

Cherokee Community of Puget Sound (CC-PS)

Bylaws

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Introduction

The Cherokee Community of Puget Sound (CC-PS) is a 501-(c)-(3) (non-profit) organization recognized by the Cherokee Nation as a satellite community of at-large Cherokee Nation citizens and associates.

Purpose

The Cherokee Community of Puget Sound (CC-PS) creates community for at-large Cherokee Nation citizens and associates in the state of Washington by providing fellowship and learning opportunities through training and culture sharing. As an organization 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.

Article I: Membership

Persons desiring membership in CC-PS must complete an application and pay annual membership dues. The approval of all membership applications is at the discretion of the Council. Membership will be valid from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Mid-year applications are treated the same as renewals. Membership dues shall be paid on an annual basis.

Section 1. Classes of Members

There shall be two categories of membership in the CC-PS.

- Cherokee Citizenship Membership. A Cherokee Nation Citizen membership requires that at least one member of a family household be a registered member of the Cherokee Nation. The Membership Coordinator will verify the applicant's status via the Cherokee Nation Citizen Card (aka "Blue card) or the Cherokee Nation photo ID. At least sixty percent (60%) of all member households of the CC--PS must be Citizen Members.
- 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 CC-PS.

Section 2. Membership Dues

Annual membership dues for voting and associate membership are \$25 for a household. All individuals in a household are eligible to apply for membership. The application form shall include the name and contact information for each individual, including postal mailing and email addresses and phone number. If a member's dues are ninety (90) days delinquent, they will no longer be considered a member and voting privileges will be revoked.

Section 3. Voting Rights

All members of a household who are at least eighteen (18) years of age who are listed on the CC-PS membership rolls as a Citizen shall have the right to vote in all CC-PS elections. Any changes in household membership must be reported to the CC-PS. Individuals who are unable to pay the annual dues, due to a hardship, may request a waiver of annual dues from the Council. The Council will review and render a decision as to whether it will approve the waiver. Associate members shall have voting rights.

Section 4. Termination.

The Council may terminate a member's membership for violation of these Bylaws, or for action that is considered detrimental to the organization. Any member may bring a grievance to the Council for investigation of detrimental conduct. The Council shall investigate all grievances. The investigation may include obtaining testimony and evidence from the accused member. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Council may elect to terminate the membership upon a simple majority vote. When a Council member is under investigation, such Council member shall not participate in the investigation or the Council vote on termination.

Article II: Meetings

General meetings of the CC-PS shall be held as determined by the Council and guided by the general membership's overall desires and needs of the organization. The membership will be notified of general meetings at least ten (10) days in advance. Participation in meetings may be via telephone, internet, or in person. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.

Meetings of the Council shall be governed by a quorum, or a majority of Council members, in order for any votes to be considered. Again, participation may be via telephone or the internet.

Article III: Council of Officers

A Council of Officers shall manage the affairs of the organization.

Section 1. Number

The Council shall consist of not fewer than four (4) nor more than seven (7) Council members, the specific number set by resolution of the Council.

Section 2. Qualifications

All Council members shall be registered members of the Cherokee Nation and must be residents of the State of Washington.

Section 3. Terms of the Council

Council members shall serve a term of two (2) years. The resignation of a Council member must be done in writing to the Council.

- (a) All Council members shall be elected to serve a two-year term. However, the term may be extended until a successor has been elected.
- (b) Council member terms shall be staggered so that approximately half the number will end their terms in any given year.
- (c) The term of office shall be considered to begin January 1 and end December 31 of the second year in office unless the term is extended until such time as a successor has been elected.
- (d) There is no maximum period of office, although each position is open for election every two years.

Section 4. Qualifications and Elections of Council Members

To be eligible to serve as an officer, the individual must be 18 years of age and a member of CC-PS. It is expected that officers attend sixty (60) percent of regular CC-PS meetings and attend the annual meeting, unless excused by the Council Chair due to special circumstances. Council members may be proposed and elected at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the Council members. Unless a Council member dies, resigns, or is removed, they shall hold office until their term is up. The election of Council members to replace those who have fulfilled their term of office shall take place in October of each year. Only one member of a household is eligible for Council membership.

Section 5. Vacancies

Officers may fill vacancies due to the expiration of a Council member's term of office, resignation, death, or removal of a Council member, or may appoint a new Council member, to fill a previously unfulfilled position, subject to the maximum number of Council members under these Bylaws.

Section 6. Removal of Council Members

A Council member may be removed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council then in office, if:

- (a) The member is absent and unexcused from forty (40) percent or more of Council meetings in a twelve-month period. The Council Chair is empowered to excuse members from attendance for a reason deemed adequate by the Chair. The Council Chair shall not have the power to excuse themselves from a regular meeting and in that case, the Vice Council Chair shall have the power.
- (b) Before any meeting of the Council at which a vote of removal will be made, the Council member in question is given electronic or written notification of the Council's intention to discuss their case and is given the opportunity to be heard by the Council.

Section 7. Quorum

A majority of the Council members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Only business not requiring voting may be considered in meetings at which a quorum is not present. Council members cannot vote by proxy; all Council members must be participating to vote.

Section 8. Compensation

Council members shall receive no compensation for performing their duties. The Council may adopt policies providing reasonable reimbursement for Council members for expenses incurred in conjunction with fulfilling Council responsibilities.

