

CONSTITUTION OF THE WASHINGTON BRIDGE LEAGUE

ARTICLE I - NAME

This constitution embodies the principles for the government of the "Washington Bridge League" ("the League"), incorporated in the District of Columbia on May 18, 1934, under charter No. 22602.

ARTICLE II - AFFILIATION

The Washington Bridge League intends to function indefinitely within the bylaws and regulations of the American Contract Bridge League, and of our District organization. The Washington Bridge League is also known as Unit #147 of the ACBL.

ARTICLE III - OBJECTS

The WBL, without intention of profit, shall

- (a) preserve and promote the best interests of, and stimulate interest in, the art of playing contract bridge;
- (b) provide recreation and social activity for its members through the promotion and conduct of contract bridge tournaments;
- (c) encourage the highest standards of conduct and ethics by its members, and enforce such standards;
- (d) promote the development and organization of affiliated clubs;
- (e) cooperate in the ACBL charity program, and sponsor and conduct charity event with the object of realizing funds for worthy humanitarian causes; and
- (f) conduct such other activities as may be in keeping with its principal objectives.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

1. Status. (i) Any person residing in the Washington metropolitan area, subject to ACBL and District regulations, is eligible for membership, and no person shall be denied membership because of race, creed, sex, religion, age, national origin, or solely on the basis of prior conduct unrelated to bridge activity. (ii) Such person, upon payment of dues, shall become a member unless: (a) he/she changes residence to a place outside the jurisdiction of the WBL, in which case he/she may become a member of the new Unit immediately upon ACBL processing the change of address; (b) he/she has failed to pay annual dues in accordance with ACBL regulations; or (c) he/she is currently suspended or expelled from membership, in accordance with ACBL and WBL regulations; provided, however, that the WBL regulations were not in conflict with ACBL regulations.
2. Rights. Each member shall be entitled to: (i) attend all membership meetings; (ii) participate in the nomination and election of Officers and Unit Directors, and all business of the membership; (iii) participate in all WBL tournaments and other activities, subject to any proper rules that may be duly established therefor; (iv) receive all notices and general publications of the WBL and the ACBL; (v) appeal to the WBL Board from any decision of any Officer, Unit Director, representative or committee of the WBL, except that decisions of the Unit Conduct and Ethics Committee may also be appealed directly to the District Judiciary Committee.
3. Dues. Annual dues shall be as established by the ACBL or by the WBL Board, should at any time our relationship with ACBL cease.

ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

1. Annual Meeting. There shall be an annual meeting of the membership of the League held during the period March through May for the purpose of conducting elections, considering the annual reports of officers and committees, and disposing of other League business. The annual meeting may be conducted in either one or more meetings at the discretion of the WBL Board. The Secretary shall give reasonable notice of the annual meeting to the membership.
2. Special Meetings. Special meeting of the membership may be called by the President of the WBL board and shall be called by the Secretary upon the written request of fifty (50) members. The Secretary shall give reasonable notice to the membership of the proposed business of a special meeting by mail, or if that means is not practicable, by newspaper publication supplemented to the maximum extent feasible by other means.
3. Action Without Meeting. A mail poll of the membership may be conducted with respect to any current business, except when a hearing is required by this Constitution, at the direction of the membership of the WBL Board. A mail poll shall have the same force and effect as a vote taken at a meeting, except that it shall not be effective if the number of members who vote is less than the number required for a quorum at a meeting.
4. Quorum. One hundred (100) members, or one-third of the members, whichever is less, shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the membership.
5. Rules of Order. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern the League in all cases to which they are applicable, except insofar as they are inconsistent with this Constitution or the special rules of order of the League.
6. Voting. Each member shall be entitled to one vote in any election or any resolution or motion that may be brought before the membership but no member shall vote by proxy. In order to vote, one must have been a member in good standing for at least sixty (60) days or a renewed member. A majority of the valid votes shall govern in all decisions of the membership unless otherwise provided for by this Constitution or Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. The presiding officer at a membership meeting shall be entitled to vote when the vote is by ballot, but in other cases only if his/her vote would change the result.

ARTICLE VI - ELECTIONS

1. Elections Committee.
 - (i) The Elections Chairperson, appointed by the President each year, shall be responsible for preparation of printed ballots and selection of capable assistants as needed.
 - (ii) In order that a candidate's name appear on the pre-printed ballots, a petition bearing the valid signature of at least twenty-five (25) WBL members, in addition to the candidate's own signature, and specifying the position for which the candidate is filing, must be received by the Elections Chairperson at least seven (7) days prior to the Annual Meeting.
 - (iii) The ballots must include blank lines for listing of any candidates who might be properly nominated from the floor during the meeting.
 - (iv) The Elections chairperson must retain the ballots for a minimum of seven (7) days following the meeting, for inspection by any candidate or his/her designated representative.
2. Qualifications.
 - (i) In order to be a candidate for any Officer or Unit Director position, one must be a member of the WBL in good standing (per Article IV, 1, ii, c) for at least sixty (60) days prior to the election or a member during the previous dues-paying year.

- (ii) No person may be a candidate for President who has been elected to the preceding three (3) consecutive terms in the office of President.
3. Procedures. All officers and no less than three (3) Unit Directors shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Membership Meeting. No member shall run simultaneously for more than one (1) elected office or directorship. However, an incumbent director may run for an office without resigning his directorship unless he is subsequently elected to that office.
 4. Balloting.
 - (i) In the election of officers, a majority of the valid votes cast shall be required to elect.
 - (ii) If no candidate receives a majority for an office, the balloting shall be continued, but confined to the two candidates who received the largest number of votes for that office.
 - (iii) The election of the Unit Director shall consist of the three (3) Unit Directors whose regular two-year term has expired plus and Unit Directorships that had become vacant since the last election of Directors, and either filled by appointment of the WBL Board or remained unfilled at the time of the Annual Meeting.
 - (iv) In the election of Unit Directors, all of whom shall be elected on the same ballot, the candidates receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected; and of those elected, the persons receiving the lowest number of votes shall occupy any Directorship included in the election which were vacated before their term expired.
 - (v) In the event of a tie, where an equal number of votes has been cast for two or more candidates for the last open Directorship, a run-off will be conducted only between/among the tied candidates; in the case of more than two candidates, members may vote for only one of the candidates. Directors elected to vacated directorships shall serve for the unfulfilled term.
 - (vi) In the event there were fewer candidates for Directorships than the number expired and vacant and/or where an incumbent Director, as a result of his election to an Office while the Annual Meeting was in process, vacated his/her Directorship, a special election will be held within two (2) months for the purpose of filling such vacancies following reasonable notice to the membership, with all nominations to be made from the floor. The WBL Board shall fill by appointment vacancies occurring at any other time in Directorships or Officers, excepting that of President.
 5. Taking Office. Officers and Unit Directors shall assume office during the Annual Meeting immediately following the announcement of the balloting results by the Elections Chairperson, and the completion of Old Business.

ARTICLE VII - UNIT OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

1. Officers. The Officers of the League shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. All Officers of the League shall be elected from among the membership each year, and each shall hold office until the election of his/her successor.
2. Unit Directors. The Directors of the League shall be six (6) in number. They are elected as prescribed in Article VI, with no fewer than three (3) elected from the membership each year.
3. Duties of the President. The President shall supervise the management of the affairs of the League, subject to the general direction of the WBL Board. He/she shall preside at all meetings of the membership and of the WBL Board, with the right to participate in all votes; appoint all committees, with the advice and consent of the WBL Board; serve as ex-officio member of all standing committees appointed by him/her; and perform the other duties incidental to his/her office. The President may delegate certain of his/her duties to the Vice-President as indicated below.
4. Duties of the Vice-President. The Vice-President shall assume all the duties of the office of the President during the President's absence or inability to act. If the Presidency becomes vacant, the

Vice-President shall become the President until the next election of the League. At the direction of the President, the Vice-President may serve in place of the President as a member of a committee and perform incidental duties of the President.

5. Duties of the Secretary. The Secretary shall transmit notices and other communications to the membership and, at the direction of the President or the WBL Board, conduct other League correspondence; record the minutes of all meetings of the membership and the WBL Board, including the votes on all motions; and perform the other duties incidental to his/her office.
6. Duties of the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have the care and custody of, and be responsible for, all the funds, securities, and intangible properties of the League, and shall deposit the funds in a bank of good repute. Any Officer, representative, or member of the League receiving such funds, securities, or intangible properties shall forthwith transfer them to the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall make all disbursements on behalf of the League, as approved by the WBL Board; keep an accurate account of all monies received and disbursed; render a report thereof each year at an Annual Membership Meeting and whenever requested by the WBL Board; and perform other duties incidental to his/her office. Except as authorized by the WBL Board, the Treasurer shall make all disbursements by check. All checks drawn on League funds **above an amount set by the Board** shall bear the signatures of the Treasurer, and either the President or the secretary. **Checks smaller than that amount can be signed by any of the three officers.** [[Amendment May 6, 2010 Annual Meeting]] The Treasurer, and such other Officers, members and employees of the League as the WBL Board may determine, may be bonded, at the expense of the League.

ARTICLE VIII - WBL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. Composition. The Officers and six (6) Unit Directors, during their respective terms of Office and the Past President, until one (1) year after the election of his/her successor, shall constitute the WBL Board.
2. Powers. The WBL Board shall manage the affairs of the League in furtherance of its objects in accordance with this Constitution and the other expressions of the will of the membership. In addition to the powers elsewhere delegated to the WBL Board by this Constitution, the WBL Board is delegated the power to:
 - (i) Fill any vacancy in its membership until the next election of the league, and appoint a temporary substitute for such time as a member may be unable to serve on account of illness or other good and sufficient reason.
 - (ii) Determine whether any person has been guilty of dishonest, unethical, or malicious conduct, or other conduct prejudicial to the objectives, activities, or welfare of the League, during, or identifiable with any tournament or other activity of the League; and bar or suspend from attendance at any League activities any person determined by it to have been guilty of such conduct or determined by an organization with which the League is affiliated to have been guilty of misconduct in connection with any contract bridge competition.
 - (iii) Censure, suspend, or expel a member or remove a member from office for violation of the Constitution or rules of the League; for dishonest, unethical or malicious conduct during the course of any tournament or other activity of the League or of any organization with which the League is affiliated; or for conduct that is otherwise prejudicial to the objectives, activities, welfare or good name of the League. Subject to the provisions below, the WBL Board shall determine the manner in which the charge against a member shall be inquired into and heard. The member shall be given a written statement of the charge against him/her and shall be invited to appear, after reasonable notice at a specified time, for a hearing, during which he/she shall have a fair opportunity to defend himself/herself, including representation by counsel and the examination and cross-examination of witnesses. Voting to determine the decision under this paragraph shall be by ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary to censure,

suspend, or expel the member or remove him/her from office. A written record of the findings and conclusions, shall be prepared, including the numerical result of its vote, to which the member shall have reasonable access.

- (iv) Appropriate funds and enter into contracts for, and on behalf of, the League.
- (v) Engage employees, determine their compensation and other conditions of employment, supervise their conduct, and terminate their employment, but no compensation shall be paid for services performed as an Officer, Unit Director, or committee member without the approval of the membership.
- (vi) Create, and delegate its powers to, committees; except that no committee shall have the power to censure, suspend, or expel a member or remove a member from office, unless it is a duly constituted Conduct and Ethics Committee, which has been expressly authorized to so by the WBL Board and is chaired by a member of the WBL Board.

or

- (vii) Create, and delegate its powers to, committees.
3. Recall Petition. The WBL Board must institute within thirty (30) days of receipt of a recall petition, a hearing as specified in (iii) above. All such petitions must include specific charges, and must be signed by a minimum of one hundred (100) WBL members.
 4. Meetings. The Secretary shall call a meeting of the WBL Board at any time at the request of the President or three (3) of its members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting. Unless otherwise provided for
 - (i) a majority of the votes shall govern in all decisions of the WBL Board; and
 - (ii) voting by proxy shall be permitted, but only with respect to issues specified in writing by the absent member. With respect to such specific issues, a proxy shall count toward a quorum.
 5. Action without Meeting. Any resolution in writing bearing the signatures of a majority of the members of the WBL Board indicating their approval shall constitute a duly adopted action of the Board; provided, however, that where a majority is not a sufficient vote for action, each available member of the Board shall be given an opportunity to include approval, disapproval, or abstention, and the resolution shall not be considered adopted until the proportion of signatures indicating approval is at least equal to the proportion of votes that would be required for adoption at a meeting of the Board, the abstention or unavailability of a member being treated as equivalent to failure to vote at, or absence from, a meeting.
 6. Membership Secretary. The WBL Board shall employ a Membership Secretary who shall be an ex-officio member of the WBL Board. S/He shall attend all meetings of the Membership and may attend meetings of the Board; s/he shall maintain membership information in cooperation with the ACBL; s/he shall keep a record of all member clubs and their activities and shall perform other related duties as assigned by the WBL Board.

ARTICLE IX - COMMITTEES

1. Standing Committees. The President, with the advice and consent of the WBL Board, shall appoint the following standing committees, including the chairman thereof, as soon as possible after his/her election. Membership Committee, Unit Game Committee, Ways & Means Committee, Committee on Conduct and Ethics, Tournament Committee, Bulletin Committee, and Club relations Committee.
2. Membership Committee. It shall be the duty of the Membership Committee to invite persons interested in bridge and of good moral character to become members of the League, and, with the cooperation of the Unit Game Committee and the Tournament Committee, to encourage the participation of new members in the activities of the League.

3. Unit Game Committee. It shall be the duty of the Unit Game Committee, subject to the direction of the WBL Board, to plan and conduct weekly duplicate games, including WBL championship events and other bridge activities, but not Sectionals, Regionals, or Nationals.
4. Ways & Means Committee. It shall be the duty of the Ways & Means Committee, at the request of the WBL Board, to examine the financial records and accounts of the League and report thereon to the Board. The Ways & Means Committee shall, in particular, examine and analyze the annual and other reports made by the Treasurer and make recommendations as to the financial program of the League.
5. Committee on Conduct & Ethics. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Conduct & Ethics to act on appropriate matters, such as those described in Article VIII, Section 2, Paragraphs (ii) and (iii). Generally, appeals from actions taken by the Committee on Conduct & Ethics will be made to the District Judiciary Committee. In addition, in cooperation with the ACBL, and the District Judiciary Committee, the committee may create and publicize appropriate materials intended to encourage improved concur and ethical awareness on the part of all bridge players.
6. Tournament Committee. It shall be the duty of the Tournament Committee, subject to the direction and approval of the WBL Board, to plan, publicize and conduct periodic Sectionals and Regionals Tournaments, within the rules and regulations of the ACBL.
7. Bulletin Committee. The Bulletin Committee, subject to the direction and control of the WBL Board and so long as it is economically feasible, shall regularly publish Bulletins which report tournament and Unit Game results and announce upcoming tournaments and Unit Games, and include other information which they judge to be of general interest to our membership, consistent with generally accepted standards of good taste, within the bounds of accuracy and fair comment.
8. Club Relations Committee. It shall be the duty of the Club Relations Committee, subject to the direction and approval of the WBL Board, to aid in the establishment and development of affiliated duplicate bridge clubs, supervise the operation of any WBL-sponsored simultaneous-type club events, and maintain communication with Club operators and Directors for our mutual benefit through exchange of ideas.
9. Special Committees. Special committees may be established and their members appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the WBL Board, to handle National tournaments or other matters not within the scope of the duties and powers of the standing committees.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments. This Constitution shall not be amended except by the membership through two-thirds of the valid votes cast, adequate notice of the content or text of the proposed amendment having been given by mail or in a previous, duly convened meeting.
2. Suspension. No provision of this Constitution may be suspended, except that the membership may, by two-thirds of the valid votes cast, suspend a rule of business procedure for a meeting.

As amended:

March 27, 1969;
April 11, 1974;
June 22, 1974;
April 10, 1975;
May 5, 1977;
April 6, 1989;
May 11, 1995;
May 11, 2000;
May 6, 2010.