

# Bylaws

## Operating Policies of the Shire of Sylvan Glen

---

Section I	Preface .....	1
Section II	Membership .....	1
Section III	Officers .....	2
Section IV	Change in Office .....	3
Section V	Election of Officers .....	3
Section VI	Shire Meetings.....	4
Section VII	Voting.....	7
Section VIII	Amendments to these Operating Policies.....	8

### 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 operating policies 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 operating policies 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 operating policies shall be revised and amended to eliminate such conflict at the earliest opportunity, by means of procedures set forth herein. Per Copora, the Sylvan Glen group seneschal is the final arbiter of these operating policies.

### 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. Other offices may be filled as needed by the shire, and based upon availability of members.

**C. Terms of Service & Limits**

- i. All officers will serve two-year terms. No officer shall hold more than one officer positions concurrently.
- ii. At the conclusion of a term of service, an election shall be held among eligible volunteers.
  - a. An officer may succeed themselves 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~~ on May 1st, with half of the offices expiring on even numbered years, the rest on odd numbered years. Election of officer positions will be held during the January business meeting.
  - a. Odd years: Chatelaine, Exchequer, Knight Marshall, Minister of Arts & Sciences, Target Archery Marshal, Thrown Weapons Marshal, Youth Rapier Marshal.
  - b. Even years: Chronicler, Combat Archery Marshal, Equestrian Marshal, Herald, Minister of the List, Rapier Marshal, Seneschal, Youth Fighting Marshal, Web Minister.
- iv. Officers who are not able to attend a business meeting should submit a written report of updates and activities related to their office to the seneschal prior to the business meeting.

- v. Officers are subject to the duties, responsibilities, and authority granted to them by kingdom and society law and policy. Although they report their activities to the local shire, and work to discharge their duties at the local level, they report to their applicable kingdom-level officer. Concerns with an officer in the performance of their duties, up to and including requests for removal from office, should be reported directly to their kingdom superior officer,

## 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 the successor, or seneschal~~ **the chamberlain (for inventory purpose)** ~~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~~ **their** resignation.

### B. Temporary Replacement

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

- i. An officer designating a temporary replacement must announce ~~his/her~~ **their** intention to do so in advance, ~~by posting an announcement on the shire list server, and if possible at a general shire meeting~~ **to the seneschal**.
- 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~~ **must** be submitted ~~at by the March or April~~ **November** shire business meetings for offices with term expirations set for ~~the May 1<sup>st</sup> shire business meeting~~ as defined in Section III.

- iii. Candidate names will be published ~~in the shire newsletter, mailing list and website~~ **via the shire's official communication channel and website at least 30 days in advance of** ~~before the May the January elections meeting~~ for offices with term expirations set for the **following** ~~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.

- 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. **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.**
- iii. **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.**
- iv. **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.**
- v.

## **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 **(eg: meetings for special topics requiring more time and discussion than is available during the regularly scheduled business meeting, time-sensitive items requiring immediate attention).**
- 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~~ **they** determines, in ~~his or her~~ **their** sole discretion, that such a meeting is reasonable and necessary **before the next scheduled business meeting**.
- iii. The seneschal shall be responsible for scheduling the business meeting, making an agenda, obtaining the location, and notifying the populace **via the official communication channel**. **The seneschal also has the authority to cancel scheduled business meetings, as needed, for reasons including, but not limited to, inclement weather, no business to conduct, unforeseeable conflicts with meeting location, etc; but shall hold no less than one official business meeting per quarter per calendar year.**

**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~~ **they** deem 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 **at least one week** in advance **via the shire's official communication channel**, ~~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 **of meetings** 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 ~~seven~~ **five** adult shire members **who meet the definition of "active membership,"** ~~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.
    - a. **Business is defined as any action requiring a vote of the shire to authorize any operational decisions for the shire.**

**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.
- v. 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
- vi. To the fullest extent possible, the business meeting shall be at the same time and location each month.
- v. **Virtual and/or teleconference options must be available for members who cannot physically attend the meeting.**

**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, regardless of whether official business was conducted, shall be recorded and published (in summary form) **via the Shire's official communication channel, and shall be archived and made available in such a manner that they can be accessed, as needed.** ~~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 may be done in person **and/or virtually,** 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.~~
  - c. For virtual or teleconferencing votes, the individual must clearly identify themselves and their vote.**
- ii. Proxy votes shall not be recognized or counted.
- iii. Absentee votes may be accepted by the seneschal on any scheduled and announced business item.**
- iv. Voting by secret ballot shall be used **at the discretion of the seneschal or designated representative** ~~on all scheduled votes including, but not limited to event bids, officer nomination, budget and financial matters.~~ **Members who vote by virtual or teleconferencing cannot be assured their vote can be secret.**

### **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 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 **Operating Policies****

### **A. Amendment Proposals**

All amendments or changes to these **operating policies** 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 **via the shire's official communication channel** ~~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 **operating policies** bylaws until the following business meeting.~~
- ~~ii. During the month following the proposal, the **seneschal** shire member sponsoring it shall ensure that the draft of the proposal is **distributed to the shire via its official communication channel** 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 direct feedback and commentary to the seneschal, who will compile and summarize the commentary and feedback, to be read into the record at the next meeting.** have the right to comment upon and suggest alterations to, the proposed change or amendment draft.~~



- b. After the reading of the feedback and commentary, the seneschal will invite discussion of the commentary by the members present.
- c. At the conclusion of the discussion period, the voting on the amendment draft will commence.

**C. Voting on Amendments to the**

- i. The vote on an amendment shall be taken at a business meeting as defined in Section VII. VI
- 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 of the operating policy (if passed), shall be distributed via the shire's official communication channel 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 operating policies shall be made available via the shire's official website, and made available in print upon request, as needed 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.