

**CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION  
VETERANS ORGANIZATION  
BYLAWS**

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BYLAWS**

**PREAMBLE**

We, as veterans of the United States Armed Forces, being ever mindful of the glorious tradition of our duty to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America, our responsibility to support a strong defense establishment, our interest in the welfare of our fellow service men and women in fortune or distress, and with reverence to God, Country and our departed comrades, united to further the aims and objectives of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization.

**ARTICLE I - NAME AND LOCATION**

Section 1 (Name)

The name of this organization shall be the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization abbreviated CPN Veterans Organization.

Section 2 (Location)

- a. The mailing address shall be: CPN VETERANS ORGANIZATION  
1601 S. Gordon Cooper Dr.  
Shawnee, OK 74801-9002.

The e-mail address shall be: veterans @ potawatomi.org

- b. Additional administrative offices may be maintained at a location to be determined by the Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this organization, a nonprofit military veterans organization, is to serve as a local non-political entity; support the aims and objectives of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization; promote and assist its own members both professionally and culturally; cultivate and maintain good relations with community leaders and active and reserve component tribal members of the armed forces; foster patriotism, civic duty, fraternity, camaraderie and a sense of belonging for its members; honor and perpetuate the memory of retired and enlisted personnel; assist tribal members in fortune and distress; and uphold the ideals, principles and traditions of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization.

## **ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1 (Regular)**

Any person retired and/or honorably discharged from an active or reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States, either for length of service or permanent medical disability, who is also a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, shall be eligible for regular membership. Active duty, Reserve and National Guard enlisted personnel are also eligible but must be a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

Notwithstanding this or any other provision of the Bylaws, all current members of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization shall remain eligible for membership regardless of tribal affiliation or the absence thereof.

Allow veteran spouses of enrolled tribal members to become regular members of the CPN Veterans Organization.

### **Section 2 (Membership)**

All members shall be issued a membership card with name.

### **Section 3 (Contact Information)**

The name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of each member shall be kept on file, in the office of the Secretary, for contact purposes. This information shall not be published or released without the consent of that member. It is the responsibility of each individual to keep this file updated.

### **Section 4 (Rights and Privileges)**

Only regular members in good standing shall have the right to make motions, vote, and hold organization office.

### **Section 5 (Good Standing)**

A member shall be considered in good standing except for reasons specified herein or in other organization directives. A member shall not be expelled for reasons indicated in 'b' below without a fair hearing before the Executive Committee. When expulsion from the organization is appropriate, such action must be ordered by the Executive Committee.

- a. Delinquent dues.
- b. Acts that bring discredit to or are detrimental to the best interests of this organization or to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

### **Section 6 (Reinstatement)**

A former member who resigned while in good standing, or who forfeited membership due to nonpayment of dues, may rejoin the organization as a new member or be reinstated with their original "join date" upon payment of all dues in arrears to the organization. Expelled members may rejoin after one year– and upon acceptance by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE IV - DUES, OBLIGATIONS AND FINANCES**

### **Section 1 (Dues)**

Members shall pay organization dues in the amount of \$10.00 annually. Dues are payable during festival of each year and are delinquent on August 1st. Active duty or active reserve tribal members are exempt from annual dues. All CPN WWII veterans are granted lifetime membership without dues.

### **Section 2 (Obligations)**

The organization treasurer shall, on a weekly basis, deposit all dues collected from regular members to a bank account set up for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization. The organization shall also comply with all reporting requirements promulgated in the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization Standing Rules.

### **Section 3 (Finances)**

The membership shall be the approving authority for the expenditure of organization funds. The Treasurer shall verify all to the membership. Also, under the authority contained in Article VII, Section 1, the Executive Committee may approve up to \$150.00 for any expense, without further approval, when funds are available and such action appears to be in the best interest of the organization. Any elected member of the Executive Committee and the treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks drawn on organization accounts and two signatures shall be required on each check or cash withdrawal. The authenticity of all bills for payment of goods and services shall be verified prior to the disbursement of organization funds.

