

# Veterans Council of Chatham County

## **Purpose**

1. To act for and in behalf of its member organizations.
2. To promote and foster a close and cordial relationship among all veterans and veterans' organizations in Chatham County.
3. To coordinate the activities of the various veterans' organizations of Chatham County
4. To advise the veterans organizations of Chatham County in all matters pertaining to veterans.
5. To safeguard and promote the interests of veterans whenever possible.

## **Article I Name**

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be: Veterans Council of Chatham County

## **Article II Nature**

Section 1. This organization is non-sectarian and non-partisan. It may not endorse any person or persons for political office.

Section 2. This organization may endorse items that may be of interest to veterans and may lobby for or against such items.

Section 3. No officer may personally use the name of the Veterans Council to publicly endorse or support any candidate for public office. In the event they do so, they shall immediately submit their resignation from office. In the event they fail to resign prior to the next meeting of the council they shall be removed from office by vote of the council.

## **Article III Organization**

Section 1. The membership of this organization shall be composed of veteran organizations of Chatham County whose membership support and endorse veteran activities. Their membership shall be composed of not less than fifty one percent veterans.

Section 2. Application for membership may be made by a veteran's organization submitting its request in writing. The seated delegates must be given 30 days' notice in writing of such request. The request must be acted on at the next schedule meeting of the council following the thirty-day notice and it requires a two-thirds majority of the delegates present to pass.

Section 3. The member organizations will be represented by three delegates and three alternates from each organization that are veterans. Delegates and alternates are

required to remain as members in good standing of their present organization. Member organizations will notify the council of the names of their delegates and alternates annually. Member organizations may change their delegates and alternates at any time in writing, by email or text message to the council.

Section 4. Member organizations may withdraw their membership from the council at any time by providing written notice to the council.

Section 5. Past chairmen of the council shall be lifetime delegates at large with all rights, privileges, and responsibilities of regular delegates, provided they annually show the secretary evidence that they are members in good standing of a member organization.

Section 6. To be a member organization in good standing they will have paid their annual membership dues beginning in January and becoming delinquent in March of that year. Organizations delinquent in dues will not be eligible to vote, be considered for participation in the Veteran of the Year selection process for the months delinquent or bring up business to be discussed as part of the meeting.

Section 7. Associate membership. To be an Associate Member of the Council an organization may petition the Council in writing for membership if the organization's primary mission is to provide support for Veteran's. Associate Organizations will require the same requirements as member organizations in order to qualify. Associate Member Organizations may have the same amount of representation, however, will not be permitted to vote or take part in the selection of the Veteran of the Year. They will be permitted to take part in any discussions and provide business to come before the Council.

#### **Article IV Voting**

Section 1. Each delegate shall have a vote on all matters coming before the council. In the absence of a delegate from a member organization, he shall be replaced by an alternate in the order in which they are named by their member organization.

Section 2. Only such votes of delegates as are present at the time of the vote is taken will be counted.

Section 3. Alternates present but not seated as a delegate shall have a voice in the proceedings but shall not vote.

Section 4. Past chairmen, if present, shall participate and vote in the same manner as all other delegates.

Section 5. The chairman shall cast a vote only when a vote results in a tie.

#### **Article V Officers and Elections**

Section 1. The council will have as its officers the following:

Elected Officers

Chairman • Senior Vice Chairman • Junior Vice Chairman Post 1

Junior Vice Chairman Post 2 • Secretary • Treasurer

Appointed Officers

Parliamentarian • Chaplain • Sergeant at Arms • Parade Adjutant • Nominating Chairman

All the above elected officers must be a delegate or an alternate at the time of their election and must maintain such standing during the term of their office except for the chairman, who, upon installation in office, may not act as a delegate or alternate for such member organization, however, he must remain a member in good standing of a member organization. The term of office will be one year. Officers will be sworn in and take office at the January meeting. The only duty the outgoing chairman is to perform in the New Year is to open the first meeting of the council and to pass the gavel to the incoming chairman. The above-appointed officers must be a delegate or alternate at the time of their election and must maintain such standing during the term of their office that is at the pleasure of the chairman who appointed them. The chairman's office is one year.

Section 2. The chairman shall appoint a non-voting chairman of the nominating committee no later than the October meeting. The committee shall consist of five voting members and three non-voting alternates which shall be appointed by the commanders of the eight member organizations with the highest attendance of delegates and alternates between October and the following September of each year. The commanders shall select one of the delegates or alternates from their organization to serve on the committee. The five highest in attendance shall serve as the voting members. The alternates will be ranked according to the organization attendance record. In case of a tie, a representative of each organization shall draw cards, high card shall represent. The alternates shall attend all meetings and participate in all discussions but will vote only in the event they replace a voting member of the committee.

Section 3. The chairman of the nominating committee will offer in nomination the entire slate of officers at the November meeting. At the December meeting the presiding officer will ask for nominations from the floor three times for each position. He will then call for a vote for all unopposed officers. Following this, he shall then call for the vote for the opposed officers. The senior opposed officer being voted on first.

