



CITY OF COLUMBUS
NEAR EAST AREA COMMISSION



BY-LAWS

(Revised March 26, 1996, July 8, 2010, June 14, 2012,
January 13, 2022, April 14, 2022)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLES	BEGINNING PAGE
PREAMBLE	PAGE 1
ARTICLE I GENERAL PROVISIONS	PAGE 1
ARTICLE II MEMBERS	PAGE 2
ARTICLE III OFFICERS	PAGE 4
ARTICLE IV MEETINGS	PAGE 6
ARTICLE V COMMITTEES	PAGE 8
ARTICLE VI PUBLIC HEARING	PAGE 11
ARTICLE VII PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY	PAGE 11
ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS	PAGE 11
ARTICLE IX EFFECTIVE DATE OF BY-LAWS	PAGE 11
ARTICLE X ELECTION RULES	PAGE 12

City of Columbus

Near East Area Commission

By-Laws

PREAMBLE

WE, the residents of the City of Columbus in general and the Near East Area in particular, in order to: study the problems and needs of the Area, recommend solutions therefore, and bring the same to the attention of the proper government agencies; determine the need for, and recommend legislation affecting the Area; provide communication within the Area and between the Area and city government; solicit the cooperation of all segments of the community; develop techniques for creating and promoting community dialogue relating to issues affecting the Area; and to assume and discharge all duties and responsibilities delegated to the organization under the laws of the City of Columbus - do establish and ordain these By-Laws.

ARTICLE I. General Provisions

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the Near East Area Commission, herein referred to as the "Commission."

Section 2. The Near East Area Commission serves to encourage voluntary citizen participation in decision-making – in an advisory capacity – and to facilitate communication, understanding and cooperation between neighborhood groups, city officials, businesses, and other organizations living, working, and doing business on the Near East Side of Columbus. The Commission shall identify and study the problems and needs of the Commission area in order to create plans and policies which will serve as guidelines for future development of the area, bring the problems and needs of the area to the attention of appropriate government agencies or residents, recommend solutions to neighbors and the appropriate city officials, and aid & promote communications within the Commission area and between it and the rest of the city.

Section 3. The Near East Area shall be bounded on the east by the west bank of Alum Creek; on the north by the extended south right-of-way of I-

670; on the west by the east right-of-way line of Interstate 71; and on the south by the extended intersection of Interstate 70 with the north right-of-way line of Livingston Avenue, and by the extended north right-of-way line of Livingston Avenue from its intersection with Interstate 70 east to the westbank of Alum Creek.

The four (4) districts of the Near East Area are as follows:

District I – West side of Champion Avenue; East side of I-71; South side of I-670; North side of East Broad Street.

District II – West Bank of Alum Creek; East side of Champion Avenue; South side of I-670; North side of I-70.

District III – West side of Wilson Avenue; East side of I-71; South side of East Broad Street; North side of I-70.

District IV – West side of Alum Creek; East side of Wilson Avenue; South side of Broad Street; North side of I-70.

Section 4. No person shall represent the Commission, save as directed by a vote of the Commission. This shall not be construed to restrict persons from expressing themselves, in any context and on any issue, provided that they do not represent themselves as speaking for the Commission.

Section 5. No Recommendations, expressions of support or endorsements of the Commission shall be effective for 365 days, unless expressly otherwise declared. All recommendations of the Commission shall contain notice of this limitation, except zoning recommendations, which shall remain valid until such time as they may be modified by the Commission.

ARTICLE II. Members

Section 1. There shall be seventeen (17) official members of the Commission to be known as “Commissioners”.

A. Three (3) members (to be known as “District Commissioners”) shall

be elected from each of the four (4) geographical districts within the Area.

- B. Five (5) members (to be known as “At-Large Commissioners”) shall be elected by the whole Near East Area community and shall represent the following vested interests within the area:

Human Resources (1) – this At-Large Commissioner should have a demonstrated understanding of the social service needs as well as a connection to one or more of the social service agencies doing work on the Near East Side.

Education (1) – this At-Large Commissioner should have a demonstrated understanding of the educational needs as well as a connection to one or more of schools operating on the Near East Side.

Religion (1) – this At-Large Commissioner should have a demonstrated understanding of the diverse religious community as well as a connection to one or more houses of worship on the Near East Side.

Business (2) – these At-Large Commissioners should have a demonstrated understanding of the business community, including but not limited to being a business owner on the Near East Side themselves, as well as a connection to several businesses operating on the Near East Side.

