

Tsa-La-Gi LA By-Laws

Application of membership in the Tsa-La-Gi LA implies acceptance to the following by-laws.
Accepted and approved by Tsa-La-Gi LA members in September 2014.

MISSION of TSA-LA-GI LA

- Promote and nurture the historical values for Cherokee citizens living outside the Cherokee Nation boundaries.
- To learn and retain Cherokee language, history and culture for future generations.
- To be knowledgeable and assist the tribal nation in the issues facing modern Cherokee citizens.
- To disseminate information on issues and to act as liaison for the Cherokee Nation.
- To work in concert with other pilot California citizen organizations for the benefit of the Cherokee Nation as a whole.

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

1. Qualifications of Members

Membership is available to both un-enrolled and enrolled Citizens of the Cherokee Nation. At least sixty percent (60) of member households must be citizens of the Cherokee Nation. Membership shall be granted to an applicant upon payment of annual dues of twenty-five dollars (\$25 US) for an individual and thirty-five dollars (\$35 US) for each household and completion and approval of the application form of the Tsa-La-Gi LA, provided the maximum of forty percent (40) membership of non-citizens is not exceeded. Once exceeded, a waiting list will be established for a voting membership.

Annual dues shall apply per household address. At the time of application each household shall designate the names of participating members over eighteen (18) years of age at the same address for voting purposes. The approval of all membership applications is at the discretion of the Council.

2. Rights and Obligations of Members

Upon payment of membership dues, a member household shall receive bimonthly information by mail or email of general meetings or special guests, Cherokee Nation notices, annual events, invitations or a newsletter. Individual members shall receive voting rights in Tsa-La-Gi LA.

3. Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated by the Council for the following reasons: (a) violation of the by-laws of the Tsa-La-Gi LA and/or (b) action that is detrimental to the organization. Tsa-La-Gi LA membership will also be terminated when membership dues are delinquent more than ninety (90) days.

Only the Council has authority to investigate and/or terminate a membership. However, any member is entitled to bring to the Council a grievance concerning conduct by any member or Council member, which they believe to be a violation of the by-laws and/or action that is detrimental to the organization. The Council shall investigate all grievances. As part of the investigation, the Council is obliged to receive testimony and evidence from the member in question in their own defense. A membership may be terminated only after a consensus of the members of the Council is reached. If a member of the Council is under investigation, he or she may not participate and shall not be counted in the process of reaching consensus on, the question of their termination. The decision of the Council is final.

ARTICLE II: SUBSCRIPTIONS

1. Types of Subscriptions

Non-members may receive an annual subscription to the newsletter, general meeting, cultural presentations, guest announcements, Cherokee Nation notices, annual events and invitations upon payment of thirty dollars (\$30 US). Honorary subscriptions to the newsletter shall also be provided to specified non-members at the discretion of the Council. Such subscriptions may include, but are not limited to, the Principal Chief and Deputy Chief of the Cherokee Nation, the members of the Tribal Council of the Cherokee Nation, and other selected community leaders and representatives.

The approval of all subscriptions is at the discretion of the Council.

ARTICLE III: MEETINGS

1. Types of Meetings

A general meeting of Tsa-La-Gi LA shall be held at least once on a bi-monthly basis. In addition, the Council shall also meet at a regular time, which shall be decided upon annually by the Council upon their election.

Notifications of Meetings In addition to website and general information, the membership will be notified no less than ten (10) days in advance of the time and place of all general meetings.

ARTICLE IV: COUNCIL

1. Composition of the Council

The Council shall be comprised of seven members, at least four of who shall be citizens of the Cherokee Nation. Each of the seven must be a Tsa-La-Gi LA member in good standing. Only one member of any household may serve at any given time unless approved by previous Council.

2. Terms of the Council

Council members shall serve a term of two years. A Council member may serve two full terms on the council then must sit out one year before running again. Seats on the Council are staggered; three term out one year and four the next. In case of a vacancy, the remaining Council members shall elect a member to serve the remainder of the vacated term.

3. Council Positions and Duties

Council elections are for open seats; council designates positions and duties after each election. The positions on the Council shall be as follow: (1) Meeting Coordinator is Council Leadership, who shall organize the agenda, coordinate, and conduct Council meetings and represent Tsa-La-Gi LA Council to Cherokee Nation Community Association; (2) Secretary, who shall take attendance and keep minutes at Council and general meetings, provide Historian with a copy of the minutes and provide copies of the minutes of any or all meetings to the Cherokee Nation Community Association Board; (3) Treasurer, who shall maintain all financial reports except as herein provided and keep all financial records, banking accounts, shall convey information concerning the dues of new and renewed memberships to the Membership Coordinator, and who shall make monthly financial reports to the Council and semi-annual written reports to the membership; (4) Membership Coordinator, who shall keep updated membership rolls, compile an annual membership, directory for distribution to the membership, provide notification of pending renewal dates to members and provide current membership lists monthly to the newsletter committee; (5) Media Coordinator, who shall maintain the website, prepare email announcements and newsletter committee; (6) Program Coordinator, who shall coordinate meeting locations and organize any programs to be presented at the general meetings; (7) Historian, who shall organize and preserve current and historical information on Cherokee heritage and Tsa-La-Gi LA activities.

