

Proposed Bylaw Amendment One (Article 2, Purpose)

ARTICLE 2.

PURPOSE

Current Bylaw:

The purpose of the Association shall be:

- a. To promote the welfare of blinded veterans so that, notwithstanding their disabilities, they may take their rightful place in the community and work with their fellow citizens toward the creation of a peaceful world.
- b. To preserve and strengthen a spirit of fellowship among blinded veterans so that they may give mutual aid and assistance to one another.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

The purpose of the Association shall be:

- a. To promote the welfare of blind and low vision veterans so that, notwithstanding their disabilities, they may take their rightful place in the community and work with their fellow citizens toward the creation of a peaceful world.
- b. To preserve and strengthen a spirit of fellowship among blind and low vision veterans so that they may give mutual aid and assistance to one another.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To incorporate the low vision member designation into the bylaws.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Two (Article 4, Section 2, Officers)

ARTICLE 4.

OFFICERS

Current Bylaw:

Section 2. Duration of Positions

b. Election shall be by a majority vote of the members present or represented by delegate or proxy. The elected officers shall not serve for more than a single two (2)-year term of office. Failure to fulfill any term of office will result in a four (4)-year bar from office.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 2. Duration of Positions

b. Election shall be by a majority vote of the members. The elected officers shall not serve for more than a single two (2)-year term of office. Failure to fulfill any term of office will result in a four (4)-year bar from office.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To allow for hybrid voting options, combining web-based, telephone, and paper ballots, ensuring every members vote counts.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Three (Article 4, Section 3, Officers)

ARTICLE 4.

OFFICERS

Current Bylaw:

Section 3. Election Procedures

Nominations for the elected officers of the Association shall be conducted on the respective convention floor as follows:

a. First Business Session:

(1) At the appropriate time during the first business session the presiding officer will open the convention floor for nominations.

(a) Candidates must be members of the Association.

(b) Candidates may nominate themselves.

(c) Candidates may present a short biographical sketch provided the sketch is no longer than one letter-size page in 14-point font.

(d) Nominations may be made by any member and seconded by no more than two (2) other members.

(e) Nominees need not be present on the convention floor to be nominated for office. However, a letter of acceptance signed by the nominee must be read at the time of their nomination.

(f) After the presiding officer has determined that there are no further nominations, they shall close the nominations until the election during the second business session on the last day of the convention.

b. Second Business Session:

(1) Nominations may be reopened at the commencement of the election portion of the agenda for the second business session, or by a simple majority vote at any time up to the time of elections.

(2) When all additional nominations, if any, have been made, the presiding officer shall close the nominations, at which time the election shall be carried out.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 3. Election Procedures

Nominations for the elected officers of the Association shall be conducted virtually no later than ninety (90) days prior to the respective convention as follows:

a. Nominations:

(1) At the appropriate time during the virtual nomination session the presiding officer will open the platform for nominations.

(a) Candidates must be members of the Association.

(b) Candidates may nominate themselves.

(c) Nominations may be made by any member and seconded by no more than two (2) other members.

(d) Nominees need not be present on the virtual platform to be nominated for office. However, a letter of acceptance signed by the nominee must be read at the time of their nomination.

(e) After the presiding officer has determined that there are no further nominations, they shall close the nominations.

(f) Candidates are required to submit (via email) a short biographical sketch provided the sketch is no longer than one letter-size page in 14-point font (to be posted online and/or distributed via electronic and/or paper means) within fourteen (14) days of being nominated.

(g) Candidates are required to participate in two (2) virtual candidate town halls, hosted by the board, sixty (60) days, and thirty (30) days, prior to the election.

b. Elections:

(1) The presiding officer shall commence the hybrid voting options, combining secure web-based, telephone, and paper ballots via a third-party independent entity fourteen (14) days prior to the convention in election years.

(a) As soon as the results of an election are known, the executive director shall draw up a report on the election, listing the number of votes cast for each candidate, and deliver it to the president for action.

(b) The candidate receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be declared elected and sworn into office at the convention.

(c) Election records shall be kept on file for at least six (6) months following an election and shall be available for inspection by any candidate or member of the board of directors.

(d) In the event of a tie vote, runoff elections shall be held.

(e) In the event of only one (1) candidate for office, that candidate shall be declared elected.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To allow for hybrid voting options, ensuring every members vote counts.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Four (Article 5, Duties of Officers)

ARTICLE 5.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Current Bylaw:

Section 4. Treasurer

(2) The assistant treasurer shall cause all funds received by the Association to be deposited in a bank or depository in which the accounts are insured by an instrumentality of the U.S. government designated by the board, except that:

(a) Life membership dues and the life membership fund shall be administered in accordance with Article 11 of these bylaws.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 4. Treasurer

(2) The assistant treasurer shall cause all funds received by the Association to be deposited in a bank or depository in which the accounts are insured by an instrumentality of the U.S. government designated by the board, except that:

(a) The life membership fund shall be administered in accordance with Article 11 of these bylaws.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

Removing reference to dues.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Five (Article 6, Section 2, District Directors)

ARTICLE 6.

DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Current Bylaw:

Section 2. Elections

- a. Candidate nominations will open the first day of February and close the first day of March of election years.
- b. Candidates must be members of the Association residing in the territorial boundaries of the district served, nominated, and elected by the members of that district, and agree to serve a three (3)-year term of office. Failure to fulfill any term of office will result in a four (4)-year bar from office.
- c. Candidates are required to submit (via email) a short biographical sketch provided the sketch is no longer than one letter-size page in 14-point font (to be posted online and/or distributed via electronic and/or paper means) upon being nominated. They may self-nominate or be nominated by a member of their respective district.
- d. Candidates are required to participate in two (2) virtual candidate town halls, with members of their respective districts, hosted by the board in April of election years.
- e. Hybrid elections combining secure web-based, telephone, and paper ballots will be conducted via a third-party independent entity in May of election years.
- f. As soon as the results of an election are known, the executive director shall draw up a report on the election, listing the number of votes cast for each candidate, and deliver it to the president for action.
- g. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be declared elected and sworn into office.
- h. Election records shall be kept on file for at least six (6) months following an election and shall be available for inspection by any candidate or member of the board of directors.
- i. In the event of a tie vote, runoff elections shall be held.
- j. In the event of only one (1) candidate for office, that candidate shall be declared elected.
- k. In the event of a vacancy, the board may appoint an interim director until the next election.
- l. Directors shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms of office. In the event there are no new candidates, the current director may continue serving.
- m. Members who are paid employees of the Association shall be required to resign their paid position before accepting elective office in the Association. Members holding elective office in the Association shall be required to resign their office before accepting a paid position with the Association.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 2. Elections

Nominations for the elected district directors of the Association shall be staggered, and conducted virtually no later than ninety (90) days prior to the respective convention as follows:

a. Nominations:

(1) At the appropriate time during the virtual nomination session the presiding officer will open the platform for nominations.

(a) Candidates must be members of the Association residing in the territorial boundaries of the district served, nominated, and elected by the members of that district, and agree to serve a two (2)-year term of office. Failure to fulfill any term of office will result in a four (4)-year bar from office.

(b) Candidates may nominate themselves.

(c) Nominations may be made by any member and seconded by no more than two (2) other members.

(d) Nominees need not be present on the virtual platform to be nominated for office. However, a letter of acceptance signed by the nominee must be read at the time of their nomination.

(e) After the presiding officer has determined that there are no further nominations, they shall close the nominations.

(f) Candidates are required to submit (via email) a short biographical sketch provided the sketch is no longer than one letter-size page in 14-point font (to be posted online and/or distributed via electronic and/or paper means) within fourteen (14) days of being nominated.

(g) Candidates are required to participate in two (2) virtual candidate town halls, hosted by the board, sixty (60) days, and thirty (30) days, prior to the election.

b. Elections:

(1) The presiding officer shall commence the hybrid voting options, combining secure web-based, telephone, and paper ballots via a third-party independent entity fourteen (14) days prior to the convention in election years.

(a) As soon as the results of an election are known, the executive director shall draw up a report on the election, listing the number of votes cast for each candidate, and deliver it to the president for action.

(b) The candidate receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be declared elected and sworn into office at the convention.

(c) Election records shall be kept on file for at least six (6) months following an election and shall be available for inspection by any candidate or member of the board of directors.

(d) In the event of a tie vote, runoff elections shall be held.

(e) In the event of only one (1) candidate for office, that candidate shall be declared elected.

(f) In the event of a vacancy, the board may appoint an interim director until the next election.

(g) Elections for district one (1) and district three (3) will occur in 2025, and district two (2) and district four (4) will occur in 2026, and biannually thereafter.

(h) Members who are paid employees of the Association shall be required to resign their paid position before accepting elective office in the Association. Members holding elective office in the Association shall be required to resign their office before accepting a paid position with the Association.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To stagger district director terms of office and align with officer elections.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Six (Article 9, Section 2, Convention)

ARTICLE 9.

CONVENTION

Current Bylaw:

Section 2.

Every member shall be eligible to attend and participate in all meetings of the convention and shall be entitled to one (1) vote when present at meetings, or by proxy when absent.

- a. If not present or voting by proxy, the vote of the member shall be cast by their elected delegate, if any; the proxy must be a member.
- b. The official headquarters proxy form shall be the only proxy form recognized.
- c. Proxy forms must be accepted and validated by headquarters to be counted.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 2.

