

**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON CHAPTER  
VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF THE  
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

**CONSTITUTION**

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this chapter shall be “The George Washington Chapter” in accordance with the Charter issued by the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution on April 2, 1954.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSES**

The purposes of this Chapter are the furtherance of the objectives of both the Virginia Society and the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. These purposes are patriotic, historical, and educational, and shall include:

- (a) the perpetuation of the memory of those patriots who, by their service and sacrifices during the American Revolution, achieved the independence of the American people;
- (b) the promotion of fellowship among their descendants; to inspire them and the community at large with a more profound reverence for the principles of the government founded by their forefathers;
- (c) the encouragement of historical research in relation to the American Revolution;
- (d) the acquisition and preservation of the records of the individual services of the patriots of the war, as well as of the documents, relics, and landmarks of the Revolution;
- (e) the marking of scenes of the Revolution by appropriate memorials;
- (f) the celebration of anniversaries of prominent events of the war and of the Revolutionary period;
- (g) the fostering of true patriotism;
- (h) the maintenance and extension, and the carrying out of the institutions of American freedom, and of the purposes expressed in the preamble of the Constitution of our country, and the injunctions of Washington in his farewell address to the American people.

**ARTICLE III – ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Any male shall be eligible for membership in the Society being a citizen of good repute in the community, is the lineal descendant of an ancestor who was at all times unfailing in loyalty to, and rendered active service in the cause of American Independence either as an officer, soldier, seaman, marine, militiaman or minuteman, in the armed forces of the Continental Congress of any one of the several Colonies or States, as a signer of the Declaration of Independence, as a member of a Committee of Safety or Correspondence, as a member of any Continental, Provincial, or Colonial Congress or Legislature, as a foreign national of, but not limited to, France, Germany, Poland, Spain, Sweden or Switzerland who rendered service in the cause of American Independence or as a recognized patriot who performed actual service by overt acts of resistance to the authority of Great Britain, provided, however, that no person advocating the overthrow of the Government of the United States by use of force or violence shall be eligible for membership in the Society.

Section 2. Members of The George Washington Chapter must also be members of the Virginia Society and the National Society and are subject to all the rules and regulations of those societies. Any

provision of this Constitution or the Chapter Bylaws that conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of the National or Virginia Society are void and shall have no effect.

Section 3. There shall be the following classes of membership:

- (a) Regular or Regular Life Member – A man aged eighteen years and older who meets the requirements for membership outlined in section 1 above;
- (b) Junior Member – A young man under the age of eighteen whose application has been approved in accordance with the Bylaws of the National Society. He may attend, but he pays no chapter dues and is not eligible to vote;
- (c) Memorial membership – A deceased man of the same family as a current member of the Society whose application has been submitted and approved in accordance with the Bylaws of the National Society;
- (d) Associate Member – A regular member of the National Society of the SAR who affiliates with the chapter and pays local chapter dues. He shall be approved by the Board of Managers and is entitled to all the privileges of regular members; and
- (e) Honorary Member – conferred on a member by unanimous vote of all members present at a regular or special chapter meeting.

Section 4. Life National Society members shown above are exempt from the payment of National Society dues, but shall pay Virginia and local Chapter dues and other fees of regular Chapter members.

#### **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS AND BOARD OF MANAGERS**

Section 1. The Chapter shall elect the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer at the November chapter meeting. They shall be installed at the December chapter meeting and hold office for one year or until their successors are elected and installed. They, with three elected Managers-at-Large, shall comprise the Board of Managers. Managers-at-Large shall be elected, one each successive year, and shall hold office for three years or until a successor is elected and installed. If more than one Manager-at-Large is elected in one year, the Nominating Committee shall specify the term for each nominee; if the election is contested, the nominee receiving the most votes shall have the longest available term; if the Nominating Committee fails to specify the term for each nominee and the election was not contested, the four officers may set the terms of Managers-at-Large. All elected Board members will be installed at an appropriate date.

Section 2. In addition to the above, the following shall be ex-officio members of the Board of Managers: Registrar, Chaplain, Master-at-Arms, Historian, and all committee chairmen. They are non-voting positions, nominated by the President, confirmed by the Board of Managers, and shall serve at its pleasure.

Section 3. All elected positions are subject to, and eligible for, re-election, except the Members-at-Large, who shall not succeed themselves.

Section 4. The Board of Managers shall have the power and authority to manage the affairs of the Chapter. It shall review reports from committee chairmen and recommend to the membership resolutions and changes to Chapter policy, its Constitution, and Bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS**

Section 1. There will generally be monthly meetings of the Chapter. Except under unusual circumstances, meetings will not be held in June, July, and August. There shall be at least two Chapter-wide business meetings annually, including the November meeting when election of the Board of Managers for the coming year will be held.

Section 2. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised ([www.robertsrules.com](http://www.robertsrules.com)).

## **ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at a regular or special meeting of the Chapter. The proposed amendment must have been sent by the Secretary to the members at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting date set to vote on the proposed amendment.