### **Section 4 (Fiscal Year)**

The fiscal year for this organization shall be the same as the calendar year (i.e. January 1 through December 31).

## **ARTICLE V - OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 (Elected Officers)**

Organization officers will be elected by the membership and shall consist of a Commander, Vice Commander, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed in these bylaws.

### **Section 2 (Appointed Officers)**

The Organization Commander shall appoint all non-elected officers. No appointment may exceed the remaining term of the appointing authority.

### **Section 3 (Eligibility for Election)**

Any regular member in good standing shall be eligible for nomination and election to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veteran's organization providing these and all other requirements established and announced by the membership are met.

### **Section 4 (Nomination and Election)**

Officers shall be elected at the annual membership meeting during the month of December and shall assume office on the following January 1. At least thirty days prior to convening the annual meeting, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization members shall begin a search for nominees to fill elective offices. No nominee shall be placed on the election ballot without his or her consent. Nominations shall be written or spoken. Self nominations shall be submitted in writing. Each nominee shall be allowed to give a short discourse on his reason for seeking office. Elections shall be by secret ballot or by acclamation when there is only one nominee for an office.

### **Section 5 (Terms of Office)**

The Commander will be elected for a 3 year term, Vice Commander will be elected for a 2 year term. After his 2 year term the Vice Commander will be elected for a 3 year term. Any officer may announce their candidacy for any other at the time of nominations. The term of office shall begin on January 1, following the elections. Outgoing officers will surrender all organization records and property to their successors.

### **Section 6 (Filling Vacancies)**

A vacancy in the office of Commander shall be filled by the Vice Commander, a vacancy in the office of the Vice Commander shall be filled by an elected member for the unexpired term. All other vacancies shall be filled by special election by the membership within 60 days unless the regular election is within 120 days thereafter. Any vacancies in appointed officer positions shall be filled by the Commander. When there is no candidate for an elective office and the former occupant refused to continue to serve in accordance with Section 5, the Commander may appoint a qualified member to the vacant position, subject to ratification by the Executive Committee. The appointee shall have all the rights and privileges of an elected member including the right to vote. The term of such officer, elected or appointed, shall be for the unexpired term of his predecessor.

### **Section 7 (Dual Offices)**

No officer may hold more than one elective office within the organization itself, but an organization officer may hold any other office within the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization structure unless restricted by the said Bylaws.

### **Section 8 (Removal of Officers)**

The Membership may rescind an election and remove an elected officer. Appointed officers may be removed by the Executive Committee or the organization membership with a 2/3 vote.

### **Section 9 (Resignation)**

Any elected or appointed officer who is unable or unwilling to perform his duties (for any reason) may resign on the date specified in his verbal or written resignation without further action by the Executive Committee. The Committee may also permit an officer to resign in lieu of removal from office.

### **Section 10 (Installation of Officers)**

If desired, a ceremony may be held before, after, or on the day office is assumed, which shall be January 1, each year. The following Oath of Office (while not mandatory) may be administered with or without a formal installation ceremony.

#### **OATH OF OFFICE**

I, (name), having been elected or appointed to the office of (state office), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute said office to the best of my ability; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will uphold the ideals and traditions of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization; and that I will abide by all rules and regulations to which I am subject— So Help Me God.

### **ARTICLE VI— DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1 (Commander)**

The Commander shall be the Chief Executive Officer and official spokesman for the organization. He shall set the objectives, guide the policies and preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee and the membership (except when absent or when presiding might result in a conflict of interest). If the Commander takes part in debate, he must do so from the floor, in a membership meeting. If he is not in attendance, the provisions of Article VIII, Section 5 shall apply. The Commander shall ensure that all administrative requirements of the organization are accomplished expeditiously and in a dignified, honest and impartial manner and that the intent of Article XI is meticulously adhered to. He shall normally serve as ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. He will notify the secretary in a timely manner of any meeting changes so that the membership can be notified. He will be available before each meeting to meet with the Vice Commander, Secretary and Treasurer to sign checks and to discuss any item that is on the Agenda.

