

## **NABVETS**

### **CHAPTER BY-LAWS**

#### **ARTICLE I**

##### **Name and Seal**

The name of this organization shall be Western Maryland Chapter, of The National Association for Black Veterans, Inc., (NABVETS, Inc.).

#### **ARTICLE II**

##### **Purpose**

The association is organized to foster the intellectual, economic, socio-cultural, collective good, and well-being of all veterans in general and Black veterans in particular. It seeks to promote unity through community activism, provide leadership that encompasses the entire community, secure, expand, and safeguard the rights and privileges of veterans granted by the United States of America and the States. It will assist veterans as they strive to obtain legitimate benefits pertaining to health care, rehabilitation, employment, housing, education, transportation, and economic assistance, among others. It will work to broaden the range of monuments that honor the sacrifices and memory of all veterans.

#### **ARTICLE III**

##### **Headquarters**

The headquarters and general office of the Western Maryland Chapter shall be located in Frederick in the State of Maryland.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### **Membership**

###### Section 1. Order of the Day

All meetings, after the Call to Order, shall begin with a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and Association's creed.

###### Section 2. Regular Membership

With the approval of the National Command Council (NCC), any veteran who subscribes to the principles, policies, and procedures of the Association, and agrees to pay annual dues as set by the council, may become a regular voting member. Regular members must have an honorable discharge or a discharge issued under honorable conditions, and must have served in the armed forces for a minimum of one hundred-and-eighty (180) days. Failure to promptly pay annual dues automatically suspends one's membership.

### Section 3. Emeritus Status

The Western Maryland Chapter Command Council shall have the authority to recommend the declaration of emeritus status to veterans for long and exemplary service to the Association. The NCC has the authority to grant such status.

### Section 4. Dues, Fees, and Assessments

The NCC shall set the annual dues amount for membership in the Association. State Command Councils (SCC) and Western Maryland Chapter may augment the dues amount to fund state and local operations. The Western Maryland Chapter, on a case-by-case basis, will review special situations regarding payment of dues.

Non-payment of dues in excess of sixty (60) days, or failure to make arrangements, will result in the member being placed in "less than good standing" with the Western Maryland Chapter.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Governance**

#### Section 1. Criteria for Membership

Any member in good standing of the Western Maryland Chapter shall be eligible to be elected to serve on the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council. A member in good standing is one who has been a bona fide member-at-large of a department or other unit of the Western Maryland Chapter at least thirty (30) days prior to the date nominations are accepted.

#### Section 2. Composition of Membership

The Western Maryland Chapter shall consist of at least five (5) members. Western Maryland Chapter members must agree in writing that they will attend at least 75% of the chapter meetings being held and at least 75% of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council meetings.

#### Section 3. Term of Office

The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant-at-Arms shall be elected for one year (1) terms, and serve no more than three consecutive terms; these officers shall be elected every calendar year in the month of January.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Duties of the Western Maryland Chapter**

#### Section 1. Authority

The management and government of the affairs, the preservation of the laws and policies, and the advance of interest of the Western Maryland Chapter shall be vested

in the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council, which shall have full power and authority to:

- a) Establish major administrative and other policies governing the affairs of the Western Maryland Chapter;
- b) Fill any vacancy in the office of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Sergeant at Arms on the Council for the unexpired term of the vacancy;
- c) Exercise the Western Maryland Chapter's fiduciary responsibility by protecting the assets of the Western Maryland Chapter. (All assets shall be deposited in federally-protected interest bearing accounts);
- d) Create such standing or special committees, in addition to those prescribed herein, as considered advisable to carry out any purposes connected with the work of the Western Maryland Chapter. Salaried officers and staff members shall be eligible for committee assignments, except on committees related to personnel and employment matters;
- e) Establish such personnel rules and policies as may be required for the successful administration of the Western Maryland Chapter, as it may from time to time deem appropriate.

## Section 2. Officers

The President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Sergeant at Arms shall take office immediately after their elections, and serve their respective terms of office computed from the day of said election or until their respective successors shall be elected and be qualified.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Detailed Duties of the Western Maryland Chapter Officers**

#### Section 1. President

The President of the Western Maryland Chapter shall have general command and supervision of the Western Maryland Chapter, with full authority over all Officers and employees of the Western Maryland Chapter, subject to such limitations as the Western Maryland Chapter may impose. He/She shall preside at all meetings of the Western Maryland Chapter and appoint all committees of the Western Maryland Chapter not elected directly by the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council. He/She shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of all committees.

The President shall receive regular reports from the NCC on the Association's day-to-day activities and all State Commands shall make reports to the membership through the Eclipse. The President shall convene a meeting of the Western Maryland Chapter at least ten times each year and such other times as deemed necessary, at the place and time so specified, for the purpose of conducting the business of the Chapter.

## Section 2. Vice-President

The Vice-President of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council shall perform such functions and exercise such duties as may be assigned by the President. The Vice-President shall assume and perform all duties and functions of the President in the absence or disability of the President.

## Section 3. Secretary

The Secretary shall have charge of general administrative work of the Association, and shall be responsible to maintain the history of the organization and for all correspondence, files, books, records, documents, and properties of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council. He/She shall keep a true and accurate record of all Western Maryland Chapter Command Council transactions. The Secretary shall coordinate and integrate the work of all committees. The Secretary shall be responsible to prepare all non-financial reports required by this Constitution or By-laws; record, or cause to be recorded, the proceedings of meetings as the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council may desire; and prepare and distribute minutes to the NCC within 30 days. He/She shall submit reports to the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council at its regular meetings, or whenever it requires, covering the state of the Association and its activities since the date of the last report. The Secretary shall make an annual report covering the status of the Association and its activities. He/She shall perform such other functions and exercise such further duties as may be assigned by the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council.

