

Green New Deal Oversight Boards

Board Responsibilities, Policies, and Procedures

Section I. Purpose

The Green New Deal Oversight Board was established by City Council [Ordinance 125926](#) to advise and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council related to the Green New Deal for Seattle and monitor progress in meeting intended outcomes and goals.

The City of Seattle Green New Deal Oversight Board is composed of 19 appointed members who are passionate about advancing an equitable transition to renewable energy by centering the expertise of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, elders and workers harmed first and worse by climate change. Members are appointed by the Mayor, City Council, or the Board itself into one of the following position categories as defined in [Ordinance 125926](#) (section 3.14.979 to the Seattle Municipal Code):

Section II. Membership

GND OB membership is defined by SECTION §2.B. of the [Ordinance](#).

2.1 Number and criteria – The City of Seattle Green New Deal Oversight Board is composed of 19 appointed members :

2.1.1 (§2.C.1); (Positions 1-8) Eight positions designated for community representatives directly impacted by racial, economic, and environmental injustices. These members must be: part of a community-based organization or community group that represents a community that is disproportionately burdened by pollution and environmental hazards and, based on socioeconomic and population health risk factors, is particularly vulnerable to an increased pollution burden; and carry out the majority of their work using a community-based approach in the Seattle area.

- (Positions 4-5) Two of these members should be representatives from tribes whose treaty rights are connected to the lands and waterways of Seattle (or whose usual and accustomed places are in Seattle);
- (Positions 6-8) Two of these members should be between the ages of 16 and 25 at the time of their appointment;

2.1.2 (§2.C.2) (Positions 9-11) Three representatives of organizations engaged in environmental justice work;

2.1.3 (§2.C.3) (Positions 12-15) Four representatives of labor unions;

2.1.4 (§2.C.4) (Positions 16-18) Three individuals with depth of experience in greenhouse gas reduction and climate resiliency strategy relevant to cities and their

residents, in fields such as public health, infrastructure, sea-level rise, or extreme weather events;

2.2.1.5 (§2.C.5) (Position 19) One representative of an organization involved in workforce training.

2.2 Appointments –

- 8 members will be appointed by the Seattle City Council (1 Frontline Representative, 1 Tribal Representative, 1 Youth Representative, 1 Environmental Justice Representative, 2 Labor Union Representative, 2 Greenhouse Gas Reduction / Climate Resiliency Specialist)
- 8 members will be appointed by the Mayor (2 Frontline Representative, 1 Tribal Representative, 1 Youth Representative, 2 Labor Union Representative, 1 Environmental Justice Representative, 1 Workforce Training Specialist)
- 3 members will be appointed by the GNDOB (1 Environmental Justice Representative, 1 Frontline Representative, 1 Greenhouse Gas Reduction / Climate Resiliency Specialist)

2.3 Terms – Members of the GNDOB shall be appointed to three year terms, from May 1 to April 30 three years later, except that the initial terms for positions 1 through 9 shall expire April 30, 2023, and the initial terms for positions 10 through 19 shall expire April 30, 2022. No members shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

2.3.1 No member of the GNDOB shall be appointed to more than two consecutive terms. IF a person is appointed to fill the duration of an unexpired term, then that term shall count as one of the two consecutive terms only if the portion of the unexpired term actually served is at least one year..

2.4 Vacancy – Any vacancy in an unexpired term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A member whose term is ending may continue on an interim basis as a member with voting rights until such time as a successor for that position has been confirmed by the City Council.

2.5 Resignation – Any member may resign at any time from the GNDOB upon written notice to the appointing authority (Mayor or Council) and the GNDOB. The appointing authority may remove any member for good cause, including unexcused absence from two or more consecutive meetings without cause.

2.6 Compensation – Members of the GNDOB shall serve without pay, except that members may request compensation of \$50 per hour served if participating on the Board presents a financial hardship (§4.E). Requests shall be made to the Green New Deal Advisor no later than September 30 for the following calendar year.

