

# **Constitution of the Lawrence Apartments Committee**

## **Princeton University**

### **ARTICLE I. NAME AND AUTHORITY**

#### **Section 1: Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Lawrence Apartments Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Committee. This document replaces all previous Lawrence Constitution and By-laws, and is herein referred to as the Constitution.

#### **Section 2: Purpose**

The Committee shall perform work on behalf of, and for the benefit of, the material and social life of residents of Lawrence Apartments; represent and advocate the interests of the Lawrence community to the broader Princeton community; and provide a forum for free and open discussion of matters affecting the Lawrence community.

#### **Section 3: Authority**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Committee in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and any special rules of order the Committee may adopt.

#### **Section 4: Definitions**

In this Constitution, a 'resident' is defined as an adult who lives in the Lawrence Apartments and is known to the Housing Office of the University as a tenant of the apartment in Lawrence where he or she lives. A 'member of the Committee' is a person holding an elected office described in the Constitution. The 'Committee' is all members of the Committee acting in concert under Article I, Section 3 and other areas of this Constitution.

### **ARTICLE II. MEETINGS**

#### **Section 1: Regular Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held monthly during the academic year at a time and place that is fixed by the Committee. The Committee shall notify residents of the date, time, and place of each regular meeting at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance. If a majority of the members wish to cancel a meeting, they may do so by filing a written request with the President.

## **Section 2: Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Committee may be called by the President, or upon request of any four residents. All members of the Committee must be informed of a special meeting at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the proposed time.

## **Section 3: Participation**

All residents are entitled to attend all meetings, make motions, raise parliamentary questions, and participate in discussion. A portion of a meeting may be closed to all except members of the Committee or their proxies by a two-thirds vote of the Committee. No business may be transacted or votes taken in a closed session; only discussion may occur.

## **Section 4: Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of at least one-half of the members of the Committee or their designated proxies. If it is found that a quorum is not present, the meeting may be held, but no business may be transacted and no votes may be taken.

## **Section 5: Proxies**

Proxies must present written authorization (including e-mail) to the Committee before they may assume their seats. No proxy shall fulfill the duties of any member in the absence of that officer or transfer this proxy to another person. Proxies must be residents of Lawrence Apartments and they shall have the full privileges of a member during the meeting for which they have been authorized.

## **Section 6: Roll Call Votes**

Roll call votes shall be taken when requested by any resident. Roll call votes shall be taken alphabetically, with the presiding officer voting last.

## **Section 7: Tabling of Motions**

Any motion shall be postponed definitely to the following meeting at the request of two members of the Committee. This section of the Constitution shall not be invoked more than twice for any one motion. The purpose of this section shall be to allow members of the Committee to discuss the proposed motion with other residents.

## **Section 8: Delaying of Motions**

Implementation of a motion approved by the Committee may be delayed at the request of a member of the Committee (for a period not to exceed 72 hours) for the purpose of allowing time for that individual to complete a formal referendum petition as per the Constitution. If a proper petition is not submitted to the President within seventy-two (72) hours of the delay request, action may be completed on the motion as approved. Should a proper petition be submitted in time, all action on the motion shall be suspended pending the result of the referendum. If the referendum fails to strike down the motion, the motion may be implemented as approved. A secondary delay cannot be granted. The request for a delay may be overridden if, at the discretion of the President, the motion constituted an emergency measure that required immediate action. This override would not preclude the formation of a referendum petition; it only has the power to deny a delay request.

## **ARTICLE III. COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### **Section 1: Definition**

All Committee member positions of the Lawrence Committee shall be elected annually according to the terms of Article IV. There shall be no limit to the number of terms for which an individual may be elected as a member. Each Committee member shall have only one vote on the Committee.

### **Section 2: Terms of Office**

All Committee members take office once their election is certified, and serve until the election meeting as described in Article IV, Section 3. All Committee members are required to attend monthly meetings and assist in Committee events. In the event that a Committee member terminates his or her residence in Lawrence Apartments, he or she is removed from the Committee and the office is considered vacant, to be filled as described in Article IV.

