

DRAFT

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Office of the Adjutant General

[BY-LAW STUDY GROUP CONSENSUS]

Draft By-Law/Manual of Procedure amendments by BLSG March 12-16, 2017 ----- Revised May 1, 2017

By-Law

Sec. 201 – Formation, Institution and Chartering.

Formation. A Post may be formed by completing a charter application consisting of thirty-five (35) eligible veterans, of which at least ~~twenty five (25)~~ **ten (10)** must be new members, submitted through proper channels to the Commander-in-Chief.

Institution. Each new Post shall be instituted within sixty (60) days of the date the charter application is approved by the Commander-in-Chief. If not instituted within sixty days from the date of approval, said approval may be rescinded.

Chartering. The charter of an instituted Post shall include the name, date of muster, location and list of members. The charter shall remain open for ninety (90) days from the date of institution of the Post.

Summary

The change better allows for new Posts to be formed. Former members are defined within Section 106 of the Manual of Procedure. New members are eligible veterans who have never been members of the organization before.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 211 – Suspension and Revocation of Charter.

1. Actions by the Commander-in-Chief—Suspension.

The Commander-in-Chief may ~~suspend a Post Charter in accordance with the procedures herein set forth and~~ issue a Special Order directing the Department Commander to suspend a Post Charter.

2. Actions by the Commander-in-Chief—Revocation.

The Commander-in-Chief may revoke a Post Charter in accordance with the procedures herein set forth.

- a. The Post Commander shall be notified in writing of the proposed action by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address of record.
- b. Unless ~~the Post Commander,~~ **the Post, in the presence of the Department assigned administrative committee,** upon a motion duly passed at any regular or special meeting called for such purpose, notifies the Commander-in-Chief in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested, within thirty (30) days of receipt of the revocation notice that the Post desires a hearing; the revocation of the Charter shall be affected.
- c. In the event that the Post requests a hearing, said hearing shall be held within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the notice. A hearing will be scheduled at a time and place and in a manner prescribed by the Commander-in-Chief.
- d. The Commander-in-Chief shall decide the matter within thirty (30) days.
- e. If the Post is not already under suspension at the time that the notice of proposed revocation is given, the Post shall thereafter be under suspension.
- f. The Commander-in-Chief may at their discretion, and after hearing the matter if so requested, revoke the charter of the Post by issuing a Special Order to that effect.

Notwithstanding the provisions above, the Commander-in-Chief shall automatically revoke the Post Charter if, while under suspension, the Post fails to establish a meeting quorum or elect officers as required in Section 216.

3. Actions by the Department Commander—Suspension.

The Department Commander may suspend a Post Charter in accordance with the procedures herein set forth.

- a. The Department Commander shall issue a Special Order suspending a Post Charter ~~and~~ **which outlines the deficiencies and appoints** ~~appointing~~ an administrative committee consisting of three ~~(3)~~ **(5)** members. Pursuant to a written grant of powers and limitations, such committee shall ~~carry on~~ **supervise** the business and affairs of the Post during the period of suspension. The acts and actions of the committee shall be subject to the approval or disapproval of the Department Commander.

- b. The Post Commander shall be notified in writing of the action by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address of record or by personal delivery by a designated representative.
- c. The Department Commander shall notify the Commander-in-Chief in writing within two (2) days.
- d. *The Department Commander shall give notice, in writing, of the time and place of the next scheduled meeting, in such manner as to reasonably reach the Post members at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the time set for the meeting. Such notice shall include a copy of the special order.*
- e. ~~While under suspension no meetings shall be held in the name of the Post or organization, except for the sole purpose of the discussion of the cause, effect or removal of the penalty and No funds of the Post shall be expended or obligated nor property transferred during and while the order of suspension is in force and effect except as may be approved expended or obligated by the administrative committee appointed under this subsection.~~
- f. Following an initial suspension period as provided in this subsection, the Department Commander may ~~revoke or~~ *lift or* extend the suspension for an additional period of time not to exceed ninety (90) days; *and shall notify the Commander-in-Chief in writing within two (2) days.*

