



UNDERSTANDING THE “UPDATED DISTRICT 5 BYLAWS”.



An Overview of the Changes by P/D/C J. Brian Becker, AP, 2016 Rules Committee Chair

Three things in life are “certain” - taxes, crossing the bar, and change. CHANGE, a terrifying word to many. Why change the Bylaws of the District? Times change. Our parent, the United States Power Squadrons® changes. Laws, technology changes. It has been ten (10) years since the current Bylaws were put in place. Our District 5 Bridge charged the Rules Committee to review our Bylaws, compare them to the recommended “Model Bylaws for Districts”, and recommend action to update our guiding document.

The process began with the downloading of the Model, then comparing it line for line with our 2005 document. There are many changes – numbering from roman numerals to “regular” numbers, “job tasks” moved from one section to the other, capitalization – you name it. There was a valiant attempt to prepare a script where the traditional “under-lining”, “bold”, “italics”, etc. was put to pen. Early into the Model Section 2, there were 12 pages of comparison vs 3 pages of change to the new document.

Substantially, most of the Model follows the current Bylaws. Words were moved around, comparing them line by line led to the conclusion that while the Model re-arranged words and sections and the substance remained the same as the current Bylaws.

There are, however, several significant changes that I will attempt to describe.

- [1] The Planning Committee moves from General to Appointed definition.
- [2] The Membership and Involvement Committees are merged into one.
- [3] The Model adds provisions that allow the use of electronic media for the distribution of official matters.
- [4] The new bylaws allow for a member to hold more than one flag office under certain conditions. The new 2.1.4 reads as follows:

“No member shall be nominated for or hold more than one district flag office simultaneously, except that the district offices of secretary and treasurer may be held by the same person. A member may hold an elected flag office at other levels of USPS if there does not seem to be a conflict of interest.”

There are some Sections of the Model Bylaws where they would modify the District 5 document. Most were insignificant and the Model accepted. One was not insignificant. The Model, Section 4.2.1 as pertains to the number of Delegates authorized for the Conference (which by definition includes the Council) specified each squadron had a “minimum of two delegates per squadron” was NOT accepted.

The terminology in the current District 5 Bylaws specified a “minimum of four delegates per squadron” was continued in the updated Draft.

I requested “involvement and comment” from the members of the Rules Committee, the District 5 Bridge Officers, and others who had expressed interest in the process. I received comments, recommendations, “yea” or “nay” on specific contents from the following:

R/C Ben H. Sooy, AP, USPS Parliamentarian, D5 Parliamentarian

P/D/C Jeff McKinney, JN, Member D5 Rules Committee

D/Lt Fred F. Stiehl, P, Member D5 Rules Committee

D/1st/Lt M. Melvin Shralow, JN, District 5 Law Officer

R/C Kenneth T. Perigo, SN, USPS RC

D/Lt/C Bradley D. Humphrey, JN, Administrative Officer

P/D/C Fuzzy Jones, AP, USPS Committee Member

I take this opportunity to offer a sincere *THANK YOU* on behalf of the District for your diligence and encouraging efforts to produce the proper DRAFT of the Bylaws for District 5.

Additional comments on the above modifications.

[1] Moving the Planning Committee. Movement from General Committees [Sec 2.9] to Appointed Committees [Sec 2.10 / 2.10.1] means the Committee is appointed by the Commander or the Council versus being elected. This follows the actions of the United States Power Squadrons®.

[2] Merging Membership and Member Involvement Committee also follows the actions of our parent organization. I made an analysis of the fill of the positions in the 2015 District 5 Roster listing the positions reported. The results of this study showed 8 squadrons had the same member listed for both positions, 7 did not have either position filled, 9 had one of the two positions vacant, and 7 having different folks listed for each position. Taking this into consideration, and the recommendations of the majority of the persons involved in reviewing the process along the way, it was decided to follow National and use the wording merging the two committees. The words from each existing Section are blended into the one new section, [Sec 2.10.3].

[3] Adding electronic media for official distribution of notices and business matters. This follows the updating and modifications to the individual Squadron Model Bylaws. It recognizes the technology that reduces written distribution and is used in lieu of the US Postal system. Adopting this Section, [Sec 5.6], does not change the requirement to provide notice of meetings nor the timing of such notice. It permits notice by electronic media provided the member has authorized such action by providing District 5 with their “Email address”. Written notification is still required to be sent in accordance with the Bylaws to persons not providing, (presumed not having) such an address.

The Rules Committee will submit the current DRAFT District 5 Bylaws, meeting what we believe to be the intent of the Model as modified for our District specific differences, to the Council/Conference at

the Summer Council [**FALL ??**] for approval. Such approval would allow the DRAFT to be submitted to the National Rules Committee for consideration and approval. Their approval would complete the necessary steps to update our Bylaws. The date of their approval would be the date the word “DRAFT” is removed and we have an updated document.

For those who are interested, I will request D/Lt Joseph P. Gibson, AP, to post the DRAFT Bylaws to the District 5 website. Comments, suggestions, recommendations, agreement, stronger words disagreeing, should be addressed to jbrianbecker@verizon.net. All replies will be considered by your Rules Committee, and I thank you in advance for your support – comments.

J. Brian Becker

Chair, District 5 Rules Committee