### **Section 3: Eligibility**

Any resident may run for any position, except for the position of President, Grants Manager, and External Relations Delegate as described below. For a candidate to be eligible to run for a Committee position, the resident must have attended at least one monthly Lawrence Committee meeting within one calendar year of the election date. Please note: Merely attending a previous election within the past 12 months does not apply and does not fulfill the meeting requirement. If no candidate meets this requirement, then candidates who have not attended a meeting are eligible to run.

## **Section 4: The President**

The President shall call and preside at meetings of the Committee. During Town Hall meetings, the President shall follow up on the month's agenda items, delegate tasks to Committee members, and request updates from subcommittees. As needed, the President shall meet with Committee members individually to understand circumstances that may hinder follow-through on their assigned tasks. The President shall appoint the chairs and members of subcommittees, subject to review of the Committee. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees, attending subcommittee meetings as needed. The President shall regularly check the Lawrence Committee account balance. The President shall assist the Grants Manager with yearly budgeting for social events and other anticipated expenses of the Committee. The President shall be responsible for drafting emails to residents in response to major events which significantly dampen morale or pertain to the moral fiber of the community. The President must have served on the Lawrence Committee for at least one term. If none of the candidates meet this requirement, then candidates that have attended at least two (2) meetings are eligible to run. It is a requirement of the Princeton University Graduate School that the president of a student organization must be a graduate student.

## **Section 5: Secretary**

The Secretary shall be responsible for recording and consistently publishing meeting minutes through email and the website (or another platform agreed upon with the Committee) within a week of the Town Hall or other public meetings, and after allowing the Committee to correct any errors. The Secretary shall be responsible for replying to all resident emails within two business days after hearing input from the Committee. The Secretary shall serve as the final author of all outgoing emails from the committee account, disseminating information from Committee members within two business days of their receipt. The Secretary shall notify residents of special public meetings of the Committee at least two days in advance of the meeting. The Secretary shall be responsible for meeting logistics including room reservations, video-conferencing links, and calendar invitations. The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the website, adding content within two weeks of the President's request, proactively soliciting approval of major changes to the website by the Committee.

## **Section 6: Social Chair**

The Social Chair shall organize a minimum of two social events per semester. The Social Chair shall be responsible for drafting email communications and/or preparing and posting signage for social events. The Social Chair shall provide the Secretary with draft email content for dissemination within four business days of the event. As necessary, the Social Chair shall divide tasks pertaining to each event among volunteers on the Committee and residents. The Social Chair shall present the President and Grants Manager with a tentative plan for events for the year with each event's estimated budget within one month of taking office.

## **Section 7: Facilities Manager**

The Facilities Manager shall act as a liaison between the Committee and the Office of Information Technology (OIT), Facilities, and Housing. The Facilities Manager shall follow up with OIT, Facilities and Housing as requested by the President when resident work orders have not brought resolution to the situation. The Facilities Manager shall be responsible for drafting email communications and/or preparing signage for the regulation and maintenance of Lawrence public resources and shared spaces, and notifying residents of major damage to shared facilities with an estimated resolution time. The Facilities Manager shall provide the Secretary with draft email content for dissemination within four days of the President's request. The Facilities Manager shall be responsible for posting Committee-approved signage in shared spaces and keeping shared resources in working order, including laundry-room white boards, snow-shovel repositories, and bulletin boards. Any keys belonging to the Lawrence Committee, such as the key to the Building 1

Common Room, shall be kept by the Facilities Manager, who will grant other Committee members access as needed.