- C. All members of the Near East Area Commission will adhere to the Code of Conduct as previously adopted and included herein as Appendix A.

Section 2. All Commissioners shall serve a term of three (3) years, without compensation, unless appointed to serve out the unexpired term of another Commissioner. To the extent possible, terms will be staggered for district seats, so that each district will elect one District Commissioner per year and one or two At-Large Commissioners will be elected each year.

- A. The Commission shall appoint non-Commissioner members of standing committees without restriction upon re-appointment.

Section 3. Vacancies shall be filled as follows:

- A. For an At-Large Commissioner, by a majority roll call vote of the Commission, and to serve the unexpired term of his or her predecessor, as stated in Article II, Section 1 (B), subject to the approval of the Mayor and Columbus City Council.
- B. For a District Commissioner, by a majority roll call vote of the

Commission to serve the unexpired term of his or her predecessor, subject to the approval of the Mayor and Columbus City Council.

1. Notice of the filling of a vacancy shall be given in the meeting notice to a Commissioner at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.

C. . Any person wishing to fill a vacancy shall provide documentation establishing eligibility for the seat to the Commission Chair for review by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. District Commissioners shall retain their residence within the district from which they were elected. Failure to abide by this By-Law shall constitute resignation by that Commissioner. Upon petition by that Commissioner, the Commission may grant a waiver to this By-Law by a two-thirds vote. Such waiver shall under no circumstances allow a Commissioner to be reelected to represent a district in which he or she does not reside. Restrictions on residence shall not apply to At-Large Commissioners.

Section 5. Each Commissioner shall attend a minimum of eight (8) regular Commission meetings and eight (8) standing committee meetings per year. Commissioners who are absent from four (4) regular meetings or four (4) standing committee meetings will be unable to meet their obligation and therefore will have their name submitted to the Mayor for removal from The Commission pursuant to the City of Columbus charter. All appeals must be made in writing, to the Chairperson, within fourteen (14) days of receipt of notification from the Commission. A two-thirds vote of the Commissioners present at the next regular meeting shall be required to waive this By-Law. The vote on all appeals shall be by a majority roll call vote. A waiver, if approved by the Commission, shall not release a Commissioner from his or her obligation to attend future meetings. If a Commissioners fails to attend a future meeting, the Commissioner's names shall be again submitted to the Mayor for removal.

ARTICLE III. Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Commission shall be a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, Treasurer and Sergeant-at-Arms.

A. The officers shall be elected by the Commission at the January meeting, unless there is a vacancy, and shall take office upon election

by majority voice vote, and for the unexpired term in a manner consistent with Article II, Section 2 (A).

B. All officers shall serve a term of three (3) years, and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms, unless voted by a majority of Commissioners to serve longer.

C. Vacancies in officer positions shall be filled in the same manner as the original selections and for the unexpired term of the former officer.

Section 2. The Chair shall: preside at meetings of the Commission; prepare the agenda for Commission meetings; and, shall appoint members to standing and special (ad hoc) committees of NEAC.

Section 3. The Vice-Chair shall: perform the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence; and be responsible for the dissemination of all Commission correspondence at NEAC meetings. Moreover, the Vice-Chair shall attend meetings as designated by the Chair.

Section 4. The Secretary shall: be responsible for recording minutes of Commission meetings and votes including the actual vote numbers and abstentions; distributing minutes to Commission members in a timely fashion; maintaining a filing system of minutes; maintaining other records as the Commission may direct or need; and performing related duties as may be demanded of the Secretary's position. One copy of the minutes shall be sent to the City of Columbus, Department of Neighborhoods. The minutes of all public Commission meetings shall be open to the public's examination. Copies of all available Commission documents shall be provided to any person via email or other digital means.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall: maintain records of all monetary receipts and disbursements, submit invoices as needed; provide such budgets and financial reports to the Commission as may be required; and perform related duties as may be demanded of the Treasurer's position.

Section 6. A vacancy in the office of Chair shall be filled by the Vice-Chair. A vacancy in another position shall be filled in the same manner as the original selection.

Section 7. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be appointed by the Chair and shall: at the request of the presiding officer, assure the maintenance of order at regular and special Commission meetings. He or she shall have the

authority to cause unruly or disorderly persons to be removed from said meetings and shall otherwise exercise good judgment and discretion in implementing measures to assure the safety of Commissioners and other attendees of Commission meetings. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall appoint a Deputy from the membership of each standing and special committee and the same shall be charged with the responsibility for order and security in the respective committee meetings, pursuant to the directions of the Sergeant-at-Arms. In the absence of the Sergeant-at-Arms or any Deputy from a Commission or committee meeting, the person presiding may appoint a Commissioner or any committee member Sergeant-at-Arms, *pro tem*, and the same shall serve as such until the conclusion of the meeting.

