall be elected to the seats not filled in the first ballot.

Section 5 - Term of Office

Steering Committee members shall serve two year terms.

Section 6 - Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Steering Committee. Appointees shall serve the remainder of the term.

Section 7 - Removal from Office

Steering Committee members may be removed from office following a due process procedure by a 2/3 vote of the full Steering Committee for non-attendance or for conduct which the Steering Committee finds contrary to the stated purpose of the organization.

Section 8 - Powers and Duties

The Steering Committee shall have the authority to promote the purpose of SMRR as follows:

- Conduct the affairs and activities of SMRR
- Transact financial matters
- Delegate the management of activities
- Appoint committees
- Fill vacancies on the Steering Committee
- Elect the Executive Committee
- Insure an adequate number of nominations for Steering Committee elections
- Take positions on public issues consistent with the purpose of SMRR and with resolutions passed at the Annual Meeting

Section 9 - Conflict of Interest

A member of the Steering Committee shall divulge any conflict of interest in a matter before the Steering Committee and shall refrain from voting on that issue.

Section 10 - Meetings

- a. Meetings shall be held regularly as set by the Steering Committee.
- b. Quorum—a majority of the current members of the Steering Committee shall constitute a quorum. Decisions shall be made by a majority vote of the members present except as otherwise provided in the bylaws.
- c. Notice—all members of the Steering Committee shall receive 24 hours notice of any meeting by telephone, in person, or in writing.
- d. Special meetings may be called at the request of two members of the Steering Committee.

Section 11 - Committees

Executive Committee—consists of at least one co-chair, and other Steering Committee members elected by the Steering Committee. The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility to conduct the day to day business of the organization, contract for services, supervise employees, respond to emergencies, and any other responsibilities delegated by the Steering Committee.

Article IV OFFICERS

Section 1 - Enumeration and Election of Officers

The officers of SMRR shall consist of two (2) Co-chairs, a Treasurer, and a Secretary, and shall be elected by the Steering Committee.

Section 2 - Co-Chairs

The Co-Chairs shall conduct all meetings and shall act as the spokespersons of the organization and perform other duties as designated by the Steering Committee.

Section 3 - Treasurer

The Treasurer shall collect, receive, deposit, and disburse money. Shall be responsible for filing all financial documents required by government entities. Shall make financial reports to the Steering Committee.

Section 4 - Secretary

The Secretary shall give notice of all meetings, keep minutes and records, and conduct correspondence.

Article V MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Annual Meetings

An Annual Meeting will be held between Memorial Day and Thanksgiving of odd-numbered years to elect Steering Committee members, consider resolutions, and any other business as determined by the Steering Committee, and in even-numbered years to endorse candidates and ballot measures. Such endorsements shall require a majority vote of the members present. The Steering Committee may, by a two-thirds vote, support, but not endorse, a candidate for a seat for which there is no endorsed candidate. A quorum of fifty-one (51) members shall be necessary to convene an Annual Meeting. For purposes of voting, the quorum shall be a majority of those voting members who sign into a meeting prior to the vote.

Section 2 - Regular Meetings

There shall be at least two (2) membership meetings each year in addition to the Annual Meeting. No more than five (5) months shall pass between meetings. One meeting, to be held at least 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting in even-numbered years, shall be convened for the purpose of determining SMRR's platform for that election cycle.

Section 3 - Special Meetings

Other special meetings may be called from time to time by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee must call a special meeting when petitioned by fifty-one members. Such a petition shall specify the purpose for the special meeting and no other business shall be acted upon. A quorum of fifty-one members shall be required to conduct business at a special meeting.

Section 4 - Notice of Meetings

All members in good standing shall receive written notice of meetings twenty-one (21) days in advance of the Annual Meeting, fourteen (14) days for regular meetings, and five (5) days for special meetings.

Section 5 - Rules

Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

Article VI LOCAL CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENTS

Section 1 - Qualifications

Candidates for SMRR endorsement must be members in good standing and willing to:

- a. take out City nomination papers by the day of the Annual Meeting, and
- b. submit answers to a platform questionnaire and participate in an interview process.

Section 2 - Pre-Meeting Procedure

- a. The Steering Committee shall develop a candidate questionnaire based on the purpose of SMRR and the current election cycle platform. Candidates must complete the questionnaire in writing and return it no later than twelve (12) days before the Annual Meeting or five (5) days prior to the Candidate interviews. Timing shall be determined by the steering committee based on the logistics of the Annual Meeting and interview sessions. Candidate answers shall be available to the membership during the endorsement process.
- b. Candidates must make themselves available for interviews with the membership prior to the Annual Meeting.
- c. In the event an incumbent elected official withdraws from the process after the questionnaire deadline and before the Annual Meeting, the Steering Committee by a majority vote may reopen the pre-meeting procedural requirements.

Section 3 - Balloting and Endorsement

Endorsement shall require a vote of 55% of the members present or a method approved by at least 60% of the members present at a membership meeting held at least 6 months prior to the General Election. Voting at the Annual Meeting shall be by secret ballot. If subsequent ballots after the first are necessary, any candidate receiving less than twenty (20) percent of the vote on the previous ballot shall be dropped from consideration. There shall be no more than 3 rounds of voting for any office.

Section 4 - Endorsed Candidate Obligations

Endorsed candidates must pledge to not oppose other candidates on the SMRR slate for the office they are seeking. Failure to uphold this obligation will be grounds for revocation of endorsement by a two-thirds vote of the Steering Committee after due investigation of the charges.

Article VII AMENDMENTS

Bylaws may be amended at any Annual Meeting by a majority vote of the members voting. Written notice of intent to change the bylaws shall be included in the notice of the meeting. Recommended changes to the by-laws may be submitted to the membership by recommendation of the Steering Committee or by means of a petition signed by at least fifty-one members of record submitted to the Steering Committee not less than thirty-one (31) days before the Annual Meeting.