



Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change (CEUCC) Ordinance Amendment Initiative Update

June 10, 2025





What is this?

- The mission of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) is to develop and implement policies and programs that minimize and mitigate environmental impacts and greenhouse gas emissions, build resiliency, and increase equity, enabling a healthy and enjoyable environment for all the people of Somerville and a responsible city government.
- The CEUCC (now the Interim Climate Action Commission) is a resident-led body:
 - Addresses and reverse both the climate and environmental crises.
 - Advises the mayor and municipal staff (through OSE).
 - Mobilizes Somerville residents and stakeholders by educating the public through outreach and engagement.
- On May 5, 2025 Mayor Ballantyne officially approved amendments to the establishing ordinance for the first time since its creation in 2001.
- **Congratulations!**
- **Thank you!**





Why did we update the ordinance?

- Informed by vision of community-driven climate action plan, prioritizing schools and innovation
- Strengthen the bridge between city and constituents
- Create more opportunities to reflect the values, goals, and make up of the community
- Modernized, broadened, and simplified language
- Bigger mission, bigger commission!
- More autonomy to be a truly resident-led commission
- State Climate Leaders standards compliant
- Make meaningful progress





What's new?

- Mission: Advise City/Schools + Engage Community
- 8 members to 15 members
- Resident-led commission: City *ex-officio* no longer votes
- Somerville Public Schools administrator *ex-officio* added for the first time and is not a voting member
- Youth representation for the first time (minimum 2 positions)
- Members can live or work in Somerville (minimum 1 working in Somerville, ratio depends on by-laws)
- Bylaws need to be drafted (would dictate make up)
- Establishes an interim commission





What does this mean for current members?

- The CEUCC is now the ICAC and will become the CAC once quorum is reached.
- The CAC requires a minimum of 5 members.
- Members do not need to reapply to be on the ICAC.
- Members will need to apply to be considered for the CAC.
- Top priorities:
 - Vote for officer positions
 - Draft by-laws
 - Inform job descriptions





Application process (approx. min. 7 months)

- Officer votes, membership criteria created to inform job descriptions (Est. June 30, 2025)
- Criteria for job descriptions drafted (Est. June 30, 2025)
- Job descriptions translated (~2-3 weeks, July 2025)
- Job descriptions posted/advertised (~6 weeks, August 2025)
- Interviews conducted (~2-6 weeks, September 2025)
- Mayoral review/approval (TBD, October 2025)
- Council review/approval (~2-3 months, December 2025)
- Training and swearing in (~2-4 weeks, January 2026)





2025 priorities for the ICAC

- Elect Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary
- Draft by-laws and job descriptions with the goal of City sending requests to City Council for at least 5 CAC positions by the end of the year to transition into the CAC and expand membership.
- Review city climate plans, previously informed by CEUCC, to inform priorities for the ICAC: somervillema.gov/sustainaville
 - Climate Forward 2024
 - Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments 2017 and 2024
 - Consumption-based Emissions Inventory 2019
- Represent the ICAC at upcoming city events.
- Advertise open positions.





Example schedule for the ICAC

- Initial ICAC Meetings:
 - Vote on Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary positions.
 - Draft criteria for membership and job descriptions.
 - Draft/authorize drafting remaining sections of the bylaws by subgroup(s), finalize as a whole.
 - Review city climate plans, previously informed by CEUCC, to inform priorities for the ICAC.
- Ideas for once bylaws are approved (or 6 months after first meeting, whichever is sooner):
 - Select 1-2 projects to work on as a commission from these plans (e.g. launching a group buying transformers effort).
 - Review examples from other communities, conduct informational interviews.
 - Create framework documents.





Bylaws Discussion Guide



What are bylaws?

Why are bylaws important?

- Required by the ordinance
- Clarify how business will be conducted
- Detail election processes
- Explain meeting structure
- Prescribe criteria for membership
- Previously discussed using bylaws as a tool to better connect the community with city processes by improving representation

Example sections

- ✓ Title and purpose
- ✓ Powers and duties
- Officers*
- Membership*
- Meetings
- Amendments
- Goals

Green=In ordinance

Yellow=Priority importance

Blue=Secondary importance

*We can move forward with these initiatives without bylaws





Officer Discussion: Expectations for ICAC positions

Subject to change per by-laws

Time commitments for each elected position are in addition to member commitment and are approximate.
Recommend voting at the next ICAC meeting

Chair (1-3 hours/month, 1 year commitment):

- 3rd-4th week of the month: Set date and agenda, discuss with OSE liaison + additional meeting materials. Agenda must be descriptive (e.g., “OSE director’s report” → “OSE director’s report discussing X, Y”)
- 2nd week of the following month: Lead ICAC meeting virtually.

Vice Chair (1-3 hours/month, 1 year commitment)

- 3rd-4th week of the month: Fill in for Chair as needed.
- 2nd week of the following month: Fill in for Chair as needed.

Secretary (1 hour/month, 6-month commitment or rotate):

- Take minutes

Members (2+ hours/month):

- Attend monthly meetings, contribute to agenda brainstorming, participate in activities as needed.
- Respond to communications timely, communicate availability timely for quorum.
- Have an understanding of open meeting law requirements.
- Participate in trainings and certifications as needed.





Officers Section Discussion

Current expectations, subject to change per by-laws

Time commitments for each elected position are in addition to member commitment

Example bylaw language:

- A. Officers shall include a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and treasurer.
- B. Officers shall be elected annually by the majority vote of the Commission. One member may hold more than one office.
- C. The chairperson shall: Develop the agenda in coordination with the other officers; preside over all meetings; appoint subcommittees as needed.
- D. The vice chairperson shall perform all the functions of the chairperson in their absence.

- E. The secretary shall: Keep records of all meetings attendance, minutes, votes, and correspondence; (facilitate the posting OR post notice) of all meetings forty-eight (48) business hours before each meeting in the manner prescribed by the City Clerk's Office.

**Does this sound right? What's missing?
What needs to be changed?**





Membership Section Discussion

Drafts from CEUCC amendment conversations included mention of the following minimums (16-20 qualifiers)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. 1 person from each zip code (3)
OR 1 person from each ward (7) | H. 1 expert on engagement |
| B. 1 expert on buildings/energy | I. 1 person between the ages of 15-18 (required) |
| C. 1 expert on natural resources/waste | J. 1 person between the ages of 18-25 (required) |
| D. 1 expert on transportation/mobility | K. 1 person over the age of 55 |
| E. 1 expert on health/resiliency | L. 1 person from a local institution (not necessarily a resident) |
| F. 1 expert on state policy | M. 1 expert on cleantech (not necessarily a resident) |
| G. 1 expert on finance | N. 1 local business owner (not necessarily a resident, required) |

By-laws: More qualifiers than positions. If these remain the qualifiers, 4-8 members would need to fall into 1 location category+1 of the other categories. How does the ICAC want to handle this?

Job descriptions: What are the qualifications for each position?



Public Comment