Section 4. Election will require a majority of the votes cast. In the event of three or more candidates and none receive a majority, the two highest vote recipients will then be voted on with the chairman casting the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

## **Article VI**

### **Duties of Officers**

Section 1. The chairman shall preside at all meetings, appoint all committee chairmen, shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and shall perform such other duties as may properly come within his province. They shall not commit the council to any course of action without instructions by a vote of the council.

Section 2. The senior vice chairman shall assume the duties of the chairman in their absence and perform such other duties as assigned to them by the chairman.

Section 3. The junior vice chairman post 1 shall assume the duties of the senior vice chairman in their absence and perform such other duties as assigned to them by the chairman.

Section 4. The junior vice chairman post 2 shall assume the duties of the chairman in the absence of the senior vice chairman and the junior vice chairman post 1 and perform such other duties as assigned to them by the chairman.

Section 5. The secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the council. They shall notify the members of the time and place of meetings as directed by the chairman. They shall prepare such correspondences as necessary and they shall be responsible for all records of the council.

Section 6. The treasurer shall be responsible for all property including monies of the council. They shall maintain an accurate account of all funds in their possession. They shall prepare an annual budget for anticipated receipts and expenditures. They shall be certain that all expenditures are approved by council. They shall obtain from the council approval for expenditures for routine expenses such as stamps, stationary, etc.

Section 7. The parliamentarian shall attend all meetings and interpret the bylaws upon request of the chairman or any member. They shall ensure that all actions of the council are in conformance with them. They will not participate in any discussion except to explain their ruling. The parliamentarian must be a delegate or an alternate to hold this office. They may vote on any pending matter as they are a qualified delegate or alternate. All legal questions arising from council actions shall be ruled upon by them and such ruling shall be final unless overturned by a majority vote of council.

Section 8. Any officer missing three consecutive meetings without providing cause for absence from the county shall forfeit their office and same shall become vacant.

Section 9. In the event that an elected office becomes vacant, the office will be filled by the officer next in succession in Article 5 Section 1. Succeeding officers should be willing and able to serve as successor officers. The nominating committee constituted in accordance with Article 5 Section 2 will nominate an individual to fill any office that remains vacant after successor officers have accepted or declined to fill a vacancy. The committee will report at the next scheduled meeting and the election will take place at the following meeting.

Section 10. Any delegate or alternate missing three consecutive meetings without cause shall be reported to his organization with a request for a replacement.

Section 11. All elected officers are responsible to the council for the performance of their duties. They are elected to their office and are not subordinate to any other officer but are directly responsible to the council.

## **Article VII Quorum**

Section I. Twelve delegates shall constitute a quorum for the council to transact business.

## **Article VIII Finances**

Section I. The ways and means of raising funds for conducting the activities of the council shall be decided upon by a majority vote of the council.

Section 2. No disbursement of funds shall be made by the treasurer without approval of the council.

## **Article IX Meetings**

Section 1. The council shall hold a regular meeting once a month at such time and place as may be decided upon by the council. The chairman shall call such special

meetings as in his opinion shall be necessary or upon request of six delegates to the chairman.

Section 2. Meetings shall be open to visitors unless a request for a closed meeting is made by a delegate. In such event, a vote shall be called for and the meeting closed upon a majority voting for closure. Upon such event the Sergeant at Arms shall ensure that only delegates and alternates shall remain present.

Section 3. The Chairman will maintain a roster of all organizations which will be used to determine the presence of the number of delegates of organizations which are in good standing to determine the delegates for selection of the Veteran of the Year. The roster will also be used to determine who is to provide the meal at the meeting on a rotational basis.

## **ARTICLE X AWARDS**

Section 1. General. The following are awards that are authorized with the criteria as presented for each and nominated by Organizations of the Chatham County Veteran's Council that are in good standing. The awards will be presented to the Council by the Awards Committee, voted upon by the Council membership, and presented at the discretion of the Chairman of the Council or his representative at the appropriate time and place.

Section 2. Awards Committee. The awards Committee shall consist of the Vice Chairmen, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of the Council. The Committee will solicit nominees from the Organizations in good standing for each award to be presented at the appropriate time as announced in the General Membership meeting. The Committee shall determine the eligibility of the nominees using the criterion for the award and determine the selected nominees for inclusion in the General Membership Vote. The Awardee's information shall be presented to the Chairman for the presentation of the award.

Section 3. Awards to be presented and the criteria for the selection.

1. Certificates for Service; presented to various individuals selected to provide a service to the Council, such as guest speaker etc.
2. Plaques for Service; presented to various individuals providing a Special service to the Council and as recommended by the Chairman.
3. Color Guard Competition (Veteran's Day). Plaque or Trophy to be presented to the winner of the Annual High School Color Guard Competition.
4. Veteran's Day Parade Plaque or Trophy presented to the 1st and 2d Place participant's in the parade as determined by the Veteran of the Year, Parade Marshall, and the Chairman of the Council.
5. Parade Marshall Award: an engraved Chatham County Medal presented to the Parade Marshall as selected by the Chairman of the Council.
6. Parade Veteran of the Year Award; an engraved Chatham County Medal presented to the Veteran of the Year as selected in Article XI.

