

The Commonwealth Club of Michigan



Constitution & By-Laws

Approved 11/19/2023

Constitution

Article 1: Name

Section 1

The name of the organization shall be "The Commonwealth Club."

Article 2: Purpose

Section 1

The purpose of The Commonwealth Club shall be:

- To unite people of British and British Commonwealth origin, their families and friends, and those interested in British culture for social enjoyment, fellowship, and mutual help.
- To promote British traditions and cultures.
- To promote and foster good-will and understanding among all people of all nationalities.

No person shall be excluded from The Commonwealth Club on grounds of color, race, or creed.

Section 2

The Commonwealth Club shall not be affiliated with, or be used by, any political organization.

By-Laws

Article 1: Membership

Section 1

Member in good standing shall be defined as:

- A person whose application for membership has been accepted by the Executive Board.
- A person whose fees have been paid in full for the current year, excepting where membership has been suspended or revoked as detailed in Article 6 of the By-Laws.

Divisions of Membership are:

- Family Membership – Full membership of two adults and any dependents in the same household.
- Single Membership – One person only.
- Lifetime Membership – A member who, by membership approval, is given a lifetime membership.

Section 2

Lifetime Memberships:

- May be bestowed by a two-thirds passing vote at the Annual General Meeting for lifetime outstanding service at The Commonwealth Club.
- Shall be deemed full members for life, with annual membership fees paid by The Commonwealth Club.

Section 3

Changes in members' dues will be determined by the Executive Board acting in good faith on behalf of the membership. Application of increase will immediately apply to all new members. Application of increase will apply to all existing and current members at the time the annual membership is due as outlined in **Article 1, Section 4** of the By-Laws.

Section 4

Annual membership fees are due on or by January 1st. Any member who has not paid the annual dues may be restricted from attending Members-only events.
New membership dues paid after September 30th will include the remainder of that membership year, plus the following membership year through December 31st.

Section 5

Full membership year shall be January 1st through December 31st.

Section 6

Application for membership must:

- Be made on The Commonwealth Club membership application form.
- Be endorsed by a person who is a fully paid member in good standing for a minimum of six months.
- Upon acceptance of the application by the Executive Board, applicant will be issued a membership card bearing the name and membership number of the member.

Article 2: Governing Bodies

Section 1

The Executive Board shall consist of ten Members: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Membership Secretary, Hall Manager, Newsletter Editor, Building Manager, Entertainment Chairperson and Public Relations Chairperson.

Section 2

Both the President and Vice President must have served one full term on the Executive Board in a different position prior to being considered a candidate.

Section 3

The Executive Board shall be elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting for a term of two years, with the exception of the President, who is elected for a term of one year. Nominees for the Executive Board must have been a member in good standing for one full year. The terms of Executive Board members shall end on December 31st, and the terms of their successors shall begin on January 1st.

The Vice President, Hall Manager, Membership Secretary, Newsletter Chairperson and Public Relationship Chairperson shall have terms of office beginning in odd-numbered years. The Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Building Manager and Entertainment Chairperson shall have terms of office beginning in even-numbered years.

Section 4

Vacancies that occur during term of office shall be filled by a remaining Executive Board Member or a member appointed by the Executive Board. Such appointments are to run for the remainder of the year until the Annual General Meeting, when the position shall be open for election.

Section 5

Any Executive Board Member who has missed three consecutive board meetings without offering good reason shall be replaced automatically.

Section 6

Any Executive Board Member who, in the opinion of the remainder of the Executive Board, has:

- Violated the trust vested in him or her; and/or
- Consistently neglected to perform the duties entrusted to him or her shall be asked by the President to resign as an Executive Board Member.

If said Executive Board Member should choose not to resign as requested, then a Special Meeting shall be called to resolve the matter (**Article 5, Section 2**).

Section 7

All candidates for a position on the Executive Board shall be required to state their status in similar organizations, if they hold executive positions in those organizations.

Section 8

The Executive Trustee Board:

- Will be comprised of past Presidents in good standing status.
- Cannot hold a seat on the current Executive Board.
- Will convene as needed to ensure preservation of The Commonwealth Club’s basic intent and to approve any financial expenditure in excess of one hundred times the yearly dues of a single membership.

Section 9

Auxiliary Support Officers or Aides:

- May be appointed as needed by the Executive Board to serve in capacities not covered by regular Executive Board responsibilities.
- Shall have access to all meetings for report, input, and suggestions but will be granted no voting privileges or rights.

