



Greater Los Angeles Chapter

Constitution and By-Laws

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I

NAME AND DESCRIPTION

- Section 1. The name of this Organization shall be Greater Los Angeles Chapter affiliated with, chartered by, and member of the World Lebanese Cultural Union (hereinafter referred to as “WLCU”).
- Section 2. This is a civil organization with no governmental, racial, or religious character. Its purpose shall be charitable and benevolent and to encourage and promote the object of WLCU. Its duration is unlimited.
- Section 3 This Chapter shall be composed of at least Thirty (30) ordinary members residing in Southern California.

ARTICLE II

OBJECTS

This WLCU Chapter endeavors to realize the following objectives:

- a) To strengthen and foster the spirit of loyalty and good citizenship to the country in which members of this Chapter live and take an active interest in the cultural, civic, social, and moral welfare of its communities.
- b) To unite its members in the bonds of friendship and good fellowship, promoting also the ties of mutual friendship and understanding among the many countries where WLCU members reside.
- c) To create, foster and strengthen ties of friendship and mutual understanding between all such countries and Lebanon, and to promote interchanges of cultural, social, tourist, and economic activities, between these countries and Lebanon, as well as between peoples of Lebanese descent and Lebanon.
- d) To foster Lebanese cultural heritage in countries where WLCU members reside and foster such countries’ cultural heritage amongst each other and in Lebanon.
- e) To work in support of Lebanon’s freedom, independence, and sovereignty, and for the respect in Lebanon of human rights, the rule of law, and democratic practices, thus allowing Lebanon to continue with its contributions to world peace and understanding amongst all nations.
- f) To promote the image of unselfish service that Lebanon has been rendering to humanity all through its history, and advance international good will, peace and

understanding, by encouraging its members to serve their communities without personal financial reward, and to promote high ethical standards in business, public work and private life, and also by engaging, as a Chapter, in such benevolent work as making charitable donations to local and Lebanese charities, and granting scholarships to deserving students.

ARTICLE III **MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1. Subject to the provisions of Section 2 hereinafter, any person of legal majority and good moral character and good reputation in his/her community may be granted membership in this Chapter.
- Section 2. Categories of Membership: There are three categories of membership, namely, Ordinary, Associate and Honorary.
- Section 3. Ordinary Membership: Ordinary members are persons who are of Lebanese origin, irrespective of nationality, and those connected or related to them being supporters of the objectives of the WLCU and its ideals. Rights of such members shall include, but not be limited to, eligibility to seek, if otherwise qualified, any office in the structure of the Chapter and WLCU organization. Their obligations shall include regular attendance, prompt payment of dues, participation in Chapter activities, and conduct reflecting a favorable image of the Chapter in the community.
- Section 4. Associate Membership: An Associate member is a person who is not of Lebanese descent or related thereto, irrespective of nationality, color or creed, being a supporter of the objectives of WLCU and its ideals. Associate members may attend all Chapter meetings, and such associate members are entitled to all the privileges of ordinary membership except the right of voting. Associate members shall pay the normal Chapter dues.
- Section 5. Honorary Membership: A person, not a Chapter member, having performed outstanding or meritorious service for the community or the Chapter or WLCU at large and upon whom the Chapter desires to confer special distinction. The Chapter shall pay the dues on such a member, who may attend meetings but shall not be entitled to any privileges of ordinary membership.
- Section 6. Application: Membership in this Chapter shall be accepted by invitation only. Every nominee for membership shall fill a standard application form and submit it to the Chapter's Secretary who, after investigation, shall submit the same to the Board of Directors. If a majority of the said Board approves the application, the prospect may then be invited to become a member of this Chapter. The proper membership fee must be in the hands of the Secretary before a member may be officially accepted into the Chapter or reported to the WLCU.

Section 7. Reinstatement: Any member dropped from membership may be reinstated after a lapse of not less than three months. Such member, however, will come into the Chapter under the procedure set forth in Section 6, supra, of this Article III.

ARTICLE IV **FEES AND DUES**

Every member shall pay annually per capita dues as provided in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE V **DURATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Period: Membership shall continue during the existence of the Chapter unless terminated as hereinafter provided:

Section 2. Termination of Membership:

- a) Non-payment of Dues: Any member failing to pay his/her dues within Thirty (30) days after the prescribed time, shall be notified by the Secretary to that effect. If the dues are not paid within Thirty (30) days of the said notice, such membership shall automatically terminate.
- b) ~~Non attendance: Any ordinary member who absents himself/herself from Two (2) regular and consecutive Chapter meetings shall be subject to termination by a Board decision, unless he/she is excused by the Board for good and sufficient reason.~~
- c) Expulsion: Any member may be expelled from the Chapter for cause by a Two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Board of Directors.

