

**HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL
OF
BETA SIGMA PHI**

**BY LAWS,
STANDING RULES,
&
TRADITIONS**

**Adopted: February 1, 1988
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**BETA SIGMA PHI
HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL BY-LAWS**

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be Houston City Council of Beta Sigma Phi.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization is to act in an advisory capacity on any problem submitted by a chapter; to circulate special information; to promote inter-chapter harmony; and to provide a way for chapters to correlate their planning and activity for city-wide events. City Council’s purpose is not to legislate, but to recommend, to guide and to foster cooperation and harmony in keeping with the ideals of Beta Sigma Phi.

ARTICLE III – POWERS

- Section 1.** City Council may recommend any policies when such policies are clearly needed to serve one or more of the purposes herein.
- Section 2.** City Council may choose City Council Honorary Members. It may also relieve them of their duties if circumstances so arise. (See Article IV, Section 2.)
- Section 3.** City Council approval is required before a member may transfer to another chapter within this council. City Council approval is also required before a member-at-large may transfer to another chapter within this council. (Re: Book of Beta Sigma Phi, Rules and Regulations, Article III (5) – Membership.)
- Section 4.** The City Council may, at its discretion and judgment, remove any officer for the good of the sorority without any implication of dishonor to the officer, and the voting shall be held by secret ballot.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1.** Membership of the Houston City Council shall be composed of chapters of Beta Sigma Phi represented by the incumbent president and incumbent vice-president, or other duly appointed representatives from each of the chapters. (See Article VIII, Section 1.)
- Section 2.** Honorary Member – City Council may choose City Council Honorary Members. In order to be eligible for a City Council Honorary Member, a candidate must have been a Houston City Council “First Lady of the Year.” (See Article III, Section 2, Standing Rule 6.)
- Section 3.** Associate Member – An Associate Member is a Member-At-Large or a member of chapters not affiliated with council. This member is added to our Roster and is subject to the same dues as regular Chapter members. She is also eligible to receive communications via current procedures and attend Council meetings and functions. Since there is no council chapter affiliation, she is not eligible to vote, become a council officer or be a committee chair.
- Section 4.** Dues – The annual dues shall be determined by the Executive Board with the approval of City Council at a regular council meeting; dues shall be payable twice a year, not later than the October council meeting and February council meeting. Dues for each chapter shall be based on the chapter rosters of current active members and members on leave of absence as of September 1st and January 1st. Dues of newly formed chapters shall be pro-rated. (See Standing Rule 11.) Should a chapter become delinquent in payment of dues, they will have three months in which to become current. After such time, if a chapter has not settled its account, it shall be dropped from the membership roll of Houston City Council. Should the chapter wish to rejoin council within a year, a reinstatement fee of one dollar (\$1.00) per member will be assessed,

in addition to the payment of current dues. After one year, a re-admittance may be granted, upon written request of the chapter, and approval of City Council, without penalty.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Section 1. The elected officers shall be President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. The President shall:

- a) preside at all meetings of the Houston City Council and Executive Board;
- b) follow the order of business set forth under Standing Rules for regular chapter meetings as shown in the Book of Beta Sigma Phi;
- c) serve as an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee;
- d) appoint a Parliamentarian to serve in an advisory capacity without vote. (Article X, Section 2j.)

Section 3. The President-Elect shall:

- a) perform any and all duties of the President in the event of her absence, or inability to serve;
- b) serve as official hostess of Houston City Council, chair Founder's Day observance and Summer Social;
- c) be property custodian for council.
- d) automatically serve as President the following year.

Section 4. The Vice-President shall:

- a) serve as chairman of the Membership Committee;
- b) introduce and welcome all transferees and guests who attend the City Council meetings;
- c) provide a transferee list and prospective member list when available at City Council meetings;
- d) assist the President-Elect as needed.

Section 5. The Recording Secretary shall:

- a) keep the records and minutes of all City Council meetings and its Executive Board;
- b) maintain a roll and record of all members of City Council present and absent;
- c) mail or email copies of the minutes to Executive Board members, chapter presidents, and the International office within ten (10) days after each meeting.