Section III. Leadership/Officers

3.1 Leadership – GNDOB leadership consists of the Executive Committee: Two Co-Chairs (At least one of the co-chairs shall have at least 2 years remaining on their term) and one at large member. If the GNDOB establishes standing committees, standing committee chairs may serve on the Executive Committee at the invitation or request of the Executive Committee. The size of the Executive Meeting shall not meet or exceed a quorum of the GNDOB (see section 5.1).

3.1.1 Nominations for GNDOB leadership roles are encouraged to come from Positions 1-11 in order to center the voices of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, elders and workers harmed first and worse by climate change.

3.2 Duties of the Executive Committee – The roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee include:

- Meet regularly, with the City staff coordinator as it deems appropriate, to discuss ongoing business and priorities of the GNDOB and plan GNDOB meetings.
- Set GNDOB meeting agendas, working with City staff coordinator as it deems appropriate.
- Develop proposals and recommendations for GNDOB consideration and review
- Draft official letters and memos for GNDOB review and approval.

3.3 Duties of the Co-Chairs – In addition to their roles and responsibilities as part of the Executive Committee, duties of the Co-Chairs include:

- Preside over and facilitate GNDOB meetings, with an option to delegate meeting facilitation tasks or request assistance, as needed.
- Act as spokespersons for the GNDOB and represent official GNDOB decisions and actions, as noted in the record.
- Serve as a point of contact for media, community, and elected officials Co-chairs may also speak as individuals (i.e. not representing the GNDOB) and shall make it clear when articulating their own views and concerns (e.g. “Although I serve as a Co-Chair for the Green New Deal Oversight Board, today I am speaking as an individual, not on behalf of the Board.”) (see also section 5.3). The Co-Chairs may delegate to any willing GNDOB member performance of any duties described in this section.

3.4 Terms of Office – Executive Committee members will serve for one year terms, from May 1 to April 31. Two consecutive one year terms are allowed.

3.5 Elections – Executive Committee Co-Chairs and the at-large member are determined by an annual vote at a regular GNDOB meeting. The GNDOB staff coordinator will solicit nominations for Co-Chairs and the at-large member. The GNDOB staff coordinator will contact all nominated GNDOB members to ascertain interest and ability to serve. The GNDOB staff coordinator will prepare a slate of all interested candidates for the GNDOB to vote on at a regular GNDOB meeting. Each GNDOB member shall vote for two Co-Chairs and one at-large member at a

regular GNDOB meeting. Voting shall occur at a regular GNDOB meeting, provided there is a quorum (see section 5.1). The two co-chair candidates receiving the largest number of votes will become Co-Chairs. The at-large candidate receiving the largest number of votes will become the at-large member of the Executive Committee. No proxy votes are allowed. If a Co-Chair or at-large member vacates a position prior to completing their term, a special election shall be held to fill that position, at the next regular meeting of the GNDOB, if practicable. Filling a partial term of less than six months shall not count toward a GNDOB member's eligibility to serve as a Co-Chair or at-large member for a full one-year term or renewal term.

3.6 Committees – The GNDOB may establish committees as it determines necessary, including standing or ad hoc committees. Committees shall consist of two or more GNDOB members. Committees may research and develop proposals and recommendations for GNDOB review and approval. Any formal action or decision requires approval from the GNDOB. Committees will work with the Executive Committee to draft a charter for approval by the GNDOB. The committee charter shall include a statement of purpose; type of committee (standing or ad hoc); composition; committee activities, duties and responsibilities; standard committee procedures (including details on frequency of meetings, process for designating a committee chair, decision-making process); and, delegation of authority (i.e. limits to committee's decision making authority without prior approval of the GNDOB).

Section IV. Meetings & Attendance

4.1 Public Meetings – All meetings of the GNDOB shall be open to the public and comply with requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30).