4. Actions by the Administrative Committee

- a. *The administrative committee shall approve the expenditure or obligations of all funds and transfers of all property while the order of suspension is in effect. If provided in the Special Order., all funds, securities and other property of the Post may be placed under the custody and supervision of the Administrative Committee.*
- b. *All acts and actions shall be documented and summarized in a report to the Department Commander with a final recommendation.*

5. Actions by the Department Commander—Revocation.

The Department Commander may at any time during the suspension period, recommend ~~consolidation or~~ revocation of the Post Charter to the Commander-in-Chief.

Summary

The changes provide better communication to Post members when a Post is placed under suspension, increased accountability of the Administrative Committee to the Department Commander, and give the Commander-in-Chief the authority to revoke a Post charter when the Administrative Committee is unable to garner membership support.

The changes also better define the Administrative Committee's obligation during a Post suspension and give the Department Commander greater latitude to increase or decrease the committee's responsibility over a Post's funds as the situation dictates.

By-Law

Sec. 212 – Defunct Posts.

~~The Commander-in-Chief shall revoke a Post's Charter if such Post has less than ten (10) members.~~ *Any Post with less than ten (10) members, or, while under suspension the Post fails to establish a meeting quorum or elect the required officers, its charter shall be automatically revoked and declared defunct with the issuance of a special order by the Commander-in-Chief.*

Disposition of Property. In all cases of surrender, revocation or forfeiture of a charter, title to all real and personal property shall immediately pass to the Department who shall take possession and control for disposition as directed by the Department Council of Administration for the purposes set forth in the Congressional Charter. In addition, the books and records of the Post shall be recovered by the Department.

In case of surrender or forfeiture of a charter, the Department Council of Administration in the case of trust funds or trust property, or both, shall carry out the intent and purpose of such trust to the extent of such funds or property, or both.

Summary

The change gives the Commander-in-Chief the authority to revoke a Post charter when the Department is unable to garner membership support.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 216 – Elected and Appointed Officers; Chairmen and Committees.

The Commander, on the night of election or as soon thereafter as possible, shall appoint the Adjutant, *Judge Advocate, Surgeon*, Officer of the Day, Service Officer, *Guard* and such other officers, chairmen and committees as may be required by Department or Post By-Laws or by vote of the Post membership. The Commander may appoint such other officers, chairmen and committees as deemed appropriate to properly conduct the affairs of the Post. The Commander retains authority to remove these officers, committee chairmen and committee members at any time.

Post officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the Post Adjutant. Post officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Such proof of eligibility shall be open to and reviewed by the Commander, Adjutant and Quartermaster prior to installation to office. In the event an elected or appointed officer fails to submit proof of eligibility within ~~sixty (60)~~ *thirty (30)* days of election or appointment, any right of the officer to hold the office shall be forfeited, the office declared vacant and the eligibility qualifications of such officer shall be questioned in accordance with the provisions of Section 108 of the National By-Laws.

Summary

To comply with Section 216(c) of the By-Law, and to ensure all officers have provided their proof of eligibility and are installed by their respective Department Convention.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 416 - Elected and Appointed Officers; Chairmen and Committees.

The Commander, on the date of election or as soon thereafter as possible, shall appoint the Adjutant, Chief of Staff, Inspector and such other officers, chairmen and committees as may be required by District or Department. The Commander may appoint such other officers, chairmen and committees as deemed appropriate to properly conduct the affairs of the District. The Commander retains authority to remove these officers, committee chairmen and committee members at any time.

District officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the District Adjutant. Additionally, District Commanders, District Senior Vice Commanders, and District Junior Vice Commanders shall submit proof of eligibility to the Department Adjutant. District officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Such proof of eligibility shall be open to and reviewed by the District Commander, Adjutant and Quartermaster prior to installation to office. In the event an elected or appointed officer fails to submit proof of eligibility within ~~sixty (60)~~ *thirty (30)* days of election or appointment, any right of the officer to hold the office shall be forfeited, the office declared vacant and the eligibility qualifications of such officer shall be questioned in accordance with the provisions of Section 108 of the National By-Laws.

Summary

The change encourages the District to ensure all officers have provided their proof of eligibility and are installed by

their respective Department Convention.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 516 - Elected and Appointed Officers; Chairmen and Committees.

The Commander, on the date of election or as soon thereafter as possible, shall appoint the Adjutant, Chief of Staff, Inspector, Service Officer and such other officers, chairmen and committees as may be required by Department or National. The Commander may appoint such other officers, chairmen and committees as deemed appropriate to properly conduct the affairs of the Department. With respect to salaried officers, the appointment shall be made subject to the approval of the majority of the Department Council of Administration. The Department Commander retains authority to remove these officers, committee chairmen and committees at any time; provided, however, that salaried officers appointed by the Commander may only be removed by the Commander as prescribed in Section 520.

Department officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the Department Adjutant. Additionally, Department Commanders, Department Senior Vice Commanders, Department Junior Vice Commanders, Department Adjutants and Department Quartermasters shall submit proof of eligibility to the Adjutant General. Department officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Such proof of eligibility shall be open to and reviewed by the Department Commander, Adjutant and Quartermaster prior to installation to office. In the event an elected or appointed officer fails to submit proof of eligibility within ~~sixty (60)~~ **thirty (30)** days of election or appointment, any right of the officer to hold the office shall be forfeited, the office declared vacant and the eligibility qualifications of such officer shall be questioned in accordance with the provisions of Section 108 of the National By-Laws.

Summary

The change ensures all officers have provided their proof of eligibility and are installed by the National Convention.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 518 – Officers: Duties and Obligations.

(4) Quartermaster. Among the duties of the Department Quartermaster, the Quartermaster shall:

- a. Qualify and secure a bond in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which the Quartermaster may be accountable in accordance with Section 703.
- b. Collect all monies due the Department and have charge of the funds, securities and other property of the Department, all of which shall be placed in their care. The Quartermaster shall be the accountable officer of the Department and the Treasurer of all committees handling funds.
- c. Disburse funds as properly authorized by the Department using accepted banking practices. Unless otherwise provided for in Department By-Laws, all disbursements of Department funds shall bear the signature of the Quartermaster.
- d. Receive annual membership dues (admission fees if applicable) and life membership fees and forward the National dues and life membership fees immediately to National Headquarters as prescribed in Section 104.
- e. Provide the auditors with all records, files and statements required or necessary for the preparation of the Department report of audit.
- f. Maintain a dues reserve fund as prescribed in Section 717 of the By-Laws and Manual of

Procedure.

- g. The books and records of the Quartermaster shall be maintained in a legible and uniform format. Record keeping by electronic means may be used, provided a back-up and a hard copy is maintained. Books and records shall be available for inspection by authorized officers and Department member's at all reasonable times. Reconcile and verify all transactions listed on all bank statements to assure the accuracy of Department records. Unless authorized by the Department to remove such books and records from its facilities, all such books and records shall be kept at the Department facilities.
- h. The Quartermaster shall provide access and transfer to their successor in office or anyone designated by higher authority, without delay, all books, records, papers, monies, securities and other property of the Department in their possession or under their control.
- i. Comply with, and perform all duties required of the Quartermaster by the laws and usages of this organization, the Department Convention, Department By-Laws, Department Commander and Department Council of Administration, the National Convention and the National By- Laws, Manual of Procedure, Ritual and lawful orders from proper authority and perform such other duties as may be incident to the office.
- j. Report on transactions concerning receipts and expenditures, for any given period, at a regular or special meeting of the Department.
- k. Budget. Prepare a tentative balanced budget for the financial operations of the ensuing year. The budget once adopted by the Department Council of Administration shall be forwarded to the Adjutant General by November 1.
- l. Reports.
 1. Prepare for the Department Convention a complete financial report, membership report, a list of Posts in good standing and the number of delegates to which each Post is entitled.
 2. Prepare a quarterly and final year-end financial report for the Department Council of Administration.
 3. Forward the final year-end financial report and a copy of Form 990 filed with the IRS to the Adjutant General.
 4. Prepare other reports as directed by the Department Commander, Council of Administration or Department Convention.