Section 6. The Corresponding Secretary shall:

- a) be responsible for the correspondence of City Council;
- b) file the City Council officers' names with the local Chamber of Commerce and other desirable directories;

- c) be responsible for maintaining a list of members' e-mail addresses and relaying City Council information to chapters via e-mail when necessary.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall:

- a) collect all monies and keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements;
- b) make an oral report and provide an electronic backup to the President at each meeting;
- c) provide the Secretary a written report monthly to be included with the City Council minutes;
- d) pay only those expenses accompanied by receipts, subject to Committee Chair, Executive Board and City Council approval.
- e) include reconciled bank statements, copy of previous audit, and copy of current Bylaws with Treasurer's books when presented for audit.
- f) furnish prior notice of all City Council dues and or assessments;
- g) prepare a proposed budget
- h) shall maintain Treasury books on computer and software provided by City Council.

ARTICLE VI – NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, TERMS OF OFFICE

Section 1. Nominations – At the March meeting the retiring City Council president shall call for the election of a Nominating Committee. This committee shall be composed of five (5) members from the city wide membership elected by plurality vote. The member receiving the largest number of votes shall serve as chairman. No more than one member from a chapter or the current Executive Board shall serve on the Nominating Committee, and no member shall serve two consecutive years.

Section 2. Elections

- a) At the April meeting, with retiring Council President presiding, the Nominating Committee shall present nominees for offices to be filled. One name from the city-wide membership shall be presented for each office. A brief resume of each nominee's qualifications shall be included in the report. Nominations may be made from the floor for any council elective office with the consent of the nominee and including her qualifications.
- b) No member shall be eligible for the office of President Elect unless she has served as president of a chapter for at least (6) months.
- c) Elections shall be by vote unless there are two (2) or more candidates for the same office, in which case the vote shall be by ballot and a majority shall elect. If no member receives a majority vote than there shall be a run-off between the two candidates receiving the highest votes.
- d) Only duly elected representatives or a representative's alternate from the chapters within this council may vote at the meetings of the organization.
- e) In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the President-Elect shall fill the unexpired term. An election shall then be held to fill the unexpired term of President-Elect.

Section 3. Term of Office

- a) The elected officers shall hold office for a term of one year effective the first day of May or until a successor is elected. No member may serve more than two consecutive years on City Council Executive Board. Only one member from a chapter may serve as a City Council officer in any given year. An officer who has served more than one-half (1/2) of a term is considered to have served a full term in that office.

- b) Installation – New officers shall be installed by the retiring City Council President in the presence of the membership at or before the regular City Council meeting in May.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

- Section 1.** Regular meetings of the Houston City Council shall be held the last Monday of August and the first Monday of each month, October through June. When in conflict with a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the second Monday of the month.
- Section 2.** Quorum – a majority of the duly elected representatives shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 3.** Special meetings of the Houston City Council shall be called by the President upon written request of three (3) chapters of this council.

ARTICLE VIII – REPRESENTATIVES TO CITY COUNCIL

- Section 1.** Each chapter of this council is entitled to be represented by two (2) members, the chapter’s president and vice president, or other duly appointed representatives, at each council meeting. Each representative shall have one vote with no chapter having more than two votes. (Article IV, Section 1.)
- Section 2.** All representatives shall attend council meetings. When a chapter representative is unable to attend a meeting, the alternate or an appointee must represent her. The substitute shall have full voting rights upon signing the sign-in sheet provided by the Recording Secretary. An alternate shall vote only in the absence of the regular council member for whom she is substituting.
- Section 3.** An officer of the Executive Board may serve as a substitute for a voting member of her chapter. (See Article IX, Section 5.)

