

Approved by Hiking Council: January 25, 2025

HIKING COUNCIL CHARTER

1. ACTIVITY COUNCIL NAME

The name shall be the Hiking Council.

2. AUTHORITY

This Hiking Council charter is adopted by authority of the Branch Leadership Committee. As approved by the Branch Leadership Committee, the Hiking Council has the following authority:

- Maintain and revise Club Wide Hiking Standards for approval by Branch Leadership Committee.
 - Develop and maintain organization-wide protocols for Mountaineers Hiking programs, including but not limited to:
 - Course curriculum and assessment
 - Leadership development
 - Activity-specific risk management
 - Use of shared teaching locations

3. PURPOSE

The Hiking Council is a decision-making body. The purpose of the Hiking Council is to promote safe and enjoyable hiking programs that also strive to conserve the natural world. The Hiking Council does this by maintaining Clubwide Hiking Standards and by promoting shared ideas and resources across branches.

Hiking Council Responsibilities:

- Review/audit and revise Clubwide Activity Standards, at least annually. ○ This council is responsible to set the standards for all applicable badges.
- Share ideas and resources across branches with goals of:
 - Consistency where practical
 - Learning from one another to improve both volunteer and student experience ○ Understanding industry best practices and relevant research, where available
- Make other cross-branch decisions as determined by the Council.

4. MEMBERSHIP (Chair or Proxy)

Voting membership of the Hiking Council consists of all Branch Hiking Committee chairs. Each branch gets a single vote per activity, which must be cast by the Chair or the delegated proxy. Chairs may invite additional people from their branch to join meetings based on their expertise on a subject to be discussed.

5. GOVERNANCE (Group Governance)

The Hiking Council is led by group governance. There are no elected or appointed Officers or

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specific positions of leadership. Collectively, the group is responsible for convening regular meetings, ensuring Clubwide Hiking Standards are reviewed annually and submitted to Branch Leadership Committee for approval when updated. The annual meeting will be facilitated by a staff member.

6. DECISION-MAKING (Consensus)

After group discussion and deliberation, a motion to bring business before the Hiking Council for vote may be made by any two voting members. Any business that comes before the Council for decision making must pass by consensus, defined as a $\frac{2}{3}$ (two-thirds) majority of the voting members present, including delegated proxies. The agenda for the annual summit will be drafted by staff with input from the hiking chairs from each branch.

Quorum

Majority of voting members, including delegated proxies, must be present to make a decision.

Eligibility

Each branch Hiking committee chair, including delegated proxies, is eligible to participate in consensus decision making. Each branch that has an active committee has one vote.

Proxy

In the event that a voting member is unable to attend a meeting, they may delegate their proxy, from the same branch, to another individual in attendance. A verifiable proxy may be in, but not necessarily limited to, the following formats: written, email, text message, or voicemail.

Inconclusive Outcomes

In the event that consensus cannot be reached after a reasonable hearing of the proposal, any voting member, with agreement of majority of the voting members, may put forth a motion to stop discussion and move the decision to an alternate process. An alternate process may include discussion on basecamp, appointment of an ad hoc committee.

Table

In support of transparency and allowing time for Council members to confer with their committee, any Council member may make a motion to table the vote until a specific future date. The Council is obligated to honor a motion, if adopted, to table a topic for up to four weeks. If the motion is to table the vote for an extended period of time, or if the topic has already been tabled, the Council will vote on whether and for how long to table the decision on the topic.

Electronic Consensus

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The Hiking council may make decisions in-between regular meetings to speed up the decision making process using email, Basecamp, or other electronic means. If electronic means are used, a facilitator will be designated by consensus to moderate the process described below. The process is as follows:

1. After sufficient discussion, a member poses the question: "Is there anyone who would like to have a special meeting before seeking consensus on a decision?"
 - a. If a member wishes to have a special meeting, they schedule and publish a meeting with at least 4-weeks' notice (this can be online, but must be open to the entire Council). Those present at the meeting will decide by consensus whether to put the issue to vote during the special meeting or to conduct the vote on the issue at a later date.
 - b. If, after 7 days, no member requests a special meeting, the Council may seek consensus by electronic vote.
2. Council members must have 7 days to respond with their position.

7. MEETINGS

The Hiking Council convenes annual or more frequent meetings called Hiking Summits. Hiking Summits are typically held in January. Additional Council meetings may be held at the discretion of the Hiking Council. A quorum (the majority of decision-making members) must be present to make a decision on any matter. Non-voting activity committee members may attend meetings.

8. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS

No Hiking Council members shall be removed from the Council except for good cause. The process of removal may be initiated upon a consensus of the Hiking Council, with the affected Council member counting only toward the quorum. Removal may only be voted for good cause shown at a meeting called for that purpose, with notice of that purpose sent to all Council members and to the Vice President of Branches (Board of Directors).

In the event of a dispute about whether a particular role in a branch should serve on the Hiking Council, the Vice President of Branches will consult as necessary and make the final decision.

9. AMENDING THE COUNCIL CHARTER

Amendments to this Hiking Council charter may be proposed by any Council member. Approval by the Hiking Council should follow the chartered decision-making process. All amendments must also be approved by the Branch Leadership Committee.

Amendment History:

Jan 7, 2023

Provide an amendment history.

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The Hiking Council Charter was first approved following review of the Branch Leadership Committee on February 15, 2023.