

Bylaws of the Shire of Sylvan Glen

(Revised February 2013)

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Section I Preface

A. Introduction

The Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) is a group dedicated to researching and recreating the Middle Ages in the present. Many groups hold meetings, and at these meetings we dance, talk, study, learn, revel, and make plans.

B. Purpose

These bylaws are intended to govern the organizational structure, general policy, and decision-making process of the Shire of Sylvan Glen, a branch group of the SCA located in the southern region of the Kingdom of Æthelmarc (eastern panhandle area of West Virginia). Sylvan Glen covers the counties of Berkeley, Jefferson, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral, Hardy, and Grant. None of the provisions contained in this document shall apply to any other organization or SCA group.

C. Conflict

These bylaws do not express or delineate Corporate or Kingdom SCA policies. If any conflict exists or arises between corporate or Kingdom rules, policies, or procedures and the provisions contained herein, the corporate or Kingdom laws and policies shall prevail. Further, if such a conflict is discovered, these bylaws shall be revised and amended to eliminate such conflict at the earliest opportunity, by means of procedures set forth herein.

Section II Membership & Residency Requirements

The populace of the Shire shall consist of all those who are participating or have participated in Shire activities, and who remain in good contact with the Shire, regardless of residency or Society membership status.

A. Active Membership

Active membership is defined as participating in Shire meetings, events, practices, Guilds, and/or social activities.

B. Residency Requirements

Membership and residency requirements for holding office or fighter/marshal authorization shall follow Society and Kingdom policy.

Section III Officers

A. Officers

All shire offices, including general duties and responsibilities, will be maintained according to Kingdom and Corporate definitions

B. Minimum Required Officers

Minimum required officers are Seneschal, Exchequer and one other: Knight Marshall, Minister of Arts & Sciences or Herald, subject to governance of Corporate and kingdom laws.

C. Terms of Service & Limits

- i. All officers will serve two-year terms.
- ii. At the conclusion of a term of service, an election shall be held among eligible volunteers.
 - a. An officer may succeed him/herself.
 - b. Officers who do not wish to continue in their office are encouraged to raise Shire interest to find an eligible successor.
- iii. Terms expire in the month of May, with half of the offices expiring on even numbered years, the rest on odd numbered years.
 - a. Odd years:, Chatelaine, Exchequer, Knight Marshall, Minister of Arts & Sciences, Target Archery Marshall, Thrown Weapons Marshall, Youth Rapier Marshall.
 - b. Even years: Chirurgeon, Chronicler, Combat Archery Marshal, Equestrian Marshall, Herald, Minister of the List, Rapier Marshall, Seneschal, Youth Fighting Marshall, Web Minister.

Section IV Change in Office

A. Resignation from Office

An officer may resign from office at any time. Any officer who has decided to resign shall notify the seneschal. If possible, such notice should be given at least 30 days before the resignation will take effect or earlier. A resigning officer shall deliver to his or her successor, or seneschal if no successor is immediately available, all shire-owned records and items held pursuant to the office in question, on or before the effective date of his or her resignation.

B. Temporary Replacement

Any elected officer may appoint a deputy, if no such deputy exists, to perform the duties of his or her office during a temporary absence from the area or period of inactivity.

- i. An officer designating a temporary replacement must announce his/her intention to do so in advance, by posting an announcement on the shire list server, and if possible at a general shire meeting.
- ii. Prior to relinquishing his or her office to a replacement, a shire officer shall notify the appropriate Kingdom or regional officer of the temporary change, and if necessary, request and obtain Kingdom or regional approval.

Section V Election of Officers

An office as defined in Section III is open for election when it is vacant or the current officer submits a resignation.

A. Application for Office Process

- i. Any shire member may submit a Letter of Intent in order to apply as a candidate for an office that is open for election.
- ii. Letters of Intent will be taken when an office becomes open for election.
 - a. Letters of Intent may be submitted at the March or April shire business meetings for offices with term expirations set for the May shire business meeting as defined in Section III.
- iii. Candidate names will be published in the shire newsletter, mailing list and website before the May meeting for offices with term expirations set for the May shire business meeting as defined in Section III.

B. Election

All officers of Sylvan Glen shall be elected at a qualified business meeting, as outlined in section VII, by majority vote of those present.

Section VI Shire Meetings

A. Definitions

- i. The “business” shire meeting shall mean the general business meeting held each month at a consistent time and location and may be attended by anyone.
 - a. There will be no business shire meeting held in August due to conflict with the Pennsic War.
- ii. A “special” shire meeting is also open to any shire member, but is limited to specific topics and scheduled outside of the regularly scheduled business meeting as needed.

- iii. A “restricted” shire meeting is those at which attendance is open but voting and participation is limited to specified shire members; e.g committees or event staff meetings.

B. Scheduling of Meetings

- i. In addition to the business meeting, a special shire meeting may be scheduled by the seneschal, or by agreement of any five (5) shire officers.
- ii. Any shire member may request that a special shire meeting be held. Such request shall be directed to the seneschal, and shall state the specific purpose and need for such a meeting. The seneschal shall then schedule the requested meeting if he or she determines, in his or her sole discretion, that such a meeting is reasonable and necessary.
- iii. The seneschal shall be responsible for scheduling the business meeting, making an agenda, obtaining the location, and notifying the populace.

C. Who Presides at Meetings

- i. The seneschal shall preside over business and special shire meetings.
 - a. If the seneschal is not present, the deputy seneschal shall preside.
 - b. If neither the seneschal nor the deputy seneschal is present, no official Shire business may be conducted.
- ii. At special shire meetings, the presiding officer may designate any other officer, committee chairperson, or event autocrat to preside, if such a delegation is appropriate in view of the specific subject matter of the meeting.
- iii. The seneschal or presiding officer shall organize the meeting as he or she deems necessary to maintain order and provide all members with the opportunity to participate.

