

Bylaws of Bus Riders United STL

11/29 draft version

Preamble

Public transportation is in crisis. At a time when unemployment is growing, when wages are falling, and gas prices rising; when global warming and peak oil production threaten the stability of civilization and the future of the planet; public transit should be improving and extending rapidly. And yet everywhere it is being cut back.

The corporate class, which now commands unfathomably large portions of society's wealth, effectively dictates society's transportation policies. With its money, its mass media, its lobbies and loyal servitors in public office, it has seen to it that public transit – indeed, all of our public services – are being starved and stifled, cut and privatized, restructured in such a way as to serve its own profit needs, and funded increasingly at the expense of the working class, and of society in general.

The issue of public transportation is far too important – for riders, for workers, for society as a whole, for the natural environment, and for future generations – to remain under the sway of shameless profiteers.

It is up to poor and working people, now the great majority of the population, to defend and expand public transit. Our strength has always been our numbers, and our ability to organize ourselves so that these numbers may exert power – the power to shape public policy, and thus determine our own destiny. For this reason, we convene to establish a Union of Transit Riders, under the following Constitution.

(From [TRU Constitution](#))

Article I. Name

Section 1. Name The name of this organization shall be the Bus Riders United STL (hereinafter BRU STL). It is a nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Missouri

Section 2. Location BRU STL shall operate in St Louis, MO and the region served by Metro St Louis Transit Agency bus and/or paratransit service.

Article II. Object

Section 1. Purpose BRU STL is a democratic organization of transit users and their allies, intended to support and promote the interests of bus and paratransit riders, including

reliable, fast, and safe public transit in the St Louis region. BRU STL is a riders' organization in partnership with labor and community allies.

Article III. Coordinating Committee

Section 1. Purpose The Coordinating Committee is an elected body that shall be empowered to execute decisions made by voting members, develop and set policy, oversee budgets, staff, and day-to-day operations.

Section 2. Officers The Coordinating Committee shall include a chair, co-chair, secretary, treasurer, and at-large members. Coordinating Committee members shall serve on at least one additional committee or working group.

Section 3. Composition The voting membership will determine the number of at-large members to be elected.

Section 4. Elections Voting members and Coordinating Committee members are eligible to vote in Coordinating Committee elections. The Coordinating Committee shall take reasonable measures to advertise the election at least 4 weeks in advance to ensure the greatest participation of membership. Elections shall be held annually at a general membership meeting. Votes shall be cast by secret ballot. Ballots will be counted by 2 voting members who have not been nominated for the election. The total number of votes per eligible candidate shall be counted.

1. The 2 candidates with at least 1 year Coordinating Committee experience with the most votes are reelected to meet requirements of Section 3.5.
2. In the event of a tie, both candidates shall be deemed to be elected and the count shall proceed to the candidate with the next highest number of votes.
3. In the event of a tie for last place, a coin toss performed by the voting members performing the ballot count shall determine which candidate is elected for last place.

Election results shall be presented to the membership prior to the conclusion of meetings during which elections are held. Members must be voting members in good standing at the time of nomination in order to be eligible for Coordinating Committee.

Section 5. Nominations Nominations shall be made:

1. From the floor of the general meeting prior to the election and must be seconded by a voting member.
2. By notifying the chair at least two weeks prior to the election and must be seconded by an officer.

Section 6. Term of office

1. Coordinating Committee members will be elected by ballot for a term of two years or until their successors are elected.
2. In order to establish staggered terms, the initial elected Coordinating Committee shall be divided equally as possible into two groups. One group shall serve an initial term of one year. The other group shall serve an initial term of two years.
3. Thereafter, an election shall be held each year to elect members to fill expiring terms. Each Coordinating Committee member shall be elected to hold office for a term of two years or until their successor is elected.

Section 7. Nominations for Committee Positions

1. At the Coordinating Committee meeting following the election, incoming Coordinating Committee members will be nominated for the officer roles described in Article IV. The Coordinating Committee will notify the general membership of office nominations one week before a general membership meeting.
2. Voting members shall ratify these nominations by a majority vote at the next general membership meeting following the election.
3. Coordinating Committee members who have served since the last general election are eligible to be nominated for or to hold the Chair and Treasurer officer role.
4. Officer roles shall expire annually following ratification of the incoming officers as described in 3.6.2

Section 8. Limitations Each Coordinating Committee member elected shall hold only one officer role at a time.

