

## **CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

### **of Seneca Post No. 555**

The American Legion, Schuyler County, Department of New York

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **PREAMBLE**

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes. To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the Community, State and Nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

### **ARTICLE I - NAME AND HEADQUARTERS**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be Seneca Post No. 555, The American Legion, Schuyler County, Department of New York.

Section 2. The Post Headquarters shall be located at 351 Howard Ave., Watkins Glen, NY 14891; all notices and documents addressed to the Post shall be sent to these Headquarters until further notice.

### **ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES**

Section 1. The objectives and purposes of this Post shall be to promote the principles and policies set forth in the foregoing preamble, and the National, Department and Schuyler County Constitutions and By-Laws of The American Legion.

### **ARTICLE III - NATURE**

Section 1. This Post is a civilian organization and membership therein does not affect or increase liability for military or police service. Rank does not exist in The American Legion; no member shall be addressed by his military or naval title in any meeting of the Post.

Section 2. This organization shall be absolutely non-political and non-sectarian, and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles or for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.

Section 3. Each member shall perform his full duty as a citizen according to his own conscience and understanding.

## ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any person shall be eligible for membership in The American Legion who was a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or Air Force of the United States and assigned to active duty at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990 to the cessation of hostilities as determined by the Congress of The United States of America, all dates inclusive, or who being a citizen of the United States at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during any of the said periods; provided, however, that such service shall have been terminated by honorable discharge or honorable separation, or continued honorably after any of said periods; provided, further, that no person shall be entitled to membership who, being in such service during any of said periods, refused on conscientious, political or other grounds to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified service.

Section 2. Application for membership shall be made in writing under such regulations as may from time to time be prescribed by the Post. All applications for membership accompanied by service discharge papers shall be referred to the Membership Chairman, who shall report his finding to the Post. Upon approval of eligibility, the application accompanied by the dues shall be presented to the Post at a regular meeting and shall be acted upon at such meeting. A majority vote by Post members present at a meeting shall be necessary for acceptance.

Section 3. There shall be no form or class of membership except an active membership. Dues shall be paid annually or for life.

Section 4. No person who is a member of another American Legion Post may be a member of this Post.

Section 5. Members may be suspended or expelled from this Post of The American Legion only upon proper showing of cause. Charges shall be based upon disloyalty, neglect of duty, dishonesty, or other conduct unbecoming a member of The American Legion. All charges must be made under oath in writing by the accusers, and no member in good standing shall lose his membership until given a fair trial in such manner and form as The Department of New York, Department Executive Committee shall prescribe. This action shall govern procedure whenever charges are brought against any person at any time appearing upon the rolls of this Post as a member, upon the grounds of his ineligibility to membership in the Post.

Section 6. Any member who has been suspended or expelled has the right of appeal to the Department Executive Committee in the manner prescribed by said Committee. The decision of the Department shall be final.

Section 7. No person, who has been expelled by a Post, shall be admitted to membership in this Post, without the consent of the expelling Post, except that where such consent has been asked for and has been denied by such Post, he may then appeal to the Department Executive Committee for permission to be admitted to membership in the Post, and he shall be ineligible for membership until such permission is granted.

Section 8. A member who has been expelled or suspended from this Post for any cause other than for non-payment of dues may be reinstated to membership by a majority vote of the members present at a regular Post meeting; provided, however, that he shall make payment of any arrears in his dues from the time of the expulsion or suspension, and also other regular dues that have been payable in the interval between his expulsion or suspension and his reinstatement.

Section 9. Any member in good standing desiring to transfer from this Post to another Post is entitled to a certificate from this Post stating his membership, the duration thereof and the date to which his dues are paid.

#### ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1. The Administration of the Post's affairs, during and between meetings of the Post, and except as may be otherwise provided in the By-Laws of the Post, shall be under the supervision of the elective officers of the Post.

Section 2. The elective officers of this Post shall be a Commander, three Vice-Commanders, an Adjutant, a Treasurer, a Post Historian, a Post Chaplain, and a Sergeant-At-Arms.

Section 3. All elective officers shall be elected and installed in the month of June annually and they shall hold office until their successors are duly installed or as otherwise provided.

Section 4. Every member of this Post in good standing shall be eligible to hold office in this Post except as otherwise provided herein.

Section 5. The duties of officers shall be those usually applying to such officers and as further provided in the By-Laws.