Section 9: Council Officers

The elected officers include -the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Council Chairperson. Shall organize the agenda, conduct Council and general meetings, and shall function as the spokesperson to the Cherokee Nation. Will coordinate with state and federal agencies as listed by Council Chair.

Vice-Chairperson. Shall assume the role of the Chairperson in their absence.

Secretary. Shall take attendance and keep minutes of the council meetings and maintain all records. Shall update and prepare reports as required by the Cherokee Nation and State of Washington 501-(c)-3 status.

Treasurer. Shall keep all financial accounts and make financial reports to the Cherokee Nation as required. The Council shall review the financial records at the time of a change in the Treasurer position. Shall coordinate and maintain State and federal records as required.

Section 10: Gadugi Council

An Advisory Council, called the Gadugi Council, is a place for other members to contribute their talent, expertise, and time toward CC-PS goals, like monthly meetings and the chief's annual visit. Positions are advisory, and at the discretion of the Council.

Membership Coordination: Shall keep and update membership rolls, compile the annual membership directory, provide notification of pending membership renewal dates to members, and shall verify Cherokee Nation registration status.

Event Coordination: Shall take the lead in planning, coordinating, and executing events, as well as the annual visit from the Cherokee Nation leadership.

Social Media Coordination: Shall design, update and maintain and all social media systems as directed by the Council. Shall ensure that all information is for educational and informational purposes.

Webmaster: Shall design, update and maintain the website as directed by the Council. Shall ensure that all information is for educational and informational purposes.

Veteran Recognition: Shall take the lead in efforts to recognize CC-PS member veterans.

Media Club Coordination: Shall take the lead in planning, coordinating, and executing events for a monthly review of books, stories, films, or other media for the review of Cherokee and/or other native artists' works.

Newsletter Coordination: Shall take the lead in preparing a written newsletter of events and activities related to CC-PS. The newsletter shall be in a printed format, with content as directed by the Council. Shall ensure that all information is for educational purposes.

Section 10. Rules of Procedure

The rules of procedure at meetings of the Council shall be the rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order on Parliamentary Procedure, Newly Revised, so far as applicable and when not inconsistent with these Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, or any resolution of the Council.

Article IV: Elections

Candidates shall declare their candidacy no later than thirty (30) days in advance of an election. They must provide a written statement of candidacy and a biographical sketch of no more than 300 words to a Council member for publication in a newsletter or email. This document is to be sent via email to voting members no later than thirty (30) days prior to a scheduled election.

Secret balloting shall be conducted by email. 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 day prior to the election in order to be valid.

The candidate(s) who have the highest vote total shall be declared the winner of the Council position(s) for which the member was a candidate. In cases of ties, a new election will be held for that position, repeating the election process above.

The election of the new Council members shall be made at a general meeting, but the vote totals will not be announced. Individual candidates may inquire privately to obtain their own vote totals. The ballots will be kept for thirty (30) days after the election and then destroyed.

Article V: Amendments of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended, altered, repealed, or restated by a vote of the majority of the Council, providing however, that no amendment shall be made to these Bylaws:

- (a) That no amendment shall be made to these Bylaws which would cause the group to cease to qualify as exempt under Section 501-(c)-(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, and
- (b) That an amendment does not affect the voting rights of Council members. An amendment that does affect the voting rights of Council members further requires ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of a quorum at a Council meeting.
- (c) That all amendments be consistent with the Articles of Incorporation.

Article VI: Committees

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

Article VII: Endorsements and Representations

Endorsements. No member of CC-PS shall use the name of the CC-PS in political campaigns as an endorsement of any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election. The CC-PS as an organization is prohibited from campaigning or endorsing any candidate for political office or any election.

Representations. No member of the CC-PS shall use the name of the organization to represent themselves for direct commercial gain and/or for the purposes of self-promotion or the promotion of any individuals outside interest, except with permission of the Council.

CC-PS members may state their membership for identification purposes only on resumes or similar applications.

Article VIII: Financial Provisions

Loans. No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the Council and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a resolution of the Council.

Checks, Drafts, etc. All checks, drafts, or other orders for payment of money issued in the name of the Council shall be signed by such officer or officers of the Council as determined by a Resolution of the Council.

Deposits. All funds of the Council not otherwise employed shall be deposited in such banks as the Council may select.

Donor Records.

- (a) All donor records shall be available for consultation by the members and donors concerned or by their legal representative.
- (b) No donor records shall be available to any other person outside the group except the authorized governmental agencies.
- (c) Donor records shall be made available to the Council when requested.

Article IX: Dissolution

Procedure. CC-PS may dissolve at any time by a two-thirds vote of the membership or by the Cherokee Nation, provided that at least one month’s notice of the proposal to dissolve has been given to all members.

Distribution of Assets. In the event of dissolution of CC-PS, 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 of accordingly, with a final CC-PS Council meeting to dispose of all assets.

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION OF BYLAWS

I do hereby certify that the above stated Bylaws of the Cherokee Community of Puget Sound were approved by the Cherokee Community of Puget Sound Council and constitute a complete copy of the Bylaws of the group.

The foregoing Bylaws were adopted by the Council on June 24, 2024

Ellis M. Craig – signature on file

Secretary