

# SEATTLE BACKPACKING COMMITTEE CHARTER

## 1. COMMITTEE NAME

The name shall be the Seattle Backpacking Committee.

## 2. AUTHORITY

This Seattle Backpacking Committee Charter is adopted by authority of the Seattle Branch Council Charter.

## 3. PURPOSES AND MISSION

The mission of the Seattle Backpacking Committee is to promote safe and enjoyable Backpacking that conserves the natural world. On behalf of the Seattle Branch of The Mountaineers, the Committee offers courses in Backpacking, oversees the Branch's Backpacking program, and recruits, develops and supports volunteer Backpacking leaders.

### Backpacking Committee Responsibilities

- Work to achieve the mission and goals of The Mountaineers organization and the Seattle Branch.
- Develop a diverse, open and inclusive population of members, students, instructors and leaders.
- Conduct Backpacking courses and seminars. This includes establishing eligibility requirements for the courses as well as their equivalency.
- Set fees for the seminars, Backpacking courses, and course equivalencies. The Committee will recommend fees based upon organizational guidance.
- Approve or reject Backpacking Course graduation and equivalency petitions.
- Establish leader and instructor qualifications, and maintain a current Backpacking Leader and Instructor list.
- Ensure Backpacking courses and trips are led according to Backpacking Activity Standards, including regular review of feedback
- Ensure proper maintenance and replacement of Backpacking equipment managed by the Committee.
- Coordinate with the clubwide Safety Committee investigating Backpacking incidents originating from trips sponsored by the Seattle Backpacking Committee and make recommendations or adjustments as appropriate.
- Administer Backpacking awards and leader incentives.
- Annually review Seattle Branch Backpacking policies and documents.
- Respond in a timely manner to backpacking-related badge requests that are sent to the Seattle branch, including but not limited to requests for Backpacking skills badges and any Backpacking award badges sponsored by the Committee.
- Respond in a timely manner to inquiries and applications about becoming a Backpack trip leader, including requests that are sent via the online Hike or Backpack Leader Application form, and requests or inquiries sent to the Committee by other means.

#### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

Membership on the Seattle Backpacking Committee is open to all current Mountaineers members in good standing, regardless of branch affiliation. Current Backpacking leader status is desirable but not required.

#### **5. GOVERNANCE**

The Seattle Backpacking Committee is composed of an Executive Committee and a minimum of three (3) At-Large Members. The Committee shall be responsible for the governance of the Activity, including but not limited to making rules and determining policy for the Activity's programs and property, managing the budget, and furthering Activity interests.

##### **5.1. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of six Officers:

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Training Officer
- Safety Officer

The Executive Committee may create, restructure, or dissolve sub-committees to carry out purposes of the Activity, appoint sub-committee officers and members, and delegate certain powers and duties to sub-committees.

The Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected. The Vice Chairperson, Training Officer, and Safety Officer shall be appointed by the Chairperson.

Informally, following an election, the incoming Vice Chairperson shall function as the Chairperson-Elect, tasked with learning the role and responsibilities of the Chairperson, and serving in place of the Chairperson in their absence. If the outgoing Chairperson is willing to continue to serve on the Committee in any capacity, they shall function as the Immediate Past Chairperson, tasked with assisting the current Chairperson and Vice Chairperson in matters of governance, procedure, and best practices, as needed.

##### **5.2. Term Conditions and Stipulations**

Each Officer (elected or appointed) shall serve for a period of two (2) years, with terms ending on September 30th of the odd year. Elected officers may serve multiple terms, but not more than two (2) consecutive terms. In the event that a replacement cannot be found for any elected positions, except for Chairperson, for any reason, the Chairperson may either temporarily extend the term of the incumbent, or appoint an interim officer for a period of up to one (1) year or until such time that a replacement can be found. In the event that a replacement cannot be found for the Chairperson, the Executive Committee may extend the incumbent's term for up to two (2)

additional years. In the event that the incumbent does not agree to an extension then the Executive Committee may appoint any qualified individual until a replacement can be found.

### **5.3. Officers' Duties**

Each Officer shall serve as the liaison to counterparts in other Branches, and attend meetings pertinent to the position, as well as executing any additional tasks assigned by the Chairperson. Additionally, each officer in the Executive Committee shall perform the duties as assigned.

#### **5.3.1. Chairperson**

The Chairperson shall:

- Preside at all regular Committee, Executive Committee, and special meetings.
- Confirm all sub-committee chairs.
- Be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee.
- Be the spokesperson for the Committee.
- Oversee the operations, activities, programs, and budget of the Committee.
- Recruit and develop new At-Large Members.

#### **5.3.2. Vice Chairperson**

The Vice Chairperson shall:

- Act in place of the Chairperson in their absence.
- Assist the Chairperson with duties of the office.
- Coordinate the operations of the Nominating Committee.
- Assist the Chairperson with recruiting and developing new At-Large Members.

#### **5.3.3. Secretary**

The Secretary shall:

- Be the recording officer for the Committee.
- Take, transcribe, and archive the minutes of regular Committee, Executive Committee, and special meetings.

#### **5.3.4. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall:

- Oversee the financial affairs of the Activity.
- Assist in the preparation of the annual budget.
- Interface with the Seattle Branch Treasurer and Program Center Staff, as necessary.
- Provide periodic reports to the Committee.

