

**Bylaws of the  
Earlewood Community Citizens Organization (ECCO)  
Amended & Adopted: March 15, 2007**

**Article 1: Name and Offices.**

Section 1. Name. The name of the organization is the Earlewood Community Citizens Organization, hereinafter referred to as ECCO. ECCO was established in May of 1979.

Section 2. Definition. The Earlewood Community is defined as the commercial and residential properties falling within the following geographic boundaries:

**Western Boundary:** The west bank of the Broad River extending from the center of River Drive to the point due west of the northwest corner of the Elmwood Cemetery property, running north to south.

**Southern Boundary:** The point due west of the northwest corner of the Elmwood Cemetery property on the west bank of the Broad River to the northwest corner of the Elmwood Cemetery property, across the northern boundary of Elmwood Cemetery to the CSX Railroad cut, and along the CSX Railroad cut to the center of North Main Street, running west to east.

**Eastern Boundary:** The centerline of North Main Street from the CSX Railroad tressel to the intersection of North Main Street and Sunset Drive, running south to north.

**Northern Boundary:** The centerline of Sunset Drive and River Drive from North Main Street to the west bank of the Broad River running east to west.

Section 3. Offices. The place of activities shall be located in the city of Columbia and Richland County, South Carolina.

**Article II: Objective.**

The purpose of ECCO is to maintain and enhance the residential character of the neighborhood while striving to enhance the quality of life of the citizens that live, work, and worship therein; to reach common understanding regarding neighborhood problems, issues, and solutions; to communicate community concerns and desires to appropriate government agencies, elected officials, private organizations, other pertinent groups, and citizens; to encourage participation in community life; to develop closer cooperation among community citizens; to foster community pride; to serve as a conduit for information to residents about city services and other items of community interest and concern; and to do such things as will tend to improve conditions for neighborhood residents and community oriented businesses.

**Article III: Members.**

Section 1. Qualification. Membership in ECCO is open to any adult (18 years or older) residing,

owning property, or owning a business in the Earlewood Community.

Section 2. Membership Classes and Rights. There shall be one class of membership with the following rights and privileges:

(a) Active Members. ECCO shall have Active Members, who, upon payment of annual dues, shall have all the rights and privileges of membership, including but not limited to the right to vote and the right to hold office.

Section 3. Dues. The payment of annual dues is required to become an Active Member. Dues shall be payable at the July General Meeting of each year.

(a) Amount. Dues shall be set annually by a majority vote of the Executive Council.

(b) Nonpayment of Dues. Any Active Member who has not paid dues by August 1 will be dropped from the membership rolls, at which time all rights and privileges of membership in ECCO will be suspended.

(c) Reinstatement of Membership. An Active Member who has been dropped from the membership rolls may be restored to active membership by paying the current dues.

Section 4. Authority of Membership. Full and ultimate authority for the direction of ECCO is vested in its General Meetings, at which every Active Member in good standing is eligible to participate.

#### **Article IV: Officers and Executive Council.**

Section 1 (a) Officers. The Officers of ECCO shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member-at-Large, with each position filled through election by the Active Members in accordance with Section 5, below. Candidates for office shall be Active Members in good standing. A failure to elect a President or Secretary shall not affect the existence of ECCO.

(b) Committee Chairs. The Executive Council shall also include the chairs of standing committees as voting members. Chairs of the committees shall be filled in accordance with Article VI.

Section 2. Duties. The duties of ECCO's officers are as follows:

(a) Duties of the President. The President shall direct and coordinate the affairs of ECCO, shall preside at all General Meetings of ECCO, shall represent the officially adopted positions of ECCO to outside entities, and shall perform such duties as may be directed by the Executive Council or by an adopted motion made at any General Meeting.

(b) Duties of the Vice-President. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in case of the President's absence, or upon the request of the President. The Vice-President shall also serve as parliamentarian at General Meetings and Executive Council meetings.

- (c) Duties of the Secretary. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the minutes of Executive Council and General Meetings of ECCO and account for such minutes in such form that will allow open review by membership when requested. This officer shall conduct such correspondence as may be necessary.
- (d) Duties of the Treasurer. As custodian of all moneys of ECCO, this officer shall prepare an annual budget and keep full and accurate records of all receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer shall collect the dues and prepare a membership list showing the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all members. The Treasurer shall make a complete report on the membership and financial standing of ECCO at each General Meeting. This officer shall close ECCO books as of June 30 of each year, file the necessary information with the Internal Revenue Service and the South Carolina Department of Revenue, and provide on a timely basis all books and records for examination by auditors. All checks and disbursements will require two (2) signatures from the following: Treasurer and the President, Vice-President, Secretary or Member-at-Large.
- (e) Duties of the Member-at-Large. The Member-at-Large shall perform the duties of the Vice-President, Secretary, or Treasurer in case of absence, or upon the request of one of these officers, until such time as a new officer has been elected or the officer resumes his or her duties.
- (f) Chairs of Committees. Chairpersons of the standing committees shall be elected by the officers no more than sixty (60) days after the general election.