#### ARTICLE VI - FINANCES AND DUES

Section 1. The revenue of this Post shall be derived from membership or initiation fees, from annual membership dues and from such other sources as may be approved by the Post.

Section 2. The minimum annual dues of individual members of the Post shall be THIRTY DOLLARS (\$30.00) that includes any amount charged as dues by any intermediate body between the Post and Department of New York per member; the amount of the Annual Post dues shall be as set forth in the Post By-Laws.

Section 3. The Post shall expeditiously collect the annual dues for its members and shall pay to The American Legion, Department of New York such amount due to the National, Department, District, and County Organizations.

Section 4. All moneys received in any manner for welfare purposes of any nature by the Post shall be deposited in a duly authorized banking institution, and none of such moneys shall be withdrawn except for welfare purposes and upon draft signed by the Treasurer of the Post or by at least one other member authorized for that purpose (a deputy) should the Treasurer be unable to do so.

Section 5. This Post shall not solicit another Post or County Organization, for purposes of financial aid or relief.

#### ARTICLE VII - AUXILIARY

Section 1. The Post is amenable to having an Auxiliary Organization. Currently, one does not exist.

Section 2. Should interest evolve in having such an Organization, membership in the said Auxiliary Organization shall be governed by such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion and thereafter approved by the Department of New York Executive Committee.

#### ARTICLE VIII - SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Section 1. The Post is amenable to having a Sons of The American Legion Organization. Currently, one does not exist.

Section 2. Should interest evolve in having such an Organization, membership in the Sons of The American Legion shall be governed by such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion and thereafter approved by The Department of New York Executive Committee.

#### ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This Constitution is adopted subject to the provisions of the National, Department and Schuyler County Constitutions and By-Laws of The American Legion. Any amendments to said National, Department and County Constitutions and By-Laws that conflict with any provisions hereof shall be regarded as automatically repealing or modifying the provisions of this Constitution to the extent of such conflict.

Section 2. This Constitution may be amended at any regular Post meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the members attending such regular meeting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing and read at a preceding regular meeting of the Post, and provided further that written notice, including a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been sent to all members at least ten days in advance of the date when such amendment is to be voted upon.

## BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I – NAME AND OBJECTIVES

Section 1. The Post existing under these By-Laws is to be known as **Seneca Post No. 555**, The American Legion, Schuyler County, Department of New York.

Section 2. The objectives of this Post are as set forth in the Constitution.

### ARTICLE II - ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. The administration of the Post's affairs, during and between meetings of the Post, and except as may be otherwise provided in these By-Laws, shall be under the supervision of Post officers.

Section 2. The elective officers of this Post shall be elected and installed at the regular meeting in June of each year. All elections of officers shall be by open nomination, 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, and they shall hold office until their successors are duly installed or as otherwise provided. Any elective officer may be removed for inefficiency by a recommendation from another Post officer or several officers and a majority vote by members attending a regular Post meeting, and after due notice and hearing as provided by The Department Executive Committee, a two-thirds vote of said committee being necessary to effect such removal. Inefficiencies include poor attendance, poor performance and the like.

Section 3. All vacancies existing in any office of the Post from any cause other than the expiration of term of office shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members, and a person so chosen shall hold office for the unexpired term of the officer whom he succeeds. A vacancy shall exist when an officer is absent from his Post for three consecutive meetings if considered by the other Post officers to be detrimental to the best interests of the Post.

Section 4. Other decisions to be made at the installation meeting in June shall include standing committee chairperson/officer appointments, selection of banking institution(s), appointment of a deputy treasurer, and other items requiring Post member participation.

### ARTICLE III - POST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. There is no immediate need for a Post Executive Committee, since the Post has few active members and does not maintain a facility or any recreational and social activities.

### ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Duties of Post Commander: It shall be the duty of the Post Commander to preside at all meetings of the post and to have general supervision over the business and affairs of the Post, and such officer shall be the chief Executive Officer of the Post. He shall approve all

orders directing the disbursements of funds and shall make an annual report covering the business of the Post for the year, and recommendations for the coming year, which shall be read at the annual meeting and a copy thereof immediately forwarded to the County Adjutant. He shall perform such other duties as directed by the Post.

Section 2. Duties of Vice-Commanders: The Vice-Commanders shall in the order of their office seniority assume and discharge the duties of the office of Commander in the absence or disability of, or when called upon by the Post Commander.

