



"Working Together for a Better Community"
HILLCREST COMMUNITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION (HCCA)

Legislation Committee

Anderson, A. Franklin

McDonald, Virgil

Bolling, Anthony

Robinson, Tony

Evans, Monica Holman

Stuckey, Boyle

Jackson, Linda

Wilhelm, Ed

Marlin, Robin

Williamson, Brandi

THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The Council of the District of Columbia is the legislative branch of the District government. All legislative powers are vested in the Council. In addition, the council approves the District's annual budget and financial plan, and sets the revenue required to fund the budget. It oversees the programs and operations of government agencies, and acts on or initiates reorganization plans for the Executive Branch. The Council determines land use, through the adoption of the comprehensive plan, and undertakes redistricting based on the decennial census. In addition, the Council appoints members to certain boards and commissions, and must confirm major appointments made by the Mayor.

The Council develops legislative initiatives and budget priorities to promote the public welfare. It oversees the performance of government agencies and the implementation of management reforms to improve service delivery. Council committees issue analytical reports on the effectiveness of government operations and make recommendations for reform. In addition, the Council monitors agency spending to ensure compliance with the approved budget and financial plan.

Council Rules require a public hearing before a permanent bill can be adopted and notice of the hearing must be published in the D.C. Register at least 15 days in advance. Persons wishing to speak at a hearing may sign up by contacting the appropriate committee or calling 202-724-8000. If you are unable to testify at a hearing, you can fax or mail your comments, or you can call the Council Member.

Organizational Structure

The Council is composed of 13 Members--a representative elected from each of the eight wards and five members, including the Chairman, elected at-large. The Council conducts its work through standing committees and special committees established as needed. Council staff perform legislative research, bill drafting, program and policy analysis, and constituent services. In addition, the Council is supported by centralized administrative, legal and budget offices.

To assist in its oversight, the Council appoints the D.C. Auditor who conducts statutorily required audits of government accounts and operation, and other audits as directed by the Council.

Council Committees

Much of the work of the Council is done in standing committees and special committees. Committees are established at the first meeting of each Council period.

Council Period 16 Committees

Committee Of the Whole (COW) Linda Cropp, Chairperson	Committee on Government Operations Vincent B. Orange, Sr., Chairperson
Committee on Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Jim Graham, Chairperson	Committee on Health David A. Catania, Chairperson
Committee on Economic Development Sharon Ambrose, Chairperson	Committee on Human Services Adrian Fenty, Chairperson
Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation Kathy Patterson, Chairperson	Committee on the Judiciary Phil Mendelson, Chairperson
Committee on Finance and Revenue Jack Evans, Chairperson	Committee on Public Works and the Environment Carol Schwartz, Chairperson

Member

To hold the office of Member of the Council, a person must be a registered voter, a resident of the District for at least a year prior to the general election, and of the ward if nominated for election from a particular ward, and hold no other public office for which compensation beyond expenses is received.

A member is elected from each of the District's eight wards, and four members are elected at-large to serve a four-year term.

Chairman

The Chairman is the presiding and chief executive officer of the Council and is a voting member of all standing committees. The Chairman is elected at large to a four-year term of office. When the office of Mayor is vacant, the Chairman assumes the position.

The Chairman Pro Tempore

The Chairman nominates and the Council approves by a majority vote the appointment of Chairman Pro Tempore who acts in the Chairman's absence.

Vacancies

Varying procedures guide the filling of a vacancy on the Council. If the position of Chairman becomes vacant, an at large member of the Council is elected by a majority vote of the Council to serve until a special election is held to fill the unexpired term.

If the position of an at large member who is affiliated with a political party becomes vacant, the central committee of such party appoints a person to fill the vacancy until a special election. If an at large member is not affiliated with any political party, a majority of the Council appoints a similarly unaffiliated person to fill the unexpired term until a special election.

If a ward position becomes vacant, a special election is held to fill the unexpired term. Unlike an at large position, a ward vacancy is not filled until a special election. All special elections must be held within 114 days of the declaration of a vacancy.

Duties of the Council

As the legislative branch of local government, the Council enacts laws, approves the annual operating budget, and establishes and oversees the programs and operations of all District government agencies. To carry out its duties, the Council considers how a proposed law would affect citizens and the quality of life in the District, analyzes its fiscal impact and holds public hearings to solicit citizen comment. Council standing committees conduct oversight hearings on government operation. In addition, Members assist citizens in accessing government services.

Council Meetings

The Council meets in legislative session on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. The Council meets in the Council Chamber on 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. Meetings are public, and agendas are available to visitors and published a week in advance in the Council's Calendar of the Week. Meetings are broadcast live on Channel 13 and vary in length depending on the agenda.