### **Section 8: Garden Coordinator**

The Garden Coordinator (GC) shall be responsible for basic maintenance of the Garden grounds as well as the administrative duties accompanying plot rentals. The GC shall be responsible for tracking expenditures related to tools and grounds maintenance, working closely with the Garden Events Manager to balance the Garden budget and keep records for transparency. The GC and Garden Events Manager shall jointly maintain a mailing list to disseminate information and updates about events in the Garden. The GC shall contact facilities as needed with issues related to tilling, delivery of compost and mulch, water access, poison ivy removal, and other basic necessities of the Garden. The GC shall delegate tasks to Gardeners as needed regarding the following: purchasing, maintaining, and decommissioning garden tools; removing weeds from common spaces; and monitoring plots for unacceptable levels of neglect. The GC shall decide the dates for the following events: (a) Spring Clean-Up; (b) the Kick-Off, the day Gardeners may begin using their plots; and (c) Fall Clean-Up. At least a month before the Kick-Off, the Garden Coordinator shall create a sign-up form for community members to request a Garden plot, which states the terms of the plot rental policy, including conditions for reimbursement of a deposit at the end of the rental period. The GC shall collect fees from Gardeners and reimburse eligible Gardeners at the end of their rental period.

### **Section 9: Garden Events Manager**

The Garden Events Manager (GEM) shall be responsible for organizing social events in the Garden and facilitating event-hosting for groups requesting to use the space. The GEM shall be responsible for all Garden-related advertising and social media, including advertising of the Garden sign-up form, the Spring Clean-Up, the Kick-Off, and the Fall Clean-Up. The GEM shall be responsible for tracking expenditures related to Garden events, working closely with the Garden Coordinator to balance the Garden budget and keep records for transparency. The GEM and Garden Coordinator shall jointly maintain a mailing list to disseminate information and updates about events in the Garden. The GEM shall assist the Garden Coordinator with the planning and execution of Spring Clean-Up, the Garden Kick-Off, and Fall Clean-Up.

### **Section 10: External Relations Delegate**

The External Relations Delegate shall represent the interests of the Lawrence community as a voting member of the Graduate Student Government General Assembly. The External Relations Delegate must attend all meetings of the General Assembly or make reasonable effort to name a proxy in the event of a schedule conflict. The External Relations Delegate shall make note of General Assembly meeting topics relevant to the community and report on them at the Town Hall meeting. The External Relations Delegate shall attend Graduate Housing Advisory Board meetings and meetings of the Transportation Committee at the behest of the President. The External Relations Delegate shall act as a liaison between the Committee and the Graduate Student Government, Transportation & Parking Services, the Graduate School, and the Department of Public Safety.

### **Section 11: Grants Manager**

The Grants Manager shall be broadly responsible for stewardship of Committee funds, working closely with the Social Chair to support a minimum of two social events per semester. The Grants Manager shall be responsible for purchasing supplies for the Committee using the university's tax exempt number. The Grants Manager shall assist the Social Chair by registering events, procuring administrative approval, and applying for permits when required. The Grants Manager shall apply for funding to augment the annual budget, procuring external funding for at least one social event. The Grants Manager shall be responsible for submitting receipts for reimbursement on Concur within two weeks of a transaction. The Grants Manager shall update the Committee on the account balance at the behest of the Committee. The Grants Manager

shall be a student with a NetID.

## **ARTICLE IV. ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1: Eligibility**

Any resident may vote in the elections. Any resident may run for any office, subject to any constraints in the description of the position he or she is running for in Article III. No resident may run for more than one office simultaneously. It will be the duty of the current Lawrence Committee to notify residents of the upcoming election at least a month in advance. That notification shall also include a deadline for residents to declare their candidacy, which may be any time in the week before the election.

### **Section 2: Election Committee and Chair**

For each election the Committee shall appoint an Election Committee at the October meeting consisting of at least three (3) residents who are not running for office or a representative of the Graduate School. The Election Committee shall elect a chair from its members. The Election Committee shall create and ensure the dissemination of all election emails, forms, ballots, and procedures; and determine whether candidates and residents meet the eligibility requirements described in this Constitution. The Election Committee will obtain the list of eligible voters from the University Housing Department from the Community Representative Coordinator.