Summary

The change allows for the use of electronic accounting and bookkeeping methods.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 518 – Officers: Duties and Obligations.

(5) Adjutant

- a. Be the official corresponding officer for the Department and shall attest to all official communications and reports with the Adjutant's signature.
- b. Prepare reports as directed by the Department Commander, Council of Administration or Department Convention.
- c. Maintain the books and records in a legible and uniform format. Record keeping by electronic means may be used, provided a back-up and a hard copy is maintained. Books and records shall be available for inspection by authorized officers and Department member's at all reasonable times. Unless authorized by the Department to remove such books and records

from its facilities, all such books and records shall be kept at the Department facilities.

- d. Records. Maintain a roster of the following:
 1. Department Officers and Committees.
 2. Districts and County Councils (if applicable) to include officers, committee chairmen, and meeting times and places.
 3. Posts, Post Officers, meeting times and places, membership data and other information provided by the Department Quartermaster.
- e. Files.
 1. Maintain such records and correspondence as prescribed by National Headquarters and the Department Council of Administration.
 2. Prepare and maintain minutes of each Council of Administration meeting and Department Convention after correction and approval.
 3. A file containing a copy of the proof of eligibility submitted by officers pursuant to Section 516.
- f. Maintain a current copy of the By-Laws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and copies of the By-Laws of the Department, District and County Council (if applicable), and all Posts within its jurisdiction.
- g. Transfer to their successor, without delay, all books, papers, records, monies and other records and property of the Department in their possession or under their control.
- h. Comply with and perform all duties required of the Adjutant by the laws and usages of this organization, applicable By-Laws and orders from lawful authority and perform such other duties as are incident to such office.

Summary

The change allows for the use of electronic accounting and bookkeeping methods.

By-Law

Sec. 522 – Council of Administration – Composition, Powers and Duties.

- (a) **Composition.** The Council of Administration of a Department shall consist of the Commander, Senior Vice Commander, Junior Vice Commander, Adjutant, Quartermaster, Judge Advocate, Chief of Staff, Inspector, Surgeon, Chaplain and District Commanders. In the absence of a District Commander the District Senior Vice Commander and in the absence of the District Senior Vice Commander, the District Junior Vice Commander may function as a member of the Council of Administration. The ~~retiring~~ **immediate Past** Department Commander shall also be a member of the Department Council of Administration ~~until such time as another Department Commander retires. In the event the retiring Department Commander is unwilling or unable to serve on the Department Council of Administration, their place shall be filled by the last retired Past Department Commander who is ready, willing and able to serve.~~ In the Departments of Alaska, **District of Columbia**, Hawaii and Europe, the Commanders of all Posts in good standing shall be voting members of the Department Council of Administration. Other Departments having a membership of 9,500 or less may adopt By-Laws to include all Post Commanders as voting members of the Department Council of Administration. Also the four (4) immediate Past Department Commanders may be voting members of the Council of Administration, on the condition that the By-Laws adopted by the Department Convention so provide.
- (b) **Administration of Affairs Between Conventions.** The Department Council of Administration shall be responsible for administering the affairs and transacting the business of the

Department between Department Conventions. The Council shall be governed in its duties by the mandates of the National Convention, the Congressional Charter, By-Laws, Manual of Procedure, Ritual and laws and usages of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States as well as by the mandates of the Department Convention, Charter and By-Laws.