## **Section 2 (Vice Commander)**

Vice Commander will be responsible to stay in contact with each officer in the event of someone needing our service. He will have the phone number of the person in charge of our Color Guard and/or Honor Guard to inform them they are needed and the place and date. In the event the Commander is unable to serve for the unexpired term or for a temporary absence, the Vice Commander will serve until the Commander's return or a vote of the membership for a new Commander.

## **Section 3 (Secretary)**

Secretary will be responsible for keeping all records of our organization. The minutes of each meeting will be recorded. Minutes will be viewed at membership request at a membership meeting and will be viewed and amended at that time. The Secretary will be responsible for keeping the membership informed of any meeting changes and of scheduled monthly meetings and/or any other function. The Secretary will see that meetings are posted in the How Ni Kan each month and an invitation to returning tribal veterans that we are here to help them and would like for them to attend our meetings.

## **Section 4 (Treasurer)**

The Treasurer will be responsible for all funds belonging to the Veterans Organization. Each month there will be a monthly Treasurer's report read to the membership at the monthly meeting. Any elected member of the executive committee & Treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks. The Treasurer will keep the checking account balanced each month. If there is a request for funds, they must be brought before the membership during the next meeting. The Treasurer will be responsible for ordering vests and hats for new members as requested and informing them when they arrive. The Treasurer will also take the request of any officer and bring it before the membership.

## **Section 5 (Team leader)**

The Team leader will be chosen by the Commander. The Team leader will have the responsibility of keeping the Color Guard and Honor Guard staffed and ready to perform at all times as needed. Any uniforms for the guard will have to be requested through the Treasurer and it will be brought before the membership for approval.

## **Section 6 (Executive Committee)**

The Executive Committee will consist of the Commander, Vice Commander, Secretary, Treasurer and the Team leader. These meetings will be held to discuss any item that comes up during the month prior to the regular meeting that must be answered due to an EMERGENCY. This will be brought up for discussion by the membership. No officer will take it upon himself to act on any item without the Membership being made aware of it and approval. Any emergency can be reported to any officer and they can call an Executive meeting. *All decisions of the Executive Committee must come before the membership for a vote which will require a quorum of 6.*

### **Section 7 (Event Coordinator)**

The Event Coordinator will consist of one (1) member of the Veteran's Organization. The purpose of this member is to invite guest speakers who might like to speak at our meetings with the approval of the Commander and Vice Commander.

### **Section 8 (Coordinator of Veterans Operations)**

The Coordinator of Veterans Operations (a. k. a. VA Service Officer) is a volunteer position. He must be certified through a service organization. Example ODVA, VFW, etc. The duties of this position are to assist the Citizen Potawatomi Nation veterans. He is appointed by the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization. This position shall only be terminated by the request of the Commander and the Executive Committee, with pending notification of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Legislature.

### **Section 9 (Chaplain)**

The Chaplain (an appointed officer), shall give a non-sectarian invocation and benediction at the opening and closing of each membership meeting and at such other times as may be appropriate. He shall offer assistance and condolence to the families of ill or deceased organization members and shall officiate at community affairs on behalf of the organization as appropriate.

### **Section 10 (Sergeant at Arms)**

The Sergeant at Arms (an appointed officer), shall maintain a sign-in register at organization membership meetings; verify voting eligibility of attendees when in doubt; maintain order in the meeting room; report the number of members present; assist the Commander when called upon; and perform such other duties as may be assigned.

### **Section 11 (Other Appointments)**

Other officers, when elected by the membership or appointed by the Commander, shall have their duties, rights and privileges provided in writing and incorporated into these bylaws during the next amendment.

### **Section 12 (Mission)**

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization was formed to have a meeting each month to have fellowship, to serve our returning tribal veterans, giving them a place to meet and having someone to help them with any problems they might have getting settled back into tribal activities. Our duties are also to attempt to get personal items and send them to troops when we have enough to ship to them.

