



*A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families*

To: All Department of Oklahoma Executive Committee Members

From: Department of Oklahoma Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Date: May 13, 2024

Subject: Proposed amendments to the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules that will come before the Department Executive Committee

Attached are the proposed amendments that will come before the Department of Oklahoma Executive Committee (DEC) at the 2024 Department Pre-Convention DEC meeting. Below is a summary of each amendment:

- Amendment #1 – ALA Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules proposes a change to the requirements for a unit to remain in good standing within the American Legion Auxiliary.
- Amendment #2 – ALA Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules recommends changing “should” to “shall” everywhere “should” appears in the standing rules.

**July 2024 Department of Oklahoma Executive Committee Amendment #1 – Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules**

| CURRENT WORDING | PROPOSED AMENDMENT | IF ADOPTED, WILL READ |
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|  | <p>American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma Chelsea Milam-Stanley Unit 60 respectfully petitions ALA Department of OK District 1 to petition the ALA Department of OK to petition the National ALA to adopt <b>Whereas for a “Unit to remain in good standing” or “be considered active”, the Unit shall participate but not limited to, in at least (3) three programs recognized by the National ALA. These ALA national programs shall be the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A. Americanism:</b></li> <li><b>B. Community Service:</b></li> <li><b>C. Constitution and By-Laws:</b></li> <li><b>D. Education:</b></li> <li><b>E. Finance:</b></li> <li><b>F. ALA Girls State:</b></li> <li><b>G. History:</b></li> <li><b>H. Junior Activities:</b></li> <li><b>I. Leadership</b></li> <li><b>J. Legislative</b></li> <li><b>K. Membership</b></li> <li><b>L. National Security</b></li> <li><b>M. Poppy:</b></li> <li><b>L. Public Relations:</b></li> <li><b>O. Risk and Compliance Committee:</b></li> <li><b>P. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation:</b></li> </ul> | <p>American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma Chelsea Milam-Stanley Unit 60 respectfully petitions ALA Department of OK District 1 to petition the ALA Department of OK to petition the National ALA to adopt <b>Whereas for a “Unit to remain in good standing” or “be considered active”, the Unit shall participate but not limited to, in at least (3) three programs recognized by the National ALA. These ALA national programs shall be the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A. Americanism:</b></li> <li><b>B. Community Service:</b></li> <li><b>C. Constitution and By-Laws:</b></li> <li><b>D. Education:</b></li> <li><b>E. Finance:</b></li> <li><b>F. ALA Girls State:</b></li> <li><b>G. History:</b></li> <li><b>H. Junior Activities:</b></li> <li><b>I. Leadership</b></li> <li><b>J. Legislative</b></li> <li><b>K. Membership</b></li> <li><b>L. National Security</b></li> <li><b>M. Poppy:</b></li> <li><b>L. Public Relations:</b></li> <li><b>O. Risk and Compliance Committee:</b></li> <li><b>P. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation:</b></li> </ul> |
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## July 2024 Department of Oklahoma Executive Committee Amendment #1 – Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules

**Proposed by:** Mrs. Angela M. Wagstaff RN BSN

**Rationale:** In March 2023 upon joining the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma Chelsea Milam-Stanley Unit 60 there were only 3 members in attendance at the meeting. Reporting they had been the only ones doing anything for the last 5-6 years. According to those three, the Unit was re-chartered 2014 for the purpose of “only participating in Girls State”. Interesting enough during this meeting, the treasurer reported the Unit was struggling to pay for the three (3) High School Juniors they were sponsoring to attend Girls State. It is my belief, since the Unit had only been required to participate in one program, the Unit had ultimately lost the heart of the ALA mission statement and support of the community. While Girls State is a noble program if a Unit only does one program such as this ultimately the Unit does not fulfill the American Legion Auxiliary Mission Statement. On that March evening Unit 60 received two new members who wanted something more and wanted to do something for veterans as well. Over the next year, Unit 60 developed governing documents to mirror the National, Department and District Constitution and Bylaws to remain in compliance. Hosted the first annual Memorial Day Weekend Pancake Breakfast where veterans were served free. The Unit held their first annual Chili dinner, Poker Run and Silent Auction on Veterans Day to benefit for our Poppy Fund. This past Christmas Holiday season Chelsea area WWII veterans received personalized gifts with their particular interests. Provided Christmas holiday gifts to area nursing home veterans. The Unit signed up with Wreaths Across America for their buy back and fund raiser on sales \$5 wreath program to benefit the Unit’s Girls State fund. We hosted a Super Bowl square board benefitting our Girls State fund. Currently, we are sponsoring ten (10) junior girls from 4 different area high schools providing scholarships for them to attend Girls State. Our Unit has added 11 new members and meeting attendance runs between 12-15 members. We continue to excel and making efforts to participate in the following programs of the National ALA: Americanism – Assisted the American Legion Milam-Stanley Post 60 with placing of the flags on veteran’s gravesites and downtown for Memorial Day, Flag Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day and the Americanism essay contest; Community Unity Service - Participated in Chelsea Project’s Trunk or Treat and Butter-fly Sanctuary in the Pocket Park; Constitution and By-Laws - Annual review to ensure compliance with National, Department and District changes or additions to the ALA Constitution and By-Laws; Education – we provided ALA information to area elementary, junior high and high schools regarding ALA; Finance – we performed annual review of treasurer’s accounting and in progress in the development of an annual budget; ALA Girls State – we advocated in a yearlong effort for Chelsea High School junior girls to participate (note it had been 9 years since a high school junior girl from Chelsea had attended Girls State but this year 3 young ladies will be attending Girls State and the Unit continued to support Foyil, Adair and Inola junior girls and are sponsoring 7 girls from those area high school; History: - the Unit has made its first scrapbook since re-chartering and is making its first attempt in the scrapbook contest documenting past, present and hopefully the Unit’s future. Junior Activities – we are coordinating with our American Legion Post 60 in the development of Junior Activities Program and the Sons of the American Legion. We have our two new junior members and recruited new members for the Sons of the Legion, utilizing the Family Legion Form. Leadership – (work in progress); Legislative – we are going to make sure the Unit completes the “impact” form as those are reported to Congress; Membership – we have set a goal of 66 new members over the next 5 years; National Security – (work in progress); Poppy – held our first fund raiser for veterans and initiated “Adopt a Veteran for Christmas” provided gifts to WWII veterans and veterans in area nursing homes during the Christmas season, sponsored Chelsea school children to participate in the poppy poster contest and our

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district poppy contest with flower and wreath arrangements; Public Relations – voted to become a member of the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce, currently sending a liaison between the Chelsea City governments, CEDA, Project Chelsea and the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce meetings. We are getting involved; Risk and Compliance Committee – we are holding our elected officers accountable to complete the Unit’s non-profit 990n3 accurately and timely; Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation – we provide continued support to the Claremore Veterans Hospital Bingo activities and have given St. Valentine cards to those inpatient veterans.

Most importantly, I am not mentioning any of the above in a boastful way but rather to point out if a little bitty unit can do what Unit 60 has done to engage the community, instill pride for our veterans and our country just by requiring participation in at least three (3) programs listed by our National ALA committees, I believe adopting this amendment this action will revitalize the American Legion Auxiliary. Thus embracing our mission statement of service through our national programs we will see our membership will increase exponentially. We will be the leadership and will be focused to service. We can do more than we think.

**Consequential Amendments**      None

**Constitution & Bylaws Notes & Recommendation**      None

The Department of Oklahoma Constitution & Bylaws Committee **RECOMMENDS / DOES NOT RECOMMEND** this amendment.

**Notes:**

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**July 2024 Department of Oklahoma Executive Committee Amendment #2 – Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules**

| CURRENT WORDING  | PROPOSED