4.2 Public Comment – The public may speak on issues which come before the GNDOB. The Executive Committee shall designate the appropriate time for public comment and establish time limits for each speaker (usually two minutes per speaker). Additional rules:

- Public comments made at meetings must be related to the issues on the agenda for that meeting.
- Speakers should address their comments to the GNDOB, not to individual members.
- The GNDOB does not answer questions or engage in discussion during public comment

4.3 Meeting Schedule

4.3.1 Regular meetings – The GNDOB shall meet every month, or as needed. (§2.D). A regular meeting schedule will be established annually, at the end of each calendar year, to start at the beginning of a new year. The Executive Committee may adjust the regular meeting schedule, with approval from a majority of the GNDOB, based on the annual work plan.

4.3.2 Annual retreat – The GNDOB will develop an annual work plan at an annual retreat, usually held in Q4. The work plan will be assessed approximately six months after the retreat and adjusted as necessary to respond to emergent and high priority issues.

4.3.3 Special meetings – A special meeting may be called at any time by the Executive Committee or by a majority of the GNDOB members. Written notice must be delivered by email at least 24 hours before the meeting to each GNDOB member. Notice must be posted on the GNDOB webpage 24 hours in advance of the meeting,

4.4 Regular Meeting Agendas – The Executive Committee, with support from City staff as it deems appropriate, will prepare an agenda for each regular GNDOB meeting. Agendas will be approved by the Executive Committee and shall be sent via email to all GNDOB members and other interested parties and posted to the GNDOB webpage no later than 24 hours in advance of the published start time of the meeting.

Section V. Conduct of Business

5.1 Decision making –

The GNDOB will strive to make decisions by modified consensus whenever possible to assure that the opinions of everyone are heard, discussed, and valued.

The GNDOB will use the following voting system

- a. Yes, I approve.
- b. Yes, with reservations.
- c. Not voting until we have further discussions.
- d. I don't approve, but I won't block.
- e. I block. Serious concerns.
- f. Stand aside. Recuse myself.
- g. Not present.

a, when there is disagreement, members have the opportunity to stand aside or block consensus.

- Stand asides provide a way for GNDOB members to express concerns, but allow the group to proceed with the decision. ("I can't support this proposal because...But I don't want to stop the group, so I'll let the decision happen without me.")
- Blocks provide a way for GNDOB members to express firm opposition to the issue or proposal. ("I have a fundamental disagreement with the core of the proposal that has not been resolved. We need to look for a new proposal.")

The GNDOB may use Fist to Five to test for consensus. Fist to Five is accomplished by raising hands as in voting, with the number of fingers raised that indicates level of agreement:

- A fist means, "I vote NO." In consensus, this is the same as a block.
- 1 finger means, "I'll just barely go along." Or, "I don't like this but it's not quite a no." Or, "I think there is lots more work to do on this proposal." In consensus, this indicates standing aside, or not being in agreement but not blocking the consensus.

- 2 fingers means “I don’t much like this but I’ll go along.”
- 3 fingers means, “I’m in the middle somewhere. Like some of it, but not all.”
- 4 fingers means, “This is fine.”
- 5 fingers means, “I like this a lot, I think it’s the best possible decision.”

If there are any fists or 1s when using Fist to Five, the Co-Chairs or meeting facilitator will ensure these concerns are heard. If there are many 2s and 3s, this should signal to the Co-Chairs that the issue or proposal would benefit from further discussion, clarification or amendments. Process for making a final decision:

- Clearly state the final proposal and check that everyone understands what is being proposed.
- Check if there are any blocks or stand asides. It takes two blocks to stop the proposal.
- If there are fewer than two blocks, check for active agreement from everyone. This can be done verbally, with show of hands, or using Fist to Five.
- Verbally summarize the result (e.g. number of blocks or stand asides) and be explicit whether a decision has been reached. Two or more blocking votes indicates that consensus has not been attained. If the GNDOB is ultimately paralyzed by the modified consensus process, then action will be approved by majority vote. There will be a minimum of two attempts at reaching consensus. After two attempts, it is up to the Co-Chairs to decide if the consensus process should continue or transition to majority vote. (add backup consensus process, i.e. Robert's Rules of Order / 50% +1 vote)