ARTICLE IX – EXECUTIVE BOARD OF CITY COUNCIL

- Section 1.** The Executive Board of the Houston City Council shall consist of the elected officers of the council. The board shall have the authority to act during the interim between regular meetings, with such emergency action subject to ratification of the council. Each board member shall have one (a) vote at the board meetings and three (3) members shall constitute a quorum. The parliamentarian has no vote and is not counted in the quorum. (See Article X, Section 2j, Parliamentarian.)
- Section 2.** The Executive Board shall fill vacancies in any office other than the President or President-Elect for the unexpired term, subject to council approval. (See Article VI, Section 2e.)
- Section 3.** The Executive Board shall appoint chairmen for the Council Standing Committees (except the Nominating Committee). The term for these appointments shall be one (1) year.
- Section 4.** The Executive Board shall appoint Special Committees for specific duties as necessary.
- Section 5.** Regular Executive Board meetings shall be held preceding regular City Council meetings, as necessary. Special meetings may be called by the President, or at the request of any three officers. It shall be the duty of each officer to attend all regular and special board meetings and City Council meetings. No member of the Executive Board may vote in a council meeting except as a substitute for a voting member of her chapter. (Article VIII, Section 3.)
- Section 6.** The Executive Board shall provide chapters a current copy of the City Council Bylaws annually.

ARTICLE X – COMMITTEES

Section 1. Duties of the Standing Committees of Houston City Council:

- a) A committee shall present recommendations to City Council.
- b) A committee shall present contracts to the Executive Board for approval before deposits are made.
- c) A committee shall present a financial report to the membership and submit a written report to the Treasurer no later than 30 days after the event.
- d) A committee chairman has no council vote.

Section 2. Standing Committees:

- a) **Audit:** This committee shall consist of one qualified member to examine the Treasurer's financial records. She will be available to the Treasurer for consultation at any time. The Audit Report shall be made at the June council meeting.
- b) **Council Acknowledgement of Participation and Achievements (CAPA), Scrapbook and Yearbook Contests:** This committee shall formulate and compile a document with recommendations to be submitted to the HCC Executive Board for approval and made available online to the membership by the November Council meeting each year. This document shall include all information pertinent to CAPA activities and the State Scrapbook and Yearbook Grading Sheets, and all decisions, with guidance of the Executive Board, shall be final. In addition to Scrapbook and Yearbook contests, CAPA includes four (4) mini contests (Best Program, Best Service, Best Social and Best Ways & Means). All chapters shall compete equally in all CAPA, Scrapbook and Yearbook contests. The first place winners shall be recognized with certificates and cash awards as determined by budget allowances and awarded at the Founder's Day Banquet.
- c) **City Council Directory:** This committee shall be responsible for publishing the City Council directory. The use of the City Council directory shall be strictly for the information of Beta Sigma Phi members. A complimentary copy of the directory shall be presented to the President.
- d) **Fall Fashion Show:** This committee shall formulate and execute all plans for a fashion show and luncheon to be held in the Fall.
- e) **Friendship:** This committee shall be responsible for extending our hand of friendship by appropriate remembrance or visits to Beta Sigma Phis and their families who are hospitalized for any length of time in our city.
- f) **Historian:** The Historian shall compile a scrapbook for the year's activities to be presented to the President at the Founder's Day banquet.
- g) **Legacy Ritual:** This committee shall be in charge of the Legacy Ritual and honoring all Legacy and Envoy II members of Houston City Council, and work pertaining thereto in keeping with the ideals set forth in the Ritual.
- h) **Librarians:** This committee shall maintain folders for each chapter and officer of council and furnish the same with all flyers and information addressed to them.
- i) **Membership:** This committee shall be responsible for keeping a current record of members eligible to progress; to encourage progression; to maintain full chapter membership; and to execute any special rushing project deemed necessary. This committee shall function under the direction of the Vice President. (Article V, Section 4a.)
- j) **Parliamentarian:** The Parliamentarian shall advise on questions of procedure upon request and shall serve as chairman of the Bylaws Committee when such is appointed by the Executive Board. She shall

attend all Executive Board and council meetings. (Article IX, Section 1.) The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for purchasing the gift for the outgoing President and presenting it at Founder's Day.

