

BY LAWS FOR THE SOUTH STREET TENANT TASK FORCE

ARTICLE I: Name of Organization, -Location of Office, Purpose, and Fiscal Year.

Section 1 Name: The name of the local tenant organization (LTO) is the South Street Tenants Task Force (SSTTF).

Section 2 Location: The principal location (office) of the LTO shall be 19 St. Rose Street, Basement, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 within the Boston Housing Authority's South Street public housing development. The Board of Directors may change the principal location, (office) as long as it is within a location that is reasonably convenient to residents of the South Street development and wheelchair accessible.

Section 3 Purpose: The purpose of the organization shall be:

a. To improve the physical and social conditions of the South Street housing development of the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) by ensuring that BHA provides safe, sanitary decent and affordable housing at South Street.

b. To ensure that BHA Management respects the rights and dignity of all tenants at the South Stret development and to represent tenants in bargaining with the BHA on all management issues which affect South Street residents.

c. To hold regular meetings, keep tenants informed and encourage leadership and involvement among all in the community concerning all issues that affect the living conditions at the South Street development.

d. To secure all available funds and resources to meet the social recreational and educational needs of the community.

e. To develop a democratically-run organization and to always be open to new participants.

f. To raise funds to meet the needs and goals of the organization.

g. To organize all tenants of the South Street development to influence local and citywide decisions of the BHA and other governmental agencies that affect public housing tenants, united with public housing tenants citywide when appropriate for actions, press conferences, conventions and similar activities, and to educate its members about housing and economic issues that may affect public housing

tenants.

h. To be affiliated with and have active representation in any citywide public housing tenants organizations or coalitions through delegates to any board or steering committee, participation in campaign meetings and workshops, and similar activities..

Section 4 Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the LTO shall begin on July 1st and end on June 30th of each year.

ARTICLE II: General Membership, Board of Directors, Officers

Section 1 General Membership

1.1 Definition of General Membership: The General Membership of the LTO shall consist of the residents of the South Street public housing development of the BHA who are eighteen (18) years of age or older, or who are emancipated minors who are also leaseholders.

1.2 Voting Rights of General Membership: The General Membership shall have rights to participate and vote in the LTO's annual and other membership meetings on amendments to the By-Laws, resolutions, and election or recall of the Board of Directors, and to take such other steps as may be necessary to achieve the purpose of the LTO. Members shall have the right to participate in all other meetings of the Board of Directors and shall have the rights to participate in all committees created by the Board of Directors to carry on the work of the organization. However, members who are not part of the Board of Directors shall have no voting power at Board of Directors meetings. Members shall only have voting power at committee meetings if they have been designated as members of such committees.. Eligible status may be verified by determining if an individual is listed on a BHA lease or recertification documents as a leaseholder or adult household member. Residents who have vacated the development will no longer have voting rights, except in instances where the development is undergoing redevelopment and members of the LTO must temporarily relocate off site, but have rights to permanently relocate back to the development. Voting rights can only be exercised by persons present at a General Membership meeting; there shall be no voting by proxy. Each member shall only have one vote.

1.3 Meetings of General Membership: There shall be at least two (2) General Membership meetings a year. One of these meetings shall be the annual meeting, held in September of each year. At this annual meeting, members will receive annual reports, financial reports, and other information as specified by the Officers or a majority of the members of the Board of Directors. The purpose of these meetings will be to inform residents on matters of general interest, including the solicitation of input regarding BHA maintenance, modernization efforts, and

revisions in BHA policies. Additional meetings of the General Membership may be called by the President of the Board of Directors (or, in the President's absence, the-Vice-President), by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors, or on a written request of ten percent (10%) or more members of the General Membership. Written notice concerning such meetings and the proposed agenda items for such meetings shall be provided to all resident households at least five (5) days in advance of the General Membership meetings. Items for the agenda of the General Membership meeting may be added by advance written request of three (3) or more members of the General Membership. There must be a quorum of at least eight (8) members before any action can be taken at a General Membership meeting. A majority vote of those members present and voting at a membership meeting shall be sufficient to pass a motion for a resolution. All General Membership meetings shall be held at times and places that are reasonably convenient to residents of the South Street development and wheelchair accessible and at a time likely to maximize tenant participation. The LTO shall provide interpretative services as needed if funds are available. Meetings shall be open only to the General Membership, and members shall have reasonable opportunity to participate and make their views known. The Board or a member of the General Membership may invite BHA staff members and other persons who are not members of the General Membership to attend. .

