

**Columbia
American Legion
Post No. 581**



By-Laws

05/18/2024 Revision

Columbia American Legion Post No. 581

By-Laws

Article I

Section 1. The Post existing under these By-Laws is to be known as Columbia American Legion Post No. 581, Department of Illinois, located at 375 East Locust Street, Columbia, Illinois 62236.

Section 2. The objectives of this Post are outlined in the American Legion National Constitution and By-Laws.

Article II – Management

Section 1. The government and management of the post are entrusted to a Board known as the “Executive Board”.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall consist of six (6) members in addition to the officers of the post and the Immediate Past Commander. Two (2) members and the officers of the post shall be elected annually at the regular May meeting, except the Adjutant, who is appointed by the Commander elect and takes office at the Regular Post Meeting next following that of the election. All elections of officers and Board members shall be by ballot, and the candidate or candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to the respective office or offices for which they are candidates. In addition to the elected Executive Board members the Park Chairperson, Gaming Chairperson, Finance Chairperson, House Chairperson(s),

Personnel Committee Chairperson are ex-officio members of the Executive Board with full voting rights. No person acting as a member of the Executive Board shall have more than one vote on any given issue.

Section 3. All vacancies existing in the Executive Board or any office of the post from any cause other than expiration of the term, shall be filled by the Commander, and a person so appointed shall hold office for the unexpired term of the member of the committee or officer who he or she succeeds. A vacancy shall exist when a member or officer is absent from his or her post for a continuous period considered detrimental to the interest of the post by the Executive Board.

Article III – Post Executive Board

Section 1. The Post Executive Board shall meet for organizational and such other business as may come before it at the call of the Post Commander prior to the next regular meeting after the installation of the new officers. Thereafter, the post Executive Board shall meet on at least the 1st Tuesday of each month and as often as the Commander deems necessary. The Commander shall call a meeting of the Post Executive Board upon the joint written request of at least three (3) Executive Board members. Seven (7) members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. The Post Executive Board shall approve the final hiring of such employees as may be necessary; shall authorize and approve all expenditures not covered elsewhere in these articles, except dealing with real property; shall hear the reports of Post Committee Chairperson(s); and generally, shall have charge of and be responsible for the management of the affairs of this post.

Article IV – Transactions

Section 1. All transactions of this post dealing with the expansion, purchase, or any disposition or sale of real property must be conducted by a special meeting called by the Commander, with a two-thirds (2/3) vote required of the membership present at such meeting. Written notices shall be given to all members at least ten (10) days before such a meeting.

Article V – Duties of Officers

Section 1. Post Commander. It shall be the duty of the Post Commander to preside at all post meetings and to have general supervision over the post's business affairs. Such officer shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the post. The Post Commander, who is the Chief Executive Officer, is authorized to approve emergency expenditures deemed necessary for the good of the post. The Post Commander is an ex-officio member of all committees and may serve as a Committee Chairperson. The Post Commander shall perform such other duties as directed by the post.

Section 2. Senior Vice Commander. The Senior Vice Commander shall assume and discharge the duties of the office of Commander in the absence or disability of, or when called upon by the Post Commander. Membership and the rendering of related reports is the primary responsibility of the Senior Vice Commander.

Section 3. Junior Vice Commander. The Junior Vice Commander is responsible for the Post's Public Relations Program. The Junior Vice Commander is also responsible for all social activities in the post.

Section 4. Post Adjutant. The Adjutant shall be in charge and keep a complete and correct record of all proceedings of all meetings, keeping such records as the department and national organizations may require, and under the direction of the Commander, managing all correspondence of the post. The Adjutant certifies the officers for the ensuing year.

Section 5. Finance Officer. The Finance Officer of the post shall have charge of all finances, and see that they are safely deposited in an accredited financial institution and shall report once a month to the Finance Committee and Executive Board the condition of the finances of the post, with such recommendations as the Finance Officer and Finance Committee may deem expedient or necessary for raising funds with which to continue the activities of the post. The Finance Officer shall prepare and post at the monthly meeting an itemized report (Income and Expenses) of the Post funds. The Finance Officer shall present all exceptional bills to the Executive Board for approval before payment. The Finance Officer shall sign checks disbursing the post's money except for resale items purchased by the Home Manager(s). The Finance Officer is responsible for preparing sales and payroll reports and income tax returns. The Finance Officer, along with the Finance Committee, shall be responsible for the preparation and submission to the Post Executive Board an annual CPA quality review and/or audit, as appropriate, at the end of the fiscal year.

Section 6. Post Historian. The Post Historian shall be charged with the individual records and incidents of the post and post members and shall perform such other duties as may properly pertain to the office as determined by the post or the Executive Board. The Post Historian

shall also maintain and safeguard all previous post minutes.

Section 7. Post Chaplain. The Post Chaplain shall be charged with the spiritual welfare of the post comrades and will offer divine but nonsectarian services in the event of dedications, funerals, and public functions. The Post Chaplain shall adhere to such ceremonial rituals as the national and department headquarters recommend.