In all the above cases the action of the Board shall be final.

Section 3 Resignations: Any member may resign from this Chapter and said resignation shall become affective upon acceptance thereof by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI **OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

Section 1. Officers: The officers of this Chapter shall be a President, Two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer, all of whom shall be members of the Board of Directors. The Immediate Past President shall be an officer of this Chapter as well.

Section 2. Board of Directors: The governing body of this Chapter shall be a Board of

Directors composed of the officers as stated in section 1, supra. Except for the Immediate Past President, all officers shall be elected by the Chapter's members as provided for in this Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 3. No person shall be eligible to hold office as a member of the Board unless he/she is an ordinary member in good standing.

Section 4. The decisions of the Board in all Chapter matters shall be final.

Section 5. No officer shall receive any compensation for any service rendered to this Chapter in his/her official capacity, except that the Board may appoint a paid secretary whose compensation shall be fixed by the Board. Furthermore, the President or, in his/her absence, their delegate to the World meetings and conferences may receive compensation for an air ticket only as shall be stipulated hereinafter.

ARTICLE VII

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. President's Qualifications:

- a) Must be an ordinary member of this Chapter in good standing.
- b) Should possess the ability to assume the leadership of the Chapter and possess the esteem and confidence of fellow members.
- c) Should be prepared to give the time and effort necessary to lead and carry on the work of the Chapter.
- d) Should have a working knowledge of the Constitution and By-laws of the Chapter and the objects of WLCU.

Section 2. Duties of President:

- a) Presides at the meetings of the Chapter.
- b) Attends district conferences.
- c) Should, without fail, attend the World Convention once every Two (2) years, subject to the right of delegating someone in his/her behalf as stipulated in this Constitution and By-laws, but such right to be exercised in very exceptional cases where health or similar reasons prevent the President's attendance.
- d) Sees that each meeting is carefully planned, opening and adjourning on time,

and presides at regular meetings of the Board of Directors.

- e) Appoints Chapter committee chairmen and members for the jobs assigned and makes sure that each committee has definite objectives and is functioning successfully.
- f) Holds regular Chapter meetings or functions, at least once every Two (2) months, and regular Board of Directors meetings, at least once every month.
- g) Cooperates with the District President in various Chapter and district matters and handles all correspondence promptly.
- h) Supervises the Chapter's Budget preparation and annual audit.
- i) Makes use of information and helpful suggestions available at the Secretariat General.
- j) Ensures that all decisions and resolutions of the World Council are implemented.
- k) Makes certain that important information obtained from the District President, Secretariat General, World President or other WLCU organs is passed on to the Chapter's members.
- l) Makes certain that the Chapter immediately budgets for the necessary expenses for travel to the World meetings as indicated under Article XIV of the WLCU Internal Regulations.
- m) Conducts periodic check ups on all Committee activities and objectives.
- n) Submits a comprehensive annual report to the Chapter on the status of Chapter finances and on the extent to which the Chapter has achieved its objectives for the year.
- o) Arranges a joint meeting of the incoming and outgoing Boards of Directors for the dual purpose of getting the new administration off to a good start and providing continuity of Chapter administration.

Section 3. Immediate Past President:

Shall advise the President on all such matters as the President may require.

Section 4. Vice President:

- a) If the President is unable to attend or perform the duties of office for any

reason, the Vice-President next in rank shall occupy the President's position and perform its duties with the same authority as the President.

- b) Each Vice-President shall, under the direction of the President, oversee the functioning of such committees of this Chapter as the President shall designate.

Section 5. Secretary:

- a) Shall be under the supervision and direction of the President and the Board of Directors.
- b) Shall keep the records of membership.
- c) Submits reports to the World Council through the General Secretary containing such information as the World Council may require.
- d) Submits reports to the Secretariat General on the membership of this Chapter, as requested.
- e) Keeps and maintains general records of this Chapter, including records of the minutes of Chapter and Board meetings, attendance, committee appointments, contact information of members, and Chapter's financial accounts.
- f) Ensures that all World Council dues and any Secretariat General requirements are met.

