

# DC Minyan Bylaws

Latest revision: December 9, 2009

## ARTICLE I. THE DC MINYAN

1.1 DC Minyan is a Jewish community passionately committed to both traditional *halachah* and principles of egalitarianism. We strive to be an inclusive community that provides rich and meaningful Jewish experiences for people of diverse backgrounds. Our activities are focused on the three pillars of the Jewish world: *Torah* (study), *Avodah* (prayer), and *Gemilut Chasadim* (social action/acts of kindness).

1.2 Seating at services is separate for men and women, with no *mechitzah* (divider), and we wait for a quorum of ten women and ten men before reciting the central parts of the service (*d'varim sh'bigdusha*). The Minyan uses the traditional liturgy in all of our services.

## ARTICLE II. LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

2.1 The Leadership Council comprises leaders across various aspects of the Minyan and therefore brings a wide array of backgrounds and functional experiences to bear on Minyan structure and programming. The Leadership Council sets the long-term vision of the Minyan. It is responsible for the following: large or long-term logistics decisions, such as location of Minyan services or programs; setting membership rates; approving major budgetary expenditures and the Steering Committee's annual budget; and allocating supplemental funds to Committees as needed. It also plays a role in selecting new members of the Steering Committee, as set out below.

2.2 The Leadership Council shall be composed of all Steering Committee members, plus one **Committee Representative** for each permanent Committee, one representative from **DC Beit Midrash**, and the two immediate **past Steering Committee** members, if they so choose. Each member of the Leadership Council shall be a member of the DC Minyan in good standing. The permanent Committees receiving representation on the Leadership Council are as follows:

- **Social Action** – Responsible for overseeing and organizing DC Minyan social action activities, training and mobilizing social action committee members to coordinate specific social action programs, and ensuring a focus on a variety of issues through both service and advocacy work.

- **Hospitality** – Responsible for welcoming visitors and new members of the Minyan and coordinating places at Shabbat and holiday meals immediately following Minyan services.

- **Finance**– Responsible for the economic health of DC Minyan, including strategic planning, fundraising, budgeting, accounting, investment management, and day-to-day financial operations.

- **Gabbai**—Responsible for coordinating all aspects of services, including Torah reading and daveners.

• **Chinuch (Education)**—Responsible for planning and coordinating learning events and other educational programs, and for pursuing other learning opportunities for the Minyan community.

• **Community Relations**—Responsible for programming having a community focus, maintaining DC Minyan’s membership lists, spearheading DC Minyan’s annual membership drive, serving as the “point person” for new arrivals to the community, and soliciting input from the community

• **Special Events**—Responsible for coordinating and overseeing community lunches and additional community and holiday programming.

• **Administration**—Responsible for preparing meeting agendas and minutes with the input of the Steering Committee and the Leadership Council, preparing the quarterly calendar, maintaining the DC Minyan databases, and compiling and sending the weekly DC Minyan emails.

• **Parents & Kids**—Responsible for overseeing Tot Shabbat and other childrens' shabbat and holiday programming, planning and coordinating family programming, coordinating babysitting for appropriate DC Minyan events, and working with Community Relations to integrate new families into the DC Minyan community.

2.3 The Leadership Council may add or remove permanent and/or ad hoc committees and/or modify the list of permanent committees entitled to receive representation on the Leadership Council. Modifications to the list of permanent committees receiving representation on the Leadership Council shall require the approval of two-thirds of the Leadership Council but shall not require the amendment of these bylaws. The Steering Committee shall ensure that these bylaws are updated in a timely manner to reflect any such modifications. For purposes of this section 2.3, the term "permanent committee" shall include DC Beit Midrash.

2.4. Unless otherwise determined by the Steering Committee, the Chairperson of a Committee shall be the Committee’s Committee Representative on the Leadership Council. Each Committee Representative shall retain his or her seat on the Leadership Council until he or she returns from his or her position as Committee Chairperson (or other applicable position, in the case of a Committee Representative who is not the Committee Chairperson) or is asked to vacate his or her Committee Representative position by a consensus decision of the remaining members of the Leadership Council.