- (c) **Budget.** The Council of Administration shall approve an annual budget by October 31 covering the financial operations of the Department for the ensuing year. The Council of Administration shall have the power to establish the compensation of all Department officers and employees.
- (d) **Audits-Accounts.** The Council of Administration may authorize an audit of the accounts of all Department officers.
- (e) **Disposition of Property.** In the case of surrender or forfeiture of a Post or District charter, the Department Council of Administration shall have the authority to make disposition of all properties in accordance with Sections 210 and 410 and its action therein shall be final.
- (f) **Regular Meetings.** The Council of Administration shall meet in regular session not less than twice each year and shall hold such other meetings as the Department By-Laws may provide.
- (g) **Special Meetings.** The Department Commander may call a special meeting of the Council of Administration whenever the same may be necessary for the welfare of the Department. The Department Commander shall call a special meeting upon written request signed by a majority of the members of the Department Council of Administration. In case the Department Commander refuses to call such meetings, the Department Council of Administration may proceed to hold such meetings, due notice of which shall be sent to all members of the Council of Administration by the Department Adjutant not later than ten (10) days prior to the date of said meeting. No business shall be transacted at any special meeting except that business for which the meeting is called, as set forth in the notice.
- (h) **Time and Place.** Meetings of the Department Council of Administration shall be held at such times and places as the Department By-Laws may provide, or as may be provided by majority vote of the Council. Special meetings shall be called at such times and places as may be decided by the Department Commander, except in case of a special meeting ordered by a majority request of the Council of Administration, which shall be held at such time and place as may be determined by those requesting the meeting.
- (i) **Quorum.** A majority of the members of the Council of Administration shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- (j) **Voting.** Each member of the Council of Administration present at a meeting shall be entitled to one vote. On matters requiring action by the Department Council of Administration between stated meetings, the Department Commander may direct the Department Adjutant to conduct mail ballots, the results of such mail ballots shall be reported for the record at the next stated meeting.
- (k) Any valid action taken by the Council of Administration in the performance of its duties shall be effective upon passage and shall remain in effect until such time as it may be terminated or superseded by the Council of Administration or by a Department Convention acting within the limits of its own authority.

Summary

The change clears up any confusion of who may sit on the Council of Administration should the Department Commander serve consecutive terms.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 616 - Elected and Appointed Officers; Chairmen and Committees.

National officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the Adjutant General. National officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Such proof of eligibility shall be open to and reviewed by the Commander-in-Chief, Adjutant General and Quartermaster General prior to installation to office. In the event an elected or appointed officer fails to submit proof of eligibility within ~~sixty (60)~~ **thirty (30)** days of election or appointment, any right of the officer to hold the office shall be forfeited, the office declared vacant and the eligibility qualifications of such officer shall be questioned in accordance with the provisions of Section 108 of the National By-Laws.

Summary

The change conforms with the changes made to Sections 216, 416, and 516 of the Manual of Procedure.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 717 – Dues Reserve.

A dues reserve fund shall be credited within each Department ~~and Post~~ with not less than fifty percent of its part of the current year's dues paid by each member prior to July 1, including Life Membership dues payouts received from the National Organization. The Quartermaster shall not disburse nor shall an obligation be incurred against this fund until after July 1, at which time it shall be transferred to general fund and be available for expenditures.

Summary

VFW Controller Jim Lierz believes the purpose of dues reserve was to provide the proper revenue recognition for member's dues that spanned over two different fiscal years. This was fairly simple and accurate since all dues spanned the same calendar year period of January 1 to December 31. With the advent of subscription dues, member's dues may all span unique twelve month periods, and the proper accounting of dues through amortization becomes much more complicated and difficult to manage.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 1001 – Rules of Order Governing All Meetings.

