

ROYAL BAHAMAS DEFENCE FORCE VETERAN ASSOCIATION

BYLAWS 2013

ARTICLE I - ESTABLISHMENT

The Royal Bahamas Defence Force Veteran Association was organized from a meeting held on 10th May 2012 to be a non-profit organization to serve and assist its members.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

Section1 General.

The objectives of the Association are as follows:

To further the efficiency and wellbeing of the service preserve its traditions and Encourage Recruiting.

- (a) To foster comradeship among those who have served in the RBDF
- (b) To provide facilities for bringing members together
- (c) To perpetuate the memory of those members of the RBDF who have died in the, service of their country
- (e) To provide relief from conditions of need, hardship or distress, to persons who have served in the RBDF and all dependents of such persons
- (f) To advise and assist in their search for employment
- (g) To advise members and their dependents on personal matters, such as pensions, compensation, health and national insurance benefits and other subjects affecting their welfare
- (h) To pursue any of the above for benefit of former members and their dependents
- (i) To encourage visits, holidays and social activities, which promote comradeship among members
- j) To assist the RBDF Ranger Programme

Section2. Non-Profit.

None of the aforementioned objectives shall be construed to authorize the Association to conduct activities for monetary profit or financial gain or to attempt to influence legislation.

2.1 Patron

The Governor General shall be the Patron of the Association and any appointed Deputy Governor General will be Vice Patron.

ARTICLE III: TERMS AND USAGE

Section 1.1 INTERPRETATION:

ASSOCIATION - means Royal Bahamas Defence Force Veterans in the Bahamas RBDFVA.

BOARD - means the directors and Executive officers of the Association as elected, or otherwise provided for by the Association at Convention.

GOOD STANDING – a member shall be in good standing when:

- (i) His/her annual dues are fully paid up as of the 31st of December.
- (ii) He/she is not in default of financial indebtedness to Association.
- (iii) His/her membership is not under suspension,

EMPLOYEE – means an employee from who is eligible to receive salary from the Association.

RULES OF ORDER – where these By-Laws, the Convention or the Board has not made any rule or order governing any particular proceedings,

WORDS AND GENDER – words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa; and words importing a male person include a female person.

SEAL - The seal means the official seal of the Association.

ORGANIZATION

Section 1.1 HEADQUARTERS

The Association headquarters shall be located in New Providence Bahamas.

Section 1.2 FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Association shall end on the 31st of December in each year.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Association shall be All past, present members of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force and its Reserve, and any person who served in the British Commonwealth Forces of a nation shall be eligible for Full Membership; provided that such members and persons shall have served in Defence Force or other Military Force for not less than six months, or were honourably discharged disabled having served a shorter period”.

RANK

No member of the association shall be entitled to rank or precedence over any other member by reason of having held, at any time rank, command, appointment or commission.

A Member is to be address as “Shipmate by other members.

A. FULL MEMBERSHIP (Voting, Office Bearing)

Any past member of the RBDF
Honorable Discharge
Any Rank or Rate

B. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP (Voting, Non-Office Bearing)

All serving and retired members of Military in Country
Members of RAFA/British Legion/Ex Services

C. HONORARY MEMBERSHIP (Non-Voting, Non-Office Bearing)

Honorary Membership may be grated to those persons who by reason of their interest in and service to Veterans and their Families. Membership must be approved by the Association’s Executives.

D. APPLICATION PROCESSING FEE

Every applicant for membership shall complete an application as provided by the Association and will be required to provide a (BSD \$20.00), application processing fee.

Certificate of Membership

The certificate is to be issued by the association to each Member evidencing their membership in the Association.

Section 1.3 VOTING ASSOCIATE MEMBER:

Any associate member who renews a membership after one year (12 months) in good standing can apply and may be given this membership status.

- (i) This member is eligible to attend meetings with the right to vote and serve on committees.
- (ii) This member may not serve on the executive or attend conventions as a delegate.

