

Bylaws for the Senior Tar Heel Legislature
of
North Carolina

Article I: Name

The Name of This Organization
Shall Be the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature

Hereafter Referred to as the NCSTHL

Article II: Purpose

- Section A - To provide information and education to Senior Citizens on the legislative process and matters being considered by the General Assembly.
- Section B - To promote citizen involvement and advocacy concerning aging issues before the General Assembly.
- Section C - To assess the legislative needs of older citizens by convening a forum modeled after the General Assembly.
- Section D - To provide older North Carolinians an opportunity to become more knowledgeable about the legislative process.
- Section E - To develop a nonpartisan forum for older North Carolinians to discuss Senior Citizens issues.

Article III: Organization

- Section A - The body shall be unicameral and shall consist of 100 delegates.
- Section B - There shall be one delegate and one alternate from each county.

Article IV: Selection of Delegates

- Section A - Process:
 1. Selection of delegates and alternates will be conducted independently by each Area Agency on Aging which will be responsible for planning the selection and for conducting a publicity campaign in their area.
 2. The delegates shall be duly selected pursuant to procedures developed by the Department of Human Resources, Division of Aging, and approved by the Secretary of the Department in consultation with Senior Citizens Advocacy Groups.

3. Delegates will be selected in agreement with Item 2 above no later than 15 July of even numbered years.
4. Orientation of all delegates to the NCSTHL shall be held in October of even numbered years with the time to be set by the Speaker with the concurrence of the Executive Committee and with the assistance of the staff liaison of the Division of Aging.
5. Delegates selected by 15 July of even numbered years will be asked by their Area Agency on Aging to meet together no later than 15 August of even numbered years in order to receive a regional orientation to indicate their Committee preferences and to discuss Resolutions that they may wish to submit individually or by the group. Resolutions should be sent to the staff liaisons for forwarding to the Resolutions Committee Chairman no later than September 1 of even and odd numbered years.

Section B - Qualifications and Eligibility:

1. Any resident satisfying state and local county resident requirements who is 60 years of age or older may be a delegate or alternate for the county in which he or she resides.
2. Each delegate and alternate shall serve for a two year term. Each selected delegate or alternate shall serve in all regular sessions of this body and called sessions and on all committees to which appointed or selected during his/her term of office.
3. The term of office shall be from the time of taking the oath of office until a successor takes the oath of office. The oath of office shall be administered at the beginning of the first session after selection.
4. One alternate delegate shall also be selected from each county by the same process and at the same time that the regular delegate is selected. Alternate delegates shall be encouraged to participate in all NCSTHL activities, but will not have a vote in matters unless the regular delegate is absent and he/she notifies the alternate to take his/her seat at that time.

Articles V: Officers

Section A - The NCSTHL shall have four officers: Speaker, Speaker Pro Tempore, Deputy Speaker Pro Tempore and Secretary. All qualified delegates shall be eligible for election.

Section B - Duties of the officers are the same as the duties of the officers of the House of Representatives of the North Carolina General Assembly and the House Rules shall be adopted by the NCSTHL as its rules unless otherwise established in these bylaws.

Section C - Officers shall be chosen in the following manner:

1. At least 90 days and not later than 60 days prior to the January meeting in odd numbered years, any delegate desiring to stand for election as an elected officer shall inform the Elections and Credentials Committee of the NCSTHL of that desire.
2. At least 30 days prior to the date set for the January meeting in odd numbered years the Elections and Credentials Committee shall notify all delegates of the names of all candidates seeking election, showing their names and respective County represented, together with a brief profile of each candidate.
3. At the January session of the NCSTHL in odd numbered years each such candidate shall be introduced and permitted to make a two minute presentation to all the delegates there assembled.
4. Election of officers shall be held in January of the odd numbered years with the date to be set by the Executive Committee. Standing committees and other committees appointed by the Speaker will meet at the same time.
5. Delegates shall cast secret ballots for each office. Following the candidates' presentations, the Chairperson of the Elections and Credentials Committee shall designate one or more members of that committee to distribute the ballots, one to each delegate, and to collect the completed ballots. The Chairperson shall also designate two members of the Elections and Credentials Committee, none of whom is a candidate for any office, to serve as tellers to count and tabulate the votes. Each candidate for any office shall be entitled to monitor the counting and tabulating of the votes or to designate another delegate to do so in his or her stead.