Section 6. Treasurer:

- a) Receives all monies, from Secretary and otherwise, and deposits same in a bank or banks approved by the Board.
- b) Pays out monies in fulfillment of Chapter obligations only on authority given by the Board of Directors. All checks and vouchers shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by another officer determined by the Board.
- c) Prepares and submits periodic financial reports to the Board of Directors of this Chapter, and to the World Council as requested.
- d) Upon retirement from the post, shall turn over to successor, or to the President, all funds, books of accounts or any other Chapter property in his/her possession.

ARTICLE VIII
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Composition: The Board shall be composed of the officers of this Chapter, namely the President, up to Three (3) Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer, in addition to the Immediate Past President, if any.

Section 2. Meetings:

- a) Regular meetings of the Board shall be held monthly at such time and place as the Board may determine.
- b) Special meetings of the Board shall be held when called by the President or when requested by Two-Thirds (2/3) or more of the Board members, at such time and place as the President may determine.

Section 3. Quorum: The presence in person of a majority of its members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board. Except as otherwise specifically provided, the act of the majority of the Directors present at any meeting of the Board shall be the act and decision of the entire Board of Directors.

Section 4. Duties and Powers: In addition to such duties and powers set out elsewhere herein, the Board shall:

- a) Constitute the Executive Board of this Chapter and shall be responsible for the execution, through its officers, of the policies approved by the Chapter.
- b) Authorize all expenditures.
- c) Have an annual audit of its accounts books. Any member of the Chapter in good standing may inspect the audit or accounting upon request at a reasonable time and place.
- d) Appoint a bank or banks for the deposit of funds of the Chapter.
- e) Name and appoint the delegates and alternates, other than the President, to the District Conferences and World meetings.

ARTICLE IX
NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MATTERS

Except as stipulated in article II, paragraph (e) of this Constitution, this Chapter should not be involved in the local politics of its community and country, or the local politics of Lebanon. Therefore, and keeping in mind the said exception:

- a) The Chapter shall not express any opinion of public characters on such matters as may be the subject of controversy.
- b) The Chapter shall neither support nor nominate any candidate to a public office, nor shall it discuss at any of its meetings the merits or demerits of such candidates.
- c) The Chapter shall not issue circulars or take resolutions embodying points of view on world matters or questions of international political character nor shall it take any joint action in respect thereof.
- d) The Chapter shall not solicit the support of any other civil or public association, nor shall it issue or make circulars, publications, speeches or other proposed projects for the solution of debatable international problems.

ARTICLE X

MEETINGS

- Section 1. Regular Meetings of this Chapter shall be held no less than once every two months, at a time and place recommended by the Board of Directors, and after a notice has been issued to the members. Such notice may be given by mail, phone, or e-mail.
- Section 2. Special Meetings of this Chapter may be called by the President, at his/her discretion, or when requested by Two-Thirds (2/3) or more members of the Board of Directors. The notice of such meeting shall set forth its purpose.
- Section 3. The Annual Meeting of this Chapter shall be held at the discretion of the President and at such time and place determined by the President. At this meeting, reports from various officers may be read. Every second year, such Meeting must be held and shall be the Election Meeting as well.
- Section 4. Quorum: The presence of One-quarter (1/4) of the membership in good standing shall constitute a quorum. If this number does not turn out, the meeting shall be postponed for Thirty (30) minutes, and those who are present shall be deemed to form a quorum after the lapse of the said Thirty (30) minutes.
- Section 5. Except otherwise specifically provided, the act of a majority of the members present at any meeting shall be the act and decision of the entire Chapter, once the notice and quorum rules herein stated are properly observed.
- Section 6. Board of Directors Meetings: These are as stipulated for in Article VIII, Section 2 of this Constitution.

ARTICLE XI
RECOGNITION OF THE CHAPTER BY WLCU

This Chapter shall abide by the requirements of the WLCU's Constitution and By-laws, provided that they are not in conflict with the laws of this country; and so far as recognition is concerned shall pay particular attention to article XVIII of said WLCU By-Laws, Sections 1, 2 and 3.

ARTICLE XII
DELEGATES TO THE WORLD CONGRESS

In order that this Chapter may have its voice in World Congress decisions, this Chapter shall have the power to pay the necessary traveling expenses for the President, or the Chapter's delegate to the World Congress in accordance with Article XIV, Section 3 of the Bay-laws of the WLCU.