To be limited to those (not otherwise qualified) who by reason of their interest in and service to Veterans and their families and the work of the Association generally deserve such honour, and to be allowed admittance at all times, upon approval of the Association.

ARTICLE V: DUES

All Full and Associate Members shall pay (BSD \$10.00) monthly. Dues are to be received by the Treasurer no later than December 31st of any given calendar year.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

QUORUM

Two thirds (2/3) qualified members present shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may adjourn a convention.

ARTICLE VII: VOTING RIGHTS

Section 1: Executive Officers have one vote each on any item.

Section 2: Any member of any member/organization cited in Article II, and the public in general, are both welcome and encouraged to attend meetings. Anyone may give a presentation to the Association for their cause, however, only members of the Association may make motions for any action and only Association members may vote on any motion before the Association.

Section 3: The Secretary will maintain a roster of all registered Members represented and may be called upon during any meeting to verify the credentials of any person casting a vote.

Section 4: Liaison officers from Royal Bahamas Defence force or counsels will not be eligible to vote.

Section 5: A simple majority of 51% or more is sufficient to pass any proposal with the exception of the changes to the Bylaws, which will require a two-thirds majority vote of members present. (Refer to Article XII, Section 2).

Section VIII VOTING PROCEDURE

Except for the election of Executive Officers, all voting shall be either by a show of hands or as a standing vote, as the presiding Officer may direct, unless the "ayes" and "nays" are demanded. When the "ayes" and "nays" are demanded, the secretary shall call the roll and record the "ayes" and "nays". The presiding officer shall declare the result of such a vote.

Section 8.1 MAJORITY OF VOTES

Unless otherwise herein provided, the decision of the Convention shall be by a majority of votes cast.

Section 8.2 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The President shall appoint the following committees: Grievance and Appeals Committee, and such other committees as the Convention may deem necessary.

Section 8.3 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committees other than the Constitution, Resolutions, Finance, Credentials, Membership and Publicity Committees shall consist of such members as the Board decides.

Section 8.4 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND RULES

Each Committee shall elect its own chairperson, make its own rules, set its own quorum, and shall consider and report all matters referred to it: and may, of its own motion, make recommendations upon such other matters as it may consider desirable.

Section 8.5 RESOLUTION REFFERAL

All resolutions, which have been submitted, to the duties of the President are to:

a. Act as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Association, and as an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominations Committee.

Section 8.6 RESOLUTIONS

All resolutions proposed to be submitted to the Convention shall:

8.6.1 Be proposed by the Board and shall be forwarded to the secretary at least sixty (60) days before the date of the Convention. Resolutions of any member of the Association may be submitted in the same manner as above

8.6.2 Each Resolution shall:

(i) deal with one subject only;

(ii) be typewritten or printed upon a separate sheet of letter size paper (21.5 cm x 28 cm); and

(iii) be clear and concise with either sufficient preamble or explanatory footnote.

8.6.3 The Board or Convention may refuse to receive or consider any resolution not properly presented in accordance with this paragraph.

8.6.4 Resolutions which are not received by the secretary within the time prescribed in

8.6.5 shall be listed separately from the others and may only be considered after all those received within the prescribed time to have been dealt with.

8.6.6 No supplementary resolutions be accepted on the convention floor without (12) twelve hours' notice prior to being presented for the vote.

8.6.7 The secretary shall, not less than thirty (30) days before the convention, endeavour to send all of its Members, a copy of all resolutions received within the time limited in bylaw 8.6.1

8.6.8 No resolution or motion amending the constitution, rules, or bylaws shall be considered:

1 Unless on motion of the Board or of any member.

2 Provided however that the Convention may by a two-thirds majority vote dispense with such notice of motion.

4 A two-thirds majority vote shall be required to pass amendments to the constitution, rules and bylaws.

5 Unless otherwise stated, all amendments to the bylaws, rules and constitution will be effective as and from the termination of the Convention at which such amendments are approved.