Section 8. Additional officers or representatives may be created by the Commission. They shall be elected by the Commission.

Section 9. NEAC Officers shall be elected by the following procedure.

- A. Nominations for each office may be made by any Commissioner including self-nominations. Persons making nominations may present a brief verbal or written statement supporting such nomination. The Chair, with the assistance of the Secretary, as needed, shall provide a list of the nominations for each office sequentially to all Commissioners present; then the election for such office shall be held; then the process shall be repeated for the next office. Offices shall be filled in this order: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- B. A simple majority vote of the Commissioners present and voting will be sufficient to elect a NEAC Officer. If there is no majority for any nominee, then a second ballot shall occur between the two nominees with the most votes on the first ballot.
- C. A Commissioner may hold only one office.
- D. NEAC members nominating an absent Commissioner shall have a written statement from that person illustrating his or her willingness to serve if elected.

ARTICLE IV. Meetings

Section 1. The Commission shall hold a regular meeting on the second Thursday of each month, except during the month of August.

- A. The day, time, and place of a regular meeting shall be set by majority vote of the Commission.
- B. A regular meeting may be canceled, or the week of the month changed by two-thirds vote.
- C. All official meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public.
- D. All official meeting dates of the Commission shall be submitted for publication to the Columbus City Bulletin, the Near East Area Commission website, and the City of Columbus Neighborhood Liaison prior to the meeting dates.

Section 2. The first regular meeting in January shall be known as the organizational and orientation meeting and shall include introducing new commissioners to the By-Laws and their expected duties and responsibilities.

Section 3. The first regular meeting in January, the organizational and orientation meeting, shall be known as the election of officers meeting. In addition, this meeting will include the designation of new Commissioners to standing committees, as well as the possible redesignation of existing Commission members to other standing committees.

Section 4. All four (4) NEAC Districts (i.e. Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4), comprised of three (3) elected Commissioners each, shall hold a minimum of two open public district meetings per year: As a result of these district meetings, community discussion and participation will be generated to more aptly reflect the needs and concerns of NEAC's constituency. Written and oral reports of these district meetings shall be presented at the following Commission meeting. A meeting of the Community Engagement Committee in a specific district may substitute for a district meeting.

Section 5. Special meetings may be called to session by the Chair, or by a majority of members in a regular or special meeting, or may be summoned upon written request by five (5) or more members. The purpose of the meeting, date, time, and location shall be stated in the summons. Except in cases of emergency, at least three (3) days' notice shall be given before a special meeting is called to session. Special meetings shall be open to the public and all official business of NEAC shall be conducted in a regular or special meeting, except as otherwise specifically permitted in these By-Laws.

Section 6. A majority of currently seated members of the Commission, including the Chair, shall constitute a quorum.

Section 7. The Order of Business of Commission meetings shall generally include but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Roll Call
- B. Minutes of Previous Meetings
- C. Keynote Speakers / Guests
- D. Standing Committee Reports
- E. Special Committee Reports
- F. Neighborhood Group Reports
- G. Old Business
- H. New Business
- I. Announcements
- J. Adjournment

Section 8. The Chair shall recognize members of the public who wish to address the Commission concerning issues under discussion. The time limit allotted each person for his or her address to the Commission shall be three (3) minutes; unless enlarged at the discretion of the Chair. If the time is insufficient to properly address all relevant issues presented by the member(s) of the public, the issue – when appropriate – shall be referred by the Chair to the proper committee for further discussion or appropriate action. Any decision or action resulting from such referral shall be reported at the next Commission meeting by the committee to which it was referred. Minority, dissenting or non-concurring committee reports may be filed with Secretary by a Commissioner and shall be attached to the majority report.

ARTICLE V. Committees

Section 1. Annual Appointment of Commissioners to Standing Committees shall be made by the Commission Chair with due consideration to the preference of individual members. Committee appointments shall be effective until the next annual meeting and shall be subject to approval by a majority vote. To the extent applicable, distribution should be one district commissioner from each district per standing committee. The 5 at large commissioners shall be distributed 2-2-1 between the three standing committees.

Section 2. After appointment of commissioners to Standing Committees are made and approved, the members of each committee shall select a Committee

Chair and Vice Chair from Commissioners appointed to that committee. After which, standing committees shall select their other officers from the remaining membership of the committee.

