



Quick Guide: 2017 By-Law Revision Proposal

[As a 501\(c\)3 nonprofit organization, the West Side Community Organization is governed by bylaws.](#) The changes outlined in the proposal were developed by a subgroup of WSCO’s Board of Directors, Executive Director, and attorney. The proposal was approved by the full Board of Directors on Monday, September 11, 2017, and posted for public comment on Wednesday, November 8, 2017. WSCO membership will vote on this proposal at our annual meeting on Friday, December 8, 2017 at El Rio Vista Recreation Center (179 Robie St, St. Paul, MN, 55107).

Please contact us at [info\[at\]wsco.org](mailto:info@wsco.org) if you have questions.

The following table summarizes changes in the 2017 Bylaws Proposal. Note that this is not an a complete list, rather calling out specific changes that may be of most interest to community.

WHAT does the proposal change?	WHY was this change proposed?
We’ve updated and added language from Minnesota State Statute.	Our lawyers told us to. (Kidding.) It is good practice to include all the relevant legalese regarding neighborhood organizations, so we did. This accounts for 80% of the changes you see in the proposal.
We changed the number of board members from 17 to 13, and changed the length of board terms from 2 years to 3 years. (Term limits remain six consecutive years.)	Organizations benefit when their boards are engaged with their work and understand how they operate. What we’ve heard consistently is that even with intensive onboarding, understanding WSCO’s work, role as a District Council and organizational structure is a learning curve for most new board members. Under our current bylaws, half of the seats on Board of Directors is up for election every year. By extending term lengths to three years, by 2020, a third of seats on the Board will be up for election. This will help make these annual transitions more manageable for WSCO.

	<p>We are reducing the number of seats on the board and adding leadership roles within WSCO’s standing committees, and in our issue-based organizing work.</p>
<p>To be a ‘member’ (and be eligible to serve on the Board of Directors or vote on WSCO business), you must have a current, primary address on the West Side (in other words, you live here most of the time).</p>	<p>Those directly affected by daily neighborhood issues are actual neighbors themselves; their voice should be centered in decision-making at WSCO.</p> <p>If you own property on the West Side but do not currently live or work here, you’re still very welcome at WSCO, from attending community events and to giving input on issues/decisions/positions. Under this change, however, you would not vote on official business.</p>
<p>The Board of Directors can appoint an Ex Officio from WSCO membership.</p>	<p>Ex Officios are non-voting board members who serve an advisory, non-voting role at Executive Committee and Board meetings. They have knowledge of the organization and nonprofit operations.</p> <p>Our current bylaws specify that Ex Officios must a recent past Board Presidents. WSCO seeks a larger range of candidates for this position.</p>