6 Official minutes of the convention shall be the notification to members to amend their bylaws to conform to any amendments affecting the Association administration or responsibility approved there at.

8.6.9 The mover of a resolution, which is not endorsed by a committee, may appeal to the Convention, and upon receiving a two-thirds majority vote of the Convention may submit the resolution to the Convention.

8.6.10 Any resolution or other matter brought before a Convention may be referred by the presiding officer to a standing or special committee for consideration and report, and shall not be considered by the Convention until such committee reports. The Convention may by a two-thirds

ARTICLE IX: OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Section 1: The elected officers of the duties of the President are to:

DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

Section 2 the duties of the President are to:

a. Act as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Association, and as an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominations Committee.

b. Appoint chairmen of standing and special committees.

c. Make a decision pending approval of the membership in case of doubt as to the duties and responsibilities of any officer or committee chairman.

d. Appoint a replacement to fulfill the duties of any elected official for anyone who might resign or become unable to fulfill their duties. This appointment must be verified or rejected by the membership at the second regularly scheduled meeting after the appointment is made. See Article X, Section 9.

e. Preside at all meetings and assure that the Association operates within the parameters established in these bylaws.

- f. Set goals and objectives for the Association, including but not limited to membership, programs, financial matters, and communication with the membership and public.
- g. Oversee and manage the Association's Internet presence, member e-mail lists, and newsletter.
- h. Maintain liaison with other veterans' organizations in the area and other organizations impacting upon the Association.
- i. Represent the Association at Veteran's Day services, Memorial Day ceremonies, and any other appropriate commemorative occasion.
- j. Present awards and citations
- k. Participate in the observance of the death of a member, such as a visitation at a wake or attendance at the funeral, as may be appropriate.
- l. Act as final arbiter for all interpretations of the meaning/intent of these bylaws.
- m. Undertake other duties as the position of President may require or as voted upon by the membership.

Section 3 Vice-President: In the absence or by reason of the inability of the President to act, the First Vice-President shall discharge all the duties and exercise all the powers of the President and in the absence of the President and the First Vice-President, the second Vice-President present shall discharge all the duties and exercise all the powers of the President.

Section 4 Secretary:

4.1 The secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the Association and of the board in special books to be kept for that purpose, and shall be required at every meeting to have the proper minute book and all necessary books and correspondence relative to the business likely to be transacted at such meeting. The Secretary shall be custodian of the seal of the Association, and all books and official records belonging hereto, excepting those of the Treasurer. The Secretary shall act at all times and in all respects entirely at the will of the Association executive officers, and shall conform to such rules and regulations as they may make.

4.2 The secretary of the Association, with such assistance as shall be given by the convention, shall act as convention secretary, and shall keep a true and correct record of its proceedings, and shall act at all times in all respects at the discretion of the convention.

Section 5 Treasurer:

5.1 The treasurer shall keep a just and true account of all monies received and paid out by the Association and of all financial transactions of every kind, and of all assets and liabilities of the Association. The treasurer shall deposit all funds of the Association in such chartered bank as the executive officers may determine in the name of the Association.

5.2 All monies payable by the Association shall be paid out by cheque only, which shall be signed by the treasurer and either the assistant treasurer, president or one of the vice-presidents and no cheque shall in any case be signed blank.

5.3 The treasurer shall keep the books of the Association at the head office, and they shall be open to inspection of the executive officers at all times.

5.4 When required by the executive officers, the treasurer shall prepare and submit a balance sheet showing all assets and liabilities of the Association, and all its financial dealings arranged in proper order.

5.5 Notwithstanding sub-section 5.3 above, the treasurer shall produce the books and financial records of the Association for inspection by the finance committee at the time and place of each biennial convention of the Association.