2.5 Each **Committee Representative** is expected to attend all Leadership Council meetings. Each **Committee Representative** shall report to the Leadership Council on the operations of his or her Committee and submit annual and other budget requests to the Steering Committee. **Committee Representatives** are expected to represent their committees on the Leadership Council for at least one year.

2.6 After one year of service on the Leadership Council by a Committee Representative, the Steering Committee may meet with a Committee Representative to discuss the person's continued service on the Leadership Council. The Steering Committee may meet with the Committee Representative on an annual basis thereafter to discuss such Committee Representative's continued service on the Leadership Council.

2.7 The Leadership Council shall meet at least every other month, as necessary, and the names and contact information of members of the Leadership Council shall be made readily available to the Minyan community. Leadership Council meetings shall be chaired by a member of the Steering Committee. For the purposes of decision-making, the Leadership Council shall be considered to have a quorum with the presence of a minimum of two Steering Committee members and a majority of the Leadership Council members who do not sit on the Steering Committee.

2.9 By and large, the Leadership Council shall strive to operate by consensus. In cases where consensus proves impossible, a majority vote of the Leadership Council members will be required to adopt a given proposal. Leadership Council decisions shall be subject to a veto by the Steering Committee. That veto may be overridden by a unanimous vote of all non-Steering Committee members of the Leadership Council.

### **ARTICLE III. STEERING COMMITTEE**

3.1 The Steering Committee is the executive committee of the DC Minyan and broadly ensures that the goals of the Minyan, as expressed by the Minyan Leadership Council and general membership, are being achieved. The Steering Committee is wholly responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Minyan, for setting the programmatic course of the Minyan, and possesses all other powers not specifically delegated to the Leadership Council. It is additionally be responsible for working with Committee Chairpersons to provide them with necessary guidance. **Committee Representatives** shall submit budget requests to the Steering Committee prior to the start of each calendar year. The Steering Committee shall be responsible for presenting an annual budget to the Leadership Council.

3.2 The Steering Committee shall consist of four members of the Minyan in good standing, serving two-year renewable terms beginning and ending in January. Two of the four positions will turn over each year.

3.3 Candidates for the Steering Committee may be nominated by any member of the Minyan in good standing. A selection committee shall interview nominees and make the final selection of new Steering Committee members.

3.4 The Selection Committee for new Steering Committee members shall be chosen at the first Leadership Council meeting following the high holidays. The Selection Committee shall be composed of the four members of the Steering Committee and three self-nominated and Leadership Council-approved members of the Leadership Council. Immediately following this meeting, Steering Committee nominations will be collected by the Selection Committee, and Steering Committee interviews will be scheduled. The Selection Committee will evaluate

potential Steering Committee members based on a number of factors including, but not limited to:

- Previous involvement/leadership in Minyan activities;
- Familiarity with the Minyan;
- Core strengths and skills of candidates;
- Skills of departing Steering Committee members in need of replacement; and
- Ensuring diverse community representation.

3.5 At the end of the Steering Committee term, in January, departing Steering Committee members shall be given the opportunity to take seats on the Leadership Council for the coming year.

3.6 Steering Committee members may be involuntarily relieved of their duties by a two-thirds vote of the Leadership Council at a specifically convened meeting, preceded by a minimum of two weeks' notice.

3.7 Should the need arise to replace a Steering Committee member mid-term, the general Minyan membership shall be notified of the opening on the Steering Committee and, subject to Section 3.8, a sufficient period of time will be given to allow the Leadership Council to nominate, and a selection committee to select, a replacement from among members of the Minyan in good standing.

3.8 In the event that, at the time of the opening, fewer than six months remain in the term of a Steering Committee member whose position has been vacated, the remaining Steering Committee members may elect, subject to the approval of the Leadership Council, to continue for the remainder of the term with fewer than four members; provided, however, that in no event shall there be fewer than three members on the Steering Committee.

3.9 The Steering Committee may authorize expenditures of funds not otherwise allocated by DC Minyan's annual budget as long as the annual total of such expenditures does not exceed \$1,000. Such authorizations by the Steering Committee do not require the approval of the Leadership Council.

