

Northwest Chapter of the American Medical Writers Association

CONSTITUTION

The Northwest Chapter subscribes to the constitution and bylaws of the parent organization, the American Medical Writers Association, insofar as the principles, objectives, and provisions of the American Medical Writers Association apply to its chapters.

BYLAWS

Article I. Name and Territory

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the *Northwest Chapter of the American Medical Writers Association*, hereinafter referred to as AMWA-NW.

Section 2. The territory of the chapter shall include Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Alaska, and British Columbia.

Article II. Objectives

Section 1. The objectives of the chapter shall be to raise the standards of practice and achievement in medical communication by:

- Bringing together people within the area of the chapter who are engaged or interested in: the communication of medical information, allied professions, or sciences so that they may share views, experiences, and goals. Such persons include (but are not limited to) writers, editors, illustrators, publishers, students, and those active in research, documentation, audiovisual techniques, public relations, education, and advertising.
- Furthering the professional development of medical communicators through educational programs.
- Encouraging professional medical communicators and their employers to value and promote quality in medical communications.
- Encouraging the participation of biomedical communication students.

Article III. Membership

Any member in good standing in the American Medical Writers Association who lives or works in the territory of the Northwest Chapter shall automatically be a chapter member. AMWA members living in British Columbia may designate either the Northwest Chapter or the Canadian Chapter as their affiliate chapter. The standing of an individual member in AMWA shall be determined by the records of the national secretary.

Article IV. Officers and Delegates

Section 1. The officers shall include a president, president-elect, secretary-treasurer (or secretary and treasurer, as determined by the executive committee in consultation with the nominating committee) and one delegate to the National Board of Directors (and one additional delegate if chapter membership exceeds 400). The term of office for each officer shall be one year or until a successor has been duly elected, beginning at their election and terminating at the election of succeeding officers. Membership in a single post on the chapter executive committee shall not exceed 5 consecutive terms of office. Officers shall be required to be AMWA members in good standing.

Section 2. Duties of the Officers. The officers shall perform the customary duties of each office.

- **President:** The president shall serve as chairperson of the executive committee and as ex-officio member of all other committees.
- **President-elect:** The president-elect shall assist the president in all of the duties and responsibilities of the office and shall become president at the end of the term of the incumbent.
- **Secretary:** The secretary shall keep a list of all members of the chapter, and keep a record of every general business meeting and executive committee meeting. The secretary shall inform the executive secretary of AMWA and the editor of the national newsletter of the activities of the chapter. The secretary shall also act as administrator of the chapter area coordinator list.
- **Treasurer:** The treasurer shall deposit in the chapter's bank account all monies paid to the chapter and pay all bills approved by the executive committee or the president. At the close of the calendar year, the treasurer shall submit a summary annual financial report for inclusion in the annual chapter report to the AMWA Board of Directors. In July of each year the treasurer shall submit (1) an annual report of income and disbursements with a balance sheet of the chapter's finances and (2) an estimated operating and program budget for the ensuing fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) to the chapter

executive board for review and approval. On or before August 1 of each year, the treasurer shall file the approved statements with the national treasurer of AMWA.

Section 3. Vacancies

- **President:** If a vacancy occurs in the office of president, the president-elect shall immediately assume the duties of the president for the remainder of the term and subsequently for the term for which he/she was elected.
- **President-elect:** If a vacancy occurs in the office of the president-elect for any reason other than through assumption of the presidency, a special election shall be held for a new president-elect.
- **Secretary or Treasurer:** If a vacancy occurs in the office of secretary or treasurer, the executive committee shall appoint a successor for the remainder of the term.
- **Chapter delegate to the AMWA board of directors:** If a vacancy occurs in the chapter representation to the AMWA board of directors, the executive committee shall appoint a successor for the remainder of the term.

Article V. Election of Officers and Chapter Delegate(s). Nomination and election of officers and delegates shall take place yearly.