Section 8. Sergeant-At-Arms. The Sergeant-At-Arms shall preserve order at all meetings and perform such other duties as may be assigned to the Sergeant-At-Arms by the Commander. The Sergeant-At-Arms shall ensure that all new members are properly initiated. The Sergeant-At-Arms must also concern himself/herself with the proper presentation of other rituals outlined in the Manual of Ceremonies ---- burial detail and the wearing of Legion regalia.

Section 9. Service Officer. The Service Officer shall supervise all matters pertaining to service to comrades in prosecuting all just claims against the United States government and agencies or state governments and agencies. The Service Officer shall also be responsible for communicating with sick comrades and visiting and comforting members of their families when sick or bereaved.

Article VI – Membership Eligibility

Section 1. Any applicant for membership in this Post must meet American Legion Eligibility Guidelines and present full payment of annual dues and suitable documentation of eligibility status to be considered for membership. Transfers must meet the same criteria as established for new members.

Article VII – Convention Delegates

Section 1. Delegates and alternates to a department convention shall be elected by department guidelines by the post at a regular meeting of the post to be held at least twenty (20) days before the date of such convention.

Article VIII – Appointments

Section 1. By the beginning of the following calendar year, the Post Commander shall appoint for one (1) year Chairpersons and members of the following standing committees: House; Finance; Gaming; Park; Children and Youth; Americanism; Insurance; Commander's Committee and Personnel. The Commander shall appoint other special committees, as necessary. Such standing and special committees shall consist of such members as designated by the Post Commander. Vacancies occurring on any of these committees for any cause other than expiration of term shall be filled immediately by a person designated by the Post Commander. A person so designated shall hold office for the unexpired term of the committee member whom he or she succeeds.

Article IX – Standing Committees

Section 1. House.

- a. The Home Manager and Assistant work under the supervision of the House Chairperson(s). The Home Manager is authorized to purchase all resale items and other items necessary for the operation of the home. All funds are to be accounted for in and out of the Lounge Account, supported by required bookkeeping procedures established by the Finance Committee, and an itemized report

provided monthly to the Finance Officer to be forwarded to the Executive Board.

- b. The House Committee, under the supervision of the Executive Board, is charged with all matters about the care of the Post Home, the operation of the Club facilities, and arrangements for all home rentals and social activities. The Committee shall govern the Rules and Regulations adopted by the Committee and approved by the Executive Board.
- c. The House Committee shall have the power to spend monies from Post funds for emergency house maintenance deemed necessary with a report furnished to the Executive Board.

Section 2. Finance.

- a. The Finance Committee shall establish and administer the Post's financial policy and fiscal strategies. The Finance Committee shall conduct and perform such studies and analyses pertinent to the wellbeing of the Post's budgetary and financial goals. The Finance Committee shall interact closely with and aid the Finance Officer in preparing an annual CPA quality review and/or audit and the receipt, disbursement, and accounting of all post funds and investments.

Section 3. Gaming.

- a. The Gaming Committee, headed by the Gaming Committee Chairperson, is charged with operating the various Post 581 gaming activities in compliance with and by legal guidelines contained in the laws of the State of Illinois and, if applicable, the ordinances of the City of Columbia, Illinois.

- b. The Gaming Committee shall comprise the Gaming Chairperson, the Chairperson(s) of the various post-games and raffles, and the Post Commander, an ex-officio Gaming Committee member. The Gaming Chairperson shall ensure that the various Post games and raffle Chairperson(s) comply with the Post By-Laws guidelines and that all required licenses and permits are in effect and current.
- c. The Chairperson for each game and/or raffle shall be knowledgeable of and responsible for operating their respective gaming activity according to the laws of the State of Illinois and, in the case of raffles, also applicable City of Columbia, Illinois ordinances.
- d. All proceeds from the post-gaming and raffles are to be deposited in the respective game account, with a copy of the deposit slip being directed to the Finance Officer. Such funds will be turned over to the Post Finance Officer as receipts permit. An accurate and complete accounting of all games and raffles shall be maintained in an up-to-date status by the respective game or raffle Chairperson(s). It shall be made available to the Finance Officer, Finance Committee, and/or Executive Board upon request. Monthly or special reports shall be prepared by the gaming/raffle Chairperson(s) and forwarded through the Gaming Committee Chairperson for the record and for reporting to the Post Executive Board and Post Membership.
- e. The various gaming/raffle Chairperson(s) are authorized to purchase all supplies (not including

equipment) for the successful operation of their respective game/raffle. The Post Executive Board must approve equipment purchase except that emergency purchase of equipment mandatory for the successful operation of that game/raffle may be approved by the Gaming Committee Chairperson in Consultation with the Post Commander.

- f. In the case of miscellaneous raffles, an activity that deals with one-time or occasional raffles, not regularly scheduled raffles, consideration can be given to not having a specific individual named as a chairperson. The Gaming Committee could manage miscellaneous raffles, or such raffles could be included in one of the other in the Gaming Committee at the Commander's discretion.