## Section 4. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the Western Maryland Chapter and shall have general charge of its fiscal affairs. He/She shall receive regular reports on the finances of the Association and shall inspect the books and audit the accounts thereof, from time to time. He/She shall render to the Western Maryland Chapter and Western Maryland Chapter at their regular meetings, or whenever they require, an account of transactions and shall submit a report of the financial condition of the Western Maryland Chapter to the NCC on a monthly basis.

The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all monies due and owing to the Western Maryland Chapter and shall give a proper receipt for such monies as are collected. Such monies shall be deposited in separate bank accounts held in the name of the Western Maryland Chapter. The Treasurer shall have prepared and mailed to the President and the other members of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council and each subordinate body, an annual financial report of the receipts and disbursements of this Western Maryland Chapter and its assets and liabilities, and shall be responsible for preparing all other financial reports required by this Constitution or By-law. The Treasurer and President shall be required to review and approve the expenses of the Administrative Staff as defined by the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council, shall be responsible to develop a uniform accounting system and record keeping system for the Western Maryland Chapter, to include maintaining a signature

account of the Chapter's bank account. An annual audit of the Western Maryland Chapter's finances by an outside Certified Public Account will be conducted. Such audit shall be made in accordance with the professional accepted standards for auditing non-profit membership organizations. The Treasurer shall be authorized to carry out the responsibilities personally or by deputy. If a deputy is to be designated to carry out any duties or responsibilities of the Treasurer, said deputy should be qualified in financial matters.

#### Section 5. Sergeant-at-Arms

The Sergeant-at-Arms shall perform the usual duties pertaining to the proper order at meetings, the conduct of the membership at the meetings; and such other duties as may be assigned by the President.

### **ARTICLE VIII**

#### **Standing Committees**

Section 1. The President shall appoint the following standing Committees:

- a) Membership
- b) Fundraising
- c) Topical Issues
- d) Speaker Identification
- e) Nominations

Section 2: Other committees may be appointed as desired. The chairpersons of each committee will give a report during the regular meeting of the Western Maryland Chapter.

### **ARTICLE IX**

#### **Meetings of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council and Chapter**

##### Section 1. Schedule

Regular meetings of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council shall be held on the first Tuesday of each month of the year, and at such other times as deemed necessary for the purposes of conducting the business of this Chapter.

##### Section 2. Chapter Meetings

The Western Maryland Chapter Membership meeting will be held monthly, on the first Tuesday of the month. The meeting shall be held in a location designated by the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council.

##### Section 3. Quorum

A majority of the membership of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except to adjourn.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Vacancies on the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council**

#### Section 1. At-large

Any vacancy occurring during the year among those Western Maryland Chapter Command Council members elected at-large or by the Council at any regular meeting, shall be filled by the Council, provided advance notice is given the Council membership that such action is to take place at said meeting.

#### Section 2. Officers

Any vacancy of officers of the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council shall be filled by majority vote of the Western Maryland Chapter.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Western Maryland Chapter Command Council Elections**

#### Section 1. Nominations/Campaigning/Elections

At the regular January meeting of the Western Maryland Chapter Command, nominations, by regular members in good standing, will be taken from the floor. In the event more than one person is nominated for a position, each person will be given three minutes to campaign and provide reasons as to why he/she is qualified for the position.

Following the nominations and campaign, a vote, by a showing of hands, will be taken. Members will only be allowed to vote for one candidate per position. The candidate with a majority of votes, will be announced the winner.

#### Section 2. Oath

Those candidates who receive a majority of the votes by eligible voters shall be declared the winners and shall be installed in the Office by the previous President, or a designee, within one (1) month of the conclusion of the ballot count. The newly elected Western Maryland Chapter Command Council officers shall be administered the following oath of office:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly pledge on my honor to comprehend (recognize) and comply with all of the regulations of the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws of the National Association for Black Veterans and with all rules, regulations, policies, practices, and decisions adopted in furtherance of the administration of NABVETS, and to honestly and faithfully perform the duties for and on behalf of the membership of the Association and the Western Maryland Chapter.

### Section 3. Election Challenge

Any eligible voting member shall be entitled to file an election protest with the Election Committee within fifteen (15) days following the installation of the newly elected Chapter Officers. The protest shall specify the nature and details of the conduct alleged to have violated the Constitution, election rules, or applicable laws or regulations.

### Section 4. Eligibility

To be eligible to run for a position on the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council, an individual must be a regular member in continuous good standing.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Publications**

The Western Maryland Chapter Newsletter shall be the official publication of the Chapter. This Newsletter will be published monthly and distributed using email or US Mail.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **Rules**

The rules prescribed in the most recent Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Western Maryland Chapter and the Western Maryland Chapter Command Council in all cases to which they are applicable, and which are not otherwise covered by the By-laws or Special Resolutions.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **Amendments**

It shall require a majority of the total membership cast at a designated meeting to enact a by-law change. Such amendments shall become effective upon their adoption. Amendments proposed to the by-laws shall be submitted in writing by members in good standing, 30 days prior to a designated meeting. After approval by the membership, such amendment must be submitted to the National Command Council for ratification.

Adopted unanimously by the Chapter.

*Xavier V. Bruce*

Xavier Bruce  
Commander

*Torrance Beck*

Torrance Beck  
Secretary