

New chapter by-laws guide

There are a number of options for a club developing a new constitution. This is a discussion, article by article of some of those options. Use it as a guide to go through the bylaws template. The constitution will serve as a guide for a new club. Some of the articles need to be very structured and there are some sections that need to be deliberately vague. Use this guide to develop your Constitution and By-Laws to fit your organization.

Title: This is straightforward. Insert the name of your organization. Look at a copy of the Yellow Book to get an idea of what other clubs have done.

Article 1: See previous paragraph.

Article 2: Objectives. It is important to identify you group as a non-profit organization.

You can spend a lot of time identifying your goals and making a nice sounding mission statement. In reality you probably will not refer back to it very often to see if your group is adhering to the statement. The NCSBA likes to see a commitment to education and charity. The culture of your group will develop over time. Generally simple is better. The suggested objectives mirror the NCSBA objectives.

Article 3:

This is a pretty generic statement. It's important to be open to anyone who is interested in honey bees.

Article 4:

There is a good bit of latitude in the officers. It is critical that you have the standard President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Most clubs have the entire officer group serve one year terms. Some clubs have the Secretary and Treasurer serve two year terms to give the officers some continuity. Some groups have elected directors that serve on the Executive Board with the officers. Generally they would serve 3 year terms with one expiring each year. In the initial election it would be necessary to identify the initial 1, 2 & 3 year terms. Staggering terms will help provide continuity on the board. Subsequent terms should all being 3 year terms. Some clubs have an elected Program Director who also serves on the executive board. In small clubs it is often difficult to find people willing to fill all of these positions. It is usually good to have more people working in leadership roles but you will need to access your own members to determine your needs. You can always amend your by-laws at a later date to add positions or delete positions but changes to your bylaws must adhere to the procedures you establish in this document.

This is a good place to establish rules of succession if any officer is unable to complete their term. Vice-president replacing President is easy and President appointing any other vacant office is simplest.

All officers must me NCSBA members in good standing.

Article 5:

Section 1 Dues:

NCSBA requires NCSBA membership for all club members. You can set your club dues at whatever level you want. You need to have an idea of what your fixed expenses will be and how many members you expect to have in the first year or two as well as how else you will raise money. Many clubs find meeting places that are free and this helps keep the expenses down. Generally local annual dues vary between \$5-20.

Section 2: Life membership.

This is completely a local option.

Article 6:

Section 1: Meetings:

Most clubs hold monthly meetings and some clubs identify the day, i.e. second Tuesday. If you lock in a date in your by-laws it takes a special vote to change a meeting date. Also many clubs do not meet in December. Unless you say this in the by-laws it takes a special vote to cancel the meeting. Also, if on short notice you need to change the date or meeting place it would again take a special vote if you identify the meeting place in your bylaws. An easier way to address this is to simply state that you will have monthly meetings with the possible exception of December and allow either the board of the President to set the date and place with proper notification to the members.

Article 7

Section 1: Committees: The Executive Committee is pretty standard with the elected officers. As stated in the Article 4 discussion, there are several options here. If you want to have Board Members this is the place to add more detail. If you do not add Directors it is probably a good idea to make the past President a voting member to eliminate a 2-2 vote on any issue

Section 2: The Auditing Committee should probably not be a standing committee.

Section 3: The Nominating Committee should probably not be a standing committee.

Section 4: Special Committees. Some clubs have an elected Program Chairman which is great if you have enough people. Some other positions can be either elected or appointed. Appointed is a lot easier and it gives some leeway. If you want to include appointed positions in your by-laws you need to identify how they are appointed. You can also address this without putting it in the by-laws. Some possible positions or committees are Program Chairman, Webmaster, Events Chairman, or any other position you can imagine.

Article 8 Quorum

Section 1: Self explanatory.

Article 9 Duties of Officers

If you elect not to require NCSBA membership by all members, NCSBA requires all officers be members of the NCSBA for the chapter to remain in good standing. This officer requirement must be stated in your bylaws.

Section 1 President: You can add additional duties for the president but be careful. Simple is generally better.

Section 2: Vice-President. You can add any duties that work for your group.

3: Secretary: The listed duties are based on what other clubs have done over the years. This is a template but you can make some changes.

Section 4: Treasurer: The listed duties are based on what other clubs have done over the years. It is a pretty good template but you can make some changes. Item K is very important. You will need to establish your own EIN#. Your bank can help establish this. It is a onetime event but the Treasurer must keep track of the EIN #.

When you establish a bank account most banks will require 2 signatures. You can identify which officer will have this authority. Usually this will be the Treasurer and one other officer.

Article 10: Amendments:

This is a standard structure. Think about how to structure other areas because if you do not adhere to the by-laws you will need a special vote which will take time. The 2/3 vote requirement for a change is a good idea.

Article 11: Repealing clause. This is very straight forward.

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