- k) **Photographer:** The Photographer shall be responsible for photographic coverage of City Council activities for any publicity or other purposes required including pictures to be furnished to the historian for the scrapbook.
- l) **Promoting Relationships In Sisterhood & Membership (PRISM).** This committee shall formulate plans and recommend changes to stimulate interest and participation of the current membership in Houston City Council events and activities and to stimulate membership growth by promoting Beta Sigma Phi in the city.
- m) **Publicity:** This committee shall extend through the mediums of the press, radio, television and the International Torch of Beta Sigma Phi the aims and accomplishments of the council's activities. It shall at all times endeavor to give the public an accurate account and intelligent understanding of Beta Sigma Phi as an educational, social and service factor. Additionally, the committee shall keep a record of articles submitted and those appearing in local media and report to the membership.
- n) **Service:** This committee shall investigate, organize and supervise any service and fund raising projects of City Council:
 - 1) A chapter wishing to propose a service project to City Council shall send literature to the Service Chairman by February Council Meeting.
 - 2) The Service Committee shall prepare a written presentation giving each proposal full explanation equitably. The written proposal(s) shall be submitted to each chapter at the March council meeting.
 - 3) The Service Project of City Council shall be voted on annually at its regular April meeting.
 - 4) All service funds shall be disbursed within the year earned whenever possible.
- o) **Sweetheart Ball:** This committee shall formulate and execute all plans for a ball to be held in February at which time chapter Sweethearts shall be presented and awards made. (See Standing Rule 10).
- p) **Web Master:** This committee shall formulate and maintain a council Web Page composed of information relevant to this council and timely news items submitted by chapters and committee chairmen of council.
- q) **WICK:** This committee shall formulate and publish a council newsletter for the months of September through June, composed of timely news items submitted by chapters and committee chairmen of council.

ARTICLE XI – FINANCES

- Section 1.** The annual dues of this organization shall be fixed According to Article IV, Section 4. (See Standing Rule 11.)
- Section 2.** Any assessments shall be set by the Executive Board with the approval of City Council and shall be payable to the Treasurer within thirty (30) days from the date of approval.
- Section 3.** The President of Houston City Council shall be honored at all functions at council's expense. Registration fees for the president to state and area conventions shall be paid by the council.
- Section 4.** The Treasurer, with Executive Board consultation, shall prepare a proposed budget for the incoming Year and present the proposed budget to City Council at the June meeting. (See Article V, Section 7g.)

Section 5. All general fund bank accounts shall be in the name of Houston City Council of Beta Sigma Phi. The only authorized signatures shall be the President and Treasurer.

Section 6. At the close of the sorority year (April 30) a maximum working balance of \$3,000.00 shall remain in the general fund. After the audit, any sum over this amount shall be disbursed by recommendation from the Executive Board.

ARTICLE XII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER, NEWLY REVISED shall govern the meeting in all cases not specifically covered by the rules and regulations in the Book of Beta Sigma Phi on Councils and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws may be amended or revised at any regular meeting of the Houston City Council by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, provided the proposed amendment is not contradictory to the Constitution and Bylaws of the International Organization and provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular City Council meeting and shall be effective after approval of the International Office.

ADOPTED: February 1, 1988

LAST REVISION: November 2, 2015

HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL STANDING RULES

Robert's Rules shall apply to Standing Rules changes: "Standing Rules are adopted, as any ordinary motion, by a majority vote, and are amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote without previous notice, or by any majority vote with such notice."