Section 3. Term of Office. Each Officer shall serve a two year term and shall hold office until his or her successor has been duly elected, or until his or her death, or until he or she shall resign or shall have been removed in the manner provided for in Section 3 (a), below. The term of office for newly elected officers shall begin at the conclusion of the General Meeting where elections are held.

- (a) Removal of Officers. Any Officer may be removed from office on the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the Active Members present at a Special Meeting called for this purpose, whenever, in their judgment, the best interest of ECCO will be served by this action.

Section 4. Nominations. A standing Nominating Committee, as provided for in Article VI, Section 5, below, will strive to identify, at a minimum, two candidates for each office prior to the July General Meeting in election years. The Nominating Committee will present its slate of candidates at the July General Meeting, in election years, to the membership. At this meeting nominations for office will also be taken from the floor. Prior to election, each candidate shall have agreed to serve if elected.

Section 5. Elections. Elections will be the first order of business at the September General Meeting, or as soon thereafter if conditions prohibit. Elections will be conducted by the standing Election Committee as provided for in Article VI, Section 3, below. Election results will be announced by the Chairperson of the Election Committee.

- (a) **Balloting.** The election shall be conducted by secret ballot. A candidate shall be duly elected by receiving a majority of the votes cast for his or her office.
- (b) **Absentee Voting.** The Election Committee shall make available absentee ballots to Active Members who apply to the Election Committee for this privilege. Absentee ballots will be made available after nominations have been made at the July General Meeting and must be received by the Election Committee's designee prior to the day of open balloting to be valid. Absentee ballots will be distributed in such a manner as to maintain both the integrity of the election and the anonymity of the person casting the ballot.
- (c) **Special Elections.** In the event of death, resignation, or removal from office, with the exception of the Presidential Office which the Vice-President will automatically fill, the Nominating Committee will convene immediately upon a vacancy to identify at least one candidate to fill the vacancy. The Nominating Committee's recommendation will be announced at the next General Meeting and nominations will be taken from the floor. At the conclusion of nominations a secret ballot will be taken to fill the vacant office if there is more than one person nominated, otherwise the sole candidate will assume the office by acclamation. There shall be no absentee voting in Special Elections. The newly elected Officer will assume the duties of office at the conclusion of the meeting and will serve out the remainder of the term of office.

Section 6. **Executive Council.** ECCO shall have an Executive Council, which shall consist of the five duly elected Officers and the standing Committee Chairs as the Council's voting members and the immediate past-President as a non-voting, ex officio member. The government of ECCO, the management of its affairs and the regulation of its procedures, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, shall be vested in the Executive Council and performed in accordance with the will of the membership. The Executive Council shall be responsible for ECCO's funds, including establishing appropriate procedures for accounting and auditing.

**Article V: Meetings.**

Section 1. **General Meetings.** There shall be no less than five General Meetings of the membership each year. The date, time and place for each meeting shall be decided by a majority vote of the Executive Council, and shall be advertised at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The conduct of the meetings will be guided by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Section 2. **Special Meetings.** The Executive Council by majority vote or ten Active Members through petition to the Executive Council may call a Special Meeting to handle business of a special and time sensitive nature that cannot wait until the next General Meeting. Notice of a Special Meeting will be made to all Active Members a minimum of one week in advance of the meeting. The Notice will include the place, day, time, and purpose or purposes for which the meeting is being called.

Section 3. **Celebratory Meetings.** There shall be each year three Celebratory Meetings: Thanksgiving Celebration, Holiday Celebration, and National Night Out Neighborhood Celebration. The date, time, and place of the Celebratory Meetings shall be determined by a majority vote of the Executive Council and advertised a minimum of one month in

advance of the meeting. General Meetings will not be conducted at Celebratory Meetings.

Section 4. Executive Council Meetings. The Executive Council shall meet at a minimum monthly.

Section 5. Quorum. Majority of the Executive Council and ten Active Members present shall constitute the minimum number needed to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any General Meeting or Special Meeting.