## **ARTICLE VII – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Section 1 (Function)**

Control and management of the organization between membership meetings shall rest with the Executive Committee. The Committee shall transact all business and have exclusive control over all other responsibilities unless restricted by these bylaws or membership.

### **Section 2 (Standing Rules)**

The Executive Committee may formulate, adopt and implement such Standing Rules as are necessary for the operation and administration of the organization, but if such rules are not ratified by majority vote at the next membership meeting, they become null and void

## **ARTICLE VIII – GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 (Date, Time, Place, and Calling of Meetings)**

The date, time and place of monthly membership meetings shall be held, no less than once per month, on the fourth Tuesday of each month or subject to a date and time established by a vote of the majority of the membership.

The annual meeting, at which officers and Executive Committee for the forthcoming year are elected, will always be in the month of December, as specified in Article V, Section 4. Special meetings may be called at any time as prescribed.

## **Section 2 (Notice of Meetings)**

If notice of a special meeting is not given at a membership meeting, an official notice shall be mailed, telephoned, or published in a newsletter for delivery at least seven days prior to the next meeting date. In lieu thereof, notification of an emergency special meeting may be made by telephone or other means to all members who attended the last three regular meetings (if possible). Notice will be given at least 24 hours in advance and the purpose of the meeting will be stated.

## **Section 3 (Quorum)**

**A quorum at any organization membership meeting shall be 6 active members on roster and having voting rights.** A quorum must be present prior to conducting any official business. If a quorum is not present, another meeting shall be scheduled within thirty days and all members notified.

## **Section 4 (Presiding Officer)**

The organization commander shall normally preside over all membership meetings. If the Commander vacates the chair during a meeting the Vice Commander, will assume the chair unless he has been, or intends to become involved in debate, which he must also do from the floor. If the Commander and the Vice Commander must step aside, or if they are all absent, another member in chain of Command shall preside during that meeting only.

## **Section 5 (Order)**

Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed in all meetings of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization.

## **Section 6 (Meals)**

Meals for members and a guest shall be paid for by the organization. Be it understood that meals are a privilege if organizational funds are available. The meals shall be served at one business meeting each month.

## **Section 7 (Order of Business)**

The Order of Business shall normally be as follows. The meeting will be called to order before any business is conducted and again after each recess. Except as shown in Article VIII, Section 4, a quorum must be present before any business is conducted:

- a. Call to Order
- b. Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag
- c. Invocation or prayer
- d. Attendance
- e. Introduction of New members and Guests
- f. Reading and Approval of the previous minutes
- g. Reports of Officers
- h. Standing/Special Committee Reports/Special Speaker
- i. Unfinished/Old Business
- j. New Business
- l. Special Announcements (next meeting date, etc)
- m. Benediction
- n. Adjournment

## **ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1 (Standing Committees)**

Standing committees shall consist of Event Coordinator, Treasurer, Sergeant at Arms and Chaplain. Each committee shall normally consist of three or more members, excluding the Commander, who shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees except at meetings where Article XI, applies. The Commander shall normally appoint the chairman of each committee and the chairman shall select all other members. All members shall serve terms corresponding to that of the Commander.

### **Section 2 (Special Committees)**

Special committees (which are automatically dissolved upon completion of the assigned task) shall be elected or appointed for a specific purpose. Written instructions shall normally be provided – which shall specify committee duties; when action is to be completed; and when a final report is to be made. The Commander shall appoint special committees. The Commander shall be an ex-officio member of all special committees except the Nominating Committee; except at meetings where Article XI, is applicable; or except when actions are under consideration that may be personally favorable or unfavorable to him – such as an award, or conduct that could lead to removal from office.

### **Section 3 (Committee Duties and Responsibilities)**

A description of the duties and responsibilities of all standing committees and the special committees shall be as outlined in organization rules or policy guides. Recurrent duties of other special committees such as Awards, etc., may also be specified in standing rules or policy guides, approved by the membership.