Section 1. The slate of nominees for chapter officers and delegate(s) shall be presented to the chapter executive committee by a nominating committee in March of each year. All nominees must be AMWA members in good standing and must have signified their willingness to serve if elected.

Section 2. The slate, approved by the Executive Committee, comprising at least one, and preferably more, nominees for each office, shall be circulated to the membership of AMWA on or before April 15th. The presentation of the slate to the membership shall include an invitation for further nominations of eligible and willing members (as above).

Section 3. Nominations shall close on May 15th of each year.

Section 4. Members shall vote by mail, either surface or electronic. The close of voting shall be June 15th of each year.

Section 5. The officers and delegates shall assume their official duties on July 1st following the election and serve until their elected successors take office.

Article VI. Committees

Section 1. Executive Committee: The executive committee shall comprise the officers, chairpersons of standing committees, and the chapter delegate(s) to the AMWA board of directors. The executive committee shall be responsible for the chapter's direction and shall serve as trustees of the chapter's property. A quorum of the executive committee shall consist of a simple majority, but must include the president, president-elect, or a designated representative.

Section 2. Standing Committees: The president shall appoint the committee chairpersons for the following standing committees within 30 days of taking office. Committee chairpersons shall be members in good standing of AMWA.

- **Program/Education committee:** This committee shall plan the programs for the chapter's meetings and events, including any special educational programs, for the benefit of members and nonmembers. Sub-committees (*e.g.*, Annual Symposium committee, or individual meeting committees) shall be appointed by the Program/Education chairperson, as needed.
- **Communications/Publicity committee:** The chairperson shall work closely with the chapter secretary to coordinate chapter communications activities, appointing sub-committees as necessary to provide services such as area coordinators, chapter website, chapter newsletter (which may be electronic), and publicity for chapter events.
- **Nominating committee:** The nominating committee, which will be active in March and April of each year, shall prepare a slate of AMWA-NW members as candidates for president-elect, secretary-treasurer (or secretary and treasurer, as determined by the executive committee at the time the nominating committee is formed), and chapter delegate(s).

Section 3. Additional Committees: Additional committees may be appointed by the president with the approval of the executive committee, in response to specific needs.

Article VII. Meetings and Chapter Communications

Section 1. Location: The Program/Education committee, in conjunction with the executive committee, shall determine the site for chapter meetings. "Meetings" and programs may be held electronically or in person.

Section 2. Timing of Major Meetings: The chapter shall hold no major meetings (*i.e.*, workshops or seminars lasting one-half day or more) within 30 days before or after the annual meeting of AMWA, unless the chapter meeting is an approved

part of the AMWA annual meeting. The annual business meeting of the chapter shall be held, electronically or in-person, in June of each year.

Section 3. Executive Committee Meetings: The executive committee shall establish the time and place of its meetings; the president may call meetings of the executive committee as needed.

Section 4. Chapter Communications: Chapter communications with members may be accomplished by means of regular mail, electronic mail, or other appropriate media. Official notifications, such as announcement of chapter elections, will be sent by electronic mail, or by regular mail to members who do not have electronic mail capability. Elections and other matters requiring a vote of the membership will be held by mail, either regular or electronic.

Article VIII. Amendments

Section 1. Any chapter member in good standing may propose amendments to these bylaws to the executive committee.

Section 2. Proposed amendments will be considered by the executive committee (or by a bylaws committee appointed for that purpose) within 90 days of their submission.

Section 3. Once approved by the executive committee, proposed amendments will be announced to the chapter membership via the accepted method of official chapter communications, and voted upon via the normal chapter mechanism for elections (Article VII, Section 4).

Section 4. Amendments that are approved by the chapter membership will be submitted to the AMWA board of directors for approval. Amendments to chapter bylaws become effective upon approval by the AMWA board of directors.

Article IX. Dissolution of the Chapter

If the chapter is dissolved, the executive committee shall donate the net assets of the chapter to AMWA or to any organization approved by AMWA.