Section 2 Board of Directors

- 2.1 Number of Members: The Board of Directors of the organization shall consist of a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of seven (7) members. If the number of Board members drops below seven (7), the Board may function with less members as long as it equals or exceeds the BHA minimum of five (5) members).
- 2.2 Requirement of Membership in Organization: All Directors shall be active members of the organization. If a Director no longer has voting rights as a member of the General Membership due to vacating the development (see Section 1.2 above), he or she shall resign or be removed from the Board of Directors.
- 2.3 Election and Term: Starting with the next regular election after these Bylaws are approved, each member of the Board of Directors shall be elected by the General Membership at the Election meeting of the Organization, as described in Article III below, and shall hold office for a three (3) year term, unless the Director resigns, is removed for good cause by the Board of Directors, or is recalled by the General Membership. The Board of Directors shall serve for a short period after the election of its successors (but in no case more than one month after the election) in order to wrap up and transition business to the new Board of Directors.
- 2.4 Attendance of Meetings and Participation in Committees: Members of the Board

of Directors are required to attend meetings of the Board and the General Membership and to actively participate on at least one committee.

- 2.5 Quorum: Quorum for meetings of the Board of Directors is at least half (50%) of the currently serving Board members. (Thus, for example, if there were seven (7) members on the Board, quorum would be four (4).)
- 2.6 Filling of Vacancies: If a vacancy occurs in the Board of Directors prior to the next scheduled election, such vacancy shall be filled by the Board of Directors in order to ensure that there are minimum of at least five (5) members—see Section 2.1), and the Board shall be free to determine if additional vacancies are filled, up to the maximum of seven (7) members. The Board of Directors shall give written notice of such vacancy to the General Membership and give the General Membership a reasonable period of time (but not to exceed four (4) weeks) to submit names for consideration for appointment to the Board. The Director(s) so appointed shall hold office only until the next election. Reasonably prompt written notice shall be given to the General Membership and to the BHA of any vacancy caused by resignation or removal of a Director and the name and address of the person appointed by the Board of Directors to fill the vacancy.
- 2.7 Resignation: A Director may resign from the position by delivering written notice of resignation to the President (or, if the person resigning is the President, the Vice-President). Such notice shall be shared with all other Board members. Such resignation shall be effective upon receipt of the written notice by the Board of Directors.
- 2.8 Removal for Good Cause: Any member of the Board of Directors may be removed from office for good cause at any time by the Board of Directors at any meeting by a majority vote of the Board members present at such meeting. The following shall constitute examples of good cause for removal: (1) Absence from three Board meetings without excuse; (2) Violating the confidentiality of residents; (3) Accepting a paid position with the BHA or a contracted management company at the South Street development, or a paid position with the BHA in a policy-making or supervisory position elsewhere, provided however, a Director's participation in a BHA advisory capacity, such as on the Monitoring Committee or the BHA Resident Advisory Board, shall not require the Director to resign or be removed from office; (4) Misusing the organization's office or name; (5) Failure to resign after losing membership in the organization, as described in Sections 1.2 and 2.2 above; or (6) Any breach of the Director's duty of loyalty to the organization or its members; (7) For acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or (8) For any transaction from which the Director derived an improper personal benefit. Any action on removal must be preceded by written notice to all members of the Board of Directors, at least two (2) weeks in advance of the

meeting, stating that the issue of removal shall be considered at that meeting, and stating the grounds for removal.

