

Proposed revisions 4-25-2024 (meeting location, Board meeting third Thursday)

ROTARY CLUB OF BELLINGHAM POLICY MANUAL

In all text, "RCOB" refers to the Rotary Club of Bellingham.

RCOB GOVERNANCE: Our Club is governed by three documents: *The RCOB Club Constitution* is the first, and follows a standard set by Rotary International, and cannot be changed by our Club without jeopardizing our RI relationship.

The Rotary Club of Bellingham By-Laws and the *Rotary Club of Bellingham Policy Manual* both of which were written by and for our specific Club by our Members are the other two. The *By-Laws* can only be changed with the approval of the members.

The *Policy Manual* is set by the Club Board of Directors and records policies of procedure and temporal issues, such as meeting times, specific amounts of dues, etc.

1. ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting will be held the 2nd Monday of December of each year to elect officers for the upcoming Rotary year, which meeting shall be held at the usual place and time.

2. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS TIME AND PLACE – updated 4-11-2024

The RCOB Board of Directors meetings for the Rotary year will be held on the ~~second~~ **THIRD** Thursday of each month at 4:30 on Zoom unless a change is made prior.

3. CLUB ACTIVITY FUND RAISING – updated 8/10/2017

All Happy Bucks for weddings, anniversaries, births of children or grandchildren, along with eBay donations, will be distributed to the RCOB Foundation Designated Club Account unless otherwise directed by the donor. EBay funds will be transferred annually at the end of the Rotary year, leaving a minimum amount in the bank to cover banking and transaction fees.

4. CONTRIBUTION/EXPENDITURE POLICIES

Grant Types: The RCOB makes grants to projects and organizations in three ways:

- (A) As part of a "Major Project", which has a special emphasis among members and in the Club's budget;
- (B) As part of a specific committee's focus, such as the Scholarships and Awards, Vocational Service, or International Service Committees; and
- (C) Through the Service Fund Committee procedure, which provides grants to specific projects and activities not otherwise covered by (A) and (B) above, most of which are proposed by RCOB Members.

5. DIRECTORS & OFFICERS LIABILITY POLICY

The RCOB will cover the deductible of \$5,000 in the event of any future liability claims.

6. DUES - updated 7-1-2023

The Dues are billed on a Semi-Annual billing basis and emailed July 1st and January 1st of each year. The dues billed *per half year* are as follows, as of July 1, 2023 \$225 used to operate the internal operations of the RCOB; **\$100** required, tax-deductible donation to the RCOBF; **\$50** optional, deductible donation to the Rotary International Foundation (TRF).

7. ENTRANCE FEE

The current Entrance Fee for new members is \$150.00. The RCOB matches \$50.00 and the new member will be established as a Paul Harris Sustaining Member with TRF.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES REMOVE?? NO ENVIOR COMMITTEE HAS HADN'T BEEN DONE FOR YEARS.

Yearly check the fish ladder that was built by the club to make sure that it is clean.

9. IMPORTANT DATES

By-Laws Amendment Dates: (a) If presented by less than twenty-five (25) Members: Submitted to Board three months prior to the Annual Meeting; (b) If presented by petition of twenty-five (25) members, or by the Board of Directors: thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting. The Executive Secretary will notify the Membership of the proposed Amendment at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

Nominating Committee Appointed Date: The President shall appoint the Nominating Committee no later than October 15 of each year.

