

**JEFFERSON COUNTY  
MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
BYLAWS**

Last amended on December 11, 2023

The Marine Resources Committee of Jefferson County, Washington (constituted by the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners Resolution 45-99, and amended by *Resolutions 45-99, 11-00, 17-01, and 93-03*), adopts the following procedures for the transaction of its business.

**1. Role and Function of the Marine Resources Committee (MRC)**

1.1. The role and function of the MRC is as stated in Exhibit A of the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners' Resolution 03-93, or as that resolution is amended.

1.2 **Powers and Duties of the MRC.** The Marine Resources Committee shall:

1. Advise the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) about research, educational and regulatory measures necessary to protect and restore the marine resources of the County.
2. Promote specific projects necessary to achieve the protection and restoration and enhancements of the marine resources of the County.
3. Advise the Board of County Commissioners about efforts that should be developed or encouraged to promote conservation, protection and restoration of marine habitats and resources.
4. Help assess marine resources problems and the need for preventive or corrective measures in concert with governmental, non-governmental, tribal, recreational and commercial interests.
5. Help identify implications, needs, and strategies associated with the recovery of Puget Sound salmon and other marine species and habitats in and around the County; and do so in concert with the above-mentioned entities.
6. Work closely with the Board of County Commissioners to establish and implement local marine conservation, protection and restoration initiatives.
7. Coordinate with the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) on marine ecosystem objectives.
8. Reach out to the public and other key constituencies on the link between healthy marine habitat and healthy resources.
9. Annually report to the Board of County Commissioners on its activities and recommendations.

**2. Committee Members, Alternates, Officers, Executive Committee, Appointment of Members, Term of Office and Removal**

**2.1 Committee Members** - The MRC consists of thirteen voting members and two non-voting members (ex officio), or as may be modified by amendments to the resolution, which are appointed by the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for staggered four-year terms. The voting members include:

- One member representing Commercial Interests
- One member representing Environmental or Conservation Interests

- One member representing Recreation Interests
- One member representing Marine Science Practitioners, Educators, or Researchers
- One member representing Tribes
- One member representing City of Port Townsend
- Six members representing Citizens (2 representatives from each Commissioner District)
- One member representing Local Youth (starting age 15-21 years old)

Non-voting, ex officio members shall be:

- One member of the Board of County Commissioners
- One member representing the U.S. Navy
- One member representing Port of Port Townsend

**2.2 Alternates** - The MRC may designate alternates for each voting member. Alternates may participate in the discussion of any agenda items at a regular meeting and may serve on any subcommittees of the MRC. Alternates have all the responsibilities associated with a voting member except for voting when their associated representative(s) are present and voting. Alternates must apply for an MRC position as required in Section 2.5 and be approved by the BOCC, except for local government and tribal representatives.

The tribal and local government representatives are voting members who may nominate an alternate without MRC recommendation to the BOCC. BOCC approval is still required for all MRC members.

**2.3 Officers** - The officers shall include a chair, a vice-chair, a Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) representative and a NWSC alternate.

**2.4 Executive Committee** - The MRC executive committee shall be comprised of the four officers.

**2.5 Appointment of Members** – The Board of County Commissioners appoints members to the MRC. Candidates for positions representing a non-governmental position shall be nominated by submitting an application and letter of interest to the county commissioners. Names of nominees for the BOCC, Navy, Tribal and local government positions are submitted to the county commissioners by the respective agencies and these nominees do not need to complete an application form. The BOCC will forward all applications to the MRC for review and recommendations. The MRC may select a member selection subcommittee to review MRC applications.

**2.6 Term of Office** - The term of office is up to four years for the Local Youth position and four years for all other positions. Once a term has expired, the position must be advertised as per Section 2.8. Representatives must be reappointed by the BOCC to continue serving as a member. There are no term limits.

- 2.7 Removal** - The MRC may recommend to the Board of County Commissioners the removal of an MRC member for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office. The MRC will consider three consecutive absences of a member from the scheduled monthly meetings of the MRC as neglect of duty unless permission has been granted by the chair of the MRC. Inefficiency or malfeasance will be determined through discussion and by vote of the majority of the MRC.
- 2.8 Vacancy** - If a position becomes open on the MRC it is incumbent on the MRC to notify the BOCC and advertise the open position on the MRC website as well as in the newspaper designated by the County as the official newspaper for public notices.