Section 3. Each Standing Committee Chair shall be responsible for providing a written summary report and attendance record of their standing committee meeting a week before the regular Commission meeting, as well as an oral report during each regular Commission meeting.

Section 4. Individual non-commissioned committee positions shall not equal or exceed the number of commissioner positions on any standing committee; for instance, if there are seven (7) commissioners appointed to particular standing committee, then there can be no more than six (6) non-commissioner individuals on the same committee. However, if a standing committee is faced with special needs or problems (as defined by NEAC), then that committee can have more individuals (that are not Commissioners) to serve their needs.

Section 5. The Chair of NEAC shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, special and standing, except the Nominating Committee.

Section 6. The Standing Committees shall be:

A. **Planning Committee** – The Planning Committee shall review existing area plans and recommend guidelines for the comprehensive social, economic, and physical developments of the Near East Area – This will be accomplished by reviewing Community Development Act (CDA); Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), as well as City of Columbus Department of Development, Department of Neighborhoods, and Planning Division documents, and any other sources that are appropriate. The committee shall also examine federal, state, and local funding programs, which may be implemented in the Near East Area. Furthermore, this committee shall develop means for citizen participation in planning projects or programs, which affect the Near East Area

B. **Zoning, Building, Housing and Environment Committee** – The Zoning Committee shall regularly receive, review, and make recommendations on all applications for rezoning, variances, and other zoning adjustments; all appeals; all requests for demolition permits, graphics permits, and special permits; and all applications for

city historical designations pertaining to property wholly or partially within the Near East Area. The Committee shall also review existing zoning, building practices and administrative procedures, as well as make recommendations for proposed changes. All applications shall be reviewed and acted upon by the Zoning Committee based on the comprehensive nature of the proposed plan.

- C. **Executive Committee** – The Executive Committee shall be composed of NEAC Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) and the Committee Chairs of the Standing Committees (Planning, Zoning, & Community Engagement). The Executive Committee shall meet in a group (formally) in the month of February and thereafter at the discretion of the Chair and discuss NEAC business, establish annual goals for NEAC, report all recommendations to NEAC for approval, and oversee all disbursements of funds for the Commission.

- D. **Community Engagement Committee** – The Community Engagement Committee would be composed of at least five commissioners who volunteer and an equal number of community members. They will act as a steering committee for the activities planned for the year and decisions made by consensus. It will be led by chair and vice-chair, filled by commissioners and two deputy chairs, filled by community members. This rotation of leadership ensures that we fulfill our duty to help develop, mentor, and empower members of our community. The committee will rotate between districts to volunteer for civic and neighbor events and participate in events associated with the volunteerism to learn about the neighborhood, organization, etc. In addition, community presentations that are not related to zoning or planning will be heard in this committee, who will then report to the general body.

Section 7. Special Committees may be established for specific purposes by a majority vote at any meeting. Membership on a special committee may be accorded to Commissioners or non-Commissioners. Special Committees may be terminated by conditions set forth in the initiating action, or by a subsequent majority vote. All findings of the Commission's committees, which result in proposed actions or resolutions, shall be submitted at regular or special meeting for consideration.

The Special Committees shall be:

- A. **Elections Committee** – The Elections Committee shall have all necessary authority to conduct to the election in accordance with the election rules which are a part of these By-Laws.
- B. **By-Laws Committee** – The By-Laws Committee shall have the authority to propose updates to the By-Laws of the Near East Area Commission to the full Commission. This committee will meet at the direction of the Commission Chair and will be comprised of seated Commissioners currently serving on the Commission.

Section 8. The number of people who appear shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VI. Public Hearings

Section 1. Hearings may be held for specific purposes with a clearly delineated scope by a majority vote at a regular or special meeting.

Section 2. A reasonable effort must be made to notify all Commissioners and appropriate Standing and Special Committees of the Commission, as well as other affected parties.

ARTICLE VII. Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Commission in all cases to which they are not inconsistent with these By-Laws and any special rules of order NEAC may adopt.

ARTICLE VIII. Amendment of By-Laws

Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Commission by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Commissioners present and voting, provided that the amendment(s) in question was submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting, and Commissioners were previously notified of the intention to amend.

ARTICLE IX. Effective Date of By-Laws

Section 1. These By-Laws shall become effective after the proper vote of the Commission and their receipt and certification by the Clerk, City of

Columbus.