Section 9. Vacancies If the resignation or removal of a Coordinating member reduces the Coordinating Committee membership below the minimum number, an interim member will be elected by the general membership in a special election to fill the remainder of the term.

Section 10. Removal from Office Any Coordinating Committee member may be removed with or without cause, at any time, by 2/3 majority of the Coordinating Committee, if in their judgment the best interest of BRU STL would be served. Vote by the majority of the voting membership can confirm removal or reinstatement.

1. The officer must be informed before publication of the proposed removal.

2. The proposed removal must be placed on the written agenda distributed by email and archived in accessible hard copy form at least one week ahead of the general meeting at which the vote for removal is to take place.

Section 11. Resignation from Office Coordinating Committee members are requested to inform the Coordinating Committee of their resignations in writing. The Coordinating Committee will inform the general membership and archive all written resignations in hard copy form.

Section 12. Participation Requirements Failure to fulfill minimum Coordinating Committee obligations or attendance requirements as described in Article 3 or 4 will be accepted by the Committee as a de facto or implicit resignation. In-person participation is required for at least 80% of Coordinating Committee meetings. The Coordinating Committee may vote to approve phone or virtual participation on a per-member per-meeting basis to meet attendance requirements. Voting members will be informed of any de facto resignations. The Coordinating Committee member will be informed before publication of such de facto resignation to the voting members.

Article IV. Duties of the Coordinating Committee

Section 1. Chair The chair works with the Coordinating Committee and staff to convene meetings and send out agendas. The chair shall preside at all Coordinating Committee and general membership meetings.

Section 2. Co-Chair Understands the responsibilities of the chair and performs these duties in the chair's absence. Carries out special assignments and additional assistance as requested by the chair.

Section 3. Secretary Coordinates with the Coordinating Committee and staff to arrange note-taking and distribution of minutes of Coordinating Committee and general meetings. Minutes shall be distributed to voting members and archived in hard copy form. Archives all proposals and additional committee reports.

Section 4. Treasurer Maintains and presents monthly reports at Coordinating Committee meeting of income and expenditures. The Treasurer shall sign or countersign all certificates, contracts, or other instruments of BRU STL with the approval of the Coordinating Committee except where otherwise designated in these bylaws, and maintain a list of which members are up-to-date with dues.

Section 5. At-large officers Coordinating Committee members shall perform the duties assigned to them in the bylaws or other duties prescribed by the Coordinating Committee as ratified by voting members.

Article V. Members

Section 1. General Membership Any person or entity who agrees with BRU STL's Transit Bill of Rights is a general member. All general members can attend general membership meetings.

Section 2. Voting Membership A member earns the right to vote on BRU STL proposals, bylaws, and elections for Coordinating Committee members beginning on the date they have paid dues for the current year.

Section 3. Dues The price of annual dues shall be set at the cost of a standard-fare two-hour pass on Metro Transit.

Section 4. Termination of Membership The membership of any member shall terminate upon occurrence of any of the following events:

1. The resignation of the member.
2. Any member may be removed with or without cause, at any time, by 2/3 majority of the Coordinating Committee, if in their judgment the best interest of BRU STL would be served. Vote by the majority of the voting membership can confirm termination or reinstatement.

Article VI. Meetings

Section 1. Coordinating Committee meetings Coordinating Committee meetings shall be held at least quarterly and advertised to all voting members. Proposals may be introduced by the Coordinating Committee, other committees, staff, or any voting member. Proposals from general members may be submitted to the chair or co-chair at least one week in advance in order to appear on the agenda. New business can be introduced by voting members pending approval by the majority of the Coordinating Committee.

Section 2. General membership meetings General membership meetings shall be held at least quarterly and advertised publicly. Proposals may be introduced by any voting member or staff. Proposals from general members may be submitted to the chair or co-chair at least one week in advance in order to appear on the agenda.

