

BYLAWS

Holyoke Food Economy Coalition

Section 1 - Name

The name of this body is the Holyoke Food Economy¹ Coalition

Section 2 - Purpose

The purpose of the Food Economy Coalition is to identify and propose innovative policies, programming and/or project solutions to improve the Holyoke food system² and food entrepreneurship.³ Recommendations will be made to aligned bodies, such as the Office of Planning & Economic Development, the City Council, and relevant city departments (eg, DPW, BoH, etc.). The Coalition is supported by the Office of Planning and Economic Development.

Section 3 – Membership

- a. The Coalition will be composed of no fewer than 7 and no more than 15 members.
- b. The following municipal departments shall each have one representative seat:
 - a. Board of Health; and
 - b. Office of Planning and Economic Development.
- c. The following sectors shall each have one representative seat on the Coalition:
 - a. Local Business Association;
 - b. Food Justice⁴ organization;
 - c. Public Health organization ;
 - d. Holyoke Public Schools Food Service Director; and
 - e. Local Food Pantry.
- d. The following professions shall have a representative on the Coalition:
 - a. Agricultural producers⁵ processors and manufacturers;
 - b. Local Agricultural producers;⁶
 - c. Restaurant;
 - d. Supermarket/Grocery Store; and
 - e. Nutritionist/Food Health Care Advocate.
- e. Two (2) seats shall be reserved for residents of Holyoke.
- f. Members shall be appointed by the Mayor for a three-year term and shall serve without compensation.
- g. Members may be reappointed and may serve unlimited consecutive terms.

¹ We define “food economy” as, the organizations and processes involved with the production, processing (pre- and post-consumption), distribution, preparation, and serving of agricultural products, as well as the means by which individuals procure agricultural products.

² We define the “Holyoke food system” as the elements (i.e. environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures and institutions) and interlinked activities within Holyoke that are related to the production, processing, distribution, preparation, and consumption of agricultural products, as well as the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes.

³ We define “food entrepreneurship” as the ability of people to begin, maintain, and be a part of sustainable food businesses.

⁴ We define “food justice” as the critical analysis of systemic disparities attributable to race and wealth in the food system.

⁵ We define “agricultural products” as the products of farming, forestry, horticulture, gardening, and the keeping or raising of livestock and poultry. Hemp and cannabis are considered agricultural products.

⁶ We define “local agricultural products” as agricultural products that are produced (and processed, if applicable) within Massachusetts or a 50-mile radius of Holyoke, MA.

- h. Members shall represent themselves, areas of interest and/or organizations/businesses in Holyoke and should represent the diverse, broad cross-section of interest in the food economy.
- i. At the discretion of the Mayor and with the consent of the Coalition Chairperson, the Coalition membership may be expanded or reduced (not to be reduced to fewer than 7 positions). If a member resigns or is removed from the Coalition, the Coalition members may nominate a replacement. If confirmed by a majority vote of the Coalition, such person's name will be forwarded to the Mayor for appointment as the Coalition member for the remainder of the former member's term.

Section 4- Duties of Membership

Members are expected to fully participate in the following duties:

- Commit to the stated purpose and the Diversity and Equity Statement of the Coalition;
- Attend Coalition meetings;
- Contribute their expertise and participate in the strategic development of the Coalition and act as a conduit for information to and from their organization/business/community;
- Represent the Coalition positively:
 - be an advocate and role model for the mission of the Coalition in their organizations, business and/or community;
 - be familiar with the work of the Coalition; and
 - allow their name to be used in support of the Coalition's purpose;
- Disclose any conflict(s) of interest.

Conflict(s) of Interest: Member applications shall include a disclosure of potential conflicts of interest, including (i) a required disclosure of service on other commissions or boards in the City of Holyoke and (ii) any business interests related to agricultural supply and growth, sale, and distribution in the City of Holyoke. Members have a duty to disclose these potential conflicts, and must abstain from votes that are related to their conflict(s) of interest. Further, after the member discloses a potential conflict of interest, the Coalition may vote to determine if further action is needed to insulate the Coalition from the potential conflict of interest.