Nominations Presented Date: The Nominating Committee shall present the slate of candidates to the Membership three weeks prior to the annual meeting, **second Monday of December. ADD**

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RCOB Major Awards Executive Committee start nomination's from the membership April 1st for award presentation at the Changing of the Guard, typically the last Monday in June. ADD

10. INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL FUNDRAISING

The Board of Directors of the Rotary Club adopts the philosophy that fund raising is not limited to Internal Fundraising, but also includes External Fundraising. (Adopted by the Board 7/11/02)

11. MAJOR PROJECTS RECOMMENDATION PROCEDURES

The purpose of the Major Projects Recommendation Committee ("Committee") for the RCOB is to recommend to the Board of Directors of the RCOB major projects for RCOB sponsorship. The following procedures shall be followed by the Committee:

TIMELINE: COMMITTEE START: MARCH/APRIL

SELECTION MADE: MAY/JUNE

FUNDRAISING PERIOD: OCTOBER-DECEMBER

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

1. INCOMING PRESIDENT ON COMMITTEE

2. FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN ON COMMITTEE AND INVOLVED IN SELECTION OF PROJECT

A) Application and Presentations:

1) **Tax Exempt Status:** All projects shall be for organizations which have 501 (c) 3 or similar federal tax-exempt status. Proof of tax-exempt status is to be attached to the application.

2) **Application Form.** The application for funds shall initially be made in written form not to exceed five (5) pages 8½" x 11" double-spaced. The application must include the following:

- a) Full name, address and telephone number of the organization making application,
- b) The mission statement of the applicant,
- c) The purpose of the request,
- d) A complete explanation of the project with supporting data,
- e) Manner in which Rotary would be recognized,
- f) The amount of the request, and
- g) The name and telephone number of a contact person for the applicant.

3) **Application Sponsor.** The application must be signed and dated by a member of the RCOB as the project sponsor. It must also be signed and dated by the authorized agent of the applicant. Digital signatures and/or verifying emails are acceptable.

4) **Submission.** A digital copy of the application shall be submitted to the Chair of the Committee on or before the specified date. All applications made to the Committee Chair shall be submitted to the Committee for review.

5) **Presentation of Request.** The applicant and the sponsor of the project shall be prepared to make an oral presentation to the Committee. If a presentation is requested by the Committee, the presentation may include photographs, videos, maps and other visuals and/or handouts. The committee may request additional information, clarification and explanation of the project.

B) Review of Project.

1) The members of the Committee shall consider the applications and presentations, and determine the project(s), if any, they believe best meet(s) the guidelines.

2) The Committee shall forward its recommendation(s) together with explanation to the Board of Directors of RCOB for their review and final determination.

3) The Board of Directors of RCOB may approve, reject or modify the Committee's recommendation(s). Although not required, the Board may determine to seek approval of the recommended application(s) by the full Club membership. 4) The Rotary member sponsor of those applications which the Committee does not endorse shall be notified as soon as practical following the Committee's recommendation and RCOB Board's determination.

C) Committee Guidelines in Reviewing Project Requests.

The Committee shall use the following guidelines in reviewing project requests:

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- 1) Preference should be given to projects that would benefit citizens of Whatcom County, Washington and further to citizens who live in the Bellingham and greater Bellingham area.
- 2) The Committee may consider projects for which fundraising may exceed a period of one (1) Rotary year.
- 3) The Committee in its discretion may consider partnership with other Rotary clubs and other partners or organizations if the size of the project warrants this, to accomplish the goals of the project.
- 4) The Committee shall consider the Club's major project history as well as the Club's visioning directives in the application review and recommendation process.
- 5) The Committee shall consider funding applications that further the purpose of the organization making the request. The RCOB prefers capital projects. The committee will not consider applications to provide funding for operational costs other than major maintenance. The committee will not consider applications to provide funding to retire debt.
- 6) Projects for which the RCOB is a participant shall require public recognition of the RCOB in a form recommended by the Committee and approved by the Board.
- 7) Where possible, projects shall include the opportunity of members of the RCOB to participate in the construction and fundraising of the project.
- 8) The Committee does not have the authority to determine the fundraising goal for recommended projects but may make a recommendation to the Board. 9) The Committee shall determine in its sole discretion whether it will recommend a project and the terms of that recommendation.

12. MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS, FUNDRAISING, LIMITS & USES UPDATED 7-1-2019

(A) The Charitable Assessment collected from Members will be used to fund the Service Fund Committee and other charitable expenditures that are eligible for tax-exempt treatment and will be distributed through the RCOB Foundation (RCOBF). Non-tax-exempt contributions will be funded from the "Internal" portion of the dues and/or from fines and other miscellaneous income.

(B) Other fundraising from members will be limited to the explicit "Major Project(s)" undertaken by the Club each year.

(C) Each year members are expected to support at least one major project aimed at improving the quality of life in the Bellingham area by contributing to the annual RCOB fundraising campaign. Members are urged to contribute at least \$750 - \$1000 to this project. If that is not possible, please speak with the club president.

13. MEMBERSHIP LIMITS

Single institutions or organizations will not be represented by more than five percent (5%) of the Club's Members, and broad categories of classifications (i.e., "Law") will not be represented by over 10% of the membership. Retired Members do not count toward these percentages. As of 2/5/2014 the category counts were Banks 8, Education 9, Health 15, Insurance 8, Law 8, Non-Profit 11, and Real Estate 6. One or more of these classifications (i.e., health) may be divided by the Membership/Classification Committee. (Adopted 2/12/2004)

14. MEMBERSHIP AND CLASSIFICATION PROCEDURES

Adopted by the Board December 8, 2005

Every Rotarian has the right and duty to seek qualified members. In this way, all members can help our club achieve full representation of the business and professional life of the community.

Rotary was founded on the principle that leaders from various vocations best representing the business community form a club. The diversity of self-reliant personalities is an essential basis of a dynamic and interesting club.

Rotary membership is by invitation. When considering people for membership, emphasis should be on quality. Quality members will be those who are open-minded, honest, generous with leadership qualities, who are prepared to share their professional knowledge and abilities with others, and who wish to belong to Rotary in order to serve others. Membership development is first and foremost a search for the right people and not for people with the right classification.

14.1 The Classification and Membership Committee

14.1.1 Committee Composition – The Classification and Membership Committee will be composed of seven members, including the chairperson, all appointed by the President.

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14.1.2 Committee Member Terms – Members serve a maximum of three years, with staggered terms, so that one-third of the members is replaced each year. Having holdover members will provide continuity and familiarity with the processes.

14.1.3 Chairperson – The chairperson should have served as a member of the committee for at least one year before being named chairperson. If none of the existing members wishes to be appointed chairperson, a member who has had experience on the committee will be appointed.

14.1.4 Responsibilities – In addition to the responsibilities outlined below, the Classification and Membership Committee will:

- A. At least annually at a club assembly, review the membership process for all members.
- B. Make information regarding the RI and RCOB websites available to all members wishing to propose someone for membership.
- C. The Membership Committee will meet in May of each year or when requested by the board to apply the criteria and to identify new candidates to recommend becoming an Honorary Member or Friend of Rotary and identify any current member of either category who should no longer be retained as such. See *Section 14.2.2 Honorary Membership – Adopted by the Board of Directors 4/20/2017*

14.2: Membership Types and Qualifications

There are two kinds of membership, namely: Active and Honorary.

14.2.1 Active Membership

A candidate for Rotary membership is an adult of good character and reputation. Traditionally members hold or have held an executive position with discretionary authority in a business or profession. They should preferably live or work within the local area and be willing and able to attend most meetings. Lastly, they must have time and resources which they wish to give back to their local and world community through Rotary. (Adopted by the Board 6/12/14)

The RCOB also enacted a policy on February 12, 2004 as follows:

“Single institutions or organizations will not be represented by more than five percent (5%) of the Club’s Members and broad categories of classifications (e.g. “Law”) will not be represented by over 10% of the membership. Members who are retired shall not be included in the total number of members from a classification. The classification of a transferring or former member of a club shall not preclude election to active membership even if the election results in club membership temporarily exceeding the above limitations. If a member changes classification, the club may continue the member’s membership under the new classification notwithstanding these limitations. “

“NOTE: Holders of public office: Persons elected or appointed to public office for a specified time are not eligible for active membership under the classification of such office. This restriction shall not apply to persons holding positions or offices in schools, colleges, or other institutions of learning or to persons who are elected or appointed to the judiciary. Members who are elected or appointed to public office for a specified period may continue as such members in their existing classifications during the period in which they hold such office.