Section 4. Legion Memorial Park.

- a. The Park Committee shall be responsible for regular operation and expenditures for the Doughboy Monument Plat Tract maintenance. Emergency expenditures are to be referred to the Post Commander for approval.

Section 5. Children and Youth.

- a. The Children and Youth Committee shall be charged with Boys' State, Boy Scouts, aid, and service to children of veterans, cooperating with other established agencies in the community, laboring for the betterment of child conditions, and coordinating services agencies in the community for the above purposes. The Children and Youth Committee shall also function as an intermediary for the needy child of a veteran in obtaining the

fulfillment of the Legion's pledge that "no child of a war veteran shall need the necessities of life" and "a square deal for every child."

Section 6. Americanism.

- a. The Americanism Committee shall be charged with the inspiration of patriotism and good citizenship by arrangements for proper observation of patriotic occasions; encouragement of patriotic and civic phases of instruction in schools; education of the general public in American ideals through public forums, youth activities such as theatrical contests, school awards medals, flag etiquette, and other similar community services for the community and civic betterment.

Section 7. Insurance.

- a. The Insurance Committee shall negotiate and acquire sufficient coverage for all post assets and operating responsibilities.

Section 8. Personnel.

- a. The Personnel Committee, under the supervision of the Executive Board, is responsible for all hiring and dismissal of home employees. The Home Manager is responsible for daily supervision of home employees and will report to the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee on pertinent matters involving employee performance.

Section 9. Commander's Committee.

- a. The Post Commander is authorized to appoint a Commander's Committee. The Commander's Committee shall consist of at least five (5) but not more than nine (9) members selected by the

Commander from the members of the Executive Board and the Post General Membership at the Commander's discretion. The Commander's Committee shall have as its purpose the responsibility of advising the Commander and dealing with emergencies needing immediate action when time constraints preclude coping with the issue(s) through the scheduled or unique meetings processes.

Article X – Resolutions

Section 1. All resolutions of state or national scope presented to this post by a committee shall merely embody the opinion of this post on the subject, and a copy of same shall be forwarded to the department headquarters for its approval before any publicity is given or action other than the mere passage by the post is taken.

Article XI – Meetings

Section 1. The regular meeting of the post shall be held at the post home on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. except as otherwise provided by the Commander or the Executive Board. Such a meeting may be converted into an entertainment meeting, as the post officers may deem advisable.

Section 2. Except as otherwise provided by the Executive Board, the regular meeting of the Post Executive Board shall be held on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the post home to transact such post business as may properly come before the Executive Board. Seven (7) members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. The Post Commander or majority of the Executive Board shall have the power to call a special

meeting of the post at any time. Written notice shall be given to all members at least ten (10) days in advance of such meeting. These meetings shall address only the issue(s) for which the meeting was called. Each issue must be clearly stated in any special meeting(s) call.

Section 4. Upon the written request of five (5) post members, the Post Commander shall call a special post meeting to transact such business as specified in the request. Written notice shall be given to all members at least ten (10) days in advance of such meeting. These meetings shall address only the issue(s) for which the meeting was called. Each issue must be clearly stated in any special meeting(s) call.

Section 5. Twelve (12) members shall constitute a quorum for a Regular Post Meeting.

Article XII – Notices

Section 1. Every member shall furnish the Senior Vice Commander with said member's phone number and/or address for mailing purposes.

Section 2. The Post shall provide written notice of the annual election of Post officers to be given at least two (2) weeks prior.

Article XIII – Rules of Order

Section 1. All proceedings of this post shall be conducted under the pursuance of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Article XIV – Limitations of Liability

Section 1. This post shall not incur, or cause to be incurred, any liability or obligation whatever shall subject

to liability the post, subdivision thereof, groups of people, members of the American Legion, or other individuals, corporations, or organizations.

Article XV – Endowment Association

Section 1. The post has created an endowment association and trust to accept gifts of property, real or personal, and to hold such assets in trust for the benefit of the post, alone or in conjunction with the Columbia American Legion Auxiliary Unit No. 581. Trustees for said Association shall be five (5) in number. They shall be elected from the Columbia American Legion post or Auxiliary membership, whichever is appropriate, at their annual election of officers for the specified term.

Article XVI – Dissolution

Section 1. All outstanding assets will be transferred to the Columbia American Legion Endowment Association at the time of dissolution.

Article XVII – Amendments

Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended at any regular post-meeting by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at such regular meeting, provided that the proposed amendment(s) shall have been submitted in writing and read at the next preceding regular meeting of said post; and, provided further, that the written notice shall have been given to all members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date when such amendment(s) is/are to be voted upon, notifying said members that at such meeting a proposal to amend the By-Laws is to be voted upon.

THESE REVISED BY-LAWS WERE
PRESENTED AND ADOPTED AT A
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COLUMBIA AMERICAN LEGION POST 581.

TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024

COMMANDER *Jim Vogt*

ADJUTANT *Rob Leblanc*