

Richmond Progressive Alliance Bylaws

Adopted by RPA membership meeting September 26, 2015

Amended 3/31/18, 4/27/19

I. Mission

The RPA is an independent progressive organization that seeks to unite Richmond's diverse communities and form alliances with other community based organizations to promote actively social justice, economic equality, health, environmental protection and democracy. We work to elect government officials who share these progressive values, and who do not accept corporate donations.

II. Core Values

- a. One Richmond. A better Richmond is possible only through our working to achieve unity of the different populations that make up our diverse city. We need a united community effort to take on the problems of economic inequality, crime and violence, and the environmental crisis, which are destroying our children's future, our infrastructure, and our safety nets.
- b. Democracy is about people, not corporations. Large corporations have too much power in our society. In all our activities and campaigns we refuse contributions from corporations and try to answer their power with the voluntary activity of large numbers of people.
- c. Democracy is about government being transparent, the public making the important decisions, working with elected officials, holding them accountable. It also requires ending the back room politics of corporations using their power, pulling strings, or buying support through contributions.
- d. Diversity and respect for each other's ideas. We don't all agree on every issue and invite discussion in our newsletter. We are people who live, work, or are active in Richmond, some for many generations and some who are recent immigrants. We are registered to many parties, or as independents, "declined to state," and are sometimes not voters. We all agree on the need to build a strong progressive movement where people support each other.

III. Inclusion, affirmative action, and new leadership development.

The RPA seeks to build power for all people. We recognize that history, the economic system, unequal educational opportunities, and physical abilities have created a non-level field. In all of our activities, internal and external, we make a priority of the needs and leadership development of those who are disadvantaged

by the system: people of color, lower income people, women, LGBTQ, disabled, young people, seniors.

IV. Status.

The Richmond Progressive Alliance (RPA) is an unincorporated not-for-profit association registered in the State of California and Contra Costa.

V. Membership

- a. Residents of Richmond and those who work or are regularly active in Richmond and who agree with the mission and core values of the organization and pay the basic dues of the RPA may become members in good standing of the organization.
- b. Members are encouraged to participate actively in the community and the organization. Members are expected to contribute financially to the RPA above the basic dues level if possible.
- c. Members are expected to be respectful of each other and generally to promote the RPA and its mission in public.
- d. Members are encouraged to bring ideas and issues to Action Teams and to the Steering Committee.
- e. Members can attend and vote at membership meetings, receive membership emails, join Action Teams and Committees, and be considered for RPA leadership positions.
- f. Members may have their membership terminated by the Steering Committee for cause.
- g. No members shall have rights to the assets of the organization. Upon dissolution all assets will be donated to a qualified [501(c) (3)] organization.
- h. Dues
 - i. The annual dues for membership in the RPA will be proposed by the Steering Committee and approved at a Membership Meeting.
 - ii. Dues will be waived for members with extreme financial hardship.
 - iii. Given that we are a donation-based organization members are expected to contribute more than the basic dues if they are financially able.

VI. Action Teams

- a. Action Teams will be the basic unit of research and action around specific topics.
- b. Action Teams are open to all members of the RPA and may, at the discretion of the Action Team, be open to nonmembers interested in activity around the specific topic.

- c. Action Teams will initiate both strategy and policy discussions within the RPA. Those that require a decision or endorsement by the whole RPA or effect the RPA significantly will be submitted to the Steering Committee.
- d. Action Teams will work closely with elected officials in researching, mobilizing and implementing policy.
- e. *Action Teams will each have a chair or co-chairs, and will be responsible for convening meetings and record keeping. (Amended 3/31/18)*

VII. Membership Meeting

- a. Membership meetings will be held at least 4 times per year.
- b. Decisions at membership meetings will be the final authority in the RPA on policy.
- c. *Steering Committee elections will be held at least once every two years. Elections for the Steering Committee and Officers will be held at a Membership meeting during the first quarter of odd years. The Steering Committee will set the date and provide the proposed slate from the Nominations Committee with at least 30 days notification to the membership. (amended 3/31/18)*

VIII. Steering Committee

- a. The Steering Committee will consist of 12-29 persons elected yearly. Steering Committee members will include 7 Officers, 5 or more at large members, representation from active Action Teams and representation from allied organizations and community groups.
- b. The Steering Committee will make decisions of the RPA between membership meetings.
- c. The minimum responsibilities of a Steering Committee member are to attend Committee Meetings and regularly participate in Committee email discussions and votes.
- d. The Steering Committee will meet at least monthly.
- e. Policy proposals from Action Teams, committees, or members will come before the Steering Committee.
- f. The Steering Committee will submit what it believes to be the most important policy issues before the RPA to the membership meeting and organize the discussion ensuring that all views are presented. Any member who disagrees with a Steering Committee decision not to bring an issue to the membership may appeal to the membership committee.
- g. Action Teams will be established formally by the Steering Committee as the need and desire rises. Members of the RPA are encouraged to propose new Action Teams as issues come up. The Steering Committee may appoint an initial convener of the Action Team, who will serve until such time as the Action Team selects a replacement. The Steering Committee may disband an Action Team.
- h. The Steering Committee may add to itself members with voice but no vote as new Action Teams or committees are set up, to assure that there is good participation and communication with new Action Teams.