ARTICLE XIII
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

This Chapter may, for better development of its financial and social levels, and at its discretion, form a Board of Trustees to be appointed by the Board of Directors from such members of the community whose presence on the said Board of Trustees may enhance and encourage the growth and development of this Chapter. The powers and duties of such Board of Trustees shall be determined by the Board of Directors of this Chapter.

ARTICLE XIV
EMBLEM

The emblem and colors of this Chapter shall be the same as the emblem and colors of the WLCU.

ARTICLE XV
AMMENDMENTS

- Section 1. Upon recognition of this Chapter by the WLCU, this Constitution, except in an emergency as provided for in Article I, Section 2, Subsection (c) of the By-Laws of the WLCU, and except as provided for in Section 4 of this Article, may be amended only by the Legislative Committee as part of the World Convention and after approval of the World Council, provided that such amendments are ratified by majority of electors present and voting in a World Convention.
- Section 2. Amendments may be proposed by this Chapter, the District President, a District Conference, or the World Council.
- Section 3. Procedure: Proposals to amend this Constitution shall be delivered to the

Secretariat General no later than the First (1st) day of May of the year during which the World Convention is to be held, in order for such proposals to be considered.

Section 4. Only the name of this Chapter may be amended by the vote of a majority of members present and voting at any regular meeting satisfying the requirements of notice and quorum.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1 **MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

- Section 1. Each member, including reinstated members, shall pay a regular annual due of _____, payable immediately on acceptance of his/her membership, as set in Section 6 of Article III of the Chapter's Constitution, and shall be deemed to cover dues up to the end of the current year, i.e. December 31st.
- Section 2. The President and Secretary of the Chapter, upon request by the Secretary General, shall issue and sign a list of the Chapter's membership, listing each and every member who has been admitted to the Chapter, stating the member's full name, address, date of admission and type of membership.

ARTICLE II **ELECTIONS**

The Board of Directors of this Chapter, excluding the Immediate Past President, shall be elected as follows:

- Section 1. A nomination meeting shall be held in the month of March or April of each second year (i.e. once every Two (2) years) with the date and place of such meeting to be determined by the Board of Directors and notice thereof duly sent to all members. Nominations shall be presented from the floor to a Nominating Committee composed of a minimum of Three (3) and a maximum of Five (5) members from the Chapter at large. No member of the Nominating Committee can be a nominee for the post of Board member. All members, regardless of the category of their membership can make nominations to the Board as long as any required membership dues for the current year have been paid prior to March 1 of the current year. Only ordinary members can be nominated or run for seats on the Board as long as their required membership dues have been paid prior to March 1 of the current year. Any number of nominations may be made by the members from the floor.
- Section 2. The President shall appoint the Nominating Committee. The nominations duly made from the floor shall be placed by the Nominating Committee on a ballot in alphabetical order.
- Section 3. If in the interim between the nomination meeting and the election meeting the number of nominees shall fall under that required to fill the numbers stipulated herein for Board of Directors, then further nominations shall be taken from the floor at the election meeting.

- Section 4. An Election Meeting shall be held in the month of May immediately subsequent to the Nomination Meeting (i.e. once every Two (2) years). The time and place shall be determined by the Board of Directors, and Two (2) weeks prior notice thereof shall be given to the Chapter's members. Such notice shall include the names of all nominees approved at the preceding nomination meeting as well as the names of all members qualified to vote according to Section 1 of this Article, supra. No nominations may be made from the floor at the election meeting, except as stipulated in Section 3 of this Article, supra.
- Section 5. Only those members present at the election meeting and qualified to vote, as detailed earlier in this Article, have the right to vote. The election shall be by secret ballots previously prepared by the Secretary and the Nomination Committee. The Nomination Committee will be declared by the President an Election Committee, to monitor and verify the elections, after the President has replaced any member from the original committee not present at the election meeting. The candidates securing the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. In case the number of candidates is the same as that required to be voted in for the Board of Directors, then the President shall declare that such candidates are elected by a raise of hands without the need to carry out a secret ballot. If a majority of those present and qualified to vote did not endorse the list of candidates by a raise of hands, then more nominations can be taken from the floor to be followed by elections as described in this Article.
- Section 6. The newly-elected Board of Directors shall meet within One (1) week after its election and shall elect from its membership a President, a First Vice President, and then possibly Second and Third Vice Presidents if the Board had chosen to fill these positions, a Treasurer and a Secretary who, together with the Immediate Past President, shall constitute the officers of the Chapter.
- Section 7. Subject to the provisions relating to removal of members of the Board, all such members of the Board of Directors shall be elected every Two (2) years and shall take office immediately after their election, and shall hold office for Two (2) years from that date. All officers are eligible for re-election. In the case of new or re-activated Chapters, the Board of Directors shall hold office until the month of May of the second year following its election, irrespective of whether that results in an actual duration of more or less than Two (2) years, e.g., a Board elected in November 2006 shall hold office until May 2008 (about 19 months), whereas if elected in March 2007 it shall hold office until May 2009 (about 26 months).
- Section 8. Vacancy: A vacancy in the office of the President shall be filled by the First Vice-President, then –if applicable-- by the Second, then by the Third Vice-President, each filling the said post if the former Vice-President causes a vacancy. In such case, an emergency election meeting shall be called by the Acting President within Three (3) months of the vacancy, to elect an entire Board. The