- 1) Council shall observe Founder's Day each year with a banquet. Only those chapters on the Houston City Council Roster and Associate Members shall be permitted to attend our Founder's Day Banquet except by invitation. Rituals are limited to Silver, Gold and Diamond Circles, Installation of Officers and the Jewel Ritual.
- 2) A traditional gift shall be presented to the outgoing President of City Council at a cost not to exceed \$75.00. Executive Board gifts shall be guards appropriate to their office.
- 3) Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Houston City Council committees must remain on active status in their chapters. A leave of absence shall constitute the chairman's or vice chairman's resignation from committee assignment. Competition points shall be prorated between the chapter of the original chairman or vice chairman and the chapter of the new chairman as determined by the Chapter of the Year Committee and Council Executive Board. It is the responsibility of the chairman or vice chairman and her chapter to notify City Council when a leave of absence is taken.
- 4) Outside guest speakers requesting an audience at Houston City Council meetings shall present their request in writing subject to approval by the Executive Board.
- 5) Chapters may make nominations for First Lady of the Year at the February City Council meeting. Resumes of the candidates should be made available to each chapter. The vote shall be taken at the March Council meeting. An engraved item with the total cost not to exceed \$50.00 shall be presented to the incumbent First Lady. Courtesy invitations shall be extended to her for Founder's Day.
- 6) Honorary members shall be voted on annually at the March Council Meeting and shall receive the Pledge Ritual and the Ritual of Jewels Ritual in accordance with the Book of Beta Sigma Phi, and receive one honorary pin and shall be honored at Founder's Day.
- 7) Courtesy tickets for the chairman and vice chairman of City Council events shall be included in the budget of their committee.
- 8) A recipient of the International Award of Distinction shall be recognized at all City Council functions.
- 9) All chapters shall compete equally in all CAPA contests. The first place winners shall be recognized with certificates and cash awards as determined by budget allowances.
- 10) The Sweetheart Ball Committee shall present a Queen, Princess, and a Sweetheart from the chapter candidates.
- 11) Annual dues are \$30.00 per member. (Article XI, Section 1)
- 12) Courtesy tickets for the representative(s) of the Council Service Project for Founder's Day shall be included in the budget of that committee.

HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL TRADITIONS

Every organization which has a background of achievement has entertained certain traditions that are observed year after year until they are accepted as a part of the organization itself. Traditions play a prominent part in Beta Sigma Phi and it is important that all members be acquainted with those of Houston City Council, which was established in 1936-37. The following observances have become traditional with our council.

- 1) HCC sponsored events:
 - a. Founder's Day Banquet in April
 - i. Council officers are installed at the Founder's Day banquet.
 - ii. The retiring City Council President is installed by ritual as a Houston City Council Jewel at Founder's Day.
 - iii. Chapter Women of the Year are presented at Founder's Day.
 - iv. A yearbook, scrapbook and CAPA contests is held, with winners announced at the Founder's Day banquet.
 - b. Fashion Show
 - c. Sweetheart Ball
 - i. The Houston City Council Queen, Princess, and Sweetheart are presented with flowers and a Beta Sigma Phi trophy or a gift of equal value by the Sweetheart Ball Committee.
 - d. Summer Social
 - e. Legacy Day
- 2) A Service project.
- 3) Any State or Area Convention bid for and hosted in the name of or on behalf of Houston City Council must have approval of the Houston City Council membership. In accordance with Article IX. Section 4 of the Houston City Council By-Laws, the Executive Board of Houston City Council shall appoint a Special Convention Board Committee who shall follow the duties for Standing Committees in Article X. Section 1. Subsections a) - d) of the Houston City Council By-Laws. When the State convention is hosted by our council, the Convention Board presents the Chairman and Vice-Chairman with an appropriate gift.
- 4) Yellow roses and Memorials
 - a. For current and associate members - When a current member or associate member of Houston City Council passes away, her chapter shall notify the HCC President of her death and whether a Beta Sigma Phi "In Memoriam" ritual will be held. The President shall arrange for a card and a single yellow rose in a vase to be sent by Council to the family or to where her services are being held.
 - b. For immediate family (spouse, significant other, parents, sibling, or children) of current and associate members - If a current member or associate member of our council has a death in her immediate family, and the Houston City Council President is informed, she shall arrange for the member to be presented with a card and a single yellow rose in a vase.
 - c. For past members - If a past member of our council passes away, and the Houston City Council President is informed, she shall arrange for the member's family to be presented with a card and a single yellow rose in a vase at the home or where her services are being held.