

Community Coalition for Social Justice

By-laws

Approved by CCSJ Membership, 14 March 2000

Article I: Purpose

The Community Coalition for Social Justice (CCSJ) is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to promoting the principles of social and economic justice and respect for all persons and to opposing discrimination and hate-motivated violence in Morgantown and surrounding communities.

To this end, the Coalition will undertake activities that include:

- promoting educational efforts in our schools, both public and private, that encourage respect, non-violence, tolerance, and commitment to justice;*
- supporting the efforts of member organizations that seek to achieve these goals;*

- *working with people to overcome barriers erected as a result of discrimination and intolerance and to promote nonviolent means of resolving conflict;*
- *assisting individuals and groups who are the victims of hate crimes or discrimination;*
- *working to promote tolerance and non-discrimination by the police, in the courts, and in f local government;*
- *working with private enterprises, civic and religious organizations, and local government to promote social and economic justice in our community;*
- *organizing community responses to attacks on these basic principles, including media campaigns, educational efforts, meetings, and rallies;*
and
- *working with the local media to promote these values.*

Article II: Membership

Section 1: Definitions

Membership in the CCSJ shall be open to all individuals and organizations who support the purpose of the CCSJ. Organizations shall include both governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations, including schools or components of schools (e.g., classes).

Section 2: Organizations

Organizations may include voluntary and charitable associations, labor organizations, religious institutions, businesses and partnerships, government agencies, and informal alliances.

All organizations joining the CCSJ will be required to provide the name, address, phone number, and e-mail address (if available) for one individual who shall serve as the representative and contact person between the CCSJ and the organization.

Members of organizations may also belong to CCSJ as individuals but

shall not speak officially on behalf of that organization unless they are also the official CCSJ organization representative.

Section 3: Dues

The steering committee of the CCSJ shall establish a dues structure each year at their annual meeting. There shall be a dues structure for individuals and for organizations. The proposed dues structure shall be announced to the membership 15 days before the annual meeting to provide time for comment by the membership.

The dues structure to be in place until September 30, 2000, will be as follows: individual memberships will be \$5. Dues for organizations will be \$25. There will be no dues charged for individuals under 18 years of age.

To remain in good standing, dues must be paid no later than 60 days after the start of the fiscal year. Members who join after August 1 of any

year will not pay dues until the start of the next fiscal year.

Section 4: Waiver of Dues

The CCSJ treasurer shall have the authority to waive or reduce the dues for any individual or organization who wishes to be a member but can show the treasurer good cause that paying dues would impose a hardship.

If the treasurer denies the waiver or reduction, the individual or organization may appeal to the executive committee, whose decision will be final.

Section 5: Membership list

The CCSJ will publish its membership list or distribute this list via electronic means as needed for all members but will not distribute the list to non-members or sell the membership list or, in any other way, use this list for income-producing purposes. Members who do not wish to have their names and/or contact information published may so indicate on their

membership form.

Section 6: Membership meetings

The general membership shall meet at least four times a year at dates and places to be determined and to be announced via mail and e-mail at least 15 days prior to each meeting. All meetings will be announced in the local press and will be free and open to the public, although only members will be permitted to vote at meetings. A quorum at any general membership meeting shall be one-fifth of the membership. In the absence of a quorum of the general membership, a quorum of the steering committee will be able to conduct all necessary business which will then be reviewed by the general membership at the next general membership meeting where a quorum is present.

Special meetings of the membership may be called by the steering committee or executive committee, as needed, or by a petition of 15

members, with the petition presented to the president no later than 10 days before the proposed date of the meeting. Calls for special meetings must state the specific purpose(s) of the meeting. A quorum at any special meeting shall be one-fifth of the membership.

Section 7: Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the CCSJ shall take place in September of each year on a date to be established by the steering committee and announced to the membership by mail or e-mail at least 30 days before the meeting.

The annual meeting agenda shall include reports from the steering committee and officers and approval of the budget and dues for the next fiscal year.

Section 8: Communication with members

The secretary shall be responsible for sending notices of general, special, and annual membership meetings to all members. All official

communication with members who have e-mail will be done by e-mail.