#### **Article VI: Committees.**

Section 1. Standing Committees. ECCO shall have a Street Captains Committee, Election Committee, Communication Committee, Nominating Committee, Grants Committee, Quality of Life Committee, Membership Committee, Safety and Police Committee, and Zoning, Preservation and Development Committee. Standing Committee Chairpersons are appointed by the officers, shall serve a two-year term of office, and recruit all committee members. All committees will be reconstituted after elections.

Section 2. Street Captains Committee. This Committee shall be responsible for distributing the ECCO Newsletter to all residents. Street Captains will be responsible for reporting, through the Committee Chairperson, to the Executive Council any problems, needs, or concerns within their respected areas of responsibility. In this manner the Street Captains are to serve as the "eyes and ears" of ECCO so that the proper authorities within the organization can take action, if deemed necessary. This Committee also shall be responsible for putting up and taking down the monthly meeting reminder signs, recruitment and retention of Active Members, and other membership items as directed by the Executive Council or the membership.

Section 3. Election Committee. The officers shall elect by a majority vote a chairperson and two additional members to serve as the Election Committee. The three committee members shall be neither elected officers nor candidates for office. The Election Committee shall be responsible for conducting ECCO elections in accordance with Article IV, Section 5, above.

Section 4. Communication Committee. This Committee is responsible for the ECCO web site. The chairperson of this Committee shall be the newsletter editor and the final arbiter on all editorial decisions. The Communication Committee will be responsible for the publication of at least four newsletters annually and other special editions as directed by the Executive Council or the membership. The Committee shall actively encourage members of the community to submit articles for publication.

Section 5. Nominating Committee. The officers shall elect by a majority vote a Chairperson and two members to serve as the Nominating Committee. None of the Nominating Committee members will be current office holders or candidates for office. This Committee shall select and nominate a slate of officers as candidates for office to stand for election in accordance with Article IV, Section 4, above.

Section 6. Grants Committee. This Committee shall be responsible for the application and submission of grant materials for funding of identified community activities.

- Section 7. Quality of Life Committee. This Committee shall be responsible for selecting the Yard of the Month, organizing the three Celebratory Meetings, beautification, planting the beds of the entrance signs and other activities that improve the quality of life in Earlewood as well as being responsible for working with the Parks & Recreation Department of the City of Columbia to improve the appearance and services in Earlewood Park and Marshall Park.
- Section 8. Membership Committee. This Committee shall be responsible for providing and staffing the table with the sign-in sheets at General Meetings, membership drives, delivery of the welcome packet to new residents and other such activities that involve member recruitment.
- Section 9. Safety and Police Committee. This Committee shall be responsible for conducting the Safety and Crime Prevention monthly meeting held before each General Meeting, developing and maintaining good relations with the police and safety officers and other such activities that improve safety and reduce crime in Earlewood.
- Section 10. Zoning, Preservation, and Development Committee. This Committee shall be responsible for reviewing zoning changes, Design Protection Area issues, and other development that affects the Earlewood neighborhood; presenting them to the Executive Council and the membership; developing comments on them in consultation with the Officers; attending the Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA), Design Development Review Commission (DDRC), and other meetings where these issues will be discussed; and present the official position of ECCO to the pertinent board, commission, etc. The Committee shall also carry out other duties as assigned by the Executive Council.
- Section 11. Quorum. For all standing committees, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the committee.
- Section 12. Committee Funding. Committee Chairpersons will submit to the Executive Council, through the Treasurer, a budget request for ECCO funds necessary to conduct the work of their Committee. The Executive Council shall approve these budget requests by a majority vote and direct the Treasurer to distribute approved funds accordingly.
- Section 13. Removal of a Committee Chairperson. A Committee Chairperson may be removed from office on the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the Executive Council, whenever, in its judgment, the best interests of ECCO are served by this action.
- Section 14. Special Committees. The Executive Council may, by a simple majority vote, establish Special Committees of finite duration as necessary to carry out the work of the organization.

#### **Article VII: Parliamentary Authority.**

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall guide the proceedings of ECCO, except as otherwise provided for in the Bylaws. The Vice-President of ECCO shall serve as the Parliamentarian for General Meetings, Special Meetings, and Executive Council meetings.

**Article VIII: Amendment of the Bylaws.**

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, replaced, or new Bylaws adopted, by a two thirds majority vote of Active Members present at any General Meeting, provided notice has been given.

**Article IX: Dissolution.**

Upon dissolution of ECCO, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal, state, or local government for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes.