

Tampa Writers Alliance By-Laws

(revised September 2016)

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of the organization shall be The Tampa Writers Alliance, hereinafter called "TWA."

ARTICLE 2 - OBJECTIVE & PURPOSE

The TWA shall:

- A. Provide opportunities for its members to learn or improve the craft of writing and publishing.
- B. Convey such skills to others within the community (including, but not limited to, public or private schools, civic groups, and social organizations) by means of classes, contests, meetings, programs, and other appropriate endeavors as approved by the executive committee.
- C. Conduct its business in the manner appropriate for a nonprofit organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(7).
- D. Apply for, disburse, receive, and use funds from donations, grants or endowments from public or private sources which properly fall within the purview of a IRC 501(c)(7) organization.

Article 3 - MEMBERSHIP

TWA membership in good standing shall:

- A. Be open to any adult (a person 18 years of age or older) interested in writing and publishing without regard to race, sex, creed, color, national origin, physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- B. Be based on an interest in writing and publishing; there shall be no pre-requisite of publication (for pay or otherwise) of work.
- C. Have paid in full the dues required as determined by the executive committee.
- D. By the act of payment of dues, agreed to abide by these Bylaws, as well as any implementing rules and customs of the TWA.
- E. Require compliance with TWA's Code of Conduct

Article 4 – CODE OF CONDUCT

The Tampa Writer's Alliance mission is to provide opportunities for its members to learn or improve the craft of writing and publishing. Participation in the organization's programs is subject to the observance of the organization's rules.

- A. Professional and respectful etiquette is required during all TWA gatherings.
 1. During a critique session, all critiques will focus on the writing being reviewed.
 2. During a critique session, only one person speaks at a time.
 3. The author will have the opportunity to speak before and after the critique rounds, but will not interrupt during the critiques.
 4. Critiques will be structured to assist the author and improve their craft.
 5. If speaking time is moderated during a critique meeting, speakers will abide by the moderator's signals. When signaled that the maximum allotted time is met, the speaker will finish their thought within a sentence or two, then yield the floor.
 6. Critiques can be critical, but shall remain respectful at all times. All personal attacks on the author or the group are prohibited. This includes discourtesy, abusive language, and remarks intended to discourage the author from writing.
 7. The moderator of a critique session, with the support of two additional Executive Committee members, may require any member to leave a meeting if the member has violated the Code of Conduct. Violations are decided at the discretion of the moderator plus two Executive Committee members.
- B. The Executive Committee will follow-up on all Code of Conduct violation complaints and may suspend or revoke membership from Tampa Writers Alliance at their discretion. If removed from Tampa Writers Alliance due to Code of Conduct violations, members will receive no refund on their membership fees.
- C. All complaints and suggestions will be sent to a dedicated email address: improve@tampawriters.org Any complaints or suggestions emailed to the moderator or individual members will be deleted without response. All complaints and suggestions sent to the appropriate email address will be reviewed by Executive Committee members and responded to within 30 days.

ARTICLE 5 - ORGANIZATION

The TWA Members shall:

- A. Recognize all members in good standing as the general membership; which shall meet at least one time per month for the general meeting, at a time and location selected by the executive committee. All TWA meetings shall be open to the public.
- B. Participate directly in the election of the officers, recall of same, and approval of amendments to these Bylaws.
- C. Approve the annual budget and any change in the amount of the membership dues.
- D. Authorize the executive committee to meet at least once per quarter to handle all TWA business for the general membership, except the tasks previously mentioned.
- E. Encourage the formation of workshops or any other program or activity that deal with topics of interest to the general membership. Meetings of such programs shall be at the time, place, cost, and frequency determined by each program's director, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Such programs shall be open to the public.

ARTICLE 6 - OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- A. The elected officers shall be: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and three (3) members-at-large.
- B. The executive committee shall be comprised of the Officers and immediate Past President.
- C. The term of office for executive committee members and officers shall be one year.