The following Rules of Order shall govern all meetings. Any procedural matter not provided for by these Rules shall be governed by ~~Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law and Procedure.~~ **Robert's Rule of Order**. These rules may be altered or amended at any regular session of the body, upon proposition in writing, and by a majority vote of those present and voting. Any alteration or amendment of the rules provided herein shall be in accordance with procedures provided or permitted by **Robert's** ~~Demeter's~~.

Summary

The change mandates Robert's Rule of Order rather than Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law and Procedure shall be the governing rules of all procedural matters not provided for in the National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 1004 – Order of Business-Posts.

(a) *Order of Business Traditional*

1. *Opening in due form*
2. Commander: Recitation of the purposes of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Section 230102 of the Charter
3. Roll call of officers
4. Read, refer membership applications
5. Report of Investigating Committee
6. Ballot on applications
7. Muster in recruits
8. Read minutes
9. Quartermaster's report; disbursements
10. Quartermaster's report; receipts
11. Read bills
12. Report of Service Officer
13. Report on Comrades or the families of Comrades in distress
14. Report of all committees
15. Remember our National Home for Children
16. Unfinished business (Read communications associated with unfinished business and vote)
17. New business (Read communications associated with new business and vote)
18. Nominations, elections and installation of officers
19. Good of the Order (Read communications associated with the good of the order and vote)
20. Closing in due form

(b) *Order of Business Contemporary*

1. *Call to order*
2. *Check dues cards*
3. *Roll call of officers*
4. *Read, refer membership applications*
5. *Read minutes*
6. *Quartermaster's report*
7. *Report of Service Officer*
8. *Report on Comrades or the families of Comrades in distress*
9. *Committee report(s)*
10. *Unfinished business*
11. *New business*
12. *Good of the Order*
13. *Close meeting*

Summary

The change allows for an optional streamlined meeting structure.

Manual of Procedure

Sec. 1101 – Organization, Disbandment, and Transition of Auxiliaries

(f) Reports.

(1) National. The National President of the Auxiliary shall, within thirty (30) days after induction into office, submit an itemized report of the financial and membership status of the Auxiliary to the Commander-in-Chief for information and for submission to the National Council of Administration.

The National Treasurer of the Auxiliary shall prepare a quarterly report for the National President and the National Council of Administration of the Auxiliary, and submit copies thereof to the Department Presidents of the Auxiliary and to the Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The National Treasurer of the Auxiliary also shall prepare for the National President, before each National Convention, a list showing the Auxiliaries in good standing and the number of delegates to which each is entitled.

No less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting of the National Council of Administration of the Auxiliary at which the annual budget is adopted, the National Treasurer shall submit a proposed budget to the National President, and each member of the National Council of Administration of the Auxiliary. Immediately following the adoption of the annual budget by the National Council of Administration of the Auxiliary, the National Treasurer shall submit a copy of the approved budget to the Commander-in-Chief.

(2) Department. The Department President of the respective Department Auxiliary shall, within thirty (30) days after induction into office, submit to the Department Commander *the last quarterly audit, membership status report, and such additional reports as may be required by the liaison committee an itemized report of the financial and membership status* of the Department Auxiliary for information and for submission by the Department Commander to the Department Council of Administration.

(3) Districts, County Councils, Posts. The President of the Auxiliary to a District, County Council or Post shall, within thirty (30) days after induction into office, submit to the Commander of the respective District, County Council or Post *an itemized report the last quarterly audit, membership status report and such additional reports as may be required by the liaison committee of the financial and membership status of the auxiliary.*—Such reports will be acknowledged by each respective Commander during the next regular meeting and may be read to the members assembled.

Summary

The change better defines the required reports an Auxiliary must provide to their corresponding unit.

Ritual

General Rules.

1. Officers are personal responsible for their Rituals. They shall permit only properly authorized persons to read the Ritual.
2. While the Post is in session, no member will pass between the altar and the commander's station, except as prescribed by the Ritual.