Chairs of task groups shall be responsible for notifying task group members of task group activities. Representatives for organizations shall be responsible for notifying their membership of CCSJ activities.

Any notification specified in these by-laws as being "in writing" may be also be done by e-mail.

Section 9: Meeting Locations

All meetings of the membership, steering committee, committees, and task groups shall be held in locations that are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Article III: Steering Committee

Section 1: Governing Authority

The affairs of the organization will be under the direction of a Board of Directors which will be known as the Steering Committee of the CCSJ.

All members of the steering committee must be members in good standing of the CCSJ.

Section 2: Composition

The initial (interim) CCSJ steering committee shall be those individuals who attended the coordinating committee meeting on 18 January 2000 at the WVU College of Law. This group of 19 will have all the rights and privileges of an elected steering committee and shall serve until the CCSJ selects successors to these members.

Beginning on October 1, 2000, the steering committee shall consist of 21-25 individuals. Individuals who serve as representatives for organizations may serve on the steering committee and will be assumed to be speaking on behalf of those organizations while on the steering committee. All members of the steering committee, however, shall be expected to represent the broadest interests of the coalition in their

deliberations.

These individuals will include no more than 2 representatives from each of the task groups (see below), plus 9 at-large individuals elected by the membership to represent organizations and individuals (see below), plus 4 officers (see below).

Section 3: Meetings of steering committee

The steering committee shall meet no less than every other month at a time and place to be determined. The membership of the CCSJ shall be notified of these meetings by mail or e-mail no less than 7 days before each meeting. All steering committee meetings are open to the general membership.

A quorum of the steering committee shall consist of 11 individuals.

Members of the steering committee may not submit proxy votes if they will be absent from the meeting.

Members who miss three successive meetings without reasonable excuses shall be asked to resign from the steering committee for the remainder of their term. The executive committee shall have responsibility for enforcing this provision and for determining reasonable excuses.

Section 4: Officers

The duties of the officers of the CCSJ shall be those normally associated with the positions of president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

Section 5: Election of interim steering committee members and officers

Those attending the March 14, 2000, general membership meeting of the CCSJ shall be asked to approve the membership of the initial interim steering committee, which shall serve until September 30, 2000. This interim committee will choose its own officers (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) at its next meeting after March 14.

Section 6: Nominating Committee

At the next general membership meeting following the March 14, 2000, general membership meeting, the membership shall nominate and elect 5 individuals who shall serve as a nominating committee to prepare a slate of nominees for the 9 at-large members of the first permanent steering committee, which shall take office October 1, 2000.

The nominating committee will seek candidates for officers, directors, and the next nominating committee. In all its deliberations, the nominating committee shall take notice of the diversity of the membership of the CCSJ and provide a slate that reflects that diversity.

The nominating committee shall designate the candidates for the 9 at-large positions as being candidates for terms of 1-year, 2-year, or 3-year terms. Candidates elected to 2-year terms and 3-year terms may serve one successive 3-year term but then must be off the steering

committee for at least one year before being re-elected. Candidates elected to 1-year terms beginning October 1, 2000, shall be eligible to serve 2 successive 3-year terms but then must be off the steering committee for at least two years before being re-elected. Members of the interim steering committee shall be eligible for election to the steering committee which will take office on October 1, 2000.

The nominating committee shall also nominate candidates for the offices of president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Individuals serving as interim officers are eligible for election as officers for terms beginning October 1, 2000. Officers shall serve terms of 2 years and shall be eligible for re-election for 1 successive 2-year term in that office. They then must wait 2 years before being re-elected to that office.

The nominating committee shall report its slate of candidates for individuals and organizational representatives to the steering committee,

which may be a contested slate; its slate of candidates for officers, which may be a contested slate, to the membership by e-mail or by mail postmarked no later than August 15.

Members may also nominate candidates for members of the steering committee, officers, and members of the nominating committee from the floor at the annual meeting with the advanced approval of the candidates.