14.2.2 Honorary Membership –

Adopted by the Board of Directors 4/20/2017

Criteria for Honorary Member and Friend of Rotary:

The Membership Committee will meet in May of each year or when requested by the board to apply the criteria and to identify new candidates to recommend becoming an Honorary Member or Friend of Rotary and identify any current member of either category who should no longer be retained as such. The Board may also identify additional people for each category and refer their names to the committee

Eligibility for Honorary Membership.

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Persons who have distinguished themselves by meritorious service in the furtherance of Rotary ideals and those persons considered friends of Rotary for their permanent support of Rotary's cause may be elected to honorary membership in more than one club. The term of such membership shall be as determined by the board of the club in which they hold membership.

The Membership Committee's criteria for bestowing the designation Honorary Member and Friend of Rotary are provided below.

1. Honorary Member Criteria: This category of membership is authorized and described by Rotary International By-Laws section 4.050. To be designated as an Honorary Member, the candidate must meet a significant number of the following criteria at the discretion of the Board:
 - a) Has been an active regular member for a minimum of three years during the period of membership with an attendance record of not less than 80% averaged over that three-year period, (including consideration of exceptions for extenuating circumstances, e.g., illness, family emergencies, etc.). The three year period may but need not be consecutive years;
 - b) Is an inactive or former member who continues to be active in club activities by attending at least 2 meetings each year and when able, volunteers at least one shift at a club-sponsored event.
 - c) Is an inactive or former member who has served as a club officer in at least one major position (e.g. President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Treasurer, etc.)
 - d) Has participated at the District level or higher as a member of a committee or served as an officer at that level.
 - e) Has been recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow.
 - f) Has been an active participant in at least three major club projects and leader of at least one;
 - g) Sponsored at least 2 new members.
 - h) Is the spouse of a deceased member who was or had been nominated as an Honorary Member and who is engaged in Rotary activities at the local and/or higher levels.
2. Friend of Rotary Criteria:
 - a) Any member may request that a candidate be considered a Friend of Rotary at any time.
 - b) The candidate must have contributed to Rotary by actively participating in a club project in a significant manner (e.g. major donor, leader of the project, primary club partner of Rotary in the project, sponsor of the project or event, etc.).
 - c) The Board will approve/disapprove the request and notify the requester.

"NOTE: Honorary membership is the highest distinction that a club may bestow"

14.3: Membership Proposal and Approval Process

The proceedings and deliberations of the Classification and Membership Committee shall be held in strict confidence. The Committee members and other club members must be permitted to engage in frank discussions about potential members because such discussions are important to RCOB's continuing success. The Committee requires its members, as well as others participating in the process, to keep the nature and substance of its deliberations in confidence.

The membership proposal and approval process for active membership follows:

14.3.1 Proposing a candidate for membership

(A) A minimum of two active members in good standing is required to propose a new member. At least one of the proposing members shall have been a member of the RCOB for a minimum of two years. This period allows the members to become familiar with Rotary objectives, RCOB procedures and culture and to have experience on committees.

(B) Members wanting to propose a candidate for membership will:

(1) First, meet with the Chairperson of the Classification and Membership Committee BEFORE a proposed member is contacted. This will insure the proposers understand the membership process. Also, the chairperson can review (i) the candidate's status and role within his/her organization or company to determine whether he/she meets RCOB's requirements; (ii) the club's overall demographics to insure that the club remains well balanced per RCOB and RI guidelines; (iii) the candidate's lack of membership in another service organization.

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(2) Then, bring the prospective new member to at least three RCOB meetings and introduce the individual to the club membership as a guest, not as a prospective member.

