

# **Bylaws of the National Association of Government Communicators**

**September 2008**

## **Article I. Name, Mission, and Purpose.**

**Name:** The name of this organization is the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC).

**Mission:** The NAGC is dedicated to providing opportunities for individual professional advancement, enhancing effective communications with constituents, and advancing the profession.

**Purpose:** The principal purpose of the NAGC is to advance communications as an essential professional resource at every level of national, state, and local government. To achieve this purpose, the NAGC will seek to accomplish the following:

- A. Unite persons engaged in creating and disseminating government-related information.
- B. Establish and promote high standards of individual professionalism and public service.
- C. Develop—among government leaders and managers, business, professional, academic, and other groups—public awareness and understanding of the potentials, purposes, and functions of professional communicators in fulfilling the public's right and need to be informed about government activities at every level. Basic to this concept is support of the professional communicator as an integral part of the decision-making process at all levels of government.
- D. Establish, promote, and sponsor opportunities for exchanging ideas and experiences through public meetings, exhibitions, conferences, workshops, and formal courses of instruction.
- E. Improve communication within government, and between government and the public.
- F. Sponsor achievement awards to recognize professionalism among government communicators and to further the public's knowledge of government.

## **Article II. NAGC Code of Ethics.**

Members of the NAGC are dedicated to the goals of better communication, understanding, and cooperation among all people.

We believe that truth is sacred; that providing public information is an essential civil

service; and that each citizen has a right to equal, full, understandable, and timely facts about his or her government. Members agree with the following principles of behavior:

- Conduct themselves professionally, providing truth, accuracy, fairness, responsibility, and accountability to the public.
- Conduct themselves in accordance with the public interest, recognizing that each member is a steward of the public's trust.
- Convey the truth to their own agencies' management, engaging in no practice that could corrupt the integrity of channels of communication or the processes of government.
- Act promptly to correct false or misleading information or rumors and do not intentionally communicate false or misleading information. .
- Identify publicly the names and titles of individuals involved in making policy decisions, the details of the decision-making processes, and how interested citizens can participate.
- Represent no conflicting or competing interests and comply fully with all statutes, executive orders, and regulations pertaining to personal disclosure of such interests.
- Avoid the possibility of any improper use of information by an "insider" or third party and never use inside information for personal gain.
- Guarantee or promise the achievement of no specified result that is beyond the member's direct control.
- Accept no fees, commissions, gifts, promises of future consideration, or any other material or intangible valuable that is, or could be perceived to be, connected with public service employment or activities.
- Safeguard the confidence of both present and former employees, and of information acquired in meetings and documents, as required by law, regulation, and judgment.
- Protect the professional reputation or practice of another person, private organization, or government agency from wrongful injury.
- Participate in no activity that could manipulate the price of a company's securities.

*Members who violate the organization's Code of Ethics may be asked to resign their membership in the NAGC.*

### **Article III. Membership.**

## **Section 1. Membership Categories.**

The NAGC has seven categories of membership: Active, Affiliate, Student, Retired, Honorary, Lifetime, and Organization/Agency.

1. **Active:** A person currently employed by federal, state, or local government, or an organization composed of or solely representing government entities, and serving in a position whose principal duty is to create or disseminate information or illustrative materials in any medium to communicate with the agency's internal or external public, or who directs or manages these activities.

2 **Affiliate:** Contract employees, consultants, or others whose jobs are the result of government outsourcing and who are engaged in communication or public relations functions.

3. **Student:** Anyone enrolled in a formal course of instruction at a high school, college, or university. To distinguish between students and working professionals doing postgraduate work, only persons considered as full-time by their academic institutions qualify as students.

4. **Retired:** Any retired NAGC member of five years active membership who is no longer working as a government communicator, contractor, subcontractor, or in any capacity as a professional communicator working for a fee.

5. **Honorary:** Any person who, by majority vote of the Board of Directors, is determined to have made a significant contribution toward advancing the objectives of the NAGC.

6. **Lifetime:** Any member can purchase a lifetime membership at the current rate of membership times ten years. No renewal payments will be made upon purchase of a Lifetime membership.

7. **Organization/Agency:** Any group of individuals (up to five people in total) who meet the Active category requirements may join the NAGC for a set fee that equals four times the annual membership fee for an Active individual. Government members joining in this category are considered Active members. Nongovernment organizations are eligible to apply for organizational membership if composed of individuals who meet the Affiliate requirements.

## **Section 2. Method of Election to Membership.**

Application for membership involves filling out the form approved by the Board of Directors and should bear the signature of the applicant. The application and payment for dues are sent to NAGC headquarters..