newly-elected Board shall have a term which length is determined in the same way as in the case of a new Chapter described in Section 7 of this Article, supra. In the event of any other office becoming vacant, the Board of Directors shall appoint a member to serve the remainder of the term.

Section 9 Removal: Any member of the Board may be removed for cause by Two-thirds (2/3) of the votes of the entire Board of Directors. The President of the Chapter may be removed in accordance with the provisions of Article XV, Section 3, of the WLCU By-laws, which authorizes the World President under circumstances and for cause deemed sufficient by the World President to remove a President of a Chapter.

ARTICLE III **COMMITTEES**

Section 1. The following standing Committees shall be appointed by the President:

- (a) Youth
- (b) Membership, Public Relations, and Attendance
- (c) Finance
- (d) Information & Communications (website)
- (e) Culture & Heritage

Section 2. The President may appoint with the approval of the Board of Directors, such other committees as may be necessary for better development of the ideals and objects of this Chapter.

Section 3. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 4. All committees shall consist of a chairman and as many members as shall be considered necessary by the President.

Section 5. Each committee, through the Chairman, shall report either verbally or in writing to the Board of Directors as the Board stipulates, either periodically or on request.

Section 6. Each committee shall transact such business as is delegated to it by the By-Laws or referred to it by the Board.

ARTICLE IV **DUTIES OF COMMITTEES**

Section 1. Youth Committee: Organizes and sponsors such activities as athletics, camps, hobbies, youth clubs and organizations etc., and any other activity that may be of interest to the youth of this Chapter or to potential Chapter members. In particular, the Committee shall seek to implement a Youth Exchange Program

with other countries where WLCU Chapters exist and with Lebanon. The Youth Exchange Program shall be conducted for people between the ages of 15 and 26.

Section 2. Membership, Public Relations, and Attendance Committee: Shall take positive action to initiate and present to the Board the names of suitable persons for Chapter membership; and shall devise and carry into effect plans to give out public information about WLCU, its history and objects, and to secure proper publicity for the Chapter, its objects and ideals. Shall encourage attendance at regular meetings of the Chapter, promote better incentives for good attendance and encourage attendance to the World Congress or District Conferences.

Section 3. Finance Committee: Prepares the Chapter's budget and supervises with the Treasurer prompt collection of dues; assists the Board to formulate plans for raising money to promote activities; assists Secretary and Treasurer with their financial statements and other Chapter and WLCU reports; assists in the implementation of fund raising programs and ensures that budgetary forecasts are met.

Section 4. Information & Communications (website)

Section 5. Culture & Heritage

ARTICLE V

ORDER OF BUSINESS AT MEETINGS

1. Meeting called to order by the President.
2. Roll call and reading of communication from absent members.
3. Reading of the Minutes of the previous meeting by the Secretary.
4. Other reports of the Secretary and the list of members absent two or more consecutive meetings.
5. Report of the Treasurer.
6. Correspondence and announcements.
7. Committee reports.
8. Unfinished business (any business held over or pending from previous meetings.)
9. Any new business.
10. Adjournment.

ARTICLE VI

AMENDMENTS

These By-laws may be amended at any regular meeting, a quorum being present, by a Two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present and voting provided that amendments do not contradict

this Chapter's constitution or WLCU Constitution and By-Laws, or the laws of this Country.