Lived Experience Advisory Board – Bylaws Meeting
Why Bylaws?

- The purpose of the bylaws is to describe how the LEAB functions. Bylaws outline the LEAB’s purpose and operations, who may participate, and expectations of members and leaders.
Today’s Decisions

- Simple majority vote?
- Topics for Today:
  - Membership
  - Leadership
  - Decision Making
  - Agreements
  - Subcommittee Structure
Need enough people to bring diverse opinions and be inclusive, but not so many as to make it hard to get things done.
MEMBERSHIP

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

Need enough people to bring diverse opinions and be inclusive, but not so many as to make it hard to get things done.

OPTIONS:
- 7-10
- 11-14
- 15-18
- Other options?
May ensure that group has members from particular lived experiences. Upside is ideally maximizing diversity of voices, but downside is might need to keep seat open or seek out certain people for open spot.
MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:
- Open policy: Find out groups with which person identifies in membership application form. Use those to attempt to bring out new groups and create diverse group.
- Categories: Reserve spot on Board for, e.g., person who identifies as LGB, person who identifies as transgender, person who identifies as parenting, etc. Could do half of member seats for designated groups.
- Other options?

DIVERSITY MECHANISM

May ensure that group has members from particular lived experiences. Upside is ideally maximizing diversity of voices, but downside is might need to keep seat open or seek out certain people for open spot.
MAINTAINING MEMBERSHIP

Need to ensure that those who are members are participating in the group, and if they are not, someone else might use their spot.
MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

- Attendance-based
  - For example, Members must attend at least half of meetings in a six-month period to stay in good standing.
  - If a member attends fewer meetings, then other members may vote to remove the member from the Board. Removed member may reapply for membership at any time; this does not bar them in the future, but creates space for others who may wish to join as active participants.

- Action-based
  - For example, members may bring the matter to a meeting for discussion and vote if member not contributing. If agreement to remove that member from the Board, they will be removed.

- Time Limit
  - For example, a member is automatically retired after 3 continuous years as a LEAB member.

- Other options?

MAINTAINING MEMBERSHIP

Need to ensure that those who are members are participating in the group, and if they are not, someone else might use their spot.
Sometimes in groups like the LEAB, someone who holds a related position will be a member of the group. This can open lines of communication, enhance collaboration, and bring system perspective into conversations; but it can also reduce candor, and move away from complete ownership by those with lived experience.
MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER WITHOUT LIVED EXPERIENCE

Sometimes in groups like the LEAB, someone who holds a related position will be a member of the group. This can open lines of communication, enhance collaboration, and bring system perspective into conversations; but it can also reduce candor, and move away from complete ownership by those with lived experience.

OPTIONS:

- Invite someone from Continuum of Care (community homelessness stakeholder group) to be a *non-voting* member of LEAB
- Invite someone from Continuum of Care to be a *voting* member of LEAB
- Invite someone from Continuum of Care to *attend* LEAB meetings to serve as liaison with CoC, without making them a full member of the Board
- Other options?
Need to establish a schedule for members to plan ahead and for new members to know whether they are able to participate.
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**Frequency:**
- Twice a Week
- Weekly
- Every other Week
- Monthly
- Other options?

**Length:**
- 1 hour
- 2 hours
- 3 hours
- 4 hours
- Other options?

**Day/Time:**
- Day of the Week? Time?
With an advocacy group made up of many people, it can help keep the work organized to have designated person(s) who understand the mission of the LEAB and have authority to speak on behalf of the LEAB.
LEADERSHIP

GROUP LEADER(S)

With an advocacy group made up of many people, it can help keep the work organized to have designated person(s) who understand the mission of the LEAB and have authority to speak on behalf of the LEAB.

OPTIONS:
- One Chair or President of LEAB – more streamlined leadership, but more rests on one person.
- Two co-chairs or co-presidents of LEAB – diffuses responsibility and tasks, increased coordination required.
- Other options?
Note that other roles can have specific tasks to ensure that everything gets done and the work is distributed amongst several people.
LEADERSHIP

OPTIONS:
- Chair/similar – opens the meetings; sets the direction
- Secretary – Takes minutes and emails them to the group after each meeting. May create agendas for meetings, informed by chairperson(s).
- Liaison – may have official spokesperson as voice to CoC. This person can attend CoC meetings and relay information.
- Other options?

SUPPORTING ROLES

Note that other roles can have specific tasks to ensure that everything gets done and the work is distributed amongst several people.
Create some turnover so that different people can fill different roles over time.
LEADERSHIP

OPTIONS:

(Co)-Chair:
- 2 year term
- 1 year term
- Other options?

Option: If co-chairs, offset tenures such that they expire at different times. For example, “After one co-chair position changes hands, the other co-chair may stay an additional 6 months regardless of time of tenure; this person may still be removed by membership by vote.”