- 2.9 Meetings of the Board of Directors: The Board of Directors shall meet at least once a month at a regular time and place which shall be posted and made generally known to the General Membership. Meetings shall be held at times and places that are reasonably convenient to residents of the South Street development and wheelchair accessible. The Board of Directors shall provide interpretive services as needed if funds are available. Special meetings may be called by the President (or in the President's absence, the Vice-President), or by written request of a majority of the Directors to the Secretary. Notice of any special meeting shall be given at least two (2) days --forty-eight (48) hours--in advance to all Board members, and shall also be posted. Generally, Board of Directors meetings shall be open to the General Membership who will have reasonable opportunity to participate, but the General Membership shall not have voting rights at such Board of Directors meetings. The Board of Directors may decide to close the meeting or go into executive session for all or a portion of its meeting to all but the members of the Board of Directors to discuss confidential matters, including but not limited to the physical or mental condition of an Officer, Director, or other member of the General Membership, discipline or dismissal of an employee of the organization, security, and litigation. Written agendas for the Board of Directors meeting shall be prepared and provided in advance to all Directors, and shall be posted at the meeting place where the Board shall meet, and shall be made available to the General Membership upon request. Each member of the Board of Directors shall have one vote, and a member must be present at the meeting in order to determine quorum and to vote; there shall be no voting by proxy or phone.
- 2.10 Duties: The Board of Directors shall develop and carry out the policies and programs of the organization. They shall establish the committees for the organization and coordinate their work. They shall report regularly to the General Membership. They shall represent the interests of the General Membership before the BHA and other groups and agencies. The Board of Directors shall administer any funds received by the Organization responsibly and for the benefit of the General Membership, consistent with the organization's purpose.
- 2.11 Powers: The Board of Directors shall have the following powers:
- (A) Election and removal of Officers;
 - (B) Filling of vacancies on the Board of Directors;
 - (C) Removal of Directors for good cause;
 - (D) Authorization of expenditures;
 - (E) Employment of persons as necessary to achieve the organization's purpose;
 - (F) Receiving funds for the use of the organization and the General Membership;

- (G) Establishment of a bank account;
- (H) Establishment and revision of committee structure;
- (I) Acting on behalf of the General Membership in matters involving the BHA and regulatory agencies.

Section 3 Officers

3.1 Election of Officers and Responsibilities: The following Officers shall be elected by the Board of Directors from among themselves at their first meeting following their election by the General Membership. An Officer shall not act contrary to a position taken by a Board of Directors vote.

(A) ~~President~~—The President shall chair all meetings of the Board of Directors, preside over General Membership meetings, represent the General Membership and the Board of Directors, sign all correspondence on behalf of the organization (except as the Board of Directors may otherwise designate), and exercise general supervision and control of the affairs of the organization. The President shall only vote in the Board of Directors and the General Membership as necessary to break a tie.

(B) Vice-President—The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President when the President is absent or unable to perform his/her duties.

(C) Secretary—The Secretary shall record and maintain minutes of all Board of Directors and General Membership meetings and shall insure that proper notice of Board meetings and General Membership meetings is given. The Secretary shall also function as the Clerk of the Organization under the terms of any Articles of Organization. In the absence of the Secretary, a temporary secretary may be elected to record the minutes of the meeting concerned.

(D) Treasurer—The Treasurer shall have general charge of all financial affairs of the organization. The Treasurer shall ensure accurate record keeping with respect to the organization's and Board's financial affairs, and shall sign off on checks authorized by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall provide regular financial reports to the Board of Directors and to the General Membership on the organization's financial affairs. All checks issued by the organization shall have, in addition to that of the Treasurer, the signatures of at least the President (or, in the President's absence, the Vice-President) or Secretary.

