

Bylaws Working Group

Since the January full Board meeting, the Bylaws Working Group (“BWG”) of Community Board 2, Manhattan held two virtual meetings via Zoom.

Meeting 1

Date: January 20th (at 6:30 pm)

Committee Members Present: Susan Kent (Chair), Katy Bordonaro, David Gruber, Patricia Laraia, and Matt Metzger

Committee Members Absent with Notice: Kristin Shea

Other CB2 Members Participating: Carter Booth (CB2 Chair), Michael Levine

Agenda: Public members and their roles on CB2’s committees.

The BWG began its meeting with the announced agenda item, public members (see Bylaws Section 6.c.ii.). Continuing from the group’s Jan. 11th meeting, the BWG resumed discussion of ways to maximize the benefits realized from the involvement of public members on CB2’s committees. Specifically discussed were the development of a more robust application process for public members, establishing their term of service and reappointment, and the Board Chair’s authority to make appointments. It was noted that pursuant to the definition of “public members” in the city charter, it may be more appropriate in the future to refer to such appointees as “public committee members.”

While considering ways to expand access to expertise and institutional knowledge through the appointment process, the meeting turned to a discussion of the Executive Committee. The recommendations presented were first, to expand the membership of the committee to include that the chairs of working groups, and second, that if possible, a past chair always serve on the Executive Committee. This would be achieved by enabling an outgoing chair to remain on the committee until such time as a new past chair is available to serve in his or her place.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:46 pm.

Meeting 2

Date: February 1st (at 6:30 pm)

Committee Members Present: Susan Kent (Chair), Katy Bordonaro, David Gruber, Patricia Laraia, and Matt Metzger

Committee Members Absent with Notice: Kristin Shea

Other CB2 Members Participating: Carter Booth (CB2 Chair), Michael Levine,
Donna Raftery

Agenda: Discussion of Rules of Order (Bylaws § 4).

The meeting began with a discussion of how to utilize the statement of values and principles previously approved by the BWG but not submitted for Board consideration. It was noted that the statement, which had been criticized during the group's Jan. 11th meeting, was in fact substantively similar to the model recommended at that time; the consensus was that elements of the statement should be incorporated into the Bylaws.

The discussion then moved to the subject of the need to distinguish between rules of order appropriate for inclusion in the Bylaws versus supplemental procedural rules, rules of the type set forth in Robert's Rules of Order. To this end were discussed: the scope of the Chair's latitude, meeting time management, and establishing guidelines for the handling and dissemination of correspondence and other written correspondence received from members of the public. It was agreed that in all situations maintaining neutrality and avoiding the appearance of bias was critical.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Kent, Chairperson