In the event that, after a reasonable recruitment effort, a sufficient number of residents willing to serve on the Election Committee cannot be found, the Lawrence Committee may appoint to the Election Committee graduate students or spouses of graduate students who are not residents. If a sufficient number of volunteers still cannot be found the Lawrence Committee may appoint representatives of the Graduate School. Under no circumstances may any individual running for office serve on the Election Committee.

### **Section 3: Election Meeting**

The election meeting shall be a regular meeting of the Lawrence Committee in the month of November. The Committee must notify all Lawrence Residents of the time and location of the Election Meeting at least one week in advance. Candidates or their proxies shall be given an opportunity to speak to the eligible voters, and communicate in any other manner deemed appropriate by the chair of the Election Committee, before the vote.

### **Section 4: Balloting**

The Election Committee chair shall open balloting following the addresses by candidates. Balloting shall be according to a preferential voting system. The election chair shall explain the exact mechanism before the balloting begins. Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot. The Election Committee shall make provisions for residents not at the meeting to cast absentee ballots.

### **Section 5: Counting**

Votes are to be counted in public by the Election Committee. All ballots cast in an election shall be kept in a secure location by the Election Committee for no fewer than ten (10) days and until all appeals and recounts have concluded. The Election Committee chair shall announce the results of the election to the current committee and all candidates once he or she has finished tabulating the ballots. In the event of a tie at the conclusion of preferential voting, there will be a run-off election between the tied candidates.

## **Section 6: Contesting Results**

Once the results have been certified, any candidate or Committee member may request to see the ballots or other election materials. If a signed petition is presented by a) all members of the Lawrence committee, or b) 50 percent of voters contesting that the election for one or more positions was irretrievably flawed, the contested position(s) are considered vacant and shall be filled in by the procedure described in Section 8.

## **Section 7: Taking of Office**

Assuming there is no successful contestation, the elected candidates take office at the following regular Lawrence Committee meeting after the Election Committee chair announces the results.

## **Section 8: Vacancies**

Vacancies shall be filled by elections to be held at the next Committee meeting after an elective position is vacated. These elections shall be held in accordance with the established procedures. All vacancies shall be filled only for the remaining terms of office.

# **ARTICLE V. REFERENDA**

## **Section 1: General**

Referenda may be called when it is desired to ascertain that the Committee is acting in accordance with the opinion of a majority of the residents of Lawrence Apartments. A referendum shall be called upon presentation to the President of a petition signed by 20 percent of the residents.

## **Section 2: Powers of the Referendum**

Any motion except those dealing with the allocation of funds and the removal of a Committee member may be reconsidered by a referendum. The function of a referendum shall be to permit the reconsideration of a single motion that has been voted on by the Committee, by the entire residential body. Until such time as the referendum has been held, the motion shall be considered suspended.

## **Section 3: The Referendum Committee**

A Referendum Committee composed of the Secretary as non-voting Chair, two (2) residents in favor of the question to be considered, and two (2) residents opposed to the question shall plan, publicize and supervise each referendum. The President shall appoint a Referendum Committee within forty-eight (48) hours after receipt of a requesting petition.

# **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

## **Section 1: Regular Amendments**

Any amendment of this constitution may be proposed at any meeting of the Committee by petition of either a) three (3) Committee members or b) twenty (20) residents. It must be presented in writing and in the exact wording in which it is to be incorporated. The Committee shall then organize a vote in accordance with the procedures in Article IV (including advance notification for discussion of the proposed amendment). If the amendment is proposed by Committee members, a two-thirds affirmative majority of residents at the meeting is required for passage. If the amendment is proposed by residents, there must be a quorum of 20 percent of all current residents, and the amendment must pass by two-thirds affirmative majority of the voters.

## **Section 2: Committee Amendments**

All of Article III, except for Sections 1 and 2, may also be amended by the Committee. Such amendments must be proposed in writing at a regular meeting, and all residents must be informed of the amendment text and the time and place of the vote a week before the Committee votes on the proposed amendment. A two-thirds affirmative roll-call vote of the Committee is required for passage.