

**SPRINGFIELD AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, UNIT 176  
BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE I  
ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1:** Election shall be by secret ballot and a majority of votes cast by eligible Unit members shall be necessary to elect. When there is but one (1) candidate for an office, the nominee may be elected by voice vote.

**Section 2:** The term of office for newly installed Unit officers shall commence immediately following Unit installation in June and shall terminate at the close of the next succeeding Unit installation.

**Section 3:** In order to participate in the election of Unit officers, an eligible member shall have paid his/her dues for the current fiscal year.

**Section 4:** Delegates and Alternates to the Department Convention or a District Annual Meeting shall be elected at a Unit meeting.

**Section 5:** All Officers shall be elected annually at a Unit meeting duly called for that purpose.

**Section 6:** A nominating committee of three members shall be elected by the members present at a regular Unit meeting in March of each year for the purpose of:

a) Presenting at the April meeting a slate with two candidates, if possible, who have consented to serve, for each office, after which nominations from the floor will be accepted provided, nominees have consented to serve prior to nomination. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the May meeting if there is no candidate(s) for any given office(s) provided nominees have consented to serve prior to nomination.

b) Presenting a slate of Delegates and Alternates, who have consented to serve for District Annual Meeting and Department Convention, at the meeting not less than two weeks prior to the Annual District Meeting, after which nominations from the floor will be accepted, provided nominees consented to serve prior to nomination. Alternates shall have priority in order of their election.

c) The Unit President and President-Elect shall automatically be the first and second delegates to the District Annual Meeting. The Junior Past President and President shall automatically be the first and second Delegates to the Department Convention.

**ARTICLE II  
DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1: Unit President:** The Unit President will be familiar with the duties of all officers and committee chairs and encourage and inspire them in their work. It is the responsibility of the president to see that all officers are supplied with all available information and material from department and National Headquarters.

The Unit President will preside at all meetings of the Unit and the Unit Executive Committee and:

- require adherence to the Constitution and Bylaws, rules and regulations established by the National and Department Conventions, National and Department Executive Committees, and the unit itself;
- appoint members of standing committees and create other committees as necessary; and

- appoint all non-elected officers and perform all other duties assigned to the office.

A special election may be called as soon as possible after a vacancy occurs by giving twenty-one (21) days' notice in writing to the Unit membership. A notice in the Post Scripts shall suffice. The Unit President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the Office. The Unit President shall read and file an annual Unit report at the District Annual Meeting, as required.

**Section 2: Unit Vice President:** The Unit Vice President is given the responsibility, with the president, for complete development of the unit program. The Unit Vice President •will be prepared to preside at meetings in the absence of the president. The Unit Vice President shall succeed the Unit President in case of death, resignation or removal.

**Section 3: Unit Secretary:** The duties of the Unit Secretary are administrative and require the ability to be adept with email. The Unit Secretary:

- makes a record of all business transacted at each unit and executive board meeting (the minutes);
- counts a rising vote when requested by the president;
- prepares a statement of unfinished business to come before the meeting for the use of the presiding officer;
- has on hand for reference at each meeting a list of the names of members of all standing committees, a copy of the unit's bylaws, and correspondence sorted for reading; and

is responsible for sending all name and address changes to Department Headquarters.

## Minutes

Minutes record the action that was taken at the meeting, not what was said by the members. The minutes never reflect the secretary's opinion, favorable or otherwise. The first paragraph of the minutes will have the following information:

- type of meeting (regular, special, adjourned regular, or adjourned special);
- name of the unit;
- date and time of the meeting, and the place, if it is not always the same;
- name of the presiding officer, officers present, committee chairs present, and those absent; and
- whether the minutes of the previous meeting were distributed in advance, read, and approved as read or as corrected.
- The body of the minutes will have a separate paragraph for each subject matter, giving the name of the person who made the motion, and show the following:
  - specific wording of each motion;
  - disposition of the motion (adopted or rejected); example: "Mary Smith moved that the unit spend \$200 for landscaping plants. The motion was adopted.";
  - secondary motions that were lost or withdrawn;
  - all notices of motions (i.e., changes to constitution and bylaws which require prior notice before actual voting can occur); and
  - all points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost, together with the reasons given by the chair

for their ruling.