(C) Following completion of the above, if proposers decide to formally propose a candidate, the proposers first need to convey to their candidate the attendance requirements, time commitments and minimum financial obligations to the club and RI. While the right person vs. the right classification is important, ultimately the candidate's ability to meet the initiation fee, dues, charity assessment and miscellaneous expenses is an important consideration before accepting membership in the club; and most importantly the candidate's understanding that the object of Rotary is to serve – the club, the community, and the world at large.

(D) If the candidate understands the membership obligations and is willing to commit to the service, attendance, time and minimum financial obligations and if the proposers wish to continue the process to propose the candidate for membership, the proposers will formally propose the candidate using the regular proposal form in use at the time. Proposal forms must be signed by both proposers, and the candidate who, by signing the application, acknowledges and authorizes discussions about his or her suitability for membership. Also, the candidate's signature authorizes the club to publish the candidate's name in *The Tattler* in the event the C&M Committee recommends the candidate to the board of directors for membership. The completed application will be submitted, in confidence, to the Executive Secretary, who shall deliver the form to the chairperson of the C&M Committee.

(E) Proposers of a new member should monitor the status of their proposal. They may check the progress with the club's Executive Secretary who maintains a checklist on each nominee.

14.3.2 Classification & Membership Committee Actions

(A) After the proposers formally propose the candidate, using the club's member proposal form, the committee will review the proposal.

(1) The committee members shall carefully consider the prospective member's suitability for membership including his or her character, business and professional standing, and the qualifications stated in "Active Membership" above.

(2) The Committee members will attempt to confirm information provided in the proposal form and may contact members within the same classification, or other members to provide information useful in its evaluation.

(3) The Committee chairperson may invite the proposers to appear at the Committee meeting to answer any questions that may arise. The proposers should not contact individual Committee members during this process.

(4) The proposers may request to appear before the C&M Committee to support their candidate before the committee votes on the candidate.

(B) The Committee members shall approve or reject a membership proposal through a majority vote.

(1) The Committee Chairperson shall forward any recommendation for membership to the Club President for action as outlined below.

(2) The Committee Chairperson will inform the proposers of any negative decision through a simple letter announcing the Committee's decision.

(3) There is no appeal process from the Committee's decision.

14.3.3 Following Committee Approval

Membership proposals favorably passed upon by the committee shall be forwarded as follows:

(A) The recommendation for membership will be forwarded to the Board for action. The Board shall consider and approve or disapprove the recommendation of the committee and shall then notify the proposers of its decision through the Executive Secretary.

(B) If the membership proposal is approved by the Board:

(1) A representative of the committee and the proposers will meet with the proposed member to determine if he/she wishes to join and confirm the prospective member understands the privileges and responsibilities of Rotary.

(2) The name of the candidate, classification and occupation will be published in *The Tattler*.

(C) If there are no objections from the membership after two weeks following the publication date, the new member will be inducted.

14.3.4 Review Process, if Written Objection is Received

The review process if a member objects to the decisions made according to this procedure shall be as follows:

(A) A member may object by communicating in writing directly to the president within the two weeks following publication of the candidate's name in *The Tattler*. The communication should simply state, "I object to (candidate's name)" without stating any reasons. It should be signed and sent directly to the president.

(B) The president will contact the objector to determine the reasons for the objection.

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If the president concludes there is no merit to the objection then the objector will be informed and the candidate will be inducted.

(C) If the president determines the objection should be investigated, the president will refer the specifics of the objection to the C&M Committee for investigation. The president shall not reveal the name of the objector to the committee unless the objector waives the right to confidentiality.

(D) The committee members will conduct an investigation of the objection and ultimately, but expeditiously, make a recommendation to the president on the candidate's membership. If the committee recommends approval of the candidate, it will go forward as though no objection(s) had been made. If the committee recommends against membership, the president is informed by the C&M chairperson, and the president reports to the board with the C&M's recommendation.

