

# DCFCA Constitution

As last amended June 24, 2015

**The D.C. Federation of Civic Associations was organized November 10, 1921, and incorporated April 17, 1941. It received US 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status on October 24, 2001, and a certificate of exemption from DC sales and use tax on January 28, 2002.**

## Preamble

We the citizens of the District of Columbia who believe that community betterment is based upon first, the recognition of the interdependence of individuals and organizations existing in our city, and second, the cooperation of all residents in the task of making better citizens and a better community, have joined together in local civic associations for our mutual self-interest. We have, by our vote, affiliated each of our local associations with the District of Columbia Federation of Civic Associations, Incorporated, which is guided by the objectives of, and derives its authority from, this Constitution, which we, the organized citizens who are interested in community betterment, do ordain.

## Article I. Name

This organization shall be known as the District of Columbia Federation of Civic Associations, Incorporated.

## Article II. Objectives

The objectives of the Federation shall be as follows:

1. To consider and act upon any matters affecting the civic interest and general welfare of the residents of the District of Columbia;

2. To provide a strong vehicle through which member organizations may

participate in the shaping of their community life;

3. To act as an official civic body assisting District officials in the development, publication, and implementation of citywide programs in the interest of the citizenry;

4. To determine the city's important needs, to seek solutions and relief of community problems through research and study, and to carry out plans agreed upon by community consent;

5. To serve as a channel through which plans and projects of citywide public and volunteer agencies may be disseminated for support and adaptation to neighborhood programs;

6. To promote cooperation with other organizations and agencies whose aims are to raise the standards of the community, and to secure adequate laws for the protection and wellbeing of all citizens;

7. To interest, develop, and prepare citizens as workers and leaders in civic and community programs;

8. To encourage member organizations to sponsor, train, develop, and encourage young people in civic work and to organize junior civic associations; and

9. To organize and support a Federation of Junior Civic Associations.

10. To grant scholarships to deserving DC Public School system graduates admitted to American colleges.

11. Upon the dissolution of this organization, all assets shall be distributed for one or more tax exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal

government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

### **Article III. Membership**

Section 1. The Federation shall be composed of nonpolitical, nonsectarian civic organizations which have individual memberships and which are established for, and are devoted to, the improvement of the civic interest and general welfare of residents of the District of Columbia.

Section 2. All organizations admitted to membership in the Federation shall meet the following criteria:

(A) Have objectives in line with those of the Federation, as stated in Article II, above;

(B) Have a minimum of fifty (50) financial members who are residents of, or who have interests in, the District of Columbia;

(C) Hold regular meetings of their general membership;

(D) Hold regular elections at least every two years of the principal officers, one of whom should be president;

(E) Have a democratic constitution properly ratified by the membership; and

(F) Submit an application including its constitution, documenting criteria (A) through (D), and including current dues to the Federation.

Section 3. Civic Associations which have definite geographical boundaries not conflicting with the boundaries of present member associations may be admitted by the majority vote of delegates present and voting.

Section 4. Other organizations which have no definite boundaries, or civic associations whose boundaries conflict with those of member associations, may be admitted by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of delegates present and voting; provided:

(A) That the applicant meets a community need in its area or field which no

present member organization effectively addresses; and

(B) That in the event there is an unresolved boundary dispute with a member association, the Membership and Credentials Committee has determined:

(1) That the applicant has tried unsuccessfully to interest the member association in its needs, and

(2) That negotiations between the parties have failed.

Section 5. A member organization may be suspended from the Federation for the failure to maintain any of the criteria stated in Section 2 of this Article, or for other causes deemed prejudicial to the Federation, upon recommendation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Committee and ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of delegates present and voting in the Assembly at the next regular meeting after the month in which the Executive Committee made its recommendation; provided:

(A) That charges have been submitted in writing by no fewer than three delegates from three different member organizations at a regular meeting of the Executive Committee;

(B) That copies of the charges shall have been mailed by the Executive Committee to delegates of record of the member organization within one week of submission of charges;

(C) That the delegates bringing the charges deliver or mail copies of the charges to all members of the Executive Committee within two weeks of bringing charges;

(D) That the charges be considered at the next regular meeting of the Executive Committee;

(E) That if the suspension is recommended, that it be reported in the notice of the Assembly meeting that will consider the recommendation; and

(F) That the member organization be given reasonable opportunity to be heard and to answer all charges brought against it at the Executive Committee and Assembly meetings considering the charges.

Section 6. A suspended member organization may be readmitted by the same procedures as are currently applicable for admission.

#### **Article IV. Representation**

Section 1. All delegates shall live within their civic association boundaries. Each member organization of the Federation shall be entitled to six delegates, one of whom shall be its president, and one of whom shall be a representative of its junior civic association. If the organization does not have a junior civic association, then it may send a youth representative from the parent organization. For a youth to be a voting delegate, he or she must be at least 15 years of age and attending school (in 10th to 12th grade). Youths not meeting these criteria may represent their Junior Civic Association or their parent organization as nonvoting representatives in the Federation Assembly. Nonvoting youth representatives shall have the basic right to attend meetings, speak in debates, and participate in other nonvoting activities of the Federation.