OTHER ROLES:

- 2 year term
- 1 year term
- Other options?

LENGTH OF TENURE

Create some turnover so that different people can fill different roles over time.
Need known approach to filling vacancies, whether because person leaves or tenure expires.
LEADERSHIP

OPTIONS:

- By nomination
  - For example, Any member can nominate a current member for any vacant or soon-to-vacant leadership position. If one person is nominated for the position, majority vote in favor of that person puts them in the position. If more than one person is nominated for a single position, then whichever nominee receives more votes will be put in the position.

- From another position such as Secretary

- Other options?

CHOOSING NEW LEADERS

Need known approach to filling vacancies, whether because person leaves or tenure expires.
This describes the number of members who need to be present for decisions to be made. If quorum is too small, then very few members might bind the whole group to some decision; if quorum is too big, then it can be difficult to have enough members present to decide anything.
DECISION MAKING

QUORUM

This describes the number of members who need to be present for decisions to be made. If quorum is too small, then very few members might bind the whole group to some decision; if quorum is too big, then it can be difficult to have enough members present to decide anything.

OPTIONS FOR VOTING:
- Quorum for voting is at least 2/3 of current members. (e.g., if the LEAB has 9 spaces filled, then 6 or more members present at a meeting make quorum.)
- Quorum for voting is at least half of current members. (e.g., if the LEAB has 9 spaces filled, then 5 or more members present at a meeting make quorum.)
- Quorum for voting is at least 1/3 of current members. (e.g., if the LEAB has 9 spaces filled, then 3 or more members present at a meeting make quorum.)
- Other options?

OPTIONS FOR MEETING:
- Quorum for holding a meeting is at least 1/3 of current members. (e.g., if the LEAB has 9 spaces filled, then 3 or more members present at a meeting make quorum.)
- Quorum for holding a meeting is at least 2 current members. (e.g., regardless of LEAB size, 2 members showing up for a meeting may hold the meeting, though they cannot make decisions that bind the group.)
- Other options?
For actions to be taken and decisions to be made, the group needs some way to come to agreement. A simple voting method can make decision-making as easy as possible.
“Robert’s Rules of Order” is a standard way that many groups conduct decision-making. For any matter:

1. One member states their desired outcome by making a motion, saying “I move that...”
2. Another member who agrees can second the motion, saying “I second the motion.” If no one seconds the motion, it’s not lost forever, but no vote is taken at that time.
3. If the motion is seconded, the leader of the meeting brings the group to discussion, saying “It has been moved and seconded that... Is there any discussion?”
4. During discussion, the person who made the motion may speak first. Everyone else is then able to speak as well. Ideally the leader alternates between speakers who are “for” and speakers “against” the motion.
5. Voting takes place when the leader puts the question, saying “Those in favor of the motion that... say ‘Aye'. Those opposed say ‘No’.” Then the votes are counted, and the leader announces either “The motion is carried” if it passed, or “The motion is lost” if it did not pass.

Note that majority vote is over half of those entitled to vote; thus a tie vote is lost, because it is not a majority.

Other options?
Sometimes all members of the LEAB won’t want, or won’t be needed to, work on a particular issue. Smaller groups can be deputized to work independently with the consent of the LEAB.
At any meeting, members may vote by majority to establish a subcommittee on any topic that will further the work of the LEAB.

Other options?

Sometimes all members of the LEAB won’t want, or won’t be needed to, work on a particular issue. Smaller groups can be deputized to work independently with the consent of the LEAB.
Many consumer groups have some type of Code of Conduct, Member Responsibilities, or Agreements to outline what effective membership looks like. This can communicate with current and potential members about what the expectations are for the group. These may be in the bylaws or may be a stand-alone document.
Examples:

- LEAB members maintain focus on representing the interests of all people with lived experience of homelessness in Santa Clara County.
- Members work together to establish annual goals for the group and contribute to achieving those goals.
- Members maintain a culture of respect and active participation.
- Members will not use their LEAB position for personal advantage.
- ...
- What else?
MISSION

SUGGESTION: “The Lived Experience Advisory Board is a self-led body consisting of membership with lived experience of homelessness. The Board works to advocate for those who utilize the homelessness system of care through policy, planning, recommendations, and feedback to decision-makers, while supporting each other to develop professionally.”

GROUP PURPOSE

A statement in the beginning of by-laws to focus the group’s reason for existence. This is meant to summarize the overall goal of the group to explain it to others. Think of how you want a person referencing the LEAB: “that group that does... “.

Other options?
Today’s Decisions and Up Next

- Topics for Today:
  - Membership
  - Leadership
  - Decision Making
  - Agreements

- How did we do? What’s next? What’s still missing?