### **3. Officers - Election of Officers - Succession**

- 3.1. Annually, at its regular December meeting, the MRC will elect a chair, vice-chair, NWSC representative and NWSC alternate from its members. Officers and the NWSC representative and alternate will serve terms of one year, or until successors are elected. There are no term limits for officers.
- 3.2. Nominations of officers, the NWSC representative and NWSC alternate are from the floor and, where more than one nomination to an office is received, voting will be by secret ballot. Election of any officer, NWSC representative and alternate requires a majority of a quorum of the December meeting of the MRC or whenever the vote is held.
- 3.3. In the event of a vacancy in the chair, the vice-chair will automatically succeed to the chair until an election for chair can be held. A vacancy occurring in the office of chair, vice-chair, NWSC representative or alternate is filled by election, as defined above, to serve for the unexpired portion of the term.
- 3.4. An acting chair will be elected by the members present to serve during the absence of the chair and vice-chair.

### **4. Officers - Duties**

- 4.1. The chair is the chief executive of the MRC and is responsible for appointing subcommittees and to conduct the business of the MRC between its meetings. It is the responsibility of the chair to enforce the bylaws. The chair will sign documents of the MRC. The NWSC representative will represent the MRC on the NWSC. The chair is entitled to a single vote and shall retain the right and responsibility to participate in all MRC deliberations and to vote on all matters. The vice-chair will act for the chair in the chair's absence.

### **5. Meetings**

- 5.1. All meetings of the MRC shall be open to the public and all MRC actions shall take place in MRC meetings. The public is welcome to contribute comments twice during the meeting: at the beginning, during the guest introduction part of the agenda and/or at the end during the public comment time. This is to accommodate those that might

only be able to attend part of the meeting. It is incumbent upon the chair to enforce this rule.

- 5.2. Regular meetings of the MRC are held on the first Tuesday of each month and located in a public meeting place by prior arrangement. The MRC may substitute another day, time or place for the regular meeting and must provide notification of changes in the meeting call. If the business of a regular meeting cannot be completed, the MRC may designate a time for an adjourned meeting or may defer the business until the next regularly scheduled meeting. If another day, time or place is selected, public notice shall be given as follows:
  - 5.2.1. Posting of notice at the entrance(s) to the building where MRC meetings are customarily held;
  - 5.2.2. Timely written request to the weekly local newspapers for inclusion in the community calendar sections of those papers;
  - 5.2.3. Posted on the MRC website by the MRC staff person; and
  - 5.2.4. Sent out by email to the MRC and interested parties by the MRC staff person.
- 5.3. Special meetings may be called by formal action of the MRC, by order of the chair or by written request to the chair by a minimum of three members. Notice of such special meeting is to be provided to all MRC members at a minimum of 10 days prior to the meeting and public notice will be provided as specified above.
- 5.4. Subcommittee work sessions may be scheduled as needed. At such meetings the public is welcome to attend but shall not ordinarily be allowed to participate unless specifically requested by the subcommittee chair.
- 5.5. All meetings of the MRC shall be conducted pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30)

## **6. Attendance**

- 6.1. To achieve its greatest effect, the MRC needs the regular attendance of its members at most or all meetings; the MRC benefits greatly from full participation of each member and keenly feels each absence.
- 6.2. MRC members are expected and required to notify the chair of anticipated absence from any meeting of the MRC as far in advance of the meeting as possible. In addition, it is incumbent upon the member to contact his or her alternate, if there is a designated alternate, to attend to meeting in place of the member. In the event that such notifications indicate that a quorum will not be present, the chair may cancel or reschedule the meeting. Alternately, the meeting may be held by a "committee of the whole" which is comprised of the members present. Discussion of issues may be held but no binding votes may be cast.
- 6.4. The chair will note concise written statements sent by a member who is unable to attend in lieu of an alternate when the topic addressed comes up on the agenda.

## **7. Quorum - Voting**

- 7.1. The decision-making approach of the MRC will be by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, the MRC will recognize a simple majority vote. Any dissenting opinions will be recorded and included in the meeting summary.
- 7.2. A simple majority of the total of the voting members currently appointed to the MRC constitutes a quorum for the conduct of MRC business. If all positions are filled then a quorum shall be 7 members. Voting is by voice vote, except where specified differently in these rules. Alternatively, the MRC itself may require a ballot or roll call vote. In lieu of an absent member, a member's designated alternate, if present, will be included in the quorum tally.

