

Constitution of the Washington Civil War Association

As amended February 24, 2007 at Orting, Washington.

Article 1 -Purpose of the Washington Civil War Association

1. The Washington Civil War Association (WCWA) is a club organized to honor America's past by reenacting the War Between The States. Our objective is to interpret and present the daily life of Confederate and Federal soldiers and their families and associates for the public through living history, reenactments, first person characterizations, and education. To this end, our member units portray military and civilian organizations from all theaters of the Civil War during the period of 1861 to 1865.
2. Diversity is one of the strong points of any organization. Our members have dramatically different backgrounds and values. In order to preserve the harmony of the individual units, as well as the WCWA, it is essential that we respect each other's values.
3. Each member is responsible for developing his or her own persona. As living historians we should know what is correct for the period and for our personas within that period. Each member is encouraged to use the historical record as a guide to his or her persona development. All members are actively encouraged to do their own research in order to expand our combined knowledge of the units.

Article 2 -Supremacy and Order of Law

The Constitution and by-laws shall be the principal law of the Washington Civil War Association. All WCWA or unit policies and regulations shall be enacted and enforced pursuant to and in accordance with the Constitution and by-laws. While wide latitude will be given to the individual member units to regulate themselves according to their wishes, no member unit will enact regulations or policies that contradict or conflict with the WCWA Constitution or by-laws. Any WCWA or unit regulation or policy that contradicts or conflicts with the Constitution or by-laws shall be considered void.

Article 3 -Membership

1. The WCWA invites persons of all races, creeds, religions, genders, ages, or any degree of disability to be members. Individual member units of the WCWA, in an effort to accurately portray 19th century Americans may, through their unit regulations, structure a member's chosen role in that unit to align that role with the proper role which that member (given that member's race, gender, etc.) would occupy in 19th century America. However, no article, by-law, rule, policy, or regulation shall be enacted by any member unit of the WCWA which would prohibit outright the membership or participation in a legitimate role of any person on the basis of race, creed, religion, gender, age, or disability.

2. Removal of Members: The WCWA reserves the right to revoke the membership of any WCWA member who repeatedly or maliciously (i) violates the WCWA Safety Rules, (ii) puts others or themselves at risk, (iii) uses illegal substances or engages in illegal activities at all WCWA events, and/or (iv) violates WCWA policies and procedures. The procedures for removal of members, including an appeal process, shall be clearly outlined in the WCWA bylaws.

Article 4 -Structure of the WCWA

3. Individual units may be formed, but must be recognized as such by the Board of Directors of the Washington Civil War Association. The Board of Directors shall set standards for unit recognition. Although individual units are autonomous, they must agree to abide by the Constitution and by-laws of the WCWA at WCWA sponsored events.
4. A Union Battalion shall exist. All recognized Union military units shall be part of the Union Battalion. Military and civilian impressionists who are members of a Union military unit or that unit's civilian auxiliary are considered part of the Union Battalion.
5. A Confederate Battalion shall exist. All recognized Confederate military units shall be part of the Confederate Battalion. Military and civilian impressionists who are members of a Confederate military unit or that unit's civilian auxiliary are considered part of the Confederate Battalion.
6. A Civilian Community shall exist. All recognized Civilian units shall be part of the Civilian Community. Civilian impressionists who are members of a Civilian unit are considered part of the Civilian Community. Military impressionists may not join Civilian units. Independent, or "Freelance" reenactors are allowed for civilian impressions only. They are permitted provided they agree to be a member of the Civilian Community.

Article 5 -Board of Directors

1. The activities of the WCWA will be directed by a Board of Directors that will have administrative supervision over the Club's member units. The WCWA's responsibilities to its member units are to negotiate contracts, administer finances, and provide insurance for the members of the WCWA.
2. The Board of Directors will consist of:
 - A. An Administrative Board, which is composed of: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Union Battalion Commander, Confederate Battalion Commander, Union Civilian Leader, and Confederate Civilian Leader.
 - B. And a General Board, which is composed of: Unit Commanders of all voting military companies (or their chosen or elected representatives) and Civilian Leaders of all voting Civilian units (or their chosen or elected representatives.)