D. Notice of Meetings

- i. Notice of business and special meetings must be published to the Shire in advance, and as soon as possible after the meeting is scheduled. If possible, notice of the meeting shall be included in the Shire newsletter, and posted on the shire list server, and should be published at least one week in advance of the meeting date.
- ii. Notice shall be the responsibility of the seneschal or presiding officer, except in cases of restricted meetings, in which case notice shall be the responsibility of the individual scheduling the meeting. Notice of restricted meetings shall follow the same general requirements, but may be limited to publication among those to whom the meeting is open. For example, a committee chairperson setting a committee meeting need only notify the committee members, and the seneschal.
- iii. Notice of special meetings shall include a statement of the issue(s) or subject matter of the meeting.

E. Quorum

- i. At a business, general or special shire meeting, a quorum shall consist of ten shire members, at least three of whom must be shire officers.
- a. The quorum must include the Seneschal or a representative appointed by the Seneschal.
- ii. If a quorum is not present, no business may be conducted.

F. Business Meeting

- i. A business shire meeting shall be held at least once each month, except August, unless waived by unanimous consent or majority vote at the preceding month's business meeting. To the fullest extent possible, the business meeting shall be at the same time and location each month.
- ii. The seneschal, acting alone, does not have the authority to cancel the monthly business meeting, with the exception of extreme or dangerous weather conditions or emergency loss of meeting site.
- iii. Any shire member may add an issue or item of business to the agenda for any business. If possible, such addition should be communicated to the seneschal in advance of the meeting.
- iv. The purpose of the business meeting is to obtain reports from officers and committees on the operation and activities of the shire, to discuss and plan activities, and to address other matters of concern that affect the operation of the shire. This meeting may be organized and run in any manner that is most efficient and expedient in meeting the needs of the shire.

G. Who May Attend

All business and special meetings shall be open to the public, subject to the amount of space available at the meeting location.

If space is limited, preference shall be given to shire members, as defined in Section II.

H. Minutes

The minutes of all business and special meetings shall be recorded and published (in summary form) in the next issue of the Shire newsletter. If no newsletter is published, the minutes shall be made available to any shire member upon request. A copy of the minutes of each meeting shall be filed and kept in the shire records.

Section VII Voting

A. Eligibility to Vote

- i. An individual must be a shire member as defined in Section II in order to vote on shire business. The seneschal shall ensure that all persons voting are eligible to do so, and may require proof of eligibility from any person intending to vote.
- a. An individual must be 16 years of age or older in order to vote on all business, including shire officer elections.

B. Methods of Voting

- i. At all business and special meetings, voting must be done in person or, for scheduled votes, by absentee ballot.
 - a. A vote may be taken verbally, or by a show of hands, as the seneschal requires.
 - b. Officer elections may be voted upon by means of a prepared absentee ballot delivered to the seneschal.
- ii. Proxy votes shall not be recognized or counted.
- iii. Voting by secret ballot shall be used on all scheduled votes including, but not limited to event bids, officer nomination, budget and financial matters.

C. Voting in Officer Elections

- i. If only one viable candidate exists for an office, that candidate shall be considered elected to the office by default, and no vote need be held.
- ii. Ballots will be prepared 10 days in advance of the May shire meeting.
- iii. Ballots will be posted on the shires mailing list and be available for download, review and for use as an absentee ballot.
- iv. When using an absentee ballot it must be signed, dated and include membership number and expiration date, and be sent directly to the seneschal by the date of the meeting at which the vote is scheduled.
- v. Votes will be counted by the seneschal and verified by the attending elected officers defined in Section III whose offices are not up for re-election.
- vi. The nominee with the majority (51%) of votes is elected. If no nominee receives a majority (51%) of the vote, a runoff election will be held immediately between the two nominees with the most votes.
- vii. In the case of a tie vote for an office, the winner will be determined by a majority vote by the elected officers present, minus the Seneschal, who will cast their vote if there is a tie again.

Section VIII Amendments to these Bylaws

A. Amendment Proposals

All amendments or changes to these bylaws must be formally proposed at a business or special meeting which is open to all members. Such a proposal shall include a completed draft of the proposed change or amendment, and an explanation of why it is needed. The proposed changes must also be published on the shire list server and in the shire newsletter.

B. Notice and Consideration

- i. No vote shall be taken on a proposed amendment to the bylaws until the following business meeting.
- ii. During the month following the proposal, the shire member sponsoring it shall ensure that the draft of the proposal is posted to the shire list-serve within 5 days of the meeting at which it was presented, and provided to the shire chronicler, who shall publish it in the shire newsletter. The purpose of this section is to provide adequate time for notice, publication, and mature consideration of the proposed amendment.
 - a. During this time, all shire members shall have the right to comment upon and suggest alterations to, the proposed change or amendment draft.

C. Voting on Amendments

- i. The vote on an amendment shall be taken at a business meeting as defined in Section VII.
- ii. Two-thirds (2/3) of the voting membership present at such meeting must vote in favor of the change or amendment in order for it to pass.
- iii. The outcome of the vote, and the new or revised bylaw section (if passed), shall be posted to the shire list-serve, published in the shire newsletter, and added to all official copies of the shire bylaws.

D. Publication

The shire bylaws shall be published at least once each year in the shire newsletter and to the list server. If no newsletter is being published, the bylaws shall be printed and distributed separately upon request.