



BY-LAWS OF THE CHEROKEE COMMUNITY OF THE INLAND EMPIRE

Mission & Purpose

The Cherokee Community of the Inland Empire (CCIE) is a community of Cherokees dedicated to Cherokee history, culture, heritage, tradition, and fellowship. We are a non-political, non-profit Native American organization whose members reside outside the boundaries of the Cherokee Nation and Bands. We have come together on the basis of our shared history and heritage, and out of an interest in the continuation of and a love for the Cherokee People and Nations.

It is critically important that we find innovative ways to retain Cherokee people in stronger ties of culture and responsible citizenship. We believe the concept of “community” is one way to achieve this goal.

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

1) Qualifications of Members

Membership shall be granted to an applicant upon payment of annual dues of twenty-five dollars (\$25 US) and completion and approval of the application form of the CCIE. Annual dues shall apply per household. At the time of application each household shall designate the names of participating members over eighteen (18) years of age at the same address for voting purposes.

The approval of all membership applications is at the discretion of the Council.

2) Rights and Obligations of Members

Upon payment of membership dues, a member household shall receive one newsletter bi-monthly and individual members shall receive voting rights in CCIE.

3) Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated by the Council for the following reasons: (a) violation of the by-laws of the CCIE and/or (b) action that is detrimental to the organization.

Only the Council has authority to investigate and/or terminate a membership. However, any member is entitled to bring to the Council a grievance concerning conduct by any member or Council member which they believe to be a violation of the by-laws and/or action that is detrimental to the organization. The Council shall investigate all grievances. As part of the investigation, the Council is obliged to receive testimony and evidence

from the member in question in their own defense. A membership may be terminated only after a consensus of the members of the Council is reached. If a member of the Council is under investigation, he or she may not participate and shall not be counted in the process of reaching consensus on, the question of their termination. The decision of the Council is final.

ARTICLE II: SUBSCRIPTIONS

1) Types of Subscriptions

Non-members may receive an annual subscription to the newsletter upon payment of twenty-five dollars (\$25 US).

Honorary subscriptions to the newsletter shall also be provided to specified non-members at the discretion of the Council. Such subscriptions may include, but are not limited to, the Principal Chief and Deputy Chief of the Cherokee Nation, the members of the Tribal Council of the Cherokee Nation, and other selected community leaders and representatives.

The approval all subscriptions is at the discretion of the Council.

ARTICLE III: MEETINGS

1) Types of Meetings

A meeting of the CCIE shall be held monthly. In addition, the Council shall also meet monthly at a regular time, which shall be decided upon annually by the Council upon their election.

2) Notifications of Meetings

The membership will be notified ten (10) days in advance of the time and place of all general meetings.

ARTICLE IV: COUNCIL

1) Composition of the Council

The Council shall be comprised of seven members, at least four of who shall be registered members of the Cherokee Nation. Each of the seven must be a CCIE member in good standing. Only two member's of any family and/or household may serve at any given time excluding spouses and/or significant others.

2) Terms of the Council

Council members shall serve a term of two years. The terms shall be staggered as follows: upon the initial election of seven council members, the top four vote-getters will take two-year terms. The remaining three will take one-year terms. Thereafter, all Council members will be elected to two-year terms.

A Council member may serve two full terms (four years) and then must sit out one year before running again.

3) Council Positions and Duties

The positions on the Council shall be as follows: (a) Chairperson, who shall organize the agenda, coordinate, and conduct Council meetings, (b) Secretary, who shall take attendance and keep minutes at Council and general

meetings, and who shall maintain all other records except as herein provided, (c) Membership Coordinator, who shall keep updated membership rolls, compile an annual membership directory for distribution to the membership, provide notification of pending renewal dates to members, and supply current membership lists monthly to the newsletter committee, and provides the election committee with current number of members. (d) Treasurer, who shall keep all financial accounts, and who shall convey information concerning the dues of new and renewed memberships to the Membership Coordinator, (e) Assistant Chairperson, who shall facilitate meetings or keep records in the absence of the regular Chairperson or Secretary, and who shall act as the representative spokesperson for the organization to the public as directed by the Council, (f) Advisor, who shall organize and coordinate the agendas, general meetings & events and who shall alternate monthly in conducting the general meetings, (g) Bylaws and Press, maintains the by-laws, be in charge of communicating information to the press, and publishing the bi-monthly newsletter.

These positions will be designated by the Council members at the first Council meeting after the annual election, and will be designated for a period of time that is at least, but not limited to, one year.

All Council members shall transfer any records that they maintain in their possession to their successors throughout the life of the organization.

4) Quorum

A quorum of the Council shall be reached when four (4) members are present. No official business shall be acted upon unless a quorum is present.

5) Attendance

Council members shall be required to attend at least sixty-seven per cent (67%) (8) of scheduled Council meetings and sixty-seven per cent (67%) (8) of scheduled membership meetings.