Section 3. Special meetings Special meetings may be called by any Coordinating Committee member, or five voting members may request a special meeting via written request to the

secretary. Notice of the meeting shall be sent to voting members at least three days prior to the meeting, or as soon as possible if prohibited by time constraints.

Section 4. Quorum A quorum for conducting business of the Coordinating Committee shall consist of two-thirds of its members. The quorum shall be ten voting members for proposals voted on at general membership meetings.

Article VII. Additional Committees

Section 1. Additional committees Additional committees shall be created or dismissed as needed by a decision of the Coordinating Committee or voting members at general meetings.

1. Committees should be executed according to the needs of BRU STL.
2. Committees at a minimum should have a chair.
3. Committee members shall elect a secretary at each meeting.
4. Committees should meet on a regular basis as needed.
5. Written reports from each committee meeting should be presented to the general membership and submitted to the Coordinating Committee secretary to be archived.

Section 2. Quorum Three members constitutes a quorum.

Article VIII. Records and Reports

Section 1. Meetings Minutes from general membership and Coordinating Committee meetings shall be taken by the Secretary. Other committees shall submit written reports from each meeting to the Secretary to archive.

Section 2. Proposals All adopted proposals, policies and bylaw revisions shall be archived in hard copy and electronic forms and shall be available for review upon request by any voting member.

Section 3. Committee Decisions All such decisions of the Coordinating Committee shall be recorded, available for review, and open to modification, or reversal by voting membership.

1. All proposals and decisions requiring a majority vote of the Coordinating Committee shall be recorded and archived in electronic and hardcopy forms, including a record of the votes of the Committee members who voted for them.

2. Any officer or voting member may then request further information for review and potential reversal or modification of any such decision, in the form of a proposal to be voted on by the voting membership.

Article IX. Staff

Section 1. Obligations Staff members obligations shall be defined in the job description set by the Coordinating Committee.

Section 2. Hiring Hiring staff members is the responsibility of the Coordinating Committee. Majority of the Coordinating Committee must approve the hiring of any staff member.

Section 3. Limitations Staff members are not eligible to serve on the Coordinating Committee or as voting members although they may attend meetings, and present, revise and discuss proposals.

Section 4. Termination Coordinating Committee members can remove staff members by presenting such a proposal to the Coordinating Committee.

1. The staff member must be informed before publication of the proposed removal.
2. The proposed removal must be placed on the written agenda distributed by email and archived in accessible hard copy form at least one week ahead of the Committee meeting at which the vote for removal is to take place.
3. A majority of the Coordinating Committee is required for removal.

Article X. Nondiscrimination and Harassment Policy

Section 1. Obligations It is the policy of BRU STL that all participants in BRU STL activities will enjoy an environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. BRU STL is dedicated to equality of opportunity and treatment for all members, regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion or religious belief, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities, veteran status, or any other reason not related to scientific merit.

Section 2. Harassment BRU STL expects that all relationships among members are free of bias, prejudice and sexual harassment. Therefore, discriminatory behavior or sexual harassment shall be grounds for immediate termination of membership.

Article XI. Grievance Process

Section 1. Other forms of conflict resolution are encouraged All parties are encouraged to resolve disagreements and disputes through one-on-one dialogue, discussions with officers and voting members, and/or formal mediation whenever possible.

Section 2. Filing a Grievance Grievances from voting members must be submitted, in writing, to the secretary, within 90 days of the alleged violation. A grievance must state the action being grieved, the provision which was allegedly violated, how the grievant was harmed, and identify a remedy.

Section 3. Initial Review and Response The Coordinating Committee will review the proposed grievance, determine its findings, and render a decision on the grievance. The Coordinating Committee shall notify the grievant of the decision, in writing, within 60 days of the receipt of the grievance.

Article XII. Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1. Bylaw Revision All revisions to bylaws must be submitted as proposals at least one week before the Coordinating Committee meeting at which they will be voted upon. Two-thirds of the Coordinating Committee must vote in favor to modify the bylaws confirmed by a majority of the voting membership. The date of latest adopted revisions shall be placed at the end of the last version of the bylaws document, with a very brief summary of the changes that were made with each revision at the bottom.