

Bylaws
Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council

Article I: Name

The name of this corporation shall be Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council.

Article II: Purposes and Objectives

The purpose and objective of Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council shall be:

1. To meet regularly to encourage a spirit of unity and dialogue, to create increased communication and cooperation among faith communities in the Fort Collins area.
2. To facilitate communication between faith communities and social action groups within local, secular and religious communities.
3. To identify needs not presently being met in the community; to facilitate and/or create ways to meet those needs; to support and augment existing attempts to meet needs and to address social issues.
4. To establish by Covenant, a relationship of the Interfaith Council to constituent members.
5. To establish our voice in the community.

Article III: Membership

Section 1. Representative Membership:

The Interfaith Council (IF) shall consist of representatives from each constituent body, as elected or chosen by that body.

Any organized faith community in the greater Fort Collins area may become a member of the Council by covenant, sending two voting representatives.

Affiliate faith communities and human service organizations whose purpose is consistent with the purposes and commitments of Interfaith Council may serve as affiliate members. Each affiliate member will have one voting representative.

Section 2. Duties of Members: Membership in the Interfaith Council signifies agreement:

1. To participate in deliberations of the Council.
2. To support in principle the Council's legitimacy in bearing an interfaith witness to religious bodies and to the community.
3. To contribute toward the Council's basic operating expenses, as determined by the Executive Team. This fee may be waived by executive action.

Section 3. Covenants: A yearly written commitment or covenant will be sought from each faith community/affiliate member to facilitate planning for the year to follow.

Article IV: Elections

Section 1. Nominating Team. The president appoints a nominating team at least 90 days prior to the annual meeting.

Section 2. Slate of Officers. The nominating team will have a slate of nominees available at the business meeting prior to the annual meeting. At the same meeting, additional nominations may be made from the floor by a representative member of the Interfaith, with the permission of the nominee, and a second.

Section 3. Election. Officers are elected at the annual meeting.

Article V. Executive Team Membership and Duties

Section 1. Executive Team Composition. An Executive Team (EC) consisting of 9 members, preferably balanced between clergy and lay representatives, will be elected by the Interfaith council to serve a 2 year term, with half elected at the annual meeting. They are to supervise and coordinate the activities and affairs of the Interfaith Council. They shall function as the “Board of Directors” with the President as the “Director” in accordance with the articles of incorporation.

Section 2. Duties of the Executive Team.

The duties of the Executive Team shall be to:

1. Secure covenant commitments from member groups.
2. Review agenda and monthly meeting programs as set forth in Article 7, Section 4.
3. Oversee financial affairs of Interfaith Council
 - a. Prepare annual budget and set membership fees each year.
 - b. Review and approve distribution of funds.
 - c. Develop fund raising procedures.
 - d. Designate two (2) Signers for any disbursement.
 - e. Determine appropriate signatures for bank accounts.
 - f. Appoint a team to annually audit all financial records.
 - g. Appoint a Financial assistant to handle incoming mail and aid the Treasurer. Duties of the Financial Assistant (not authorized to sign checks):
 - (1) Pick-up mail on weekly basis
 - (2) Record received funds (receipts) with the Treasurer on a signed form to be filed with another officer designated by the Executive Team

- (3) Deliver mail to appropriate officers and team leaders
4. Compile calendar of meeting places and programs
5. Arrange for minutes to be taken and recorded.
6. Assign new programs and projects to appropriate team.
7. Appoint a Nominating team at least 90 days before annual meeting.
8. Approve additional teams and positions as needed.
9. Receive inquiries and refer to appropriate team.

Section 3. Officers.

Officers shall consist of President, Vice President/Program Chair, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, plus chairs for the following Teams: Food, Health, Housing, Membership and Social Concerns.

Article VI: Organization of Council

Section 1. Duties of Officers.

In addition to attendance at regular Executive Team meetings, their duties shall be:

President:

1. Preside at Interfaith meetings.
2. Prepare agenda for Interfaith meeting.
3. Prepare Executive Team reports.
4. Represent Interfaith for official functions.

Vice President:

1. Receive information and suggestions regarding possible programs.
2. Consult with Executive Team on program schedule for the year.
3. Confirm programs in advance of Interfaith meetings.
4. Preside at Interfaith and Executive Team meetings in absence of the President.
5. Represent Interfaith in absence of the President.