ARTICLE 7 - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- A. Only members in good standing may be nominated or elected to a TWA office.
- B. Elections will be held every year. Current officers may run for their current, or another office.
- C. No member shall be offered as a candidate for office without the consent of that member.
- D. Candidates for office shall be sought from the membership by a three person nominating committee appointed by the executive committee in the October preceding an election year. The nominating committee's slate shall be made available to the membership and general public in December.
- E. Elections shall be held during the January general meeting and shall be by a show of hands among a simple majority of the members in good standing present.
- F. Announcement of the officers so elected shall be made available to the membership and general public in February.
- G. Officers shall be installed and take office from the Call to Order at the February general meeting.

ARTICLE 8- REMOVAL/RESIGNATION FROM OFFICE

- A. Upon the resignation or removal from office of the president, the vice president shall assume that office automatically and immediately.
- B. Upon the creation of a vacancy in any office (including the vice president's succession to president), the executive committee shall immediately elect a member in good standing to serve out the remainder of that term.
- C. An officer or executive committee member shall be removed from office if he or she is no longer a member in good standing, or if 25% of the general membership sign a petition demanding such removal.
- D. At the next general meeting, such a completed petition shall be voted upon by a show of hands among the members in good standing present. A two-thirds majority shall be necessary to remove an officer or executive committee member from office.

ARTICLE 9 - DUTIES OF OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- A. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the TWA. The President shall preside at all TWA meetings, and, with the approval of the executive committee, appoint committees and positions, delegate responsibilities including, but not limited to, public relations director, newsletter editor, anthology editor, contest coordinator, and any others as needed. The President shall perform any duties incumbent upon a chief executive officer of a IRC 501(c)(7) organization.
- B. The Vice President shall, in the absence of the President, assume the duties stated above. The Vice President shall perform other duties as delegated by the President and act as parliamentarian for the TWA.
- C. The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of all executive committee meetings and any TWA general meeting where organization issues are acted upon by the general membership, and shall communicate any such minutes upon request; and make copies available for the next general meeting. The secretary shall be responsible for correspondence not specific to any other office; such correspondence may be handled upon the request of the secretary by an executive committee member.
- D. The Treasurer shall receive and deposit all TWA funds in the financial institution currently serving the TWA.
 8. The Treasurer shall keep a written record of all TWA financial matters, prepare monthly and annual financial reports, and disseminate the reports upon request or at the next general meeting.
 9. The Treasurer shall keep an up-to-date list of members in good standing and, as possible, provide that list to executive committee members on a timely basis as needed for use in performing their duties.

10. The Treasurer shall have the authority to disburse all funds specifically defined in the annual budget. Any other disbursements must have executive committee approval.
 11. The Treasurer shall require receipts for all disbursements.
 12. The President shall have the authority to sign checks in the absence or removal of the Treasurer.
 13. The Treasurer, with the review and approval of the Executive Committee, shall prepare and submit any and all records and filings on a timely basis and as necessary to the State and Federal agencies as required by law.
- E. Each officer shall maintain accurate and up-to-date records of her or his office and deliver such records to newly elected officers at the end of her or his term. Should an officer resign or be removed, such records shall be given immediately to the president until a replacement is installed.
 - F. The executive committee shall prepare a proposed budget to present to the general membership at the April general meeting. The executive committee has the authority to determine the amount of membership dues and to direct any other fund-raising efforts to finance the annual budget.
 - G. The President shall be responsible for coordinating the speaker's program. The President may appoint members to help in this task.
 - H. The Executive Committee shall assure that a website or some other means of communication with the membership and general public is maintained and kept up to date.
 - I. If the TWA hosts any writing contest, the Contest Coordinator(s) shall be responsible for publishing the rules governing the contest, contacting the judges, gathering and distributing the entries, and obtaining the list of winners from each judge.
 1. The executive committee shall set the rules and categories for the contest.
 2. The judges' decisions are final.
 3. The judges are under no obligation to award a place or honorable mention if no entry in a category is deemed worthy.
 4. The Contest Coordinator shall maintain a list of any non-TWA members who have entered the contest and turn over any monies received to the TWA treasurer.
 - J. If the TWA publishes any anthology of writing, its Editor(s) are responsible for the look and content of such a publication, as well as producing it within the budget allocated by the executive committee. The President shall appoint members to help in this task upon the request of its editor.