## **ARTICLE X – COLOR/ HONOR GUARD**

### **Section 1 (General)**

Any member of the CPN Veterans Organization may join the Color/ Honor Guard as long as they meet the membership requirements called for in these bylaws and are able to perform the physical duties that are necessary.

### **Section 2 (Physical Requirements for Color Guard)**

Individuals must be able to lift forty (40) pounds and stand for long periods of time.

### **Section 3 (Physical Requirements for the Honor Guard)**

Any member, in good standing may be a representative of the Honor Guard. The CPN Veterans Organization Honor Guard shall not be limited to those without physical disabilities.

### **Section 4 (Appearance/Grooming)**

- Hair: Should be neat and clean
- Facial Hair: Men should be clean-shaven or have neatly groomed mustaches, beards, and sideburns
- Jewelry: It is appropriate for individuals to limit exposure of jewelry during the rendering of funeral honors
- Serviceability: Individuals should wear only those "uniform" items that are clean and complete with all buttons

### **Section 5 (Color/Honor Guard Uniform)**

The official Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization Color Guard uniform is as follows: (all uniforms include Black pants, shoes & socks)

For summer;

- Short sleeve white shirt
- Vest
- Color Guard beret or white cap

For winter;

- Long sleeve white shirt and white gloves
- Vest
- Color Guard beret or dark blue cap

The official Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization Honor Guard uniform is as follows:

- Black long sleeve ribbon shirt with gold ascot
- Honor guard beret

### **Section 6 (Utilization of the Color/Honor Guard)**

Any appearance of the CPN Veterans Organization Color/Honor Guard is subject to approval by the Commander and Executive Committee or 2/3 vote of the membership. The Color/Honor Guard may be utilized for occasions such as military funeral honors, Native American dances, local parades or festivals, veteran functions, and other functions where the tribe should be represented. Care must be taken that the ceremony, event, or some part of the event is not supportive of a cause or activity that may shine a negative light on the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Any event must not conflict with Articles III, Section 5 'b' and Article XI.

### **Section 7 (Who is eligible for Military Funeral Honors)**

- Military members on active duty or in the Selected Reserve.
- Former military members who served on active duty and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former military members discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

### **Section 8 (Who is not eligible for Military Funeral Honors)**

- Any person separated from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions or whose character of service results in a bar to veteran's benefits.
- Any person who was ordered to report to an induction station, but was not actually inducted into military service.
- Any person discharged from the Selected Reserve prior to completing one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service for reasons other than a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.
- Any person convicted of Federal or State capital crime sentenced to death or life imprisonment.

## **ARTICLE XI – CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No member shall serve in any capacity (as a volunteer or employee) where a conflict of interest is apparent or perceived unless approved by two-thirds vote of the general membership.

## **ARTICLE XII – COLORS, LOGO AND SEAL**

The official colors of this organization shall be the same as the Citizen Potawatomi Nation of Oklahoma - Red and Blue. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Logo and seal shall be as specified in the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Standing Rules and shall not be altered on the inside of the outer ring.

## **ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENT OF BY LAWS**

### **Section 1 (Procedures)**

These bylaws may be amended by two-thirds vote at any regular meeting if prior notice (containing the text or purport of the proposed change) has been given at a previous meeting.

### **Section 2 (Distribution)**

After adoption by the membership, two copies of the original organization bylaws and/or any subsequent amendments or revision shall be kept in the possession of the CPN Veterans Organization Secretary. One copy will be brought to all future meetings and another copy will be filed at the main office. Any member wanting a copy of these approved bylaws may obtain one by request from the office of the Secretary of this organization.

## **ARTICLE XIV – DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution, all organization assets (if any) shall be converted to cash. After all organizational debts have been paid; any remaining funds will be given to a local charity, decided on by any remaining members. The colors, organization charter and all membership and financial records will remain property of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and will be disposed of at their discretion.

### **Adopted:**

09 June 2009

**Amended:**

23 March 2010 by unanimous vote

27 March 2012 by unanimous vote

22 April 2014 by vote of 11 yea & 1 nay

28 July 2015 by unanimous vote

24 January 2017 by unanimous vote