Recording Secretary:

Keep records and take minutes at all Interfaith meetings.

Treasurer:

1. Record covenant pledges and membership fees and report as requested.
2. Record receipts along with the Financial Assistant. Promptly provide copies of monthly bank statements to another officer, designated by the Executive Team, to file. Distribute funds per Interfaith procedure.
3. Provide a financial report every month at the business meeting of the month.
4. Prepare an annual financial report for review.

5. Assist in the preparation of a proposed annual budget.
6. Complete appropriate reports and tax forms.

Section 2. Standing Committees.

The leaders or co-leaders of each standing team will be a member of the Executive Team and are charged to form a team to fulfill the tasks set forth: to lead the team and provide for minutes to be taken. Each team will have one vote on the Executive team. A team will secure permission from the Executive Team before taking action on behalf of Interfaith. Without specific permission from Interfaith, a team cannot act on or undertake a project. The team shall have a written report to share at the Interfaith meeting following a meeting of the team.

Section 3. Duties of the Standing Teams.

Food Team: The Food Team will oversee, develop and report to Interfaith and the Executive Team on: various food collection programs, fund collection for food, food distribution, and other programs.

Health Team: The Health Team will oversee, develop and report to Interfaith and the Executive Team on dental and pharmaceutical programs, children's health care, access to health care, medical assistance, aging issues, alcohol and drug abuse and other programs.

Housing Team: The Housing Team will oversee, develop and report to Interfaith and the Executive Team on affordable housing, homeless, transitional housing, transient issues, and other programs.

Membership Team: The Membership Team will oversee, develop and report to Interfaith and the Executive Team on the preparation and distribution of the covenants and handbooks; retention and recruitment of faith communities; maintenance and update of Council brochures; be responsible for public relation activities, newsletters, and news releases; and receive items for publication and refer them to the newsletter editor.

Social Concerns Team: The Social Concerns Team will oversee, develop and report to Interfaith and the Executive Team on: racial, cultural and ethnic diversity concerns, educational programs, ballot issues, literacy programs, justice issues, and other programs.

Section 4. Special Liaison:

The Executive Team has the authority to appoint representatives from Interfaith to other organizations whose mission/work is consistent with that of Interfaith

Council. Some may be ongoing such as the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program. Others may be short term such as special projects like the flood recovery. These representatives are appointed by and report to the Executive Team.

Article VII: Policies and Procedures of Interfaith Council

Section 1. Prologue:

The purpose of this article is to affirm the independent responsibility of the Interfaith Council to its declared principles and to the constituent members and affiliates.

The Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council will seek membership from religious communities with their own distinct viewpoints and traditions, and will proceed on a basis of full respect for the integrity which takes these diverse forms.

The function of the Interfaith Council has been and will continue to be: “to strengthen one another and our member bodies in witnessing to ‘religious conscience’ and ‘faith based action’ in our community.”

“Religious conscience” clearly may address not only specific actions to remedy shortcomings in meeting human needs, but also underlying causes, programs and assumptions.

Section 2. Mode of Response to Social Concerns/Issues.

As new needs arise for consideration or requests for a public pronouncement on some current issues are brought to Interfaith Council:

1. The request shall be referred to a standing team or an ad hoc team will be appointed to further study and examine the issue.
2. The team shall present a proposal, coordinating efforts with existing organizations/agencies or programs as possible and fulfilling the following criteria, to the Executive Team for its review.

Criteria for evaluation of projects, programs, resolutions and endorsements:

1. Is the issue or need clearly defined?
2. Does it duplicate or overlap existing projects/programs?
3. Are our resources sufficient?
4. Does it have broad, common appeal?
5. What is the probable success on the initial project/program?
6. What real, identifiable difference will it make?
7. How will it involve our members?
8. Does it address any situation of real injustice?