Upon completion of the counting and tabulation, the tellers and the candidates or their surrogates shall certify to the Speaker, in writing, the results of the balloting and the Speaker shall announce the results to the Legislature, including the number of votes cast for each candidate.

6. Election shall be by a majority vote of all delegates present. If no candidate for any office receives a majority of votes cast, a run-off vote shall be held immediately to choose between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes on the first ballot.
7. If two candidates are tied for the highest number of votes on the first ballot, the delegates shall choose between them in the run-off voting. If two candidates are tied for the second highest number of votes on the first ballot, then they, along with the candidate receiving the highest number of votes, shall participate in a 3-way run-off. If this fails to produce a candidate with a majority of votes, a second run-off vote shall be taken between the two candidates having received the highest number of votes in the first run-off.

Section D - Elected officers shall be sworn and take office immediately following the counting of ballots.

Section E - An officer shall be elected for a two year term and may not succeed him or herself in the same office.

Section F - Should a vacancy occur in the office of Speaker, the Speaker pro Tempore shall succeed to the office of Speaker and serve out the balance of his/her term. In like fashion the Deputy Speaker Pro Tempore shall succeed to the Office of Speaker Pro Tempore and shall serve out the balance of his/her term.

Section G - When a vacancy occurs in the office of Deputy Speaker pro Tempore or the office of Secretary, the Speaker shall, with the advice and consent of the other elected officers, appoint other qualified delegate(s) to succeed to the respective office(s) and serve out the balance of the term.

Section H - The Speaker may appoint a Parliamentarian, a Sergeant at Arms, a Chaplain, etc. at his/her discretion. The appointment may be for less than one term. The appointees may serve consecutive terms.

Article VI: Committees

Section A - The Executive Committee, chaired by the Speaker, shall be composed of the officers and the chairs of the standing committees and issues committees.

Section B - Standing committees shall be: Resolutions; Elections and Credentials; Public Relations; Finance; and Rules and Bylaws.

1. The Resolutions Committee shall be responsible for developing a process for submission of resolutions within the framework of Article IV Section A-4 and for arranging the publications of the resolutions submitted. Resolutions that are submitted should have a brief, specific description of the benefits expected. They should have a quantified presentation of the expenditures and financial return if possible, also possible source of funding should be included.

* a. The Resolutions Committee shall have resolutions that they have received, together with supporting documentation, in the hands of the appropriate issues committee membership no later than 15 September each year or 15 days prior to the next meeting, whichever is earlier.

* b. When resolutions are favorably reported out of the various issues committees, then such resolutions and documentation shall be given to each NCSTHL delegate for consideration no later than 1 March each year or 15 days prior to the March meeting, whichever is earlier.

c. After the March annual meeting, the resolutions Committee shall receive the approved resolutions from each of the issues committees and shall then prioritize these resolutions with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee to come up with a reasonable number to submit to the General Assembly with the support of all delegates of the NCSTHL.

2. The Elections and Credentials Committee shall supervise area selection procedures and certify the selected delegates. It shall receive the names of candidates wishing to seek an office and shall conduct the election in accordance with the rules established in these bylaws.

3. The Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for arranging coverage of events by the media, issuing press releases, contacting other organizations, and preparing and distributing brochures and/or informational material.

4. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for developing a plan for financial support for the continued operation of the NCSTHL.