Members shall vote for members of the steering committee, officers, and members of the nominating committee by secret ballot at the annual meeting. Members who cannot attend the annual meeting may request a ballot from the secretary and return it so that it is received no later than the day of the annual meeting. Mailed ballots will be opened and counted at the annual meeting. Those candidates with the highest number of votes in each category of the steering committee (individuals and organizational representatives), those candidates with the highest number of votes for each

office, and those candidates with the highest number of votes for the each vacancy on the nominating committee shall be declared the winners.

Section 7: Vacancies on Steering Committee

The steering committee shall have the authority to fill vacancies in its membership until the next election. Organizational representatives shall be replaced by other representatives of the same organizations, if at all possible. The nominating committee shall nominate candidates for unexpired terms, and the membership will vote on these candidates when voting on committee members at the next election.

Section 8: Compensation for Steering Committee Members

No member of the steering committee shall be compensated for her/his time spent as a member of the steering committee, although members and officers may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred as part of their responsibilities as members of the steering committee.

Section 9: Conflict of Interest

All members and officers are expected to represent the best interests of the CCSJ in their deliberations. Members and officers must excuse themselves from the board's deliberations about a particular topic if they feel that participating in these deliberations will place them in a financial conflict of interest.

Article IV: Committees and Task Groups

Section 1: Committees

The CCSJ shall have the following standing committees: finance and budget, nominating, and executive. The president shall appoint members of the finance and budget committee; the treasurer shall be a voting member of this committee. Members shall serve for 2-year terms and may be reappointed for one successive 2-year term. This committee shall prepare an annual budget for the CCSJ that shall be submitted to the

membership by mail or e-mail no later than 15 days before the annual meeting and shall monitor the CCSJ finances throughout the year.

Selection of the nominating committee members is described above.

The executive committee shall consist of the four officers, elected by the membership, and 1 at-large member, chosen by the members of the steering committee who are not officers of the CCSJ. The executive committee shall have the authority to act on behalf of the CCSJ between regular meetings of the steering committee.

The steering committee may create *ad hoc* committees or additional permanent committees as needed to meet CCSJ goals.

Section 2: Task Groups

The CCSJ shall determine the number of task groups, as well as their focus, each year at the annual meeting. CCSJ members may submit suggestions for task groups to the steering committee no less than 15 days

in advance of the annual meeting.

Initially, these task groups shall be: government, police, and the law; education and youth; communication/media/resources; and outreach/events.

Task groups shall meet as needed to accomplish their goals. All task group meetings shall be open to the general membership and to the public.

Task groups that wish to speak on behalf of the CCSJ, i.e., through press releases or at public hearings, must have approval from the president or, if unavailable, another member of the executive committee by mail or e-mail of their plans as far in advance as practicable. This is intended to ensure coordination of CCSJ activities and is not meant as a form of censorship of task group activities or positions.

Each task group shall convene at the annual meeting in September and shall designate up to 2 of its members to be its representatives on the

steering committee beginning in October. Task groups may determine how best to choose their representatives to the steering committee but are asked to consider the diversity of their membership when choosing these representatives. Task group representatives shall be chosen yearly and shall serve no more than 2 1-year terms. They must then wait at least 1 year before representing a task group again.

To share the responsibilities of the CCSJ, task group representatives shall not be officers of the organization.

Article V: Fiscal Year

Section 1: The fiscal year for the CCSJ shall begin October 1 and conclude September 30 of the following year.

Article VI : Amendments

Section 1: These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the membership of the CCSJ present at any regular or annual meeting of the

membership whose announced purpose includes amending by-laws.

Individual members may propose changes, or the steering committee may appoint a by-laws committee of 3-5 members to propose changes.

Section 2: The membership must receive the announcement of the proposed changes and the date for the vote no less than 15 days before the meeting; the announcement may be made by mail or e-mail.

Article VII: Dissolution

Section 1: In the case of dissolution of this organization, the assets of the CCSJ shall be distributed to the organization or organizations that best share its purpose; this must be a 501-(c)-3 organization. It shall be the responsibility of the steering committee to make this decision, but the committee shall seek the recommendations of the membership at least 30 days in advance of the vote.

Article VIII: NonProfit Statutory Requirements

Section 1: Said corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and

scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 2: No part of the net earnings of the corporations shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in article three hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (C) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 3. Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed according to Article VII and shall only be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively

for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.