3. The functions and responsibilities of the Administrative Board officers are as follows:

- A. The senior club officer is the Chairman of the Board; his/her duties are to chair Board meetings, served as an adjudicator, and manage the daily administration of the WCWA. The Chairman will conduct Board meetings at least once a quarter. The Chairman will govern according to parliamentary procedure. The Chairman will appoint committees as required. The Chairman is not a “President” and has no powers beyond those conferred by this Constitution or the bylaws unless expressly approved by the member units of the WCWA. The Chairman has no vote on the Board except in the case of a tie. If the Chairman is a Commander or Leader, the tie-breaking vote passes to the Vice-Chairman.
- B. The Vice-Chairman will assist the Chairman in the performance of his/her duties and act in the capacity of the Chairman in the Chairman’s absence. The Vice-Chairman will further head any temporary committee appointed by the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman has no vote on the Board in the case of a tie when the Chairman is a Commander or Leader. If the Vice-Chairman is a Commander or Leader, the tie-breaking vote passes to the Secretary.
- C. The Secretary will record the minutes of the Board meetings, publish the minutes in WCWA publications and report the minutes at the next Board meeting. The Secretary will be responsible for all WCWA administrative correspondence. The Secretary has no vote on the Board in the case of a tie when the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are Commanders or Leaders. If the Secretary is a Commander or Leader, the tie-breaking vote passes to the Treasurer.
- D. The Treasurer will keep an accounting of all financial matters, receive funds in the name of the WCWA, and disburse funds at the direction of the Board of Directors. The Treasurer will maintain such records and submit such reports, tax returns, etc., as may be required by Section 501 C (3) of the Internal Revenue Code for non-profit organizations. The Treasurer will review all applications for membership or renewal, validate them, collect membership fees, and issue membership documents. The Treasurer will maintain the official WCWA roster. The Treasurer has no vote on the Board except in the case of a tie when the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary are Commanders or Leaders.
- E. The Union Battalion Commander serves on the Board as a military advisor. He reports to the Board on matters regarding troop strengths and relative abilities of the Union Battalion and offers advice and opinions on any subject affecting that military branch of the WCWA. The Union Battalion Commander shall be the highest authority over Union military impressionists at field events. The Union Battalion Commander shall be the highest authority over civilian impressionists who camp within the geographic boundaries of the Union military camp at field events. The Union Battalion Commander may appoint a staff, subject to confirmation by the general board, to aid in the implementation of Union Battalion polices. The Union Battalion Commander has no vote on the Board.

- F. The Confederate Battalion Commander serves on the Board as a military advisor. He reports to the Board on matters regarding troop strengths and relative abilities of the Confederate Battalion and offers advice and opinions on any subject affecting that military branch of the WCWA. The Confederate Battalion Commander shall be the highest authority over Confederate military impressionists at field events. The Confederate Battalion Commander shall be the highest authority over civilian impressionists who camp within the geographic boundaries of the Confederate military camp at field events. The Confederate Battalion Commander may appoint a staff, subject to confirmation by the general board, to aid in the implementation of Confederate Battalion policies. The Confederate Battalion Commander has no vote on the Board.
- G. The Union and Confederate Civilian Leaders serve on the Board as civilian advisors and offer advice and opinions on any subject affecting civilians of the WCWA. The Union Civilian Leader represents all members who portray a Union Civilian impression, regardless of unit affiliation, and the Confederate Civilian Leader represents all members who portray a Confederate Civilian impression, regardless of unit affiliation. The Union and Confederate Civilian Leaders shall work together to encourage the development of Living History scenarios, demonstrations, and other Civilian activities at field events. The Union and Confederate Civilian Leaders may each appoint a staff, subject to confirmation by the general board, to aid in the implementation of their respective Civilian policies. Union and Confederate Civilian Leaders have no vote on the Board. The Union and Confederate Civilian Leaders shall be the highest authority over their respective Civilian impressionists who camp outside the geographic boundaries of the military camps at field events.
4. Unit representatives may vote by proxy. Proxy votes must be in writing and signed by the unit representative and are only valid for the meeting at which they are presented. Proxy by email is acceptable. Proxy votes may be presented by any WCWA-registered member of the same unit, or branch of service, for which said proxy is exercised.
5. Board meetings may not be conducted in secret or with the intent to exclude any individuals or factions from such meetings. Any activity conducted or decision made at
- A. such a meeting is automatically invalid. Any WCWA Board decision made under coercion and/or threat of lawsuit or bodily harm shall be null and void.