Section 5- Diversity and Equity Statement

To the extent possible, membership of the Coalition will proportionally represent Holyoke's population, including by diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity, country of origin, language, and socioeconomic background. The initial call for applicants will compare voluntarily submitted demographic information of potential Coalition applicants with relevant demographic information for Holyoke, in order to maximize representation on the Coalition.

Further, the Coalition hereby expects all members to work to:

- Be open-minded to learning from one another and working toward a common vision for health equity and racial equity in Holyoke;
- Commit to learning, understanding, acting, and speaking publicly on principles of health equity and racial equity, and how they apply in the institutional contexts in Holyoke;

- Engage staff at their own organizations, businesses and/or community to inform and improve equity in decision making across organizational, business and/or community processes; and
- Recognize the intersecting struggles of marginalized communities and understand that addressing the lack of healthy food access also means acknowledging and addressing the systemic racial, social, and economic inequities of lower-income communities and communities of color across Holyoke.

Section 6 – Recruitment and Tenure

- a. Vacancies on the Coalition shall be publicly advertised. Applicants shall submit a letter of interest to the Food Economy Coalition. Selection shall be based on ensuring a broad cross-section of interest in the food economy.
- b. The term of office of members shall begin on the date of appointment and expire in 3 years on December 31. For purposes of determining the term expiration date, members whose terms begin after January 1 shall serve a term that lasts two years plus the balance of the year in which they are appointed.

Section 7 - Officers

- a. The officers shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary.
- b. *Election* - the Coalition shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary from the Coalition membership at the first meeting of every other calendar year, to serve a two (2) year term. Nominations will be taken from Coalition members.
- c. *Term* of office begins upon election. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary shall serve no more than two consecutive terms unless so requested by the Coalition.
- d. *Function* – The Chairperson shall be present at all meetings, represent the Coalition before all other bodies, committees, and the public as directed and work with the Secretary to set the agenda for all meetings.
- e. The Vice Chairperson shall perform all duties of the Chairperson in his/her/their absence. In the event of the absence of both the Chair and the Vice- Chair, the Coalition shall select a member to perform the duties of the Chairperson. The Vice-Chair shall maintain a contact database of members, officers, subcommittees and stakeholder groups.
- a. The Secretary shall summarize the proceedings of all meetings and make them available to all members at least one week in advance of the next meeting.
- f. In the event of a vacancy of any of the offices, a special election shall be held at the next regularly scheduled meetings. Officers elected in a special election shall serve until the first scheduled meeting of the following calendar year.

Section 8– Subcommittees and Stakeholders Group

- a. Subcommittees shall be formed as necessary to carry out the work of the Coalition.
- b. Subcommittees are advisory to the Coalition.
- c. The Coalition shall schedule meetings with the stakeholders group at least two (2) times a year.

Section 9- Meetings and Voting

- b. Scheduled meetings of the Coalition shall be held at least quarterly.

- c. Notice and agenda of meetings shall be sent to all members at least one calendar week prior to all meetings. Notice, agenda, minutes and materials may be delivered electronically.
- d. Unless otherwise prohibited by law, members may participate in meetings and by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time, and participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.
- e. Special meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson of the Coalition and they will fix the time and place. Special meetings shall adhere to MA Open Meeting Law. Every effort shall be made to reach all members.
- f. All meetings shall be open to the public, and interested persons or groups are invited to address the Coalition.
- g. Official action may be taken by the Coalition when a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members. If they are 7 members, voting requires that 4 are present. If they are 15 members, voting requires that 8 are present.
- h. Meetings should be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- i. The proceedings of all meetings shall be summarized by the Secretary and made available to all members at least one week in advance of the next meeting.
- j. In the event of a lack of quorum, the Chairperson may form a subcommittee to act on a recommendation to the full Coalition, for consideration at the next meeting with a quorum.
- k. A simple majority of votes cast is required for a measure to pass, unless otherwise specified herein.

Section 10- Resignation, termination and absences

- a. Resignation from the Coalition must be in writing and received by the Chairperson.
- b. A Coalition member shall be terminated from the Coalition due to excess absences, defined as more than two unexcused absences from Coalition meetings in a year.
- c. A Coalition member may be removed for other reasons such as unprofessional or inappropriate conduct, by a majority vote of the remaining Coalition.

Section 11- Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by simple majority vote of the members present at a meeting of the Coalition. Such amendments shall become effective upon approval.