## **BY LAWS**

### **BYLAW No. 1 MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Full membership in the Chapter is conferred on all regular and regular lifetime members and associate members and shall include the right to vote, hold office, and attend all functions, provided that the member has paid the current year's dues for the National Society, State Society, and the Chapter.

Section 2. Junior members and honorary members may participate in all Chapter activities except that they may not hold office, vote, or pay dues.

Section 3. Prospective members, with their sponsor members, may attend meetings and other events of the Chapter.

Section 4. Withdrawals from membership shall be in writing and addressed to the Chapter Secretary.

Section 5. Transfer may be given to any member in good standing upon written application to the Chapter Secretary. He may transfer to any other chapter or state society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

### **BYLAW No. 2 CHAPTER OFFICERS**

President – He shall provide overall leadership in accordance with the policies and guidelines of the Chapter and the Virginia Society. He is responsible for the administrative conduct of the Chapter within the guidelines of the Chapter budget. He presides at all meetings of the Chapter and the Board of Managers, exercising of the functions of a presiding officer. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. He serves as the Chapter's duly designated representative on the Board of Managers of the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Vice-President – He assists the President in the discharge of his duties. In the absence of the President he acts for the President including acting as ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. He is Chairman of the Program Committee, responsible for all aspects of Chapter programs at regular meetings. He serves as alternate representative on the Board of Managers of the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Secretary – He shall provide members with notice before all regular and special meetings of the Chapter and meetings of the Board of Managers. This notice may be included in the newsletter, sent by e-mail and/or posted on the chapter website. He shall provide complete minutes of all Chapter and Board of Managers meetings, providing a summary of them for approval at the next meeting of the appropriate group. He shall keep other Chapter administrative records as requested by the President. At year's end he shall transfer them to the Chapter Historian for proper retention or disposition. He shall maintain control over Chapter correspondence and reports as directed by the President and the Board of Managers. He is responsible for providing the membership with a Chapter roster, updating it regularly with needed revisions.

Treasurer – The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds of the Chapter and shall sign all checks drawn on the Chapter's behalf. Checks drawn in an amount in excess of \$2,000 shall be co-signed either by the President or Vice-President. He shall collect all fees and dues from members and applicants for membership, and shall transmit those amounts due the State and National Societies to the State Treasurer. He shall prepare a budget and submit it for approval to the incoming Board of Managers at their first meeting. Expenditures during the year in excess of \$1,000 not included in the budget must first be approved by the Board of Managers. He shall keep an accurate account of his receipts and disbursements, which shall be audited each year as directed by the Board of Managers. All receipts shall be deposited to the Chapter's account, and all disbursements shall be by check only. In addition, he shall furnish such information relative to the Chapter's funds as the President and Board of Managers may require. He shall prepare an annual financial statement for the fiscal year, and shall submit it to the Secretary for distribution to the members. He shall file IRS form 990N annually (by May 15<sup>th</sup>) as well as other forms or financial documents that may be required by the Internal Revenue Service.

### **BYLAW No. 3 BOARD OF MANAGERS**

Section 1. The Board of Managers shall provide active management and control of all Chapter activities including all programs, projects, awards, and public ceremonies. In addition, they shall exercise complete financial and budgetary authority over Chapter monies, assets, and expenditures. They shall set the amount of the annual dues to be paid by the Chapter membership.

Section 2. The President shall nominate members to fill elected offices which become vacant between elections, serving only until the next election. All such nominees shall be subject to confirmation by the Board of Managers before they assume office.

### **BYLAW No. 4 EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS**

Ex-officio officers nominated by the President and approved by the Board of Managers shall participate and report to the Board of Managers but shall have no vote.

Registrar– The Registrar shall be responsible for preparing and submitting applications and supplemental applications to the state registrar as well as assisting prospective members with assembling the required documentation. The registrar may be assisted by one or more assistant registrars, who work under the supervision of the registrar.

Chaplain – The Chaplain shall be responsible for offering invocations and benedictions at the opening and closing of meetings or other events where prayers are appropriate. The Chaplain also serves as Chairman of the Amenities Committee.

Master-at-Arms – The Master-at-Arms shall be responsible for preserving order as the presiding officer may direct. He shall be responsible for the placement of the flags and banners at meetings and at special ceremonies.

Historian – The Historian shall serve as the custodian of the Chapter’s charter, the awards and other forms of recognition received by the Chapter, and records and such other documents as the Chapter’s officers shall deliver to him for safe keeping.

## **BYLAW No. 5 COMMITTEES**

### Section 1. Standing Committees

Immediately following the annual meeting, the incoming President shall appoint the chairmen of the following Standing Committees (unless the chairman is specified by these bylaws):

Amenities Committee – Responsible for arranging hospital calls, sending “get well” cards and condolences, and organizing delegations to attend local SAR funerals. The Chaplain shall be Chairman of this committee.

Flag Committee – Responsible for presenting at least one SAR Flag Certificate each year and reporting the presentation to the Virginia Society's Flag Committee. At the request of any member, the committee shall prepare a flag certificate for presentation by that member.