Examples of such groups are:

Benevolent Fund Coordinator	Parade Coordinator	Hall Decoration Coordinator
Civic and Charitable Coordinator	Newsletter Aide	Entertainment Aide

Article 3: Executive Board’s Duties

Section 1

The Executive Board shall have full responsibility for the operation of The Commonwealth Club within the terms of the By-Laws.

Section 2

The President shall:

- Be responsible for coordinating the activities of the various aspects of the Club.
- Schedule and preside over all meetings (Monthly, Special, Bi-Annual, and Annual General) for the purpose of conducting all club business.
- Be responsible for co-signing all checks.
- Attend board meetings in consultant capacity only and has no voting power, except in the event of a tie vote among the Executive Board.
- Be responsible for signing all state and local documents and licenses pertaining to club operations.
- Represent the current Executive Board before the Executive Board of Trustees, should any occurrence or circumstance arise that requires Executive Board of Trustees’ advice.

Section 3

The Vice President shall:

- In the absence of the President, perform all presidential duties and functions.
- Assist in the coordinating of the activities of the various aspects of The Commonwealth Club whenever necessary.

Section 4

The Recording Secretary shall:

- Be required to keep records of all business conducted at regularly scheduled meetings.
- Type the minutes and make them available for acceptance or correction at the following Monthly or Special meeting.
- Make corrections to minutes requested or recommended by the Executive Board.
- Maintain and keep on file all written proposals brought before the Executive Board.
- Maintain all written communications necessary on behalf of The Commonwealth Club.
- Read all incoming correspondence at all regularly scheduled meetings.
- Be required to update the By-Laws with any additions, modifications, or amendments and make them available to the Membership Secretary and the membership.
- Provide the Newsletter Editor with By-Law changes for publication in the newsletter and/or on the Club website.

Section 5

The Treasurer shall:

- Receive all funds collected for The Commonwealth Club and deposit such funds in the name of The Commonwealth Club within seven days in an insured banking or credit institution.
- Maintain all financial records and be required to submit a current financial statement at all scheduled Monthly, Bi-Annual, and Annual General meetings.
- Make withdrawals from the accounts only with the joint signatures of the President (or Vice President acting in the President's stead) and the Treasurer.
- Submit names and addresses of all new and lapsed members, together with monies due to the M.L.C.C. (Liquor Control), as soon as applications are approved.
- Provide current membership list (names and addresses) to the M.L.C.C. by February 1st of each year.

Section 6

The Membership Secretary shall:

- Be required to keep up-to-date records of the membership.
- Submit all new membership applications for Executive Board consideration.
- Have a complete membership roster where possible and distribute copies of such list to Executive Board Members in need.
- Provide new members with the By-Laws at the time of sending out the membership card.

Section 7

The Newsletter Editor shall:

- Prepare and publish to all members a newsletter twice each year prior to the Bi-Annual and Annual General Meetings. Such newsletter shall contain reports on club business, social activities and upcoming events.
- Prepare and distribute to all members a calendar of events every two months and communicate urgent club business as necessary.
- Act as liaison between The Commonwealth Club and The Commonwealth Club's Website Administrator.
- Be responsible for approving all material and information posted on the website.

Section 8

The Entertainment Chairperson shall:

- Function primarily as a social director, arranging dance band bookings, all usual parties, picnics, and catering needs to maintain a full, profitable social calendar throughout the year.
- Shall be responsible for preparation and sale of tickets for all club related functions. All ticket proceeds must be submitted to the Treasurer within one week from date of function for banking.
- Will also assist in any entertainment related activities whenever necessary.

Section 9

The Building Manager:

- Shall be responsible for the upkeep and improvement of The Commonwealth Club property and equipment, both inside and outside of the clubhouse.
- Will seek volunteer members' assistance on all projects whenever feasible, but professional help can be employed if internal expertise is not readily available and club finances permit such action.

Section 10

The Hall Manager:

- Shall maintain an up-to-date reservations calendar for all social gatherings, miscellaneous meetings, and club-related rehearsals throughout the year.
- Shall work with the Entertainment Chairperson and other support whenever necessary.
- Shall coordinate all kitchen and food service activities.
- Shall be responsible for setting prices and menu selection.
- Shall maintain adequate supplies for all kitchen and bar functions.
- Shall engage all necessary volunteer and paid help to ensure smooth running operation.