Article 6 -Elections

1. The Washington Civil War Association will hold elections for the Administrative Board positions annually. Election procedures shall be clearly outlined in the WCWA by-laws. All Administrative Board positions on the Board of Directors will be voted on according to these procedures and shall be for a term of one year, from January 1st to December 31st of each year.

2. Individuals seeking election to Administrative Board positions must be age 18 years or older, and must be current members of the WCWA. All WCWA members who meet the above criteria are eligible for the positions of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. Only those WCWA members who meet the above criteria and who declare themselves a Union Military impressionist on their WCWA application/renewal form may serve as Union Battalion Commander. Only those WCWA members who meet the above criteria and who declare themselves a Confederate Military impressionist on their WCWA application/renewal form may serve as Confederate Battalion Commander. Only those WCWA members who meet the above criteria and who declare themselves a Union Civilian impressionist (regardless of unit affiliation) on their WCWA application/renewal form may serve as Union Civilian Leader. Only those WCWA members who meet the above criteria and who declare themselves a Confederate Civilian impressionist (regardless of unit affiliation) on their WCWA application/renewal form may serve as Confederate Civilian Leader.
3. If any Administrative Board position is not filled by election, or if the position is vacated prior to the expiration of the term, the position shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Directors, except the Union and Confederate Battalion Commanders who shall be selected by vote of the General Board members of the Battalion whose position is vacant and the Union and Confederate Civilian Leaders who shall be selected by a vote of Civilian representatives from the Battalion whose position is vacant. Such appointments must meet all requirements of Section #2 above.
4. The General Board of Directors (composed of the unit representatives) may be elected in any manner that the individual units wish, however, the General Board representative for each unit must be a current member of the WCWA.
5. All members, age 14 years and older, shall be eligible to vote for the Administrative Board of Directors; except only Union Battalion members who declare themselves a Union Military impressionist on their WCWA application/renewal form shall vote for the Union Battalion Commander, only Confederate Battalion members who declare themselves a Confederate Military impressionist on their WCWA application/renewal form shall vote for the Confederate Battalion Commander, only WCWA members who declare themselves a Union Civilian impressionist (regardless of unit affiliation) on their WCWA application/renewal form shall vote for the Union Civilian Leader and only WCWA members who declare themselves a Confederate Civilian impressionist (regardless of unit affiliation) shall vote for the Confederate Civilian Leader.

Article 7 -Ratification of Measures

1. All measures, including this document, shall be ratified by a vote of eligible members. Proposals for additions, deletions or modifications to the Constitution or to the by-laws may be made by any member of the WCWA.

2. All proposals for additions, deletions, or modifications to the Constitution must be provided in writing to all members of the WCWA at least seven days prior to any ratification vote on those measures. Publication of such measures in "The Dispatch" may constitute such notification, as long as "The Dispatch" is postmarked at least ten days prior to the voting. Additions, deletions, or modifications to the Constitution shall be accomplished by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the members of the WCWA present at a major WCWA sponsored field event or at the WCWA's annual general membership meeting. A special vote-by-mail election may be called for by a three-fourths majority vote of the General Board of Directors. Additions, deletions, or modifications enacted by mail vote require a 50% return to be considered valid. All measures duly ratified take effect immediately.

3. Additions, deletions, or modifications to the by-laws shall be accomplished by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of the General Board of Directors (a quorum consisting of not less than one-half plus one of the vote eligible Board members). All by-law changes duly passed shall become effective immediately.

Article 8 -Dissolution

The WCWA is a public benefit nonprofit corporation and upon its dissolution it will distribute its assets to an organization that is public or charitable in purpose, a religious corporation, the Government of the United States or any political subdivision thereof, or any organization that is recognized as exempt under Section 501 C(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.