Section 6 AUDIT:

6.1 The executive officers shall, as often as they think necessary, but at least once in each calendar year, have the financial records of the Association duly audited by a chartered accountant, who shall provide the officers and board with duly certified copies of the financial statements.

6.2+ Each Provincial Command shall be provided with copies of such financial statements sixty (60) days prior to the Association Board of Directors' meetings.

6.3 The Treasurer shall furnish the board and finance committee, at least sixty (60) days prior to the biennial convention, an audited Statement and balance sheet covering the affairs of the Association since the last biennial convention.

- **EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
- (a) The office bearers of the Association shall be :
 - (i) The President
 - (ii) Two Vice Presidents
 - (iii) Secretary
 - (iv) Assistant Secretary
 - (v) Treasurer
 - (vi) Assistant Treasurer
- (b) There shall be 9 committee members, four of whom shall be assigned by the President. Two will be appointed as assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer, and 02 other members.
- (c) The Office Bearers and Committee Members shall be proposed by the names circulated to all members 30 days before the AGM. Any members desirous of proposing names for Office Bearers and Committee Members should submit the proposal with seconder's endorsement and the written consent of the nominee 14 days before the AGM to the Hon Secretary.

ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES

Section 1: The Standing Committees of the Association shall be the Audit Committee, Bylaws Committee, Patriotic Observance Committee, Nominating Committee, and

Membership Committee. The President may appoint special committees as required, such as the Veteran of the Year, special events, investigations, assistance in preparing position statements, etc., as deemed appropriate.

Section 2: The President will serve as an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominations Committee. Committee Chairmen shall have the authority to appoint additional members to their committees as required.

Section 3: The Audit Committee shall make an annual audit of all financial records. Upon approval by the Audit Committee, the Audit Committee shall submit its report, with its findings and any recommendations, in writing, to the Association for final approval. The report will be given at the first Association meeting after the conclusion of the audit.

Section 4: The Bylaws Committee will meet at least once annually during the first quarter of each calendar year. The committee will review the Bylaws and recommend any changes. Such changes will be published at least 30 days prior to any meeting where the acceptance of any Bylaws changes is to occur. (Refer to Article XII, Section 1, for details).

CHAPLAIN(S) APPOINTMENT

The appointment of a Chaplin, or Chaplains, shall be by the Members at General Meetings or at the convention.

Section 5: The duties of the Association Chaplain are to:

- a. Give the prayer at all scheduled monthly meetings of the Association.
- b. Give the prayer at all candidate forums and special meetings called by the President.
- c. Be available to represent the Association by giving the prayer at special occasions, as needed.
- d. Keep the President informed of illnesses of members of the Association.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

Section 6: The duties of the Commission Sergeant-At-Arms are to:

- a. Be responsible for the security at all scheduled monthly meetings of the Association.
- b. Be responsible for the security at all candidate forums and special meetings called by the President.
- c. Appoint, as needed, additional Sergeants-At-Arms to fulfill the duties of the Sergeant-At-Arms' office.
- d. Be the Chair of the Security Committee, which may be called together at the discretion of the President or Sergeant-At-Arms. The Committee will be made up of all appointed Sergeants-At-Arms and other members as deemed appropriate by the Sergeant-At-Arms
- e. Establish, as needed, a Color/Honor Guard.

ARTICLE XI: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1: The Nominations Committee will consist of at least three members, none of whom may be elected Commissioners. Anyone may recommend a nominee to the Nominations Committee. At the July meeting, the slate of nominees will be announced and any further nominations may be accepted from the floor. The floor nominated nominee may be accepted. At this point nominations will close.

Section 2: A candidate must be a member in good standing in their parent organization, and that organization must be a member in good standing of the Association.

Section 3: A candidate must be present and accept the nomination or have submitted a letter of acceptance in advance for the office at the time of nomination.

Section 4: No person may hold more than one elective office in the Association at the same time, however, only if necessary and upon approval of the Association, the offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined, but this is discouraged.