6) Vacancy

In case of a vacancy, the remaining Council members shall elect a member to serve the remainder of the vacated term.

7) Youth Representative

There shall be a non-voting honorary member to the Council to represent the youth. This member is not bound by attendance requirements. This position shall be appointed by the Council.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

1) Election Committee

Ninety days prior to the election for Council members, the Election Committee shall be selected. It shall consist of three (3) members of voting age who are in good standing. The Election Committee shall be selected at random by lottery or games of chance.

Candidates and their families are ineligible to serve on the election committee.

2) Announcements of Candidates

Candidates must declare their candidacy no later than sixty (60) days in advance of the election. They will provide a written statement of candidacy and a biographical sketch of no more than 200 words to the Election Committee for publication in the newsletter.

If not enough candidates declare within sixty days prior to the election, then the Election Committee will recruit additional candidates.

3) Election Procedures

Secret balloting will be conducted at the General Meeting. Members in good standing will receive a ballot. The Membership Coordinator will provide the Election Committee the number of current members. Each ballot will be numbered. The Membership Coordinator will provide a roster of eligible members to the Chair of the Election Committee for the purpose of distributing the ballots.

A) Voting

Members will sign the voting roster to receive a ballot. Members will mark their ballots, seal it in the envelope, and drop in the ballot box.

B) Absentee Voting

Absentee ballot requests must be made 30 days before the election to the Election Committee Chair. Absentee ballots will be noted on the Voter Roster. Marked Absentee ballots must be received by the Election Committee by mail the day prior to the election in order to be valid.

A ballot and a self addressed stamped return envelope will be placed inside a mailing envelope. The mailing envelope will be sealed. The Membership Coordinator shall then provide mailing labels that will be applied to the mailing envelopes. The absentee ballots must be sent out at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the election.

C) Counting the ballots

All ballots shall be opened and counted at the general meeting in which the election takes place. One Election Committee member shall open the envelope and remove the ballot. A second Election Committee member shall record the number on the ballot. The third Election Committee member shall record the votes on the ballot. After all votes have been counted, they shall be recounted by the entire Election Committee for a verification of the results.

D) Election results

Election results will be determined by majority vote.

E) Announcing of the winners

The announcement of the new Council members shall be made at the meeting by the Election Committee, but the vote totals will not be announced. Individual candidates may inquire privately of the Election Committee to obtain their own vote totals.

F) Tie vote

In case of a tie, the Election Committee shall conduct a runoff election by secret vote using the Voter Roster to break the tie.

G) Checks and balances

To prevent tampering ballots will be numbered and a locked ballot box will be provided. The Election Committee will keep the ballots for thirty (30) days after the election. After thirty days the ballots will be destroyed and the Election Committee disbanded.

ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS

1) Proposing Amendments

Any member may propose an amendment to these by-laws by submitting to the Council at least sixty (60) days prior to the election of the Council members. The Council will collect all proposed amendments and present them for a vote annually at the same time as the election for Council members. The Council shall have the discretion to bring any proposed amendment to the immediate vote of the membership if such urgency is deemed necessary. The vote to accept proposed amendments shall be conducted in the same manner as the election of Council members.

2) Accepting Amendments

An affirmative vote of the majority of the returned ballots is required to pass an amendment and to amend the bylaws.

ARTICLE VII: GIFTS AND DONATIONS

1) Acceptance of Gifts and Donations

All gifts and donations must be approved by the Council before acceptance.

2) Contributions by the Organization (CCIE)

All donations or honorariums made by the CCIE up to fifty dollars (\$50 US) must be approved by the Council. Donations or honorariums over fifty dollars (\$50 US) must also be approved by the membership by vote. The upcoming vote shall be announced in the newsletter and shall be taken at the next general meeting. A simple majority shall prevail.

ARTICLE VIII: REPORTS

1) Required Reports

The Treasurer shall make bi-monthly financial reports to the Council and semi-annual written reports to the membership.

The Council will make semi-annual written reports to the membership.

The Membership Coordinator shall compile a membership directory for distribution to members.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

1) Oversight of Committees

The Council shall oversee the function of all committees.

2) Types of Committees

There shall be a standing committee called the Newsletter Committee to produce and mail the monthly newsletter. The Newsletter Committee shall be formed by volunteers from the membership.

Other committees may be formed as necessity dictates.

ARTICLE X: ENDORSEMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS

1) Endorsements

No member of CCIE shall use the name of the CCIE in political campaigns or as an endorsement of any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

The CCIE as an organization is prohibited from campaigning for or endorsing any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

2) Representations

No member of the CCIE shall use the name of the organization to represent themselves for direct commercial gain, or for purposes of self-promotion or the promotion of any individual's outside interests, except with permission from the Council.

CCIE members may state their membership for identification purposes only on resumes and other similar applications.