These positions will be designated at the time of the annual election and will be for a period of two years. Alternate Council members will be designated when the elected Council members are no longer available.

All Council members shall transfer any records in their possession to their elected successors as soon as possible after the general election.

4. Quorum

A quorum of the Council shall be established when four (4) members are present. No official business shall be acted upon unless a quorum is present.

5. Attendance

Council members who fail to attend three successive meetings or four total Council meetings for which a 21-day notice has been given may be relieved of their position on the Council by a majority vote of the other members of the Council.

6. Youth Representative

There shall be a non-voting honorary member of the Council to represent the youth. The Council shall appoint the Youth Representative position.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

1. Announcement of Candidates

Candidates must declare their candidacy no later than thirty (30) days prior to the election. They will provide a written statement of candidacy to the Election Committee for publication in the newsletter.

Should there be insufficient declared candidates within sixty days prior to the election; the Election Committee shall recruit additional candidates.

2. Election Procedures

Election Committee is made up of three (3) elected members. Balloting shall be conducted by mail and at the general meetings. Absentee ballots by request shall be sent out at least fourteen (14) days prior to the election. Ballots must be received by the Election Committee by the day prior to the election in order to be valid.

Absentee mailed ballots shall be opened and counted at the general meeting in which the election takes place. One Election Committee member shall open the envelope and remove the ballot. A second Election Committee member shall record the name on the ballot. The third Election Committee member shall record the votes on the ballot. After all votes have been counted the entire Election Committee for verification shall recount them.

The announcement of the new Council members shall be made at the meeting by the Election Committee, but the vote totals shall not be announced. Individual candidates may inquire privately of the Election Committee to obtain their own vote totals.

In case of a tie, the Election Committee shall conduct a runoff election by secret ballot among the members present at the general meeting to break the tie.

The Election Committee shall keep the ballots for thirty (30) days after the election. After thirty days the ballots shall be given to the Historian to be archived.

ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS

1. Proposing Amendments

Any member may propose an amendment to the by-laws by submitting to the Council at least thirty (30) days prior to the election of the Council members. The Council will collect all proposed amendments and present them for a vote annually at the same time as the election for Council members. The Council shall have the discretion to bring any proposed amendment to the immediate vote of the membership if such urgency is deemed necessary. The vote to accept proposed amendments shall be conducted at the same time and in the same manner as the election of Council members.

2. Accepting Amendments

A quorum of sixty percent (60) of total ballots needs to be returned for a valid election to amend the by-laws. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the returned ballots is required to pass an amendment.

3. Required Amendments

In the event that amendments to the by-laws be required by the Cherokee Nation, such amendments may be incorporated by a majority approval of the Council. As required, Tsa-La-Gi LA by-laws should be in compliance of a 501(c)3 Satellite Community of the Cherokee Nation Community Association.

ARTICLE VII: GIFTS AND DONATIONS

1. Acceptance of Gifts and Donations

All gifts and donations, with a fair market value greater than \$200.00, must be approved by the Council prior to acceptance.

2. Contributions by the Organization

All donations or honorariums made by Tsa-La-Gi LA up to fifty dollars (\$50.00) must be approved by the Council. Donations or honorariums over fifty dollars (\$50.00) must be approved by a simple majority vote of the membership. The vote shall be announced in the newsletter and shall be conducted at the next general meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: REPORTS

1. Required Reports

The Treasurer shall make monthly financial reports to the Council and semi-annual written reports to the membership; reflect adoption of fiscal accounting year to begin October 1st and end September 30th. The Membership Coordinator shall compile an annual membership directory for distribution to the members.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

1. Oversight Committees

The Council shall oversee the function of all committees.

2. Types of Committees

There shall be a standing committee called the Newsletter Committee to produce and distribute the newsletter a minimum of three (3) times per year in coordination with mail or emails of general meetings or guest speaker announcements, Cherokee Nation notices, annual events, holiday invitations and updates to the website. Volunteers from the membership shall form the Newsletter Committee.

Other committees may be formed as required, e.g., Holiday Committee, Annual Picnic Committee, etc.

ARTICLE X: ENDORSEMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS

1. Endorsements

No member of Tsa-La-Gi LA shall use the name of organization in political campaigns or as an endorsement of any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

Tsa-La-Gi LA as an organization is prohibited from campaigning for or endorsing any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

2. Representations

No member of Tsa-La-Gi LA shall use the name of the organization to represent themselves for direct commercial gain, or for purposes of self-promotion or the promotion of any individual's outside interests, without the written approval of the Tsa-La-Gi LA Council.

Tsa-La-Gi LA members may state their membership affiliation for identification purposes only on resumes and other similar applications.