3.2 Term of Office; Resignation, Removal from Office, and Filling of Vacancies: The Officers' term of office shall be the same as the Board of Directors. An Officer may resign by giving written notice to all other members of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may also remove any Officer for good cause by a majority vote. "Good cause" shall be defined in the same manner as in

Article II, Section 2.8 of these By-Laws. The Board shall fill any vacancies in Officer positions from the members of the Board of Directors. The resignation or removal of an Officer shall not be deemed to also be a resignation or removal from the Board of Directors unless this is stated in the resignation, or the Board's decision. Any Officer who resigns or is removed from Officer shall have the responsibility to turn over any of the Board's records and accounts to the Board of Directors. Reasonably prompt written notice shall be given to the General Membership and to the BHA of any vacancy caused by resignation or removal of an Officer and the name and address of the person appointed by the Board of Directors to fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE III: Election of the Board of Directors by the General Membership; Recall

- 1.1 Elections Every Three (3) Years; Eligibility to Serve on the Board of Directors: Elections shall be held every three (3) years for the Board of Directors. All members of the General Membership shall be eligible to serve as members of the Board of Directors, so long as they are: (a) not employed by the BHA or its private management agents in a policy-making or supervisory position, (b) are not employed by the BHA or a contracted management company at the South Street development, and (c) are in good standing with the BHA. For the purpose of this provision "good standing" means a tenant is in compliance with the BHA lease. A tenant who is under a management or court agreement and is complying with the same, or is in the process of disputing a determination of noncompliance through the BHA Grievance Procedures or courts where there has been no administrative or judicial ruling or agreement regarding noncompliance shall be considered to be in good standing. Moreover, under BHA's Public Housing Tenant Participation Policy, a Board member or a member of a Board member's household is not eligible to receive compensation as a tenant coordinator for modernization/redevelopment/ construction work at the development.
- 1.2 Election Committee: The Board of Directors shall establish and select an Election Committee to assist the organization in conducting its election of the Board of Directors and in conducting any recall elections. The Election Committee may include members of the General Membership and/or volunteers who are not part of the General Membership. No person who will be a candidate for the Board of Directors may be a member of this committee. In selecting the Election Committee, the Board of Directors shall seek inclusion on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, familial status, and disability. The Election Committee shall implement and oversee all election activities as well as ensure the organization's compliance with all relevant election requirements, including those provided by the BHA's Public Housing Tenant Participation Policy.
- 1.3 Notice of Nomination and Election Procedures: The Election Committee, working

in conjunction with the Board of Directors, shall ensure that all voting member households will be given a written notice at least thirty days (30) days in advance of the nomination deadline and a second written notice at least thirty (30) days in advance of the election regarding the nomination and election procedures. Both notices will be delivered to each occupied unit of the development; such notices shall also be posted by the Election Committee in every development hallway, in the management office(s), and the organization's office at least 30 days prior to the nomination deadline and the election. The notice in advance of the nomination deadline shall include a description of the election procedures, eligibility requirements, deadline for submission of nominations and for the election, and a copy of nomination papers. The Election Committee shall encourage diversity in the candidate pool and attempt to achieve reasonable representation on the Board of Directors of all racial and ethnic groups and all geographic areas within the Bromley-Heath development. To ensure the notices solicit the broadest possible attention of residents and encourage their participation in the electoral process, the Election Committee shall translate such notices from English into at least the three most appropriate languages for the development's population. If the Election Committee needs assistance with translation, the Election Committee may request assistance from the BHA and the BHA shall provide such assistance. The notice of election procedures shall provide clear instructions where nomination papers may be obtained, who is an eligible candidate, and how the nomination form is to be completed, where and when it is to be filed, and the number of residents whose signature is required in support of the nomination. Nomination papers, in addition to being attached to the initial notice, must also be available to residents at both the organization's office and the BHA management office.

1.4 Number of Signatures Required for Nomination: Each candidate for the Board of Directors must obtain at least fifteen (15) signatures from the General Membership in order to be eligible as a nominee for the Board of Directors. Members of the General Membership may sign more than one candidate's nominating papers. Multiple signatures by the same member on a candidate's nomination papers shall be stricken.