## **Section 3. Rights and Privileges of Membership.**

The right to vote and to hold office in the NAGC is limited to Active, Affiliate, or Organization/Agency members. Other privileges and obligations of membership are extended to all categories of members. The offices of President and President-Elect must be held by an Active or Organization/Agency member.

#### **Section 4. Dues.**

The membership year is October 1 through September 30. The Board of Directors establishes annual dues levels.

#### **Section 5. Nonpayment of Dues.**

Members whose dues are unpaid for 60 days may be removed from the NAGC's membership rolls.

### **Article IV. Directors, Officers, and their Duties.**

#### **Section 1. Officers/Executive Committee.**

The NAGC Executive Committee comprises the President, President-Elect, Treasurer, Immediate Past-President, and Executive Director/Secretary. The Immediate Past President and Executive Director/Secretary serve as ex-officio officers without voting rights.

#### **Section 2. Directors.**

The Directors of the NAGC are the officers plus the Competitions Director, Professional Development Director, Communications Director, Membership and Volunteer Director, Development Director, and Marketing Director. They are elected biennially through an election process designated by the Board of Directors and serve staggered terms of two years starting at the end of the NAGC's annual meeting. No person is eligible to hold more than one national office simultaneously, nor serve more than two consecutive terms in the same national office.

#### **Section 3. President.**

The President is the chief executive officer and presides at all meetings of the NAGC and the Board of Directors. The President reports on the status of the NAGC's affairs at its annual meeting, and is an ex-officio member of all committees, but serves on the nominating committee. (See Article XI, Section 1.)

#### **Section 4. President-Elect.**

The President-Elect serves as the President's deputy and performs all duties of the President in the President's absence. He or she succeeds the President when the President's term expires. The President-Elect is responsible for collecting officer reports

for Board of Directors meetings and assumes other activities assigned by the President. Once elected to this position, the President-Elect is not subject to a vote of the membership when his or her term as President is scheduled to begin. To qualify for President-Elect, a candidate must have previous service as a member of the Board of Directors.

#### **Section 5. Treasurer.**

The Treasurer monitors all funds and financial records of the NAGC in accordance with the Administrative Policies and Procedures, and reports regularly to the Board on the NAGC's fiscal status.

#### **Section 6. Competitions Director.**

The Competitions Director manages the Blue Pencil/Gold Screen competition.

#### **Section 7. Professional Development Director.**

The Programs Director plans and coordinates the NAGC's annual Communications School and other educational offerings.

#### **Section 8. Communications Director.**

The Communications Director produces and distributes the NAGC's newsletter, and oversees the organization's web site and other external promotions of NAGC activities.

#### **Section 9. Membership and Volunteer Director.**

The Membership and Volunteer Director manages and establishes programs that enhance member recruitment, retention, and involvement in the NAGC.

#### **Section 10. Development Director.**

The Development Director generates operating and scholarship revenues for the NAGC, including obtaining sponsors, exhibitors, partnerships, and grants. A federal government employee cannot hold this position.

#### **Section 11. Marketing Director.**

The Marketing Director oversees the development and implementation of an annual marketing plan.

#### **Section 12. Immediate Past President.**

The Immediate Past President serves as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors without voting rights. This officer organizes a committee and follows a designated

process to nominate candidates for the NAGC's annual "Government Communicator of the Year" award.

### **Section 13. Meetings.**

The Board of Directors meets within ninety days following elections to appoint committees and transact other business. The Board also conducts a meeting in conjunction with the NAGC's Communications School.

Times and places of other regular meetings are determined by the Board of Directors. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or at the written request of a majority of the Board of Directors. Only that business specified in the notice may be transacted at a special meeting. Meetings may be held by telephone or other means approved by the Board.

### **Section 14. Meetings Notification.**

Each member of the Board of Directors must be notified at least five days prior to any Board meeting.

### **Section 15. Quorum.**

A quorum for all meetings of the Board of Directors consists of a majority of the entire Board.

### **Section 16. Compensation and Reimbursement.**

No elected officer or director of the NAGC is entitled to a salary or other compensation for services rendered. Additionally, no elected officer is permitted to benefit financially from work with the organization during his or her tenure.

The Board of Directors may authorize budgets for an elected or appointed official, including committee chairpersons, for expenses incurred in connection with the performance of assigned duties. The Board of Directors may establish appropriate rates of pay and benefits for an Executive Director and other persons employed by the NAGC pursuant to Article V of these bylaws.

