

ARTICLE I-NAME

The name of the Commission shall be the Charles County Commission for Veterans Affairs (the “Commission”). The Commission was formed by the Board of County Commissioners, via County Resolution 2018-02, adopted May 1, 2018.

ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Commission is to provide leadership that creates opportunities for all Charles County veterans and their families. The Commission exists to evaluate, develop and promote new and existing programs within Charles County.

ARTICLE III – VISION STATEMENT

Charles County will offer our veterans valuable information to ensure enrichment and enhancement of life for veterans and their families.

ARTICLE IV – PURPOSE

The purpose of the Commission is to establish an entity for all Charles County veterans of any military service; to maintain coordinated communication with the Board of Charles County Commissioners, government entities, businesses, and other veterans within the County; and to provide valuable information to the business and academic communities, as well as, various levels of government to ensure adequate opportunities are being given to our veterans for employment, education, training and public programs. This Commission is dedicated to making our County the best place to live, work and start a business for our veterans and their families in the state of Maryland. For future reference when the title of veteran is used it will refer to both men and women.

- 1) The purpose of this Commission is:
 - (a) To strengthen the common veterans’ causes and ensure that the community is aware of veteran's rights and needs.
 - (b) To preserve the honor due to all veterans.
 - (c) To help veterans and their families rapidly transition to civilian life in Charles County. Establish contact with active duty service members who intend to reside in the County to help them avoid transition problems related to unemployment, homelessness as well as physical and mental health challenges.
 - (d) To work cooperatively with other County boards, committees and commissions, and County staff with regard to policies, programs, and concerns relating to

veterans' interests, and to maintain a working relationship with all other agencies serving veterans within the County.

(e) To recognize and honor citizens in the County who distinguish themselves for community service, particularly in the area of veterans' needs and concerns.

2) The Commission, as an entity, shall not attempt to influence legislation unless it pertains to veterans' concerns. The Commission shall not participate in or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office, including the publishing or distributing of statements.

(a) Nothing in this section shall prohibit individual members of the Commission from participating in political activities including, but not limited to, seeking or holding public office.

(b) This section does not limit the ability of the Commission to dialogue with, in an open meeting, any Charles County candidate about his/her interests and intentions towards our veterans.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

The Commission shall consist of thirteen (13) members appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Board of County Commissioners. The Commission shall consist of no less than eight (8) voting members who are any member of the uniformed services (including active duty, Reservist, National Guard) or have served in the military discharged under honorable conditions. Membership will be sought from, but not limited to, residents who are familiar with, belong to, but not exclusive to the following organizations:

- American Former POW
- American Legion
- AMVETS
- Catholic War Veterans
- Disabled American Veterans
- Fleet Reserve Association
- Gulf War Veteran
- Iraq/Afghanistan Veteran

- Jewish War Veterans
- Korean War Veterans
- Marine Corps League
- Military Officers Association of America
- National Association of Black Veterans
- Order of the Purple Heart
- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Polish American Veterans
- Retired Enlisted Association
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Vietnam Veterans Association
- Women Veterans; or
- Any other organization that affiliates with and/or supports Veterans organizations.

Persons appointed to the Commission shall serve without compensation. The initial appointments to the Commission will be staggered to ensure continuity of membership.

ARTICLE VI – QUORUM AND VOTING

A quorum will consist of half of all the filled voting members plus one. With the exception of ex-officio members, each Commission member in attendance at any given meeting shall have one (1) vote on all matters that shall come before the Commission. Any action taken by the Commission on any issue must be with the approval of a simple majority vote of the Commission members present.

ARTICLE VII – STAFF SUPPORT

The Charles County Veterans Services Manager and/or designee shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Commission.

ARTICLE VIII - TERMINATION

- 1) All members serve at the pleasure of the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners may remove a Commission member on its own motion or upon the

recommendation of the Commission.

- 2) If the Commission determines by a majority vote that a member should be removed, the Chairperson of the Commission shall report that recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for its consideration.
- 3) Resignations by members shall be submitted, in writing, to the Board of County Commissioners.

ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS

- 1) All regular meetings for the upcoming calendar year will be scheduled during the last meeting that occurs during the preceding calendar year. Meetings will occur on the First Wednesday of each month that a meeting is scheduled and will be held in the Government Meeting Room or other acceptable space.
- 2) All meetings are open to the public
- 3) The Commission will meet no less than six (6) times per year.
- 4) The Chairperson may call a special meeting of the Commission. Special meetings may be called with reasonable notice to the membership, giving the specific reason for such a meeting. The special meeting shall be limited to the special topic for which the meeting was called.
- 5) For its meetings, the Commission will follow all Charles County Government policies as they apply to inclement weather closures, early dismissal or late arrivals. Commission members will be responsible to call the weather line for official weather conditions and possible closures. Meetings canceled due to inclement weather will not be rescheduled.
- 6) In the absence of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson for at a duly called meeting of the Commission, a majority of the Commissioners present may elect a presiding officer for that meeting.
- 7) Unless modified by these by-laws, all Commission meetings shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE X - OFFICERS, BOARDS AND APPOINTEES

- 1) The members of the Commission for Veterans Affairs shall elect a Chairperson from amongst the Commission's membership. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Commission.
- 2) The members of the Commission shall elect a Vice-Chairperson from amongst its

membership. The Vice Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Commission in the absence of the Chairperson.

- 3) The members of the Commission shall elect a Secretary from amongst its membership. The Secretary shall memorialize all actions, agendas and intentions of the Commission.
- 4) An immediate past-Chairperson will serve as an officer pro tem for one (1) year after the election of a new Chairperson. If the past-Chairperson's mandatory term limit is met, he/she will serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee.
- 5) The Commission may elect other officers from its membership as it deems necessary to fulfill the purpose of the Commission.

ARTICLE XI – SUBCOMMITTEE

All subcommittees will have a Chairperson who is assigned by the officers of the Commission. The Chairperson of the Subcommittee will be responsible for scheduling, convening and presiding at the meetings of their committees, coordinating the work of the committee, and all other duties associated with the Chair of the Subcommittee.

- 1) Subcommittees may be established for such purposes as the Commission shall determine in furtherance of the Commission purpose.
- 2) Subcommittees formed will meet no less than once (1) between each official Commission meeting.
- 3) There is no age or residency requirements for subcommittee membership.
- 4) All items to come before the Commission will be presented in written form to the Secretary one week and one day prior to the scheduled Commission meeting for inclusion on the Agenda.
- 5) Chairperson of the subcommittee shall submit an annual report of activities, accomplishments, recommendations and program plans (if appropriate) at the end of each calendar year.
- 6) The Chairperson of each subcommittee will submit a report in writing to the Chairperson and Secretary of the Charles County Commission for Veteran Affairs at each meeting. These reports will be added to the minutes as recorded by the Secretary.
- 7) Every member of the Charles County Commission for Veteran Affairs must either chair a

subcommittee or serve on a subcommittee.

ARTICLE XII - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- 1) The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings to perform his/her duties:
 - (a) Ensure compliance with the by-laws;
 - (b) Strive for achievement of the purpose and objective of the Commission;
 - (c) Represent the Commission at accepted functions;
 - (d) Shall appoint sub-committee chairpersons as deemed necessary;
 - (e) In the absence or inability of the Chairperson to perform his/her regular duties, he/she shall delegate the responsibilities to the Vice-Chairperson;
- 2) The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson in all functions and chair all meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.
- 3) The Secretary will be responsible for the recording and accuracy of the minutes taken during the Commission meetings and:
 - 1) Will provide members and the public with timely notice of meetings; and
 - 2) Will record, transcribe and maintain a permanent file of the minutes of the Commission, and
 - 3) Will provide minutes via email to the Commission members within fourteen (14) calendar days of the meeting. At the same time, the Secretary will post a DRAFT of the minutes on the County's website. The Secretary shall include the approval of the minutes on the agenda for the next meeting;
 - 4) Will receive, prepare and transmittal any correspondence of the Commission, and will maintain a permanent file of such correspondence; and
 - 5) Will perform other duties as may be requested by the Commission in furtherance of the Commission mission and purpose.

ARTICLE XIII - REPORTS

The Commission shall submit an annual report to the Veteran Services Manager by March 1st of each calendar year for forwarding to the Board of County Commissioners concerning its activities and recommendations.

ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended, repealed or suspended at any meeting of the Commission, in whole or in part, by a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Commission and with final approval of the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE XV - POLICY

- 1) The Commission for Veterans Affairs shall not adopt policies in conflict with the laws of the United States of America, the State of Maryland and/or the Charles County Code.
- 2) The Commission or membership on the Commission shall not be used to influence, directly or indirectly, any political election or activity for personal gain.
- 3) No member of the Commission shall obligate or incur any liabilities in the name of the Charles County Commission for Veterans Affairs or the Charles County Government.

ARTICLE XVI - APPROVAL

The foregoing by-laws of the Commission for Veterans Affairs shall be the true original publication of this organization and adopted at the meeting by a majority of the members on this date:

Date Adopted: Initially adopted September 12, 2018. Changes to original draft approved by Consensus on November 17, 2020.