Every member shall be eligible to attend and participate in all meetings of the convention. Regardless of attendance, secure web-based, telephone, and paper ballots will be conducted via a third-party independent entity entitling all members to one (1) vote on business matters.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To allow for hybrid voting options, combining web-based, telephone, and paper ballots, ensuring every members vote counts.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Seven (Article 9, Sections 4, 5, and 6 Convention)

ARTICLE 9.

CONVENTION

Current Bylaw:

Section 4.

At convention, fifty percent (50%) of registered and present members, representing at least two (2) districts, shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5.

In the absence of a quorum, the convention shall have no authority and may transact no business except to adjourn from hour to hour, or from day to day, or to a day certain.

Section 6.

Every regional group (group) shall elect a member from its group as its official delegate to the convention; and such official delegate shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote for each member of their group, not including members present and voting, or voting by proxy.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Delete Sections 4, 5, and 6 (and reorder remaining sections).

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To allow for hybrid voting options, combining web-based, telephone, and paper ballots, ensuring every members vote counts.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Eight (Article 9, Section 7 Convention)

ARTICLE 9.

CONVENTION

Current Bylaw:

Section 7.

The regular order of convention business shall be as follows:

- a. Invocation
- b. Pledge of Allegiance
- c. Addresses of Welcome and Response
- d. Report of the Rules Committee
- e. Report of the Credentials Committee
- f. Roll Call
- g. Minutes of the Preceding Convention
- h. Report of the Officers and Board of Directors
- i. Submission of Resolutions
- j. Nomination of Officers*
- k. Report of the Resolutions Committee
- l. Unfinished Business
- m. New Business
- n. Election of Officers*
- o. Installation of Officers*
- p. Adjournment

*Nomination, election, and installation of officers occur biannually. Additionally, the order of business may be changed by a majority vote of the members present on a motion to suspend rules.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 4.

The regular order of convention business shall be as follows:

- a. Invocation
- b. Pledge of Allegiance

- c. Addresses of Welcome and Response
- d. Report of the Rules Committee
- e. Report of the Credentials Committee
- f. Roll Call
- g. Minutes of the Preceding Convention
- h. Report of the Officers and Board of Directors
- i. Submission of Resolutions
- j. Report of the Resolutions Committee
- k. Unfinished Business
- l. New Business
- m. Installation of Officers*
- n. Adjournment

*Installation of officers occur biannually. Additionally, the order of business may be changed by a majority vote of the members present on a motion to suspend rules.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To align section with previous amendments, and allow for hybrid voting options, combining web-based, telephone, and paper ballots, ensuring every members vote counts.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Nine (Article 9, Section 8 Convention)

ARTICLE 9.

CONVENTION

Current Bylaw:

Section 8.

The board shall select the time and place of the next succeeding convention, and it shall not change the time and place of the convention except for good cause. Good cause is hereby defined as a catastrophe making it impractical to hold the convention in the recommended city; the inability of the city to provide adequate housing at reasonable rates or such other emergencies as may be deemed adequate.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 5.

The board shall select the time and place of the next succeeding convention, and it shall not change the time and place of the convention except for good cause. Good cause is hereby defined as a catastrophe making it impractical to hold the convention in the recommended city; the inability of the city to provide adequate housing at reasonable rates or such other emergencies as may be deemed adequate.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To align section with previous amendments.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Ten (Article 10 Dues)

ARTICLE 10.

DUES

Current Bylaw:

Life membership dues of fifty dollars (\$50.00) shall be paid to the Association with fifty percent (50%) allocated to the life membership fund and fifty percent (50%) allocated to the general fund.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Dues shall be established by the board. The board has established there will be no dues.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To increase the membership.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Eleven (Article 14, Section 11 Regional Groups)

ARTICLE 14.

REGIONAL GROUPS

Current Bylaw:

Section 11. Group Delegate(s)

Each group shall be entitled to elect, certify, and instruct delegate(s) as to voting on any given subject(s) or candidate(s) at convention.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Delete Section 11.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To allow for hybrid voting options, combining web-based, telephone, and paper ballots, ensuring every members vote counts.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Twelve (Article 21, Section 1 Trusted Advisory Council)

ARTICLE 21.

TRUSTED ADVISORY COUNCIL

Current Bylaw:

Section 1.

b. Members will have a voice at board meetings, providing advice and mentorship, but shall not have a vote, thereby ensuring that all board decisions are ultimately made by blinded veterans.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

Section 1.

b. Members will have a voice at board meetings, providing advice and mentorship, but shall not have a vote, thereby ensuring that all board decisions are ultimately made by blind and low vision veterans.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment Rationale:

To incorporate the low vision member designation into the bylaws.