Newly established Action Team representatives to the Steering Committee will be brought to the next scheduled membership meeting for approval.

- i. The Steering Committee will receive regular reports and proposals from the Action Teams and will submit issues and opportunities to the Teams for consideration, recommendations, and action.
- j. The Steering Committee will regularly review the actions of the officers and may approve, modify, or revoke those actions.
- k. The Steering Committee may replace an officer, permanently or temporarily, and bring the newly appointed officer up to the membership for ratification at the next scheduled membership meeting
- l. Steering Committee members will make decisions at Committee meetings; email may be used for non-controversial decisions that are time sensitive
- m. The Steering Committee will develop a procedure for each election period for nomination, vetting, and endorsement of candidates in the upcoming elections of public bodies.

IX. Officers

- a. Co-coordinators (2)
 - i. Co-coordinators may act for the RPA in between Steering Committee meetings in cases where time does not permit email polling of the Committee or a Committee meeting. Where possible these discussions should be in consultation with relevant Action Teams or Standing Committees.
 - ii. Co-coordinators will be the public spokespersons for the RPA on issues where another person has not been so designated.
 - iii. Co-coordinators are responsible for setting the dates Steering Committee Meetings and preparing the agendas in consultation with the Committee members.
- b. Treasurer
 - i. The Treasurer will collect the dues, issue "thank you" notes to donors and write checks authorized by the Steering Committee (or coordinators).
 - ii. The Treasurer will make regular reports to the Steering Committee and the Membership Meetings.
 - iii. The Treasurer will convene the Finance Committee.
- c. Communications Chair
 - i. Will convene the Communications Committee
- d. Membership Chair
 - i. Will convene the Membership Committee
- e. Office Chair
 - i. Will convene the Office Committee
- f. Recording Secretary

- i. Will maintain accurate documentation of decisions made by the Membership and Steering Committee at their respective meetings.

X. Standing Committees

- a. Office Committee -- in charge of running and scheduling the office
- b. Membership Committee
 - i. Help welcome new members into the RPA
 - ii. Plan and schedule Membership meetings in consultation with the Steering Committee
 - iii. Initiate other membership events as appropriate.
 - iv. Maintain membership records
- c. Finance Committee
 - i. Develop a yearly Budget
 - ii. Review expenditures
 - iii. Make proposals for fund raising
- d. Communications Committee
 - i. Edit and produce the RPA newsletter and keylist
 - ii. Maintain and produce the RPA website
 - iii. Maintain and expand RPA social media communication
- e. Other Committees as established by the Steering Committee

XI. Voting

- a. In all bodies of the RPA we strive to reach consensus and inclusion. Where this is not possible, votes are determined by a simple majority of the ayes and nays. There is no quorum requirement for properly noticed meetings.

XII. Elections for Steering Committee

- a. Elections for the Steering Committee and Officers will be yearly at the Membership meeting in January or February. The Steering Committee will set the date and provide the proposed slate from the Nominations Committee with at a least 30 day notification to the membership. (After the first election, the next election will be in Jan/Feb 2017.)
- b. Election Procedure
 - i. A Nominating Committee will propose a balanced slate for the new Steering Committee.

- ii. The incumbent Steering Committee will appoint a Nomination Committee from members of the current Steering and at least 2 people not serving on the current Steering Committee. At the same time the Steering Committee will announce the elections to the membership and invite nominations and self-nominations. (Amended 3/31/18)
- iii. The Steering Committee will establish other rules as necessary for the conduct of the election.
- iv. The Nominating Committee will propose a balanced slate which will contain
 - 1. One representative from each active Action Team. The Action Teams may make recommendations.
 - 2. One representative from each of the major community organizations and unions with which we closely work. In some cases this will be a slot designated for filling by that organization.
 - 3. Seven officers.
 - 4. A minimum of 5 at-large Steering Committee members from the membership and/or including possible representatives of sectors of the community whose concerns may not otherwise be represented.
- v. The proposed slate will be presented to a membership meeting for discussion and adoption. Nominations of additional candidates must be received two weeks in advance of the scheduled election.

XIII. *Supported Candidates and Leaders*

- a. *The RPA will periodically, vote on and publicize an RPA platform of fundamental policies it supports. The RPA endorses candidates based on their commitment to its platform.*
- b. *The RPA commits to supporting the work of and defending its candidates elected through RPA efforts and representatives and spokespeople of the RPA.*
- c. *Candidates who are elected through efforts of the RPA and RPA leaders are expected to engage in regular dialogue with the RPA through its steering committee, membership meetings and Action Teams to discuss implementation of our platform.*
- d. *Leaders of the RPA and candidates who are elected through efforts of the RPA are expected to know and support the RPA Platform. Those who act or vote against the platform can expect a withdrawal of political and organizational support and/or future endorsement by the RPA.*
(Amended 4/27/19)

XIV. Amendments

- a. Amendments to these Bylaws may be submitted by the Steering Committee to a membership meeting with the content provided at least 30 days in advance. Any 10 members can submit a proposed amendment to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will submit the amendment to a membership meeting with 30 days' notice.
- b. Any amendments to the submitted Bylaws amendment must be circulated no later than 15 days prior to the membership meeting.
- c. The Membership meeting may adopt the Bylaws amendment by majority vote.