The last paragraph will state the hour of adjournment. Additional rules and practices relating to the content of the minutes:

- The name of the seconder of a motion will not be entered in the minutes unless ordered by the assembly.
- When a count has been ordered or the vote by ballot, the number of votes on each side will be entered; and when the voting is by roll call, the names of those voting on each side and those answering “present” will be entered. If members do not respond on a roll call vote, enough of their names will be recorded as present to reflect that a quorum was present at the time of the vote. If the chair voted, no special mention of this fact is made in the minutes.
- The proceedings of a committee will not be entered in the minutes.
- When a question is considered informally, the same information will be recorded as under the regular rules, since the only informality in the proceedings is in the debate.
- When a committee report is significant or will be recorded to show the legislative history of a measure, the assembly can order it “to be entered in the minutes,” in which case the secretary copies it in full in the minutes.
- The name and subject of a guest speaker can be given, but no effort will be made to summarize their remarks.

#### **Unit Permanent Records**

It is the responsibility of the secretary to keep a permanent file whether by paper or electronically for the Unit, which will include the following:

- unit charter and charter roll;
- complete membership lists for every year;
- individual membership applications, filed alphabetically, for everyone who is or has ever been a member of the unit;
- complete record of members lost by death, transfer, nonpayment of dues, resignation, or expulsion;
- record of individual member identification numbers;
- complete file of the local post and Unit’s publications will be saved for history purposes;
- complete file of department’s current year bulletins;
- unit, district/county/council, department, and national constitutions of the Auxiliary;
- minutes of the meetings and officers’ reports; and
- correspondence file.

**Section 4: Unit Treasurer:** The Unit Treasurer has a duty to safeguard the funds of the Unit and to ensure that proper accounting practices and internal controls are maintained. The Unit Treasurer is responsible for the following:

- handling all unit funds. It is strongly recommended to have at least two unrelated people present for accountability when accepting cash or checks and to issue a receipt;
- collection of dues from members and donations to special funds;

- sending dues and special funds to department or national;
- providing a monthly financial statement to the unit, Finance Committee, and others as required by the unit constitution and bylaws;
- facilitating an audit. If the bylaws do not say how the audit is to be conducted, the unit may hire an outside auditor or appoint an audit committee of two or more unrelated persons; and
- providing a report after an annual audit of the treasurer's books. Once the audited report has been accepted, it becomes part of the unit's permanent record.

## Dues

The membership year is based on a calendar year: January 1 – December 31. ALA National Headquarters begins taking dues in July for the upcoming Auxiliary year. For example: In July 2020, ALA National Headquarters started taking dues for the 2021 Auxiliary year. ALA National Headquarters sends the first renewal notice for the upcoming membership year to members in mid-September. All current year dues will be collected and sent to departments by December 31 each year. A second dues renewal notice is sent by February 1 to anyone whose dues have not yet been entered in the system.

Units are encouraged to find their own ways to contact their members about the importance of renewing. Encourage members to use one of the following ways to renew:

1. by mail to the unit
2. online at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)
3. by calling the dues payment line at National Headquarters at (317) 569-4570 or
4. by paying at a unit meeting.

It is strongly recommended that members not pay dues with cash or to someone outside of the unit, such as a bartender at the post.

**Section 5: Unit Historian:** The unit historian is charged with the responsibility of recording the activities and accomplishments of the Unit. Unit Historians are encouraged to keep a factual continuing story of the accomplishments of each program in the Unit.

**Section 6: Unit Sergeant-at-Arms:** The Unit Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for keeping order at unit meetings, for the advancement and retirement of the unit colors and their proper care, and for such other duties as may be assigned by the unit president.

**Section 7: Unit Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms:** The Unit Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms will assist the Sergeant-at-Arms when necessary and act as the Sergeant-at-Arms when the Unit Sergeant-at-Arms is not present.