#### **5.3.5. Training Officer**

The Training Officer shall:

- Oversee all new hike leader training issues pertaining to the Activity.

- Recruit, train and support presenters and assistants for new Backpacking leader seminars, schedule such seminars, and coordinate the Backpacking leader mentorship program, as may be appropriate.
- Interface with Program Center Staff on training-related issues, as necessary.
- Provide periodic reports to the Committee.

#### **5.3.6. Safety Officer**

The Safety Officer shall:

- Take the lead on all safety-related issues pertaining to the Activity.
- Interface with the Seattle Branch Safety Committee, the Seattle Branch Safety Officer, and the Safety Officers of other Activities, as necessary.
- Provide periodic reports to the Committee.

#### **5.4. Order of Succession**

In the event that the Chairperson is unable to attend a regular, Executive Committee, or special meeting then any of the other attending Officers may chair the meeting, given the following order of succession:

- Vice Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Training Officer
- Safety Officer

Whenever an Officer other than the Chairperson chairs a meeting, they assume the duties and authorities of the Chairperson for the duration of the meeting.

#### **5.5. At-Large Members**

At-Large Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chairperson, and may serve as long as they are active participants and contributors to the Committee's business.

#### **5.6. Activity Members**

The term Activity Members includes all persons (other than Committee Members) on the Activity's roster of trip leaders, course instructors, and other volunteers.

### **6. ELECTIONS**

For the election of Officers, a Nominating Committee shall convene consisting of the Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and two volunteer At-Large Members. The Vice Chairperson shall chair the Nominating Committee. The Secretary shall maintain the official list of nominees for each office up for election. By July 31st of each odd-numbered year, the Nominating Committee shall nominate up to two qualified Committee Members (including incumbents) and/or Activity Members for each position up for election. At the end of the nomination period, the Nominating Committee shall dissolve.

### **6.1. Eligibility**

Any qualified Committee Member or Activity Member in good standing, willing and able to serve, may be nominated for any Officer position by petition submitted to the Secretary during the nomination period.

### **6.2. Scheduled Election**

Election of Officers shall be held during a regular September meeting, or as designated by the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall preside over the election. The At-Large Members shall elect the Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary from those nominated by the Nominating Committee, by simple majority vote. The Seattle Branch Council Chairperson shall decide such Officers in the event of a tie. The At-Large Members shall accept or reject the appointment of a Vice Chairperson, Training Officer and Safety Officer from those appointed by the Committee Chairperson, by simple majority vote. The Committee Chairperson shall decide such Officers in the event of a tie.

### **6.3. Commencement of Term**

Each Officer's two-year term shall commence on the first day of The Mountaineers' fiscal year, currently October 1.

## **7. VOTING**

A motion to bring business before the Committee for vote may be made by any two Committee Members, not including the Chairperson. Additionally, Activity Members are welcome to address the Committee in writing or in person at any regular Committee meeting to discuss proposed business. Any business that comes before the Committee for a vote must receive a simple majority vote of the eligible Committee Members present, including voted proxies, in order to be adopted.

### **7.1. Eligibility**

Each Committee Member other than the Chairperson shall be eligible to cast votes for all motions and other Committee business. Each Committee Member may cast a single vote. The Chairperson shall only cast their vote in the event of a tie, but they are free to vote any and all proxies that have been delegated to them.

### **7.2. Proxy**

In the event that a Committee Member other than the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, they may delegate their proxy 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.

### **7.3. Voting by Email**

Voting on motions and other business before the Committee normally occurs at a regular meeting. This allows for a full debate of the issue at hand. In extraordinary cases voting may occur via email.

## **8. BUDGET SIGNATURE AUTHORITY**

The Chairperson shall have the authority to commit/disburse budgeted funds. Once the budget limit has been reached then any and all additional requests must be brought before the Branch Treasurer. All disbursements must be submitted for approval by the Branch Treasurer or Branch Chair.

## **9. SEATTLE COUNCIL LIAISON**

The Chairperson may appoint a delegate to act for the Chairperson at regular meetings of the Branch Council.

## **10. MEETINGS**

Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held bi-monthly, or more frequently. The Chairperson or any two other members of the Executive Committee may call for a special meeting in advance of the next regularly scheduled meeting with 5 days' notice to the Committee Members. Regular meetings and a proposed agenda shall be announced in advance. A quorum of appropriate members must be present for a vote on any matter. Three (3) Officers plus two (2) At-Large Members shall constitute a quorum for a regular meeting. Four (4) Officers shall constitute a quorum for an Executive Committee or special meeting.

## **11. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS**

No Committee Member shall be removed from the Committee except for good cause. The process of removal may be initiated upon a two-thirds vote of the Committee, with the affected Committee 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 Committee Members and to the Branch Chair. An Activity Member may be removed from the Activity roster in accordance with the policies and procedures then in place for the removal of volunteers by The Mountaineers and/or the Seattle Branch Council.

## **12. AMENDING THE ACTIVITY CHARTER**

Amendments to this Activity Charter may be proposed by petition by any Committee Member or Activity Member. A two-thirds vote of the Committee is required to enact an amendment.

### **Amendment History:**

The Activity Charter was first approved by verbal vote of the Committee on February 2, 2021.

The Activity Charter was first approved following review and consent of the Seattle Branch Council Chair on July 15, 2021.