## **Article V. Association Management.**

### **Section 1. Official Contract Representative/Executive Director.**

Contractual arrangements may be made with professional management and promotion firms to act or serve on behalf of the NAGC. Such a firm is called an Official Contract Representative.

The Official Contract Representative must be approved by the Board of Directors and serves under a contract that is legal and binding under law. The Board of Directors may contract for any and all such administrative and management functions and tasks that further the purposes and objectives of the NAGC, but that do not replace the powers of the Board of Directors as delineated by these bylaws. The Official Contract Representative designates one professional employee as Executive Director. The Executive Director serves as the NAGC's Secretary and an ex-officio member of the Board without voting rights.

A. Operations: The Executive Committee oversees Official Contract Representative operations and, from time to time, receives reports on the administration of the organization.

B. Obligation: The Official Contract Representative must be bonded if the person or firm performs any fiduciary or financial functions on behalf of the NAGC.

C. Meeting Attendance: The Official Contract Representative is required to attend the Board of Directors meetings and present reports of activities carried out on behalf of the NAGC.

## **Section 2. Bonding.**

At the direction of the Board of Directors, any officer or employee of the NAGC must furnish, at the expense of the organization, a fidelity bond in a sum prescribed by the Board of Directors..

## **Section 3. Auditing.**

Where the Official Contract Representative serves the NAGC, the Board of Directors will arrange for an outside person or firm to conduct an audit or financial review at least once every two years or as agreed to between the NAGC and the Official Contract Representative. The results of the audit or financial review are presented as part of the Treasurer's report during the annual meeting.

## **Article VI. Committees.**

### **Section 1. Committees.**

Standing committees responsible to the Board of Directors can be formed for functions deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may also create special committees for limited terms. Such committees will perform duties assigned to them by the President.

### **Section 2. Chairpersons.**

The President appoints the chairpersons of all committees, with the concurrence of the Board of Directors.

### **Section 3. Committee Reports.**

The chairperson of each standing or other committee prepares a report outlining committee activities for the term of office and submits the reports to the Board of Directors at least thirty days prior to the NAGC's annual meeting.

## **Article VII. Vacancies and Removal from Office.**

### **Section 1. Vacancies.**

Any vacancy on the Board of Directors may be filled for the balance of the unexpired term by nomination of the President and concurrence of the Board of Directors, with the exception of the office of President, which is automatically filled by the President-Elect. The Board of Directors has the option to conduct a special election to fill the President-Elect position.

### **Section 2. Removal.**

A director may be removed for adequate reason by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

## **Article X. Meetings.**

### **Section 1. Annual Meeting.**

The time and place of the annual meeting of the NAGC is fixed by the Board of Directors. The purpose of the annual meeting is to report on the NAGC's activities during the year and transact other business.

The Executive Director/Secretary notifies all members of the NAGC at least thirty days prior to the annual meeting.

### **Section 2. Special Meetings.**

Special meetings of the NAGC may be held upon call of the Board of Directors or by petition of five percent of the active members. Notice of any national meeting is given to all NAGC members least fifteen days prior to such meetings. A special meeting may act only on the matters for which the meeting was called.

## **Article XI. Nominations and Elections.**

### **Section 1. Nominations.**

Nominations for officers are made by a nominating committee. The President appoints a chairperson, with concurrence of the Board of Directors. The chairperson selects the nominating committee, which consists of three active members, in addition to the chairperson. Notice of nominating committee appointments is given to members at least 60 days prior to the annual meeting, inviting qualified members to seek nomination from the committee.

Qualified members also may announce their candidacy for office individually as write-in candidates, and may use the NAGC's mailing list for campaign purposes at their own expense.

## **Section 2. Elections.**

The nominating committee presents a slate of nominations on an election ballot at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting. Elections occur by written or electronic ballot, or other method approved by the Board. New officers and directors take office at the conclusion of the annual meeting.

The NAGC's Official Contract Representative is solely responsible for tallying ballots.

## **Article XII. Amendments.**

### **Section 1. Amendments.**

Amendments or changes to these bylaws may be proposed by a majority vote of Board of Directors or by written petition of five percent of the active members. Notice of the proposed change is published thirty days prior to ratification and requires a three-fifths affirmative vote by Active members. The vote may be conducted by written or electronic ballot, or other method approved by the Board.

## **Article XIII. Miscellaneous.**

### **Section 1. Other Governing Documents.**

All meetings are conducted under *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, unless otherwise specified.

These bylaws were approved and adopted by membership in 1984, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1997, 2005, and 2008.