ARTICLE 10 - COMMITTEES

- A. Special committees shall be appointed by the President and approved by the executive committee to fulfill and perform any necessary functions consistent with these Bylaws.
- B. Special committees shall dissolve upon the completion of their assigned task.
- C. Actions of special committees shall be subject to approval by the executive committee
- D. While a special committee is sitting, the chair of that committee shall attend executive committee meetings and make oral and/or written reports of progress.

ARTICLE 11 - DUES AND PRIVILEGES

- A. Members must renew by the time that their membership expires. All financial instruments shall be payable to "Tampa Writers Alliance."
- B. Members shall be considered delinquent if they have not renewed by the time their membership expires.

ARTICLE 12 - QUORUM

A quorum for any TWA business shall be defined as:

- A. All members in good standing present at any general meeting.
- B. Three or more executive committee members present at any regular or specially-called executive committee meeting.
- C. Two or more members of any duly-called meeting of a special committee.

ARTICLE 13 - AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

- A. Proposed amendments shall be presented in one of two ways:
 1. Presented in writing to the executive committee in the form of a petition signed by at least ten members in good standing.
 2. The executive committee shall form a committee to review current bylaws and propose any recommended changes. This committee shall have a minimum of three members consisting of executive members and/or delegates from the general membership.
- B. Any proposed change to the by-laws must be made available to the membership and general public and announced at a regular general meeting one month prior to the general meeting at which said change will be voted on.
- C. At the general meeting following publication of the proposed amendments, the general membership shall vote by a show of hands among the members in good standing present. A two-thirds majority must approve any proposal for passage.

- D. Any proposed amendment having gone through the above procedure and not having been approved, may not be presented again for a period of one year. The executive committee shall have the authority to determine if any new proposals constitute the same or substantially the same proposed amendment and deny action on it.

ARTICLE 14 - NON-PROFIT STATUS

The TWA shall:

- A. Conduct itself as a non-profit organization as defined by Section 501(c)(7) of the United States Internal Revenue Code.
- B. Use any funds received solely for the maintenance and operation of the TWA.
- C. Pay no salaries or other remuneration other than reimbursement of actual, reasonable, and authorized expenses incurred in the maintenance and operation of the TWA.
- D. Upon dissolution of the organization, pay any and all outstanding debts, and distribute any remaining assets to another nonprofit agency, fund, or organization affiliated with writing. The nonprofit agency, fund or organization shall be selected by the executive committee with the approval of the TWA membership.
- E. Ensure that no member of the executive committee or general member shall profit financially from the demise of this organization.

ARTICLE 15 - RATIFICATION

These revised Bylaws were presented in writing to the general membership of the TWA by mail on October 25th 1999 as part of Volume 14, Number 11, November 1999 *Write Connections*. They were approved unanimously by the general membership on November 3rd, 1999. Articles 8C, 10 B-C, and 12A were revised by unanimous vote of the general membership on June 2, 2004. Articles 6B and 6D-G were revised by unanimous vote of the general membership on December 5, 2007. Article 10D was revised by two-thirds majority vote of the general membership on April 2, 2008. Articles 5B-C, 8D2, 8H, and 10A-B were revised by two-thirds majority vote of the general membership on January 20, 2012. Article 8K was added by two-thirds majority vote of the general membership on January 20, 2012. Revisions to Articles 3A, 4E, 5A, 5B, 6B, 6D, 7D, 7E, 8C, 8D1, 8D6, 8G, 8I, 8J, 10C, 10D of the Bylaws were presented in writing to the general membership of the TWA by email November 28, 2012. The revisions were accepted by two-thirds majority vote of the general membership in attendance at the General meeting held on January 2, 2013. Revisions to articles 3A, 5B, 6D, 6F, 8J, 10A, 10B, 12B and deletion of 8K, by unanimous vote of the general membership in attendance of the General Meeting held on April 1st, 2015. Addition of Article 3, section E, and addition of of Article 4, Code of Conduct, and re-numbering of subsequent articles, by unanimous vote of the general membership in attendance of the General Meeting held on September 7th, 2016.

Signed by



Amarilys G. Rassler
President
Tampa Writers Alliance
September 7th, 2016