7. NCO of the year; a plaque to be presented to the NCO of the year from the nominations by the Military Organizations in the area as solicited by the Veteran's Council Chairman and chosen by the Awards Committee. The award is to be presented by Chairman at the Annual Veteran's Day Banquet.
8. Military Service Person of the Year; a plaque to be presented to the enlisted person of the year from the nominations solicited by the Veteran's Council Chairman and chosen by the Awards Committee. The award is to be presented by the Chairman at the Annual Veteran's Day Banquet.
9. Service Award: a plaque is to be presented to a Service Officer or individual who has provided superior support to the Veterans of the Community. Individual should be nominated by an Organization in good standing but does not have to be a member of the organization but provides outstanding service to the Veteran Community. Awardee will be selected by the Awards Committee and presented by the Chairman at the Memorial Day Service.
10. Bald Eagle Award: a bald eagle trophy is to be presented to an individual who has provided exceptional service to the Veteran's Council and nominated by the Chairman and approved by the Awards Committee. The award will be presented at the Veteran's Day banquet.
11. The Fireman, EMT, and Sheriff Deputy of the Year. A plaque will be awarded to the Chatham County Service Personnel of the Year through solicitation of the various Departments by the Awards Committee and presented throughout the year.

## **ARTICLE XI VETERAN OF THE YEAR**

Section 1. Candidates for the Veteran of the Year must be a member in good standing of a member organization in good standing of the Veteran's Council and be an honorably discharged member of one of the military services of the United States of America.

Section 2. Nominations will be accepted only from the member organization. Nominations shall be approved by the individual members of said organizations and forwarded to the Awards Committee of the council on the organization's letterhead signed by the president, commander, chairman or commandant. Such letter will include a statement that the council policy has been followed.

Section 3. Nominations will be forwarded to the Awards Committee of the council no later than the first Monday of September of each year.

Section 4. The council Chairman shall appoint the previous year's Veteran of the Year as a nonvoting Chairman of the Veteran of the Year selection committee no later than the first Monday of September in each year. The selection committee will consist of seven voting members and three alternate nonvoting members. The Commanders of the ten organizations in good standing with the highest attendance rate of delegates and alternates between August and July of each year shall select one delegate from their organization to serve on the selection committee. The Commander of those selected organizations will notify the Chairman of the Veteran's Council in writing as to whom their delegate will be. The seven organizations with the highest attendance

records will serve as voting members. The three alternates shall be ranked according to the organization's attendance record. In the case of a tie a representative of each tied organization shall draw a card, the highest card will represent the organization. The alternates shall attend all meetings and participate in discussions but will vote only in the event that they replace a voting member. The committee chairman will be a nonvoting ex-officio member of the committee.

Section 5. The committee will meet prior to the second week in September to select two candidates from those nominated to run for the position. In the event there are no nominees for the position the committee will select a candidate of their own. The vote by the committee will be by secret ballot with each member having one vote. The Committee Chairman will report the results of the top two candidates to the Council Chairman with their two biographies as soon as possible. The Council Chairman will send a copy of the two biographies of the two nominees to each organization in good standing for their information. At the October Veteran's Council meeting the two nominees will be voted on by a secret ballot of one vote per each organization in good standing. The ballots will be counted by the Awards Committee and the Chairman of the Veteran's Council will announce the Veteran of the Year.

Section 6. The Investiture of the Veteran of the Year will be held following the announcement of the results of the vote later in October. The Sash, Cane and Medal will follow as they are available but prior to Veteran's Day.

#### **Article XII**

#### **Rules of Order**

Section 1. Robert's Rules of order shall govern proceedings except as provided herein.

#### **Article XIII**

#### **Amendments**

Section 1. These by laws may be amended at any regular council meeting by a two-thirds vote of delegates present provided that the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing in sufficient copies for each delegate and alternate present to receive a copy of the previous regular meeting.

#### **Article XIV**

#### **Dissolution**

Section 1. Upon dissolution, all assets of this organization are to be transferred to its successor organization. In the event there is no successor organization, then in such event all assets are to be divided in equal shares, share and share alike to the member organizations.

#### **Article XV**

#### **By, Laws, when effective**

Section 1. These by-laws as amended were approved by a two-thirds (2/3), vote of delegates present and voting on the 5th day of April 2021 and came into full force and effect on that date. We the undersigned chairman, secretary and parliamentarian respectively of the Veterans Council of Chatham County, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the by-laws, rules and regulations adopted by the Veterans Council of Chatham County on the 5th day of April, 2021.

Joseph S. Higgins  
Chairman

Christina G. Gibson  
Secretary

Douglas G. Andrews  
Parliamentarian