



New Haven Democracy Fund

"To ensure that all the citizens of New Haven have a fair and meaningful opportunity to participate in the election of mayor."
New Haven Code of General Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article XI, §2-821 • Established in 2007 • democracyfund@newhavenct.net



Minutes DEMOCRACY FUND BOARD MEETING

6:00 pm Wednesday March 16, 2022

(Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

New Haven Democracy Fund Board, Sergio Rodriguez, Chair

Members: Aaron Goode, James O'Connell, William Wynn, James Bhandary-Alexander

Democracy Fund Administrator: Alyson Heimer

To join the meeting please use one of the options below:

Web Browser: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82382679039> ; Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

Phone: Please dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (New Haven, CT) Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

+1 312 626 6799 US (Outside New Haven) Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

In person: Not available at this time. Please stay tuned for updates.

AGENDA:

- I. Call to Order & Attendance - Meeting called to order at 6:08pm.
- II. Motion to approve of prior meeting minutes by O'Connell, 4-0-0.
- III. No members of the public chose to comment.
- IV. Report from the Chair

- A. Meeting with Mayor Justin Elicker Update

The Board chair and Administrator met with Mayor Elicker on March 9 to discuss the funding request for the Democracy Fun from the City of New Haven's FY 2022-2023 budget. The mayor informed us that he proposed setting aside \$150,000.00 for the Fund in his budget. The board had requested a replenishment of \$250,000 between 2022 and the 2023 election cycle. There is another budget approval before the next election cycle and the board anticipates being allocated the remaining funds before they are needed.

The Board Chair also alerted the Mayor to multiple changes that might be made to the ordinance as a result of the sub committee's review. Many changes address issues that arose during election cycles in which the Mayor himself was a qualified candidate. He expressed general support but would defer to community input and the Board of Alders on the best way to initiate program overhauls like adding new offices to the program.

V. Ordinance Review Sub-Committee (Bhandary-Alexander, chair)

A. Draft of ordinance review - following the workshopping session of the previous bots meeting, Subcommittee Chair Bhandary-Alexander went over language changes on specific pieces of the ordinance that needed to be altered. The Board tables the final vote on language approval until the April Meeting, citing that the Administrator and members of the Board had scheduled a meeting with the chair of the legislative committee, Alder Charles Decker for the following week and sought to get input before making final proposals to be sent to the committee.

VI. Administrator's Report

A. 2022 CPI increases - as required by the ordinance, grant and other benchmark amounts must be adjusted to keep up with inflation. The two calculation methods - pinning the money to the starting year of 2007 vs pinning starting prices to the 2018 amounts provided a spread of reasonable amounts.

Cost of Living Adjustment

Sec. 2-831. - Cost of living adjustment. Beginning in 2008 and every four (4) years thereafter, the amounts of the voluntary contribution size limit, the public financing grants, the use of personal funds limit, the contribution and expenditure ceiling per election cycle, the contested election limit, the civil penalty, shall be adjusted according to four-year aggregate cost of living changes in the New Haven MSA, as shown in the Consumer Price Index for all items in the New Haven MSA. The adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest five-dollar size variation (i.e. \$25, 30, 35, 310, 315, 320) for the minimum qualifying contribution and the voluntary contribution size limit. The adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest thousand for the public financing grant, the personal funds limitation, and the contribution and expenditure ceilings (i.e. \$16,000, 17,000, 18,000, 301,000, 302,000, 303,000).

Last Adjustment occurred in April 2018.

The following amounts are calculated using the February 2022 Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI:

	Current	Proposed	Difference
Minimum contribution	\$10	\$5	- \$5.00
Maximum contribution	\$390	\$445	+ \$55.00
Minimum matching amount	\$10	\$5	- \$5.00
Maximum matching amount	\$30	\$35	+ \$5.00
Grant	\$20,000	\$23,000	+ \$3,000
Expenditure Ceiling	\$390,000	\$445,000	\$55,000

VII. New Business - Administrator will coordinate a meeting with the Legislative committee to move forward on the Ordinance rewrite process. The Administrator will also gather information on CD rates for the Board to set aside more funds into an interest bearing account.