1.5 Submission of Signatures to the BHA for Verification; Certified Papers Remaining on File: After the nomination deadline, BHA through the development manager shall have five working days to review and certify to the Election Committee that the signatures of the General Membership that appear on the nomination papers for each candidate represent names of legal occupants of the development. BHA shall not certify that the signatures are authentic. If a sufficient number of signatures are not certified, the candidate shall be disqualified from the election. BHA shall also certify that the candidates are members of the General Membership under Article II, Section 1.2, and eligible to

run for the Board under Article III, Section 1.1, above. The certified nomination papers shall be maintained on file with the Election Committee and, following the election, with the Board of Directors for three years or until the following election, whichever is later.

- 1.6 Notice of Nominations; Encouraging Resident Participation: After the signatures on the nomination papers have been certified, the Election Committee shall give written notice to all of the General Membership by way of written notices with each candidate's name and address listed. The Election Committee shall conduct a range of activities to encourage resident participation in the election, including holding candidates' nights and posting notices to remind residents at least one week before the election. Candidates for the Board of Directors may post and advertise their candidate in the development management office, the organization's office, and other usual posting locations.
- 1.7 Conduct of Election: The Election Committee shall choose an independent third party to observe elections, to provide advice to the Election Committee as needed, and to certify to the BHA regarding the fairness of the election. Independent third parties shall be defined as established organizations with relevant experience in overseeing elections, and may include but are not limited to election boards, commissions, community groups, and nonprofit organizations. Upon request, the BHA may offer assistance to the Election Committee in choosing an independent third party. At the time of the election, polling stations will be located in an area of adequate size to provide voters a sufficient level of privacy to mark ballots. The polling locations shall be reasonably convenient to the General Membership and wheelchair accessible, and the hours of polling shall be such as to reasonably accommodate the schedules of the General Membership. The Election Committee shall provide a secured ballot box at each voting station, and shall verify each voter's eligibility as a member of the General Membership. BHA shall supply a list of legal tenants and their addresses for this purpose. The persons staffing the polling stations and acting as third party observers shall be impartial. No candidate for election may be allowed in the polling station other than to cast his/her own ballot. No campaign activities shall be conducted by any candidate or his/her supporters within twenty (20) feet of the polling station.
- 1.8 Notice of Election Results: Within three (3) days of the election, the Election Committee shall provide notice to the General Membership of the election results, including the number of votes cast for each candidate, by posting the same at both the organization's office and at the BHA management office. The Board of Directors shall provide written notice to the BHA of the election results, including the number of votes cast for each candidate, within ten (10) working days of the election. The correspondence to BHA shall include a list of all Board members elected and their addresses.

- 1.10 Petition for Recall: Any member or members of the General Membership may initiate a petition for a recall election, to recall one or more members of the Board of Directors during the Director's term of office. In order for the General Membership to recall a Director, there must be a written petition containing the signatures of at least ten percent (10%) of the General Membership. Such recall petition shall have a clearly stated reason for the recall typed at the top of each page of the petition. The reason for recall is not limited to the reasons for removal for good cause stated in Article II, Section 2.8.
- 1.11 Recall Election; Limitation on Further Petitions for Recall of Same Director: A recall petition shall be submitted to the Board of Directors, which shall submit it to the BHA to review and certify that the signatures on the recall petition represent names of legal occupants of the development, but not that the signatures are authentic. Upon receipt of the certification of signatures on the recall petition, the Board of Directors shall establish and select an Election Committee.. The Election Committee shall give all members of the General Membership written notice of the meeting a reasonable amount of time in advance of the recall election which shall state the date, time and place of the meeting, the purpose of the meeting, and the grounds stated for recall in the petition. Any election meeting shall take place at a location and time reasonably convenient to the General Membership and wheelchair accessible. The recall election need not take the form of the general election provided for above. The General Membership shall be free to choose several options for recall, including designation of a particular person to serve as a Director in lieu of the Director proposed for recall, or granting the Board of Directors the discretion to appoint another person as Director for the balance of the term. If the majority of the General Membership present at the meeting votes to recall the Director, the Director shall be recalled. Reasonably prompt written notice shall be given to the General Membership and to the BHA of the outcome of any recall election. If the General Membership decides not to recall a Director, no petition to recall that same Director shall be considered until a 12-month period has lapsed from the submission of the last petition. This shall not, however, be a limitation on the power of the Board of Directors to remove a Director for "good cause" in accordance with Article II, Section 2.8.