ARTICLE X. Election Rules

- Section 1. Elections shall take place at a location determined by the Commission annually prior to September 30. Public elections may be conducted by secret ballot.
- Section 2. Polling Places: The number and location of polls shall be determined by the Election Committee. If that Committee determines that polls shall be in each district, there shall be an equal number of polling places in each district. The Commission's headquarters shall be the primary polling site for all four (4) Districts and may be the only polling site.
- Section 3. Hours: Polling places will be open from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.
- Section 4. The Commission shall certify election results annually prior to September 30 at a regular full Commission meeting.
- Section 5. All At-Large Commissioners shall be elected during the same election for District Commissioners held prior to September 30.
- Section 6. All District Area Commissioners and At-Large Commissioners shall begin their term on January 1. Area commissioner appointments are subject to approval by the Mayor with the concurrence of Columbus City Council.
- Section 7. Area commissioner terms shall end on December 31 in the year that their term expires.
- Section 8. Area commissioners may not serve on more than one (1) area commission.
- Section 9. No elector shall cast more than one (1) ballot in an election. Elections shall be determined by plurality of vote if three (3) or more candidates vie for a single position, otherwise a majority of votes cast shall determine the winner.
- Section 10. No election procedure shall be scheduled if the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of elected commissioners with expiring terms.

Section 11. All elected and appointed area commissioners shall complete the area commission appointment / code of conduct form and return the completed form to the Department of Neighborhoods. All forms shall be signed by the Commission Chairperson and submitted to the Department of Neighborhoods annually prior to September

Section 12. Election Committee:

- A. The Committee shall have all necessary authority to conduct the election, including the counting of ballots.
- B. The Election Committee shall be composed of seven (7) NEAC district residents and Commissioners who are appointed by the Chair. The Chair shall designate one person as "Committee Chair of Elections."
- C. Candidates for election to the Near East Area Commission shall not be members of the Election Committee or polling staff in the year or years in which their names will appear upon the ballot for election.

Section 13. Ballots:

- A. Upon each ballot there shall be prominently displayed the identifying number for the respective district of the candidates listed.
- B. Each ballot shall carry the name of each candidate and shall state the number of candidates for whom the voter may vote. A block shall precede the name of each candidate certified by the Election Committee as having been properly nominated.
- C. The order of listing candidate's names on the ballot of the respective area districts shall be determined by a drawing of names anonymously.
- D. No political party or other organization shall be named on the ballot.
- E. The total of ballots reproduced for each district shall be numbered and recorded by the Election Committee.

Section 14. Candidate Qualifications:

- A. Each candidate shall be sixteen (16) years of age or older.
- B. Each candidate must be a resident of the Near East Area Commission district for which he or she seeks to be elected at the time he or she commences circulating a nominating petition.
- C. Candidates in this non-partisan election shall not declare any political

party affiliation.

- D. Candidates need not be registered voters on the rolls of the Franklin County Election Board.
- E. Write-in candidates are not permitted.
- F. At-Large Commissioner candidates do not need to reside on the Near East Side but must demonstrate a vested interest in the Near East Side community and represent the particular At-Large constituency consistent with Article II, section (1) B herein.

Section 15. Petition Qualification:

- A. Petitions shall be made available no later than the first Monday in April.
- B. Petitions are to be circulated personally by the candidates.
- C. Each circulator of a petition must complete and execute the affidavit at the end of the petition prior to its submission to the Election Committee.
- D. The Election Committee may grant exception to the requirement that a petition be circulated personally by the candidate due to disability demonstrated by the circulator. This exception may be granted only upon written application submitted by the circulator to the Election Committee. If granted, a written statement to that effect must be issued by the Committee within seven (7) days after the Committee has received the written application. A proxy shall be designated to collect to collect the signatures.
- E. Each petition must be signed by at least fifty (50) persons, aged 16 or over, and residing in the area district of the circulator.
- F. At-Large Commissioner candidates shall follow the same petition qualifications as District Commissioner candidates, with the exception that at-large candidates may gather the 50 petition signatures from any of the four districts.

Section 16. Voter Qualifications:

- A. Each voter must be sixteen (16) years of age or older. Identification may be required to verify age.
- B. Each voter must be a resident within the Near East Area upon election date of the year in which the resident seeks to cast a vote. Identification shall be required to verify place of residence.
- C. Each voter need not be a registered voter on the rolls of the Franklin County Election Board.

- D. Each voter shall vote only upon the ballot pertaining to the election of a candidate in the district in which the voter resides and any At-Large candidate.