All final decisions, including results from the consensus process or voting, shall be included in the GNDOB meeting minutes (see section 6.1). Dissenting members may submit a minority report to the Co-Chairs. The minority report will be forwarded to the Mayor, City Council, and the public with any letter, analysis, advice, recommendation or similar transmitted by the GNDOB. If there is a financial conflict of interest by a member with any issue being discussed, he or she shall recuse him/herself from voting on that issue (see section 7.3). No proxy votes are allowed. (members who know ahead of time that they will be in absence of a meeting where a vote is taking place, can share their opinions to board leadership to be shared for the record at the public meeting...but does not count as an official vote”)

A simple majority (more than 50%) of the current GNDOB members constitute a quorum in GNDOB meetings. Provided there is a quorum, the GNDOB may make decisions on proposals, issues, or formal actions (see section 5.2).

5.2 GNDOB actions – GNDOB actions include formal GNDOB positions, reports, statements, letters to government officials (Mayor, Council, department directors, agency directors) and City staff, and other actions it deems necessary to carry out its role and responsibilities. All formal actions or decisions on statements, letters or memos require a final draft to be sent to the GNDOB for review and approval.

5.3 Representing the GNDOB – The Co-Chairs shall act as spokespersons for the GNDOB and represent official GNDOB decisions and actions, as noted in the record (see section 3.3).

Individual GNDOB members may represent the GNDOB (e.g. providing testimony, meetings with Council, Mayor, etc.) if authorized by the Co-Chairs. A GNDOB member may speak as an individual, clearly specifying they are speaking as an individual, or as an individual GNDOB member articulating their own views and concerns (e.g. “Although I am a member of the Green New Deal Oversight Board, today I am speaking as an individual, not on behalf of the Board.”)

Section VI. Records, Publications, and Reports

6.1 All decisions of the GNDOB shall be evidenced in writing.

6.2 Minutes – Minutes of all GNDOB meetings will be promptly recorded and prepared by staff. After approval by the GNDOB, minutes shall be posted on the GNDOB webpage as a public record.

6.3 Annual Workplan – As specified in the Ordinance (§2.A.5), the GNDOB shall publish an annual workplan to the Seattle City Council and the Mayor with the assistance of appropriate City departments. The report shall include the following:

- Define what constitutes a policy, program, or project that advances the Green New Deal for Seattle;
- Identify the board’s annual scope of work, including priorities, goals, outcomes, boards, and commissions whose scope align with those of the Board; and
- Any additional information that the GNDOB deems appropriate for inclusion.

6.4 Other Records – Copies of specific GNDOB documents will be made available to the public upon written request to the staff coordinator.

Section VII. Ethics

7.1 GNDOB members shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Seattle Ethics Code (Seattle Municipal Code ~ SMC 4.16). The Ethics Code sets high ethical standards for members of advisory boards and commissions, whose advice may have a major impact on City policies.

7.2 Disclosure of interests –The Ethics Code requires full disclosure if a GNDOB member engages or has engaged in an activity or transaction that would appear to a reasonable person to impair the member’s independence of judgment. To satisfy the disclosure requirement, GNDOB members must fully disclose the facts on the record of the GNDOB meeting using the Disclosure Form downloadable in PDF version or Microsoft Word version. The GNDOB staff coordinator will file copies of any completed disclosure forms and send a copy to the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission. Regular disclosures should be filed annually, at the start of the calendar year. Ad hoc disclosures should be made in writing at the GNDOB meeting before or as soon as the relevant matter comes before the GNDOB. The Co-Chairs and staff will ensure there are regular opportunities for ad hoc disclosure of interests in GNDOB meetings.