ARTICLE IV: Committees

- 1.1 Standing Committees: The Board of Directors shall establish standing committees to carry out the goals and objectives of the organization. It shall actively recruit the General Membership to serve on committees to ensure democratic participation and to further the goals of the organization. The standing committees shall report to the Board of Directors and to the General Membership on their ongoing work.

ARTICLE V: External Representation

1.1_1_ The Board of Directors shall appoint representatives of the Organization who will serve on other boards and organizations.

1.1_2_ Any such representative may be removed for good cause at any time by the Board of Directors at any meeting upon the vote of the majority present.

ARTICLE VI: Personal Liability of Officers and Members of the Board of Directors; Conflict of Interest

Section 1 Personal Liability

1.1_ The Board of Directors shall not have the power to bind the members of the Board personally or call upon such members to discharge any debts. The members of the Board of Directors and the Officers shall not be held personally liable for any debt, liability or obligation of the Organization. This provision, however, shall not eliminate or limit the liability of an Officer or a member of the Board of Directors for any breach of the Officer's or Director's duty of loyalty to the organization or its members, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or for any transaction from which the Officer or Director derived an improper personal benefit.

Section 2 Conflict of Interest

2.1 The Conflict of Interest provisions of any state or federal statutes or regulations that apply to public housing or non-profit corporations shall be in force with respect to the organization, including any decisions to hire personnel or to expend funds. No member of the Board of Directors or members of the immediate families of members of Board of Directors shall be employed by the organization.

- 2.2 Gifts, goods, services, and funds provided to the Charlestown development must be equitably distributed, and no member of the Board of Directors, members of Committees, or members of the immediate families of such persons shall benefit from such gifts, goods, services, or funds in a manner disproportionate with the benefits received by the General Membership; provided, however, nothing in this provision shall bar members of the Board of Directors or committee members from being reimbursed for legitimate expenses that they have incurred while acting on behalf of the organization.

ARTICLE VII: Amendment of By-Laws

- 1.1 Procedure for Amendment of By-Laws: The By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of the General Membership at a regular or special General Membership meeting. Any amendments may be proposed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall ensure that written notice is provided to all resident households at the development at least seven (7) days in advance of such meeting. Such notice shall state the date, time and place of such meeting, that it is proposed that the By-Laws be amended, and a summary of the proposed changes in the By-Laws. Members of the General Membership shall be free to propose other changes to the By-Laws at such meeting, but such proposals must be made in writing and shall be read and explained to all persons present at such meeting in advance of being voted upon.
- 1.2 Availability of the By-Laws: These bylaws, and any amendments to these Bylaws, shall be promptly provided to the BHA upon adoption or amendment. The Board of Directors shall retain copies of the By-Laws on file (including any amendments and the date of adoption and amendment) and shall make the same available to members of the General Membership upon request. The Board of Directors shall arrange for copies of the By-Laws to be translated into the languages commonly spoken at the development, and make seek assistance from the BHA in arranging for such translation.
- 1.3 Limitation on Certain By-Law Amendments: No By-Law amendment shall be proposed or adopted which would have the effect of disqualifying the organization from recognition as a Local Tenant Organization (LTO) under the BHA's Public Housing Tenant Participation Policy, as the same may from time to time be lawfully amended, or applicable lawful HUD or DHCD requirements governing participation of resident organizations in the affairs of public housing authorities. No By-Law amendment shall be proposed or adopted which will be contrary to the provisions of G.L. c. 180 as the same apply to non-profit corporations.