**Section 8: Unit Chaplain:** The Unit Chaplain will express, by word and action, our founding principle of service to God and country.

- The Unit Chaplain will encourage the unit to celebrate the diversity of its members and their faiths.
- The Unit Chaplain will provide spiritual and emotional guidance to members and their families as needed while

keeping confidentiality.

- The Unit Chaplain is responsible for presenting the invocation and benediction at Auxiliary meetings.
- The Unit Chaplain will take part as needed in installations; initiations of new members; dedication of halls, monuments, or colors; Four Chaplains services; POW/MIA recognition programs; and the memorial service of a member, always lending dignity and respect to the occasion.
- The chaplain will stay in close contact with the president and other officers of the unit and will attend all meetings of the Unit and the Unit Executive Committee.

### **Section 9: Requirement for Holding Office**

Units cannot require meeting attendance or membership for a specified length of time before a member is eligible to run for office. Once a member has been accepted for membership and paid dues, that individual becomes a member in good standing with all the rights and privileges connected with that membership, not the least of which is the right to aspire to and hold office.

## **ARTICLE III UNIT COMMITTEES**

**Section 1: Standing Committees:** There shall be such standing committees as named and required by the District, Department and National Organizations.

**Section 2: Special Committees:** There shall be such Special Committees as deemed advisable by the Unit President, the District, Department and National Organizations.

**Section 3:** Each Committee Chair shall submit a typewritten report as required by the District and Department Organizations to the corresponding Chair of the District and Department Organizations.

**Section 4:** Each Committee Chair shall submit a complete Committee file to the incoming Unit President by the June installation, to be given to the corresponding Unit Chair upon appointment by the incoming Unit President.

**Section 5:** Duties of the Unit Chairs shall be those outlined in the American Legion Auxiliary Unit Guide Book, and as assigned by the Unit President and by the Chairs of the District, Department and National American Legion Auxiliary organizations.

## **ARTICLE IV DUES**

### **General Information**

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### **Payment of Back Dues**

Members who have a lapse in membership have the option to pay back dues to re-establish their original membership join date. If back dues are paid, the member's record will be updated, and the corrected join year will be printed on future membership cards and rosters.

## **ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIPS AND TRANSFERS**

**Section 1 - Application:** Every applicant for membership in the Auxiliary must complete an individual membership application as proof of eligibility. Membership applications may be completed in paper form or online. When members join online, they are automatically placed into a holding unit — the Department Headquarters' unit of the state they designate on their mailing address. Members may then transfer to a unit in their area. **Section 2 – Voting In:** Voting on new members or transfers shall be by voice or by ballot, if requested, among members present and acceptance shall be unanimous.

**Section 3 - Initiation:** Initiation ceremonies for both Junior and Senior members, and graduation ceremonies for Junior members, shall be held during the Unit year at the regular monthly meeting. The selection of the month shall be left to the discretion of the Unit President and the Membership Chair. Both Junior and Senior members must be present at a special ceremony to receive their years of service pins. Any exception to this rule will be left to the discretion of the Unit President and the Membership Chairman.

**Section 4 - Transfers:** A member who is not subject to suspension or membership revocation is eligible to transfer membership to another unit if they have paid their membership dues to their current unit for either the current year or immediate past membership year. A member transferring to a new unit must pay current year dues to either their current unit or the unit into which they wish to transfer. The member will contact the new unit into which they wish to transfer to begin the process.

Transfer is final upon verification of eligibility, evidence of paid membership, and acceptance of the transferee by the new unit.

Evidence of paid membership:

1. American Legion Auxiliary membership card;
2. Verification of membership by ALA department or National Headquarters membership records;
3. Other documentation verifying payment of current or immediate past year membership dues, such as a canceled check or receipt; or
4. When verifying documentation is not available, a sworn statement that the member's membership dues

payment was tendered.