## **8. Conflicts of Interest**

- 8.1. Conflicts of interest will rarely arise as a matter of concern for MRC members. However, in the discussion, preparation and submittal of funding proposals for MRC projects it is possible that a conflict or the appearance of a conflict may arise.
- 8.2. A conflict of interest is defined as the possibility or appearance of possibility, and not just the actuality of a private benefit, direct or indirect, or the creation of a material personal gain or advantage to the member, family, friends or associates who hold some share of a member's loyalty.
- 8.3. Any member who believes that he or she has a conflict of interest on any matter before the MRC must, as soon as the chair introduces the matter, announce that he or she has a conflict and promptly leave the room. The particulars of the conflict must not be disclosed.
- 8.4. A member who believes he or she may have the appearance of a conflict but who does not believe that an actual conflict exists nor that his/her ability to reach an unbiased conclusion is in any way compromised should, at the opening of the discussion, disclose the apparent conflict, declare that he/she does not believe he/she is biased in any way and ask if anyone in the audience would object to his/her participation in the matter. If there is an objection and the MRC would have a quorum without the member, the member should step down and leave the room. If there is no objection the member may remain and participate in the matter.
- 8.5. If a member has not disclosed any appearance of a problem but is challenged from the floor and the challenge has no basis in fact, the member should so state and may decline to step down. A member is not obliged to accede to groundless challenges. However, if there may be an appearance of conflict, the member should respond in accordance with the earlier instructions in this section.
- 8.6. A member who has questions about his or her participation in any matter to come before the MRC should direct those questions to the chair who may, if necessary, call upon the MRC for a decision. The MRC may call upon the county prosecuting

attorney for advice. The member, however, should begin his/her inquiries with the chair.

- 8.7. A member's absence due to possible or actual conflict of interest shall be an excused absence and the reason shall not be disclosed to the MRC or the public prior to or during the MRC's consideration of the item.

## **9. Order of Business - Meeting Procedure**

- 9.1. Call to order, roll call, reporting of volunteer hours, and quorum count.
- 9.2. Example of Agenda Items
  - 9.2.1. Guest Introductions
  - 9.2.2. Amendments to/Approval of agenda
  - 9.2.3. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting
  - 9.2.4. Old business
  - 9.2.5. Committee reports
  - 9.2.6. New business
  - 9.2.7. Upcoming Projects/Events
  - 9.2.8. Discussion of next meeting date and agenda
  - 9.2.9. Observer Comments
  - 9.2.10. MRC Member Roundtable/Announcements
  - 9.2.11 Adjournment
- 9.3. The chair, in conjunction with the MRC staff, may alter the regular order of business in preparing the agenda when special circumstances and/or the efficient use of time dictates.

## **10. Minutes and Records**

- 10.1. Findings, recommendations, resolutions and minutes of the MRC are prepared at the direction of the chair. Copies will be provided to all MRC members in a timely manner for review and approval at the next regular MRC meeting. The minutes shall contain a summary record of topics discussed, motions, motion makers and seconders, resolutions, and other determinations of the MRC, and shall also contain details of time, place, type of meeting, members present and absent, speakers, and records of all votes, etc.
- 10.2. It shall be the responsibility of the chair to arrange for a recording secretary to be present at each MRC meeting, who shall prepare the minutes for MRC approval. All invoices shall be submitted to the MRC coordinator or MRC grant administrator for payment from the funds allocated by the county for MRC operations.
- 10.3. Once approved, the official minutes, with associated materials attached, shall be filed for the public record with the Board of County Commissioners. This can be done by sending an electronic copy to [jeffbocc@co.jefferson.wa.us](mailto:jeffbocc@co.jefferson.wa.us).

## **11. Notice - Agenda**

- 11.1. The chair is responsible for ensuring that required public notices are prepared and published in a timely manner to support scheduled meetings, and for posting the meeting notice and agenda before the start of each meeting.
- 11.2. The chair is responsible for ensuring that meeting calls, including the agenda, meeting place and time, and other related materials, are mailed and/or electronically conveyed to the MRC members at least seven days prior to regular meetings and in a complete form to allow review by the members of materials essentially identical to that which will actually be presented at the next meeting.
- 11.3. The Board of County Commissioners shall also receive a copy of the agenda and related materials and the agenda shall be posted on the MRC website.

## **12. Financial Support to Committee Members**

- 12.1. MRC members may receive reimbursement for travel expenses while conducting MRC business they undertake, with approval of the chair, except for normal round-trip travel between their homes and regularly scheduled meetings. All reimbursements are subject to approval by the MRC grant administrator as being within the approved MRC operating budget.
- 12.2. The MRC coordinator or grant administrator will provide appropriate expense voucher forms for reimbursement for MRC members use upon request.

## **13. Parliamentary Procedure**

- 13.1. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern matters of procedure, except as otherwise provided in these rules or in Washington State law.

## **14. Amending Rules**

- 14.1. These rules may be amended at any meeting by a vote of the majority of the entire membership of the MRC, provided five (5) days' notice has been given to each MRC member.

Adopted by Resolution 99-001 on December 15, 1999

Amended on August 16, 2000

Amended on May 15, 2003

Amended February 19, 2004

Amended February 7, 2006

Amended on January 5, 2016

Amended on February 9, 2016

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