5. The Rules and Bylaws Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the rules and bylaws that govern the procedures of the NCSTHL as well as all proposed changes. All changes must be submitted in writing to the committee chairperson and such proposed changes shall be submitted to the NCSTHL in accordance with the procedures stipulated under Article VIII of these bylaws.
6. Standing Committees appointed by the Speaker, no later than the January meeting in odd numbered years, shall be for a two year term and shall serve concurrently with the term of the speaker.

Section C - Issues Committees may include the following:

1. Long Term Care
2. Health
3. System/Service Access
4. Enrichment Opportunities
5. Crime/Safety/Security
6. General

The above issue committees may be changed by the Speaker with the concurrence of the Executive Committee by or at the January meeting each year.

The Committees in Section C shall receive resolutions from the Resolutions Committee appropriate to the topic allocated to the Committees.

Section D - Appointments to all committees, with the exception of the Executive Committee whose membership is described in this article Section A, shall be made by the Speaker who shall consider the expressed interest of delegates for such assignments.

Section E - Ad hoc committees may be created or eliminated by the Speaker as needed. Such committees shall be given a specific time limited charge and created in response to a need.

Section F - The chairs and members of all committees appointed by the Speaker shall serve coterminous with the Speaker making such appointments.

Article VII: Procedures

Section A - Procedures for the Assembly:

1. Quorum - The delegates seated at the opening session shall consist a quorum.

2. Recognition From Chair - When recognized by the Speaker, any delegate who desires to speak to deliver any matter to the assembly shall rise at his/her seat and respectfully address the Chair as "Mr. Speaker or Madam Speaker." The delegate will then state name and county represented.
3. The Chair States - (The Chair may then recognize the delegate by stating) "For what purpose does the delegate from _____ arise?"
4. Response From the Delegate - Mr./Madam Speaker " I Rise To"
 - a. "Inquire of the delegate"
 - b. "Speak on the bill."
 - c. "Offer a motion."
 - d. "Offer an amendment."
 - e. "Rise to a point of order."
 - f. "Inquire of the chair."
 - g. "Introduce a guest."
 - h. "Lay on the table."
 - i. "Moved to Adjourn."
5. Action on the floor of the NCSTHL results from a member offering a motion.

Section B - Procedure for Delegate Meetings:

1. The elected Speaker is the presiding officer and will continue in office until a successor is chosen.
2. The Speaker shall call the NCSTHL to order, at the hour provided by printed agenda.
3. The Speaker shall preserve order and decorum and shall have general control of the meetings/sessions.
4. The Speaker shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal by any delegate.
5. When the NCSTHL is ready to vote upon a question, the presiding officer shall state: "The question is on (designating the matter to be voted upon). All in favor of such question shall vote Yea and all opposed shall vote Nay. The NCSTHL will now proceed to vote". The vote shall be taken by voice or roll call. The presiding officer shall announce the outcome of the vote.

6. When two or more members wish to rise to speak at the same time, the Speaker shall ascertain their purposes and then name who shall speak first, the other members having preference to speak as designated.
7. The Speaker shall sign all resolutions passed by the NCSTHL over which he/she presides.

Section C - Procedure for Delegates:

1. Voting - Every delegate shall vote on each question unless excused for just cause.
2. Immediately Certify - Each resolution, when passed by the full assembly, will be immediately certified.
3. Decorum and Debate - No delegate shall speak more than (5) minutes on a resolution except by consent of the majority of delegates present. Debate on any amendment for any resolution is limited to ten (10) minutes on each resolution. .

Debate on each resolution is limited to twenty (20) minutes including the time allotted the author or sponsor. At the end of twenty (20) minutes, the vote shall be taken on the resolution and pending amendments. The last five (5) minutes shall be given before the vote, for the person speaking for the resolution to give the final presentation.

When any delegate is to speak in debate or deliver any matter to the session, he shall address himself to "Mr./Madam Speaker".

The rights to the floor of a delegate shall not be challenged after he/she has proceeded with his/her remarks, except by raising a question of order, parliamentary inquiry, question of privilege or to a question of the existence of a quorum.

