

Cherokee Community of the Puget Sound ByLaws

Mission & Purpose

Cherokee Community of Puget Sound (CCPS) is a community of Cherokees dedicated to Cherokee history, culture, heritage, tradition and fellowship. We are a non-political, non-profit Native American organization whose members reside outside the boundaries of the Cherokee Nation and Bands. As a community, we facilitate educational opportunities and Cherokee tribal gatherings for the purpose of learning more about our heritage and history and an opportunity to share knowledge and to create an inclusive community.

We are a satellite community of the Cherokee Nation and act as the official point of connection between the Cherokee Nation and its CCPS citizens.

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

Person(s) desiring membership in the Cherokee Community of Puget Sound (CCPS), must complete an application and pay annual membership dues. Membership is granted after approval of the application by the council of CCPS. The approval of all membership applications is at the discretion of the Council.

The membership will be valid from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Membership dues shall be paid on an annual basis.

1) Qualification of Members

There shall be three categories of membership in the CCPS.

a. Cherokee Citizen Membership. A Cherokee Nation Citizen membership requires that at least one member of a family household be a registered member of the Cherokee Nation. (ᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭ or Tsalagih Ayeli). The Membership Coordinator will verify the applicant's status via the Cherokee Nation Citizenship Card (aka "Blue Card") or new Cherokee Nation photo ID. At least sixty percent (60%) of all member households of the CCPS must be Citizen Members. b. Voting Member. All members of a household who are at least eighteen (18) years of age who (1) are listed on the CCPS membership rolls as a Citizen or Associate Member; and (2) have paid the \$25 annual dues will have the right to vote in all CCPS elections. Individuals who are unable to pay the annual dues, due to a hardship, may request a waiver of annual dues from the Cherokee Council of the Puget Sound. The Council will review and render a decision as to whether it will approve or not approve the waiver.

c. Associate Membership. An Associate Member is not a registered member of the Cherokee Nation. Associate members will not exceed forty percent (40%) of the membership of CCPS.

d. Honorary Membership. Honorary members include the Principal Chief and Deputy Chief of the Cherokee Nation, At-Large members of the Tribal Council of the Cherokee Nation, the Cherokee Nation Community Association (CNCA) Board of Directors, and other select community leaders and representatives at the Leadership Council's discretion.

By-Laws

Each household must complete a membership application and pay annual dues of \$25.00 per household to be able to vote. Each applicant must provide proof of Cherokee Nation Citizenship status if requesting Cherokee Nation Citizenship Membership. The membership application must be completed in its entirety. Changes in any household membership including, but not limited to, the following must be reported to the CCPS Membership Coordinator:

(1) additional members of the household (2) members no longer residing in the household (3) new mailing address (4) new email address (5) new phone number(s) (6) a change in status of any resident in a Citizen or Associate Member household

Household membership shall be granted to an applicant upon completion and approval of the application form of the CCPS as set forth in the CCPS Membership Rules. At the time of application, each household shall indicate the names of participating members eighteen (18) years of age or older at the same address who will be eligible to vote.

The approval of all membership applications is at the discretion of the CCPS Council.

2) Voting Rights and Obligations of Members

All adult members of a household who are at least eighteen (18) years of age and who are listed on the CCPS membership rolls as a Cherokee Nation Citizen and have paid their membership dues will have the right to vote in all CCPS elections.

Honorary and Associate Members do not possess voting rights.

3) Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated by the CCPS Council for the following reasons: (a) violation of the by-laws of the CCPS and/or (b) action that is considered detrimental to the organization as determined by the CCPS Council.

Only the governing Council has authority to investigate and/or terminate a membership. However, any member is entitled to bring to the Council a grievance concerning conduct by any member or Council member that they believe to be a violation of the by-laws and/or an action that is detrimental to the organization. The Council shall investigate all grievances. As part of the investigation, the Council is obliged to receive testimony and evidence from the member in question in their own defense. A membership may be terminated only after a consensus (majority) of the members of the Council is reached. If a member of the Council is under investigation, he or she may not participate in the investigation and shall not be counted in the process of reaching consensus on the question of their termination. The decision of the Council is final.

4) Membership Dues

Annual membership dues of \$25.00 per household are due January 1st of each year. In order to be in good standing, all dues must be paid to date. If a member's dues are ninety (90) days delinquent, they will automatically be dropped from CCPS membership. In cases of financial hardship a request may be made to the CCPS Council for a waiver of the annual dues.