Section 2. Each member organization may designate six alternates (one a youth, who meets the criteria for voting delegate as defined above) who shall be entitled to vote when its delegates are absent.

Section 3. The Federation may, upon majority vote, elect as delegate-at-large for life anyone who has served as president of the Federation for at least one term. Such delegates-at-large may have a voice and a vote in all deliberations as long as they are members of a financial member organization.

Section 4. Delegates who have been properly certified by their member organizations and delegates-at-large shall constitute the Assembly, which shall be vested with all powers of the Federation,

expressed and implied, provided for in this Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 5. A member organization may withdraw any of its delegates or alternates at any time by written certification to the Federation.

#### **Article V. Officers**

Section 1. The elected officers of the Federation shall be: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, Recording Secretary, Assistant Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Assistant Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2. The appointed officers of the Federation shall be Chaplain, Parliamentarian, Archivist, and Sergeant-at-Arms.

Section 3. All officers shall be delegates or alternates to the Federation at the time of their election or appointment.

Section 4. The duties of the various officers shall be such as usually pertain to their respective offices. In addition, the Vice Presidents shall coordinate the work of committees of the Federation as designated by the President.

Section 5. Officers may be removed for causes prejudicial to the Federation upon recommendation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Committee and ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of delegates present and voting in the Assembly at its next regular meeting after the month in which the Executive committee made its recommendation, subject to the same provisions for written charges, advance notice, and reasonable opportunity to be heard and answer charges as apply to suspension of member organizations in Article III, Section 5, above; except that charges must be brought by action of three member organizations.

## **Article VI. Elections**

Section 1. The election and installation of officers shall be at the Annual Meeting on the first Wednesday in December.

Section 2. Election shall be staggered with the President, Second Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer elected in the even years and the following offices will be elected in the odd years: First Vice President, Third Vice President, Assistant Recording Secretary, Assistant Corresponding Secretary and Financial Secretary.

Section 3. Officers shall assume office at the close of the Annual Meeting in December and shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors shall be elected, or appointed and installed.

Section 4. Any officer shall be eligible for re-election to succeed himself if he is a duly qualified delegate or alternate, but no President after 1985 shall be eligible to hold office for more than two terms successively.

Section 5. If a vacancy shall occur in the office of the President, the First Vice President shall immediately assume the duties of the President, the Second Vice President shall assume the duties of the first Vice President, and the Third Vice President shall assume the duties of the Second vice President.

Section 6. If vacancies shall occur in other elected offices, the Executive Committee shall elect officers to fill the unexpired term.

## **Article VII. Un-financial Status**

A member organization that has not paid its dues by April shall be deemed un-financial. Delegates of un-financial member organizations shall have no vote in the Federation, and delegates which have been un-financial for one full year shall not be entitled to receive notices or other services from the Federation.

## **Article VIII. Assembly Meetings**

Section 1. The Assembly shall hold regular meetings on the fourth Wednesday of each month except July, August, and December. A regular meeting of the Assembly may be suspended or rescheduled upon two-thirds (2/3) vote of delegates present and voting at the meeting immediately preceding the meeting to be suspended or rescheduled. The President may cancel a regular meeting of the Assembly if a state of emergency has been declared for the District of Columbia.

Section 2. The Annual Meeting of the Assembly shall be the first Wednesday in December.

Section 3. Special meetings of the Assembly may be called by the President when deemed necessary.

Section 4. Special meetings shall be called by the President if he is requested in writing to do so by at least one delegate from each of at least ten financial member organizations.

Section 5. All calls for special meetings shall be made by written communication to all delegates, and no business shall be considered at such meeting except as has been expressly mentioned in the notice. If the special meeting is called to substitute for a canceled Assembly meeting, however, the published agenda for the cancelled meeting shall constitute the agenda for the special meeting.

## **Article IX. Executive Committee**

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the elected officers of the Federation and the chairs of the standing committees of the Federation.

Section 2. Chairs of special and ad hoc committees of the Federation, as well as other delegates and resource persons, may be invited at the discretion of the President to attend meetings of the Executive Committee on a nonvoting basis.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall hold regular meetings approximately two weeks before the Assembly meeting at a day, time, and place designated by the President.

Section 4. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President when deemed necessary; and shall be called when requested by four members of the Committee, or by presidents of ten member associations.

Section 5. Matters of general concern to the Federation shall, if time permits, first be referred to an appropriate committee or the Executive Committee for consideration and recommendation to the Assembly.

Section 6. The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility and authority to take action within the scope of policies established by the Assembly, in order to carry them out.

Section 7. Any member of the Executive Committee may ask, upon a point of order, when the report of the Executive Committee to the Assembly has been made, for a report on any action by the committee which the member believes has been improperly omitted from the report.

## **Article X. Amendments**

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at any regular meeting of the Assembly; provided that the proposal shall have been submitted in writing at a previous regular meeting, and that the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to each delegate at least fifteen (15) days previously.