Section 17. Campaign Procedures:

- A. Campaigning shall be permissible only within the 14 days immediately preceding Election Day.
- B. There shall be a \$100.00 limit on campaign expenditures. A campaign expense is any appraisable good or service acquired primarily for campaign purposes. Each candidate must file a report of campaign expenditures with the Elections Committee within seven (7) calendar days after the election and candidates failing to meet this requirement shall be disqualified.
- C. Campaigning of any kind (including the posting of campaign materials, and not excluding any other activity that would amount to campaigning) within 100 feet of the polling place premises is prohibited. Violation of this rule shall result in the disqualification of the candidate.
- D. Campaigning, whether in person, through written materials, or online, shall be conducted in a respectful manner. Vigorous campaigning is appropriate but campaigning which involves the deliberate falsification of any candidate's qualifications or deliberately misrepresents the endorsement of any candidate by the Commission or any other public agency shall constitute an infraction of the election rules.
- E. It is the candidate's responsibility to remove any campaign posters, flyers, etc., within 48 hours following Election Day.

Section 18. Polling Procedures:

- A. The polling staff shall keep a register of the residents who have voted in the respective polling places, said register to reflect a list of names and addresses of those who cast ballots and signatures.
- B. All polling records shall be placed in the custody of the Secretary of the Commission and retained in a secure place for three (3) years.

Section 19. Counting of Ballots:

- A. The counting of ballots shall be done by the Election Committee at its headquarters immediately following the conclusion of all voting and

the transportation of voted ballots to the headquarters.

- B. Candidates may have an observer present at the counting of the ballots at the headquarters.
- C. Results of the balloting shall be certified by the Election Committee to the Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the election and shall, thereafter, be certified by the full Commission at the next regular Commission meeting, before being sent by the Secretary of the Commission to the Clerk of City Council within thirty (30) days.

Section 20. Results:

- A. In the event of tie votes, the winner shall be decided by the majority vote of the Commission only after a recount of ballots, subject to the approval of the Mayor and Columbus City Council.

Section 21. Security of Ballots:

- A. In the polling places, each ballot voted shall be deposited by the voter in a sealed ballot box.
- B. Ballot boxes shall remain sealed until counting begins.
- C. Counting shall begin after all ballot boxes have been delivered to the Election Committee at its headquarters.
- D. All voted ballots for each district shall be placed in a sealed container after counting has been completed.
- E. The sealed containers shall be kept in a secure place until three (3) weeks after the election, at which time they may be destroyed under the supervision of the Election Committee.

Section 22. Election Challenges:

- A. An infraction of any of the election rules may result in a candidate being disqualified and/or a special election.
- B. Election challenges must be presented in writing to the Elections Committee on or by 5:00 p.m. on the 7th day following the election. Each candidate for election, upon verification of his or her qualifications and petitions, shall be informed specifically where challenges may be delivered.
- C. In the event of an election challenge, an immediate fact-finding hearing will be held by the Election Committee for the purpose of receiving relevant testimony and receiving other evidence. The

Election Committee shall not deliberate upon or make any determination in regard to oral or other evidence received in the fact-finding hearing. In a second hearing, which shall be open to the public the Election Committee shall describe the evidence previously received, hear arguments relating to the evidence and make its decision. The decision of the Election Committee shall be appealable to the full Commission. The decision of Council shall be final.

Section 23. Duties of the Election Committee:

- A. Devise the form, arrange for reproduction of, and distribute petitions of candidacy for commissioner.
- B. Devise the form, arrange for, and supervise the reproduction of ballots.
- C. Select a location for and equip headquarters for the committee.
- D. Certify the adequacy of circulated petitions submitted by candidates and make public announcement of the names and districts of the certified candidates.
- E. Enlist and assign volunteer workers to staff polling places.
- F. Obtain and distribute equipment and supplies required in polling places.
- G. Tally the votes and certify the results for the Commission.
- H. Make final determination of challenges of the eligibility of votes, handle the final determination of challenges of past ballots, and final determination of other questions arising during the election process.
- I. Make all other necessary and appropriate arrangements and determinations with respect to the nomination and election process.

Section 24. Election Deadlines

When a date is set as a deadline, and that date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a State (Ohio) or national holiday, then the deadline shall be extended to the next regular business day following the aforesaid weekend day or holiday. In all cases, the day of the deadline shall end at 4:30 p.m. Deadlines as they pertain to the election rules shall be strictly adhered to and shall be final in regard to the items to which they relate. No person shall have the right to an extension of any election deadline.