Section 5: The election of Officers will be held every three (3) years, with a term of office beginning on 31st January and continuing until their successors are elected.

Section 6: All voting for officers shall be by secret ballot. Absentee voting is prohibited. However, in the event that all elected officers have agreed to serve for another term, if this is agreeable with the Nominations Committee, and there are no nominees to vie for any office, then a motion may be entertained for an election by acclamation, which will be duly recorded by the Secretary.

Section 7: The Nominations Committee Chairman will preside over the conduct of any election. The Secretary will verify the qualifications of all delegates and alternates who are to cast a vote.

Section 8: There are no term limits for elected officers. As long as an officer is willing, able, and indeed carrying out the duties of their office in an exemplary manner, then the Association should give serious consideration for allowing them to continue.

Section 9: A vacancy in any elected office, except for the office of the President, may be temporarily filled by appointment by the President. At the next Association meeting, the Association may entertain nominations for the vacated position with an election at the following meeting. No one is to be nominated and elected at the same meeting. The person elected will serve for the remainder of the term to which the vacated officer was initially elected.

Section 10: Note the time between the nomination of officers and election as cited in Sections 5 and 9 of this Article. This is to allow each nominee time to meet with the Association delegates, prepare a resume, and otherwise make their qualifications and positions known to the voting Association members.

ARTICLE XII: MEETINGS

Section 1: The regular meetings of the Association shall be held at a time and place designated by the Association President.

Section 2: The Association shall meet at least once monthly, 12 months of the year, unless extenuating circumstances make this infeasible.

Section 3: The President may call special meetings whenever deemed necessary or when requested to do so by the membership. The purpose of any such meeting shall be stated by the President and announced by mail, electronic means, or by telephone sufficiently in advance of any such meeting to give members time to react.

Section 4: Executive sessions held by the Association are strictly prohibited unless the subject matter is so sensitive or of a highly personal nature wherein the membership should not be involved.

Section 5: All meetings will be conducted using the latest Robert's Rules of Order, which shall govern this Association all applicable cases.

Section 6: The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside. In the absence of the President and Vice President, the Secretary then the Treasurer shall preside.

SECTION XIII POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Section 1: The officers, delegates, and alternates of the Association are prohibited from using this Association or its name on behalf of any political party or candidate. The Association will aggressively maintain a position of non-partisanship in all of its dealings.

Section 2: Candidates seeking political office may not distribute campaign literature, posters, signs, hats, shirts, etc., at any Association meeting.

Section 3: Persons holding elected office are encouraged to address the Association concerning matters of interest to the veterans/military community and the Association. However, their appearance cannot be in conjunction with any reelection effort, and their appearance will in no way constitute a political endorsement of them or their positions by the Association.

Section 4: During election years, the Association may conduct candidate forums wherein all candidates for a given office are offered the opportunity to be present and engage in

presentations and/or debates. Herein political activities will be allowed outside of the forum building, but must not in any way disrupt the orderly and dignified participation by the candidates.

Section 5: These Bylaws do not prevent the Association from supporting or endorsing, or stating opposition to, any local, National legislation or actions that would have an impact upon the interests of the Association.

ARTICLE XIV: EFFECTIVE DATE AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1: These Bylaws may be amended or revised only after having been considered by the Bylaws Committee. Any proposed change(s) must be submitted to the Bylaws Committee, whose members will give the recommendations(s) due consideration. The Committee will then make their recommendation(s) known and such recommendation(s) will be published at least 30 days prior to any meeting where it is to be held. A vote of acceptance or rejected is put to the members.

Section 2: At the voting meeting, the Bylaws Committee Chairman will preside over the Bylaws portion of the meeting. The recommendation(s) will be read, discussion will be called for, and a vote taken after the Secretary has verified the qualifications of the persons to cast a vote. A vote to change the Bylaws must be by a two-thirds majority of the members present when the vote is taken.