During the session, only two amendments per resolution will be allowed to be taken up. In the event that more than two amendments are submitted, the leadership shall determine which two amendments will be considered.

4. A resolution may be moved to final passage by a majority vote.

Section D. Common Forms of a Motion:

1. Table - In legislative parlance, "laying something on the table" means disposing of the matter for the legislative session. A motion to "lay on the table" has final disposition, but it is possible to take from the table by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.
2. Amendments - "To offer an amendment", the act of amending a resolution is a two part process: a motion and a piece of paper filed with the Secretary outlining the amendment.
3. Previous Question - To end debate and bring on a vote. ("Mr./Madam Speaker, I move the previous question on the passage of the resolution".)
4. Point of Order - A delegate is challenging either what is happening or what he/she thinks is about to happen.
5. Appeal - A delegate may challenge any ruling of the presiding officer by appealing to the body to override the decision by majority vote.
6. To adjourn - A motion to adjourn or recess is always in order and may be made by any delegate.

Section E. Procedures to Make a Motion:

1. When a motion is made and seconded it shall be stated by the Chair.
2. When a question is under debate the presiding officer shall receive no motion except:
 - a. to adjourn
 - b. to recess
 - c. to lay on the table
 - d. for a previous question
 - e. to amend
3. Motions which can be made but once are motions to adjourn or recess.

Section F. Procedures for Committees:

1. A majority of committee members seated at the opening of business constitutes a quorum for transaction of committee business.
2. The printed agenda of the NCSTHL carries the time of the regularly scheduled committee meetings. All resolutions must be brought up in numerical order. Announcements of any special or called committee meeting shall be read from the Secretary's desk.
3. All resolutions shall be referred to a committee and no resolution shall be considered for final passage unless it has been reported on by a committee.
4. Committee amendments to the resolution shall be taken up while the resolutions are in committee. Amendments shall be presented in writing.
5. Recommendations by the majority of delegates of the committee shall be referred for the record on one of the following recommendations: "Do pass", "Do not pass", or "Do pass as amended."

Section G. Procedures for Rules:

1. Interpretation of Rules. - It shall be the duty of the presiding officer to interpret all rules. The Speaker may appoint a Parliamentarian to assist in rule interpretation.
2. Waiver and suspension of the rules - These rules shall not be waived or suspended except by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all who are present and voting at the session/meeting.
3. In cases not provided for in these rules, the NCSTHL shall be governed by the rules of the House of Representatives of the North Carolina General Assembly.

Section H. Authority:

1. The rules contained in Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised (latest edition), shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the BYLAWS or the special rules of order.

2. These Bylaws shall take effect immediately after ratification. Amendments shall take effect in the same manner unless otherwise stated in the amendment.

Article VIII: Amendments

Section A. These Bylaws may be amended at any session of the NCSTHL under the following procedures:

1. Proposed amendments must be submitted by a delegate to the chair of the Rules and Bylaws Committee.
2. Proposed amendments to the By-Laws Committee must be in the hand of the Chairman for the Rules and By-Laws Committee before the opening of the October session of each year. These amendments will be discussed and acted upon by the Rules and By-Laws Committee at the October session of each year. Amendments to the By-Laws then shall be sent to each Area Agency on Aging Administrator and that person shall distribute copies of such amendments to each of their delegates no later than November 15 of each year. The session in January will then vote on any proposed amendments and either ratify or reject them. Amendments will be enforce form the date and time of the January vote. the director of the Division on Aging shall also be sent a copy of the proposed amendments.
3. Proposed amendments submitted must be recommended by the Rules and Bylaws Committee to be brought to the floor of the full session.
4. Proposed amendments require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the delegates present and voting at the meeting/session when such amendment is brought up on the floor of the full session.
5. Proposed amendments that are not recommended by the Rules and Bylaws Committee may be brought to the floor by a delegate by a motion with a second and by a subsequent two-third (2/3) vote of the delegates present and voting at that particular session.