3. All officers should memorize their parts and practice with co-workers in order to render all ritual work correctly and impressively. See the Foreword.
4. The officer of the day shall act as master of ceremonies.
5. When addressing the commander all officers salute in a military manner. The commander will return similar salutes. All officers' exchange salutes when addressing each other.
6. One rap of the gavel calls attention or seats the body when standing. Two raps of the gavel call everyone to standing attention.
7. At National and Department conventions the "Star Spangled Banner" should be played or sung at the Opening Session, immediately after the colors are placed.
8. All Posts should hold a public memorial service for their departed comrades, at least once a year. This may be held as a special ceremony or in conjunction with a public meeting.
9. "Sleep, Soldier Boy," by Dorothy Alexander, Auxiliary No. 409, or any other appropriate song may be used at all VFW memorial services.
10. All VFW military formations and procedures shall conform with the current Infantry Drill Regulations, United States Army.
11. The military salute shall be given in all ceremonials and meetings when a member wishes to address the commander or presiding officer. The military salute shall also be used in the ceremonial work, as set forth in this Ritual.
12. In compliance with directives approved by the Veterans of Foreign Wars 59th National Convention and the VFW National Council of Administration "the Flag of the United States, of appropriate size and attached to a standard, shall be placed upright upon the VFW altar to the left of a Bible—(to the left of the Bible as viewed by one standing before the altar and facing the Commander's station). The POW/MIA flag may be placed to the right of the American Flag. Both the flags and Bible shall be upon a regulation VFW altar cloth."
13. (a) All members who are able will stand during the offering of the prayers; (b) members will follow the action of the Chaplain or presiding officer relative to removal of caps during prayers; if uncovering, the hat shall be placed on the extended closed fingers of the right hand in such a way that the Cross of Malta is exposed and held over the heart; (c) official caps will not be worn during luncheons, banquets or other meals; (d) Official caps will be the only head covering allowed to be worn at ~~regular~~ **District, Department and National** meetings of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Summary

The change relaxes the rules around head coverings at Post meetings.

Ritual

ORDER OF BUSINESS – TRADITIONAL (Post)

(Place after "ORDER OF BUSINESS (Post)")

ORDER OF BUSINESS – CONTEMPORARY (Post)

1. *Call to order*
2. *Check dues cards*
3. *Roll call of officers*
4. *Read, refer membership applications*
5. *Read minutes*

6. *Quartermaster's report*
7. *Report of Service Officer*
8. *Report on Comrades or the families of Comrades in distress*
9. *Committee report(s)*
10. *Unfinished business*
11. *New business*
12. *Good of the Order*
13. *Close meeting*

Summary

The change complies with the change made to Section 1001 of the Manual of Procedure which allows for an optional streamlined meeting structure.

Ritual

Opening Post Ceremonies

The hour of opening having arrived, the officer of the day displays the Flag of the United States and Bible on the altar, leaving Bible closed, after which the Commander takes station and gives one rap for attention.

Commander: The officers will take their respective stations. *Unauthorized guests* ~~All persons not members of the VFW~~ will kindly retire, and the guard will close the door(s).

~~(The Commander ascertains if nonmembers have retired.)~~

Summary

The change resolves the conflict with Section 203 of the By-Law.

Ritual

Memorial Day Service

Attest:

N. P. Chipman, Adjutant General

After these preliminaries the following action is in order:

Commander stands at head of grave or appropriate spot before monument. At their right are Senior Vice Commander, national flag bearer and guard. To their left are Junior Vice Commander, Post standard bearer and guard. ~~Men~~ *Members* of the color detail stand facing either side of the grave

or monument. Post Chaplain stands at foot of the grave or appropriate spot before the monument, with officer of the day to their right and Auxiliary President or Post Adjutant at their left. The bugler stands behind the Commander.

Summary

To provide for gender neutrality in accordance with Resolution 302 passed at the 115th National Convention.

DRAFT