(E) Board Action – At the next board meeting following completion of the review process, the Board may vote to accept or reject the C&M recommendation. The Board's decision is final.

The rules in Section 1 of this policy, "Classification and Memberships Committee Responsibilities" above shall apply.

15. MEMORIALS

The RCOB will contribute \$100.00 to the RCOBF permanent fund in memory of any Rotarian or spouse who dies, and the surviving family shall be notified appropriately that such memorial has been made.

16. NOMINATING COMMITTEE DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

As adopted by the Board of Directors May 5, 2005

The duties of the Nominating Committee as defined in the RCOB By-Laws are further defined as follows:

(A) Refine criteria for leadership positions, including but not limited to the criteria of length of club service, personality, public speaking skills, leadership positions and or education etc.

(B) Define a timeline for the leadership nomination procedure.

(C) Educate the club as to the above criteria and timeline. Part of the education process should be undertaken each year during the month prior to the opening of nominations for officers and directors, and should encourage the membership to take part in the nominating process.

(D) Develop and publicize to the membership opportunities and requirements for Leadership positions within the club as well as leadership education opportunities.

(E) Maintain on-going communication with the club.

17. REGULAR MEETING TIME AND PLACE UPDATE

The RCOB meets each Monday at 12:15 p.m. excluding holidays and other dates as designated annually in advance of each Rotary year by the Board of Directors. The location of the meetings is at ~~Northwood Hall, 3240 Northwest Ave., Bellingham, Washington 98225 (360-671-8311).~~ **Whatcom Community College, 237 W. Kellogg Rd., Bellingham 98226**

18. SERVICE FUND COMMITTEE (SFC) GUIDELINES & POLICIES – UPDATED 5-13-2021

(A) Committee Members: The SFC is chaired by the President-Elect, and committee members serve staggered, three-year terms.

(B) Committee Responsibilities: (a) Receive all routine smaller donation requests that are sent to the Club; (b) Make recommendations to the Board to approve grants of specific amounts or decline to make a donation based upon the annual budget and committee guidelines.

(C) Grant Parameters: Usually the SFC will limit grants to a maximum of \$1,000. The funds will go to support local community needs. Typically, each grant requires a Rotarian to be a liaison between the RCOB and the grantees. Requests are evaluated on their own merits each year.

(1) Funding Priorities: Emphasis will be given to projects that address the Rotary International Areas of Focus (Promoting peace, Fighting disease, Providing clean water, Saving mothers and children, Supporting education, Growing local economies, Protecting the environment)

(2) Restrictions: Grants cannot be used to unfairly discriminate against any group; promote a particular political or religious viewpoint; or support purely religious functions.

(3) Considerations: Funding decisions will be based, in part, on the Rotary Four Way Test:

a. Is it the TRUTH?

b. Is it FAIR to all concerned?

c. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?

d. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

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(D) How A Grant Is Requested: Each grant application must be sponsored by a member of the RCOB who is not a paid employee of the requesting organization. The project should be part of an IRS-recognized not-for-profit organization's program, but not necessarily limited to one. Only one request for a grant may be made by any one member in a Rotary year. Applications should be in the form of a one-page letter signed by a member of the RCOB, giving the full name of the organization, a single sentence covering the organization's mission statement, the amount and purpose of the request, the relationship of the member with the organization and extent of involvement (including other members' participation too) and name/phone number of a contact person at the organization.

(E) How A Grant Is Presented And Reviewed: The member/requester should give the application to the chairperson of the Service Fund Committee who will then call a meeting of the SFC so the member/requester can attend and present the application in person. If the SFC endorses the request, the SFC then presents the endorsed request to the Board of Directors of the RCOB for approval. If approved, checks are issued by the RCOB or the RCOB Foundation as appropriate. If fund limitations preclude granting all fund requests, the SFC will give priority to projects that most comply with the current year's objectives of the RCOB.

(F) Questions and/or Comments: Please direct questions or comments to the SFC chairperson.