Section 3. Duties of Post Adjutant: The Adjutant shall have charge of and keep a full and correct record of all proceedings of all meetings, keep such records that the Department and National Organization may require, render reports of membership annually or when called upon at a meeting, and under direction of the Commander handle all correspondence of the Post.

Section 4. Duties of the Treasurer: The Treasurer of the Post shall have charge of all finances and see that they are safely deposited in a local bank or banks and shall report once a month to the Post at regular meetings the condition of the finances of the Post, with such recommendations as he may deem expedient or necessary for raising funds with which to carry on the activities of the Post. He shall sign all checks disbursing the monies of the Post.

Section 5. Duties of 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 may be determined by the Post.

Section 6. Duties of Post Chaplain: The Post Chaplain shall be charged with the spiritual welfare of the Post comrades and will offer divine but non-sectarian service at meetings, dedications, funerals, public functions, etc., and shall adhere to such ceremonial rituals as are recommended by the National or Department Headquarters from time to time.

Section 7. Duties of Sergeant-at-Arms: The Sergeant-at-Arms shall preserve order at all meetings and shall perform such other duties as may be from time to time assigned to him by the Post Commander.

## ARTICLE V - FINANCES AND DUES

Section 1. The amount of annual Post dues shall be Thirty Dollars (\$30.00) payable in July of each year.

Section 2. A member whose dues for the current year have not been paid by January first shall be classed as delinquent. If his dues are paid on or before February first, he shall be automatically reinstated. If he is still delinquent after February first, he shall be suspended from all privileges. If he is still under such suspension on June thirtieth of such year, his membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be forfeited. A member so suspended or whose membership has been so forfeited may be reinstated to active membership in good standing by vote of the Post and payment of current dues for the year in which the reinstatement occurs. The Post will pay the dues of any member on active military duty as of July first of the current year.

Section 3. All Post monies shall be deposited in a duly authorized banking institution as designated by the Post, and none of such monies shall be withdrawn except upon draft or check signed by the Post Treasurer, or by the deputy treasurer should the Treasurer be absent or unable.

Section 4. The general expenses of the Post shall be paid by checks drawn against the general fund signed by the Post Treasurer, or by the deputy treasurer should the Treasurer be absent or unable.

#### ARTICLE VI – DELEGATES

Section 1. The Post shall provide delegates to represent the Post at all County meetings and County events as may be required, pursuant to such proportional representation covering such delegates as may be provided for by the Constitution and By-Laws of the Department and Schuyler County Organization.

#### ARTICLE VII – APPOINTMENTS

Section 1. The Post Commander, immediately upon taking office each year, shall appoint officers for the following functions: Membership, Legal, Service, Compliance, and Homeland Security.

Section 2. Membership – The Membership Officer shall have charge of all matters pertaining to the membership of the Post, including the procuring of new members, reinstatement and eligibility of members.

Section 3. Legal – The Legal Officer (Judge Advocate) shall be charged with the legal supervision of Post affairs.

Section 4. Service – The Service Officer shall supervise all matters pertaining to service to comrades in the prosecution of all claims against the United States or State Governments, employment, relief, etc., and community welfare matters. This may include comforting of members and their families when sick or bereaved and with visiting ex-servicemen in nearby hospitals.

Section 5. Compliance – The Compliance Officer shall have the responsibility to ensure that the license requirements of the local, state, and federal governments are strictly adhered to, in the conduct and operation of the Post's business activities. The Compliance Officer shall ensure that all necessary tax and financial reports, as required by local, state, and federal governments, are prepared and submitted on a timely basis. The Compliance Officer shall regularly report to the post membership on the current status of the post compliance with the financial and operations requirements of the local, state, and federal governments.

Section 6. Homeland Security – The Homeland Security Officer shall be charged with the inspiration of patriotism and good citizenship by arrangements for proper observance of patriotic occasions; encouragement of patriotic and civic phases of instruction in schools;

combating anti-American propaganda by education of the general public in American ideals through public forums, etc.; and activities for community and civic betterment.

#### ARTICLE VIII - RESOLUTIONS

Section 1. All matters of State, National or International scope that appeal to Legionnaires and the Post may be treated, discussed and acted upon provided, however, that such action shall be submitted for approval through the prescribed American Legion channels to the body having jurisdiction thereof.

#### ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS

Section 1. The regular meetings of the Post shall be held at the Post Headquarters or a place to be decided by the Post, on the third Wednesday of each month, at which may be transacted such business as may properly be brought up for action; such meetings may be converted into entertainment meetings, as may be deemed advisable by the Post Commander.