#### **ARTICLE IV. COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

4.1 Each Committee Chairperson is responsible for the day-to-day operations of his or her Committee, including recruiting members of the Committee, and holding and setting the agenda for any Committee meetings.

4.2 When a vacancy arises in the Committee Chairperson position of a Committee other than the Gabbai Committee, the Steering Committee shall publicize the vacancy to the general Minyan membership. The Steering Committee and the outgoing Chairperson of the applicable Committee shall select the Committee Chairperson from among the applicants for the position. The Chairperson of the Gabbai Committee shall be selected by the Steering Committee and the outgoing Chairperson of the Gabbai Committee.

4.3 Each Committee Chairperson shall be a member in good standing of the Minyan.

## **ARTICLE V. DC BEIT MIDRASH**

5.1 The DC Beit Midrash is a non-denominational, pluralistic weekly learning program, open to all and supported in part by the Minyan.

5.2 The DC Beit Midrash Coordinators are responsible for coordination, operation, and administration of the DC Beit Midrash, including finding teachers and food sponsors and organizing social activities and other special events, as needed. The Coordinator(s) of the DC Beit Midrash shall be selected by a process established by the DC Beit Midrash.

5.3 The DC Beit Midrash Representative on the Leadership Council shall be a member of the Minyan in good standing and shall be selected for the position of DC Beit Midrash Representative by a process established by the DC Beit Midrash. The DC Beit Midrash Representative shall be responsible for reporting to the Leadership Council on the operations of the DC Beit Midrash, liaising between the DC Beit Midrash and the Steering Committee and the Leadership Council, and submitting annual and other budget requests on behalf of the DC Beit Midrash to the Steering Committee. The DC Beit Midrash Representative shall also participate in the processes through which the DC Beit Midrash disburses funds allocated to the DC Beit Midrash by the DC Minyan, whether such allocations are made in the Minyan's annual budget or otherwise.

5.4 The DC Beit Midrash Representative shall retain his or her seat on the Leadership Council until he or she retires from his or her position with the DC Beit Midrash, is replaced as DC Beit Midrash Representative through the selection process established by DC Beit Midrash, or is asked to vacate his or her Leadership Council position by a consensus of the remaining members of the Leadership Council. The DC Beit Midrash Representative is expected to attend all Leadership Council meetings and is expected to represent the DC Beit Midrash on the Leadership Council for at least one year.

5.5 Unless otherwise agreed to by the Steering Committee and the DC Beit Midrash Coordinator(s), funds raised exclusively by the DC Beit Midrash shall be restricted for DC Beit Midrash use.

## **ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP**

6.1 The Leadership Council shall determine the process by which a person becomes a member of the Minyan.

## **ARTICLE VII. COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

7.1 There shall be at least one annual meeting of the full membership, at which the Steering Committee and Leadership Council will report on the state of Minyan activities. There will also be an open forum component of this meeting, for which members in good standing will be encouraged to submit agenda items ahead of time and will be encouraged to attend the meeting

and share their ideas, concerns, and questions with the Steering Committee, the Leadership Council, and the general membership.

7.2 In addition, there shall be one informal forum during the year, or more, as the Leadership Council shall decide. Through these meetings, members of the Minyan are encouraged to provide the Leadership Council with feedback, suggestions, and issues they wish to see resolved.

### **ARTICLE VIII. HALAKHIC DECISIONS**

8.1 The Steering Committee, with the assistance of the Leadership Council, may appoint a committee to investigate and make recommendations regarding a specific halakhic issue or concerning how halakhic decisions are made for the Minyan. Any recommendations of this committee shall be brought before the Steering Committee for review. The Steering Committee shall present any recommendations of the halakha committee, along with recommendations by the Steering Committee regarding the advisability of the halakha committee's proposals, to the Leadership Council. The Leadership Council shall determine the application of the halakha committee's recommendations to the Minyan. Should the Leadership Council accept the halakha committee's recommendations, these bylaws will be considered amended to the extent necessary to allow for such halakhic positions.

### **ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS**

9.1 This document shall be considered amended following a vote of two-thirds of the Leadership Council members who do not sit on the Steering Committee, plus three of the four members of the Steering Committee, at two consecutive meetings of the Leadership Council.