ARTICLE II: MEETINGS

1) Types of Meetings

General meetings of the CCPS shall be held as determined by the Council guided by the general membership's overall desire and needs of the organization.

In addition, the Council shall meet monthly at a regular time, or as needed. The dates and times shall be decided by the Council.

2) Notifications of Meetings

The membership will be notified at least ten (10) days in advance of the time and place of all general meetings.

ARTICLE III: COUNCIL

1) Composition of the Council

The Council shall be comprised of six (6) members, at least four (4) of whom shall be registered members of the Cherokee Nation. Each of the six must be a CCPS member in good standing. Only one (1) member of any family and/or household may serve on the Council at any given time.

2) Terms of the Council

Generally, Council members shall serve a term of two (2) years. The following positions shall initially be held for a one (1) year term: Membership Coordinator, (effective April 1, 2018). Thereafter, all Council members will be elected to two (2) year terms.

A Council member may serve two (2) full terms and then must sit out one year before running again.

Resignation of a Council member must be done in writing to the governing Council.

3) Council Positions and Duties

The positions on the Council shall be as follows:

A. Council Chairperson. Shall organize the agenda, coordinate, and conduct Council meetings and shall act as the representative spokesperson to the Cherokee Nation for the CCPS and to the public as directed by the Council or the Cherokee Nation Community Association (CNCA).

B. Records Keeper/Secretary. Shall take attendance and keep minutes at the Council and general meetings and maintain all records except as herein provided. Update and maintain and prepare reports as required by CNCA.

C. Treasurer. Shall keep all financial accounts and make financial reports to the Council and/or general membership when meetings are held. Shall convey information concerning receipt of dues and of new and renewed memberships to the Membership Coordinator. Shall make required financial reports to CNCA. Shall prepare financial statements for review by the Council. The Council shall review the financial records prior to any personnel change of the office of Treasurer.

D. Membership Coordinator. Shall keep and update membership rolls, compile the annual membership directory, provide notification of pending membership renewal dates to members,

By-Laws

Shall verify Cherokee Nation registration status as required in the CCPS Membership Rules. Shall assume the duties of the Council Chairperson in his/her absence.

E. Social Media Coordinator: Shall keep all social media systems updated. Information should ensure that it is for educational and informational purposes. No political information shall be included in social media messaging

F. Webmaster: Shall design and update the website as directed by the council. Information should ensure that it is for educational and informational purposes. No political information shall be included in social media messaging.

All Council members shall transfer all CCPS records that they maintain in their possession to their successors throughout the life of the organization.

4) Quorum

A quorum of the Council meetings shall be reached when three (3) members are present. No official business shall be acted upon unless a quorum is present at any official meeting.

5) Attendance

Council members shall be required to attend at least sixty percent (60%) of scheduled Council meetings annually and at least sixty percent (60%) of scheduled general meetings annually.

6) Vacancy

In case of a vacancy, the remaining Council members shall elect a member to serve the remainder of the vacated term.

ARTICLE IV: ELECTIONS

1) Election Committee

Ninety (90) days prior to the election of Council members the Election Committee shall be selected. It shall consist of three (3) members of voting age who are in good standing. They may not be related or from the same household. The Election Committee shall be volunteers. If there are more than three (3) volunteers, then three (3) members will be selected from such volunteers by lottery or games of chance.

Candidates and their families are ineligible to serve on the Election Committee.

2) Announcement of Candidates

Candidates must declare their candidacy no later than sixty (60) days in advance of the election. They must provide a written statement of candidacy and a biographical sketch of no more than 200 words to the Election Committee for publication in a newsletter to be distributed to members no later than thirty (30) days in advance of the election.

If not enough candidates declare within sixty (60) days prior to the election or if necessary to meet the requirement that at least four (3) of the seven (5) Council members be registered members of the Cherokee Nation, the Election Committee will recruit additional candidates.

By-Laws

3) Election Procedures

Secret balloting shall be conducted by mail. Each voting member shall receive a ballot. Ballots shall be sent out at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the election. Marked ballots must be received by the Election Committee by the day prior to the election in order to be valid.

The Membership Coordinator will provide the Election Committee the number (but not the names) of current eligible voting members. Each ballot shall then be numbered accordingly. One ballot shall be placed in each envelope and the envelope shall be sealed. The Membership Coordinator shall then provide mailing labels that shall be applied to the envelope.