**Section 5 - Membership Rights:** As stated in the ALA National Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules, a new member joining the American Legion Auxiliary prior to the annual National Convention must pay full current annual dues to be eligible for full membership rights, privileges, and benefits. A new member joining after National Convention will be given full unit membership rights, privileges, and benefits from the date the dues are received through December 31 of the following year.

## **ARTICLE VI UNIT MEETINGS**

**Section 1 – General Membership Meetings:** The regular meetings of this Auxiliary shall be held once per month, subject to change based on conflict. There will be no regular meetings of this Auxiliary during the months of July and August.

**Section 2 – Officer Nominations:** An annual meeting of the Unit shall be held in the month of April at which time the Nominating Committee Chair shall present a slate of officers.

**Section 3 – Officer Elections:** Election of Unit Officers shall take place in the month of May.

**Section 4 – Officer Installation:** A joint meeting of the Post and Unit will be held for the installation of Officers. The date and time of this meeting will be set by the Post.

**Section 5 – Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the Unit may be called by the Unit President, or upon written request of at least three members of the ExCom, or two-thirds of the Unit membership. Uniform notice, in written or electronic format, of such special meeting shall be given to all members of the ExCom; and except in extreme emergency, shall be given at least 48 hours in advance. At special meetings, only the business/issue specified shall be transacted.

**Section 6 – Quorum:** Six Senior members present shall constitute a quorum at any regular meetings of the Unit.

**Section 7 – Special ExCom Meetings:** In the event an issue arises between meetings that demands immediate attention, the President may poll the Executive Committee by telephone. Any action taken pursuant to this section shall require a two-thirds vote of all members **of** the Executive Committee.

**Section 8 – Member of the Year:** Selection of the Unit Member of the Year shall be the responsibility of the members present at a regular monthly meeting designated by the Unit President and shall be by secret ballot; provided, however, that there shall be no requirement that selections are mandatory each year.

## **ARTICLE VII FINANCE**

**Section 1:** The Unit Treasurer's books, after audit, will be delivered to the succeeding Unit Treasurer.

**Section 2:** Registration fees for members attending the Department Spring and Fall Conferences will be reimbursed by the Unit. Members attending these conferences, and any other meetings outside of the Unit, are to act and dress appropriately as they will be acting as Unit representatives.

**Section 3:** Hotel and car travel expenses of the President for her/him to attend Spring and Fall Conferences and as Jr. Past President to attend Department Convention will be paid by the Unit, upon presentation of receipts for these expenses to the Treasurer of the Unit.

## **ARTICLE VIII BONDING**

**Section 1:** The Unit Treasurer or other authorized Unit officials handling funds are bonded under the National Bonding Procedure (Department Citation #7).

## **ARTICLE IX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

**Section 1:** The Unit organization shall be governed by the current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised," on all points not covered by this Constitution and Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE X DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

**Section 1:** The Unit has the responsibility for the discipline of its members. A member disciplined by said member's Unit may appeal the Unit's disciplinary action in writing to the Department Executive Committee. The Department Executive Committee shall review the appeal and respond as it deems appropriate. The action of the Department Executive Committee is final. Disciplinary actions against members, including membership suspensions, are not appealable to the National Organization. All discipline must be imposed in accordance with the principle of fundamental fairness, which includes notice and an opportunity to be heard. The Department may discipline a Unit for failure to discipline a member.

## **ARTICLE XI Amendments**

**Section 1:** These Bylaws may be amended:

- a) By a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting, provided that all proposed amendments shall have been read and distributed at the previous meeting and that the membership shall have been notified in writing that such vote is to be taken (i.e. in Post Scripts); or
- b) By unanimous vote of the members present at any regular meeting, if the amendments have not been read or distributed at the previous meeting.

**Section 2:** Amendments by shall become effective upon adjournment of the meeting at which they are adopted.



**Section 3:** These Bylaws shall be automatically amended to conform to the Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules of The American Legion Auxiliary, Seventeenth District, Department of Virginia and National Organization.

Revised January 2, 2001

Revised November 6, 2012

Revised March 4, 2014

Revised May 28, 2024