Section 11

The Public Relations Chairperson:

- Shall work with the Entertainment Chairperson and the Newsletter Editor in researching ways to make the Club more visible.
- Shall, with Executive Board approval of such, promote upcoming events, activities, and other notables via print, video, and social media outlets.
- Shall seek out other clubs and organizations with which to form mutually beneficial relationships.

Article 4: Meetings

Section 1

Annual General Meeting and Bi-Annual Meeting

The Executive Board must call a meeting of all membership during the month of January each year. Said meeting shall be called the "Annual General Meeting" and shall be conducted in conformity with the provision of the By-Laws and as near as possible according to Roberts Rules of Order.

A Bi-Annual meeting of the membership shall be held in July of each year for the purpose of hearing reports of Executive Board Members and conduction of all other club business.

Section 2

The purpose of the Annual General Meeting shall be to:

- Amend the Constitution and By-Laws (**Article 8**).
- Offer reports of Executive Board Members and sub-committee chairpersons.
- Elect a President for a one-year term (**Article 2, Section 2**).
- Elect members to open Executive Board positions (**Article 2, Section 3**).
- Conduct any business having bearing on The Commonwealth Club and/or its members.

Section 3

Special Meetings

The Executive Board may, at any time, call a Special Meeting of the membership provided that all members are notified seven days in advance. Business conducted at said Special Meetings will be restricted to the issue in that specific notification to the members.

Section 4

Monthly Meeting

The Executive Board must meet once a month throughout the year in order to coordinate and plan all Club activities and business. All Executive Board Members will be expected to offer a current report covering their own specific responsibilities and expenditures, if any.

Article 5: Grievances and Complaints

Section 1

Any member having a grievance or complaint with regard to the action of the Executive Board or operation of the Club may request a hearing of the Executive Board to register complaints or grievances. The grievance or complaint may be brought before the Executive Board at the hearing by virtue of the member in attendance or represented by a letter to the Executive Board. If the member is not satisfied with the Executive Board's handling of the same, he or she may demand a Special Meeting by:

- Filing a petition for such a meeting with the Executive Board within thirty days of their hearing with the Executive Board.
- The petition must provide specific reasons for the requested meeting.
- The petition must be signed by at least fifteen members.

Section 2

Upon receipt of petition for a Special Meeting, the Executive Board must:

- Hold said meeting within forty five days.
- Notify all members at least seven days prior to the date of the meeting.

Article 6: Disciplinary Action

Section 1

The Executive Board, by a majority vote of those present at a regularly scheduled meeting, may call for a hearing to consider taking disciplinary action against a member for conduct deemed prejudicial to The Commonwealth Club. The member shall be:

- Notified of the nature of the complaint and possible penalty in writing and by certified mail.
- Invited to a hearing before any Executive Board decisions or judgments are made; or meet with appointed representative(s) of the Executive Board who will report their findings back to the Executive Board before any decisions or judgments are made.

Should further action be justified, the Executive Board may, by a 2/3 passing vote of those present at the hearing:

1. Place said member on probation for a period of time decided by the Executive Board with no loss of club privileges, however their actions will be monitored; or
2. Suspend said member for a period of time decided by the Executive Board with loss of club privileges; or
3. Revoke the membership for at least the remainder of the year, and require re-application for membership as a new member.

Section 2

Disciplinary actions may be appealed through the grievance procedure in **Article 5**.

Article 7: Miscellaneous

Section 1

Dissolution: Any resolution for the dissolution of The Commonwealth Club must be endorsed by 75% of the membership. Upon the passage of the said resolution, the assets of the Club will be given to the City of Warren for such purposes as they shall determine.

Article 8: Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

Section 1

The Constitution and By-Laws may be amended, altered or repealed by the following three-step procedure:

1. A written copy of such proposed amendment is filed with the Executive Board at the Bi-Annual meeting.
2. The written copy of such proposed amendment is sent to all members no less than ten days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
3. A 2/3 passing vote of the membership present at the Annual General Meeting.

Section 2

A verbal amendment to the written amendment presented at the Bi-Annual meeting may be proposed from the floor during the Annual General Meeting.

Section 3

Any member in good standing may propose an amendment provided aforementioned notice is given per **Article 8, Section 1**