The ballots shall be opened and counted at the general meeting in which the election takes place. One Election Committee member shall open the envelope and remove the ballot. A second Election Committee member shall record the number on the ballot. The third Election Committee member shall record the votes on the ballot. After all votes have been counted, they shall be recounted by the entire Election Committee for a verification of the results.

If the election results would cause the Council to have fewer than three (3) members who are registered members of the Cherokee Nation, the candidate who is a registered member of the Cherokee Nation and who has the highest vote total among all non-elected registered members of the Cherokee Nation shall be declared the winner of the Council position for which such member was a candidate. This process shall be repeated until the requirement that at least four (3) of the seven (5) Council members be registered members of the Cherokee Nation is satisfied.

The announcement of the new Council members shall be made at the meeting by the Election Committee, but the vote totals will not be announced. Individual candidates may inquire privately of the Election Committee to obtain their own vote totals.

In case of a tie, the Election Committee shall conduct a runoff election by secret vote among the eligible voting members present at the meeting to break the tie.

The Election Committee will keep the ballots for thirty (30) days after the election. After thirty (30) days the ballots shall be destroyed and the Election Committee disbanded.

4) Quorum

A quorum of fifty percent plus one (50% plus one) of the eligible voting members must be achieved for the election to be valid.

ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS OF BY-LAWS

1) Proposing Amendments

Any member may propose an amendment to these Bylaws by submitting the proposed changes in writing to the Council at least sixty (60) days prior to the election of Council members. The Council will collect all proposed amendments and present them for a vote annually at the same time as the election for Council members. The Council shall have the discretion to bring any proposed amendment to the immediate vote of the membership if such urgency is deemed necessary. The vote to accept proposed amendments shall be conducted by mail at the same time and in the same manner as the election of Council members.

By-Laws

2) Accepting Amendments

A quorum of fifty percent plus one (50% plus one) of total ballots need to be returned for a valid election to amend by-laws. An affirmative vote of sixty-seven percent (67%) of the returned ballots is required to pass an amendment.

3) Amendments required by CNCA

In the event that amendments to the Bylaws be required by CNCA, such amendments may be incorporated by a majority approval of the CCPS Council.

ARTICLE VI: GIFTS AND DONATIONS

1) Acceptance of Gifts and Donations

All gifts and donations must be approved by the Council prior to acceptance and will be subject to CNCA approval in accordance with CNCA's by-laws.

2) Contributions by the Cherokee Community of Puget Sound

All donations or honorariums made by the CCPS up to and including one hundred dollars (\$500.00) must be approved by the Council. Amounts exceeding one hundred dollars (\$500.00) must be approved at a general membership meeting. A simple majority will prevail.

ARTICLE VII: REPORTS

1) Required Reports

The Treasurer shall make regular financial reports to the Council and semi-annual written reports to the membership. The financial records will be reviewed annually by the Council and a financial report will be sent to the CNCA as required by the CNCA.

The Membership Coordinator will compile annually a membership directory to be distributed to all Cherokee Community of Puget Sound members.

ARTICLE VIII: COMMITTEES

1) Oversight Committees

The Council shall oversee the functions of all committees.

2) Types of Committees

Other committees may be formed or positions appointed by the Council as necessity dictates.

ARTICLE IX: ENDORSEMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS

1) Endorsements

No member of CCPS shall use the name of the CCPS in political campaigns or as an endorsement of any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

The CCPS as an organization is prohibited from campaigning for or endorsing any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

2) Representations

No member of the CCPS shall use the name of the organization to represent themselves for direct commercial gain, and/or for purposes of self-promotion or the promotion of any individual's outside interests, except with permission from the Council.

CCPS members may state their membership for identification purposes only on resumes or other similar applications.

ARTICLE X: DISSOLUTION

1) Procedure

The Cherokee Community of Puget Sound may dissolve at any time by a 2/3 vote of the membership or by the Cherokee Nation, provided that at least five days notice of the proposal to dissolve has been given to all members.

2) Distribution of Assets

In the event of the dissolution of CCPS, all remaining assets will be distributed only to organizations which are exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or successor provisions thereto.

When the dissolution occurs, all assets will be disposed accordingly, with a final CCPS Council meeting to dispose of all assets."