7.3 Conflict of Interest – GNDOB members are required to disqualify themselves from discussion and decision making if they have a financial interest, direct or indirect, personally or through an immediate family* member, in the matter* before the GNDOB (SMC 4.16.070.G). **“Immediate family”* means a spouse or domestic partner, child, child, child of a spouse or domestic partner, sibling, sibling of a domestic partner, brother in-law, sister-in-law, parent, parent of a spouse or domestic partner, a person for whom the Covered Individual is a legal guardian, or a person claimed as a dependent on the Covered Individual's most recently filed federal income tax return (SMC 4.16.030). **“Matter”* means an application, submission, request for a ruling or other determination, permit, contract, claim, proceeding, case, decision, rulemaking, legislation, or other similar action. Matter includes the preparation, consideration, discussion, or enactment of administrative rules or legislation. Matter does not include advice or recommendations regarding broad policies and goals (SMC 4.16.030). Approved: If the members’ interests are not financial, but if they engage or have engaged in any transaction or activity which would appear to be in conflict with or incompatible with their duties or would appear to impair their independence of judgment, then they must disclose the circumstances publicly to the GNDOB. When individual GNDOB members disclose interests where there is a possibility of conflict of interest that may limit the individual’s participation in a matter which comes before the GNDOB, the GNDOB will decide if the member should be disqualified from participating in the matter. If the GNDOB is uncertain about whether an individual GNDOB member should be disqualified from discussions or decisions, it will seek advice from the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission. For more information, GNDOB members are encouraged to visit the City’s website that answers Frequently Asked Questions for advisory boards and commissions.

7.4 Recusal procedures – GNDOB members who have recused themselves from a matter before the GNDOB due to a financial conflict of interest will: Refrain from deliberation in forming recommendations or advice on the matter and will not participate in any GNDOB action on the recommendations or advice. Remove themselves from the room during the formation of formal advice or recommendations. Refrain from engaging in conversation or communication with other members of the GNDOB on the matter for which they have recused themselves. GNDOB members may recuse themselves from any matter or activity they choose even if there is not a financial conflict of interest. Section VIII. Responsibilities of the Department Staff The Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE) shall provide administrative support for the GNDOB. OSE will work with the appropriate City departments to help make the GNDOB’s work successful. OSE staff provides general GNDOB and meeting support, coordination, communication as follows:

- General GNDOB support
- Maintain and distribute member rosters
- Facilitate communication with appointing authorities
- Provide the GNDOB with requested information that it needs to conduct its business Meeting support
- Assist the Executive Committee in developing and distributing meeting agendas
- Provide information or follow-up with department staff on questions or requests by the GNDOB

- Work with department staff to keep the GNDOB updated on City projects or issues
- Manage room reservations, audio-visual equipment needs, and other logistical issues
- Maintain meeting schedule
- Assist in coordinating and communicating with presenters for GNDOB meetings
- Assist in scheduling meetings between the GNDOB and the Mayor and City Council
- Help support special GNDOB events such as annual retreats City Department Coordination
- Keep City departments well-informed of GNDOB's interests in topics or issues related to the implementation of the Jump Start Seattle Tax and its recommendation for allocation of the tax revenues
- Ensure City departments have an opportunity to brief the GNDOB, in a timely manner, on issues that may impact the GNDOB's recommendations and advice • Facilitate ongoing communication between the GNDOB and the City departments Communications
- Field and respond to requests from the public for information about the GNDOB
- Assist with preparing, formatting and distributing GNDOB correspondence and minutes
- Maintain an accurate, up-to-date webpage, including posting meeting agendas, minutes and other materials
- Help the GNDOB assure that internal and external GNDOB communications comply with the Open Public Meetings Act
- Assist with drafting reports, recommendations, advice or correspondence with the Mayor, City Council, and the departments, when assigned by the GNDOB.

Section IX. Amendment to Responsibilities, Policies, and Procedures

This document may be amended by the GNDOB at any regular or special meeting, using the decision-making process outlined in section 5.1.