9. How critical is this need in the overall community?
 10. How critical is this need relative to other needs?
3. The Executive Team shall include the proposal on the business meeting agenda with recommendations for action. This agenda item should appear on the notice for the meeting at which it is designated to be discussed.
 4. The Interfaith Council members present at that meeting shall then determine if there is a clear consensus/unanimity among them, based on knowledge of positions held by their local congregations or by their denominations. (We cannot express a consensus where a consensus does not exist.) To recognize this, is not an evasion of responsibility in the face of pressing issues; it is only to point to the need for alternate approaches. While alternate approaches might not lead to simple position statements that satisfy some proponents, they might create better grounds for understanding the issues.
 5. If there is such a consensus/unanimity, the Interfaith Council members may do any or all of the following:
 - a. Adopt the proposed statement/resolution in the name of the Interfaith Council, being careful to specify the manner in which it shall be reported.
 - b. Endorse the program or create a project.
 - c. Refer the issue to several member congregations for action.
 - d. Propose an Interfaith sponsored educational program on the issue.

Endorsement:

Interfaith members commit to working with (not for) a specific organization/project, seeking active involvement of the members of its member faith communities by:

1. Publicizing the project in each individual member faith community
2. Arranging for presentations by the endorsed organizations/program to make known their concerns/needs (focus on current needs) to member faith communities.

Endorsement does not automatically involve financial support, although this is a possibility.

Create a Project:

Any ongoing interest or concern that results in a specific program or workshop sponsored by Interfaith Council is a Project.

1. Projects may be in cooperation with other groups or agencies.
2. Usually involve financial commitment.

- 6) If it is determined that there is not a consensus/unanimity, the Council may:
 - a. Vote, but only as individuals.
 - b. Refer the issue to the congregations or to individuals for action.
 - c. Sponsor an educational program that presents the diversity of options.
 - d. Drop the issue as inappropriate for Interfaith Council action.

Section 3: Modes of Participation in Approved Projects and Endorsed Programs:

1. Financial support for new or existing programs/projects.
2. Publicly endorse and support existing programs/projects.
3. Publicize in member faith communities programs/projects and the need for volunteers and support for specific programs/projects

Section 4: Agenda Items for Interfaith Council Meetings.

Items for the Business Meeting agenda or program information for the Program Meetings should be addressed to a member of the Executive Team at least one week prior to the Interfaith Council Meeting at which it will occur. Handout literature/materials will be pre-screened by a representative/member of the Executive Team.

Section 5: Publicity and Newsletter.

1. Publicity shall be the responsibility of the Membership Team.
2. Reports of meetings will be:
 - a. Published in the newsletter sent to all representatives and interested parties.
 - b. In officially recorded minutes provided at the following meeting of the Interfaith Council.

Article VIII: Meetings of Interfaith Council

Section 1. Annual Meeting: The date, time and place of the Annual Meeting will be set by the Executive Team for the purpose of electing members to the Executive Team and receiving annual reports from programs and teams.

Section 2. Regular Meetings: Two regular meetings of Interfaith Council will be held each month except July, August and December, when only one meeting per month will be scheduled. The schedule of date, times and places will be set by the Executive Team and published by the beginning of

the year. One meeting a month will usually be devoted to business and team reports. The other meeting will usually be for program area presentation and discussion, except the month of the annual meeting. The meeting place will rotate among member groups.

Section 3. Outreach/Community Meetings: On those months with a 5th Thursday, special evening meetings may be held. Each meeting on the 5th Thursday will be called at the discretion of the Executive Team and the general public will be encouraged to attend.

Section 4. Special Meetings: On an emergency basis, a meeting of the whole council or Executive Team can be called by the president/vice-president.

Section 5. Executive Team Meetings: The Executive Team shall meet monthly to review agenda items, reports, to approve action items from teams and to make recommendations on action items to the General Assembly of Interfaith Council. Funding allocations will be made during at least one meeting in the spring and one meeting in the fall, with limited spending allocations permitted at other monthly meetings as pressing needs arise.

Section 6. Quorum: A quorum shall consist of those designated representatives present at any officially called meetings.

Article IX: Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (current edition) shall apply on all questions of procedure and parliamentary law not specified in these bylaws.

Article X: Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by representatives gathered in a regular or specially called business meeting provided proposed amendments have been distributed in printed form through the Interfaith Newsletter or by a special mailing one month prior to the voting.

These bylaws were amended on February 3, 2005 and they supersede all preceding bylaws.