Section 2. The Post Commander shall have power to call a special meeting of the Post at any time.

Section 3. Upon the written request of at least five Post members, the Commander shall call a special meeting of the Post.

Section 4. Five officers and at least three other members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5. Annual reports of the officers shall be submitted at the April regular meeting.

#### ARTICLE X – NOTICES

Section 1. Each member shall furnish the Post Adjutant with an address for mailing purposes and inform the Adjutant of any change in such address.

Section 2. The Adjutant shall cause to be mailed to each member at the address furnished by such member notice of a special meeting of the Post at least three days prior to such meeting, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and By-Laws, and all notices as required by the Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 3. Notices of special meetings at which nominations or elections of officers are to be held shall specify that such nominations or elections are to be held and shall be mailed at least two weeks prior to each such meeting.

#### ARTICLE XI – RULES

Section 1. The order of procedure at meetings of this Post shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order (Revised), except as otherwise provided herein.



## ARTICLE XII - LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

Section 1. This Post shall not incur, nor cause to be incurred, any liability or obligation whatever which will subject to liability any other Post, Subdivision, group, members of The American Legion, or other individuals, corporations or organizations.

## ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. These By-Laws are adopted subject to the provisions of the National, Department and Schuyler County Constitutions and By-Laws. Any amendments to said National, Department or County Constitutions and By-Laws that are in conflict with the provisions hereof shall be regarded as automatically repealing or modifying the provisions of these By-Laws to the extent of such conflict.

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

## ARTICLE XIV - TRUSTEES

Section 1. The Post shall elect three Trustees to serve in accordance with the provisions of the Benevolent Orders Law and who shall have the care, management and control of the Benevolent Orders Law. After the Trustees are first elected they shall, by lot, be assigned a term of one, two or three years and thereafter all Trustees shall be elected for terms of three years. No Trustee may be an officer of the Post.

Section 2. The Trustees shall not sell, convey, mortgage, or dispose of any of the temporalities and property of the Post except by and under its direction duly had or given at a regular meeting thereof, according to the Constitution and By-Laws, and the said Trustees shall at all times obey and abide by the directions, orders and resolutions of the Post.

Section 3. That in the event the charter of the Post is suspended, cancelled or revoked by The Executive Committee of The Department of New York, the Trustees then in office shall transfer all of the temporalities and property of the Post to The Department of New York, in accordance with Article III, Section 3 of the National Constitution of The American Legion.

Section 4. The Trustees elected may file in the office of the Secretary of State a Certificate of such election, signed and acknowledged by the Commander, First Vice-Commander and Second Vice-Commander of the Post, stating the time and place of such election, and that the same was regular, the names of such Trustees, the term of which they are elected to serve, and the name of the Post.

**CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION OF TRUSTEES**

**Seneca Post No. 555**, The American Legion, Schuyler County, Department of New York

We, the undersigned, do hereby make, sign, acknowledge, and file this certificate pursuant to Article 2 of the Benevolent Orders Law of the State of New York, as follows:

1. Seneca Post No. 555, The American Legion, Schuyler County, Department of New York is duly chartered and instituted in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of The American Legion, and the persons who have signed and acknowledged this certificate are respectively the Commander, First Vice-Commander, and Second Vice-Commander, the first three elected officers of said Seneca Post No. 555, The American Legion, Schuyler County, Department of New York.

2. The Trustees hereinafter named are members of such Post in full membership and in good and regular standing therein and were elected Trustees of said Post on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, at the Post rooms of said Post at # \_\_\_\_\_ Street/Avenue in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_, New York, that said election was regularly held in accordance with the Constitution and the general rules and regulations of the said American Legion Post and in conformity with its own By-Laws.

3. The names and addresses of said Trustees and the terms for which they were allotted to serve (initially, then 3 years thereafter) are as follows:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>TERM IN YEARS</u>
Stewart F. Field, Jr.	2393 Old Road, Watkins Glen, NY 14891	1
G. T. Harrison	402 10 <sup>th</sup> Street, Watkins Glen, NY 14891	2
Judythe L. Walters	3460 County Route 28, Watkins Glen, NY 14891	3

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have made, signed, acknowledged, and filed this certificate in duplicate. DATED at \_\_\_\_\_, New York, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commander

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Vice-Commander

\_\_\_\_\_  
Second Vice-Commander