Program Committee – Responsible for both the development and content of programs including speaker selection, necessary arrangements for presentation, and the order of conduct of the meeting. The Vice-President shall be Chairman of this committee.

Public Relations Committee – Responsible for preparing and distributing news of Chapter activities to the members, National and State Societies, and local news media. They shall keep abreast of the activities of the Sons of the American Revolution at all levels, informing the Chapter members, and encouraging their participation where appropriate. The Committee shall assist the Registrar in recruiting new members by publicizing the availability and value of SAR membership. The Secretary shall be Chairman of this committee, and he may appoint a vice-chairman to assist him in these important duties. The Editor of the Chapter Newsletter and the Webmaster shall be a member of this committee

Audit Committee – Responsible for the annual audit of the Treasurer’s accounts and such other audit actions as the Board of Managers may direct.

Youth Activities Committee – Responsible for handling all chapter relations with private and public schools in the Northern Virginia area, including, but not limited to: Good Citizenship Awards, the George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest, the Joseph H. Rumbaugh Historical Orientation Contest, and the Children of the American Revolution.

Awards Committee – Responsible for the development and execution of the Chapter's Awards Program. They shall recommend honorees for both intra-SAR and awards for deserving outsiders in fields such as education, public safety, military achievement, writing, and similar fields relating to the objectives of SAR. They shall implement details of awards presentations approved by the Board of Managers.

Scouting Committee – Responsible for recommending sponsorship of scouting programs to the Board of Managers and for implementing such programs through dealings with local Boy Scout troops and troop councils. They shall provide SAR recognition where appropriate to scouting activities and individuals.

Property Management Committee – Have custodial responsibility for all physical property of the Chapter to include flags, banners, uniforms, and other acquired clothing and equipment. They shall be responsible for its safe storage and maintenance. If the property is in the custody of another member, they shall keep an inventory of such property and update it annually. The Quartermaster is the chairman of the Property Management Committee.

Graves Registration Committee – Responsible for the identification, documentation, and registration for publication by the National Society of any grave of a Revolutionary War serviceman or patriot. All Society members shall assist this committee in locating the graves of their Revolutionary ancestors and other servicemen and patriots, and shall advocate for the proper marking of such graves.

## Section 2. Special Committees

The President may appoint the Chairmen and members of any special committees created by the Chapter or Board of Managers except the Nominating Committee, which is appointed by the Board of Managers. The Nominating Committee, composed of at least two former Chapter presidents and at least one member who is not presently a member of the Board of Managers, shall submit its nominations for the Officer and Manager(s)-at-Large positions, notifying the Chapter members by Newsletter or other means prior to the November election.

All other special committees shall be appointed by the President. Normally, such committees are appointed to meet a special short-term need and are normally for a short, specified duration.

## **BYLAW No. 6 DUES**

Section 1. National and state society dues are set by those societies. The dues for the Chapter are set by action of the Board of Managers. Payment of all dues shall be by November 15 of the year preceding the year for which the dues are paid so that dues may be transmitted to the state society in a timely fashion. The Virginia Society Bylaws state that "if a member has failed to pay his dues by January 1, he shall be dropped from the roles of membership of the Virginia Society."

Section 2. Applications for memberships approved in November or December which included dues payment shall be credited with dues payment for the following year. All new applications made and approved during a calendar year are exempt from dues payment for that year.

Section 3. NSSAR life members pay no national dues for life. VASSAR life members whose memberships predate 1994 are exempt from both Virginia and National Society dues for life. Other VASSAR life members shall continue to pay National dues. All chapter members shall pay chapter dues, except that members in the military who are deployed overseas are exempt from chapter dues, and the chapter shall pay their Virginia and National Society dues.

Section 4. Members whose dues are unpaid by January 1 may be suspended, but with approval of the Board of Managers, may be reinstated when all outstanding fees have been paid.

### **BYLAW No. 7 QUORUM**

Fifteen (15) members of the Chapter shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at a Chapter meeting. Five (5) members of the Board of Managers shall constitute a quorum for conducting Board business, provided that one of the members present is either the President or Vice-President.

### **BYLAW No. 8 ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Section 1. The order of business for regular meetings shall be established by the President. The following order of business is recommended for formal business meetings:

- (a) Call to order by the presiding officer.
- (b) Pledge of Allegiance.
- (c) Pledge to the SAR.
- (d) Invocation by the Chaplain.
- (e) Introduction of the head table, new members, and guests.
- (f) Approval of the minutes of the last meeting.
- (g) Officers' reports.
- (h) Committee reports.
- (i) Unfinished business.
- (j) New business.
- (k) Introduction of the speaker or program.
- (l) Closing remarks of the presiding officer.
- (m) Benediction by the Chaplain.
- (n) Adjournment.

### **BYLAW No. 9 AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Chapter by a two-thirds vote of those present, provided that a quorum is present and prior notice of the amendment(s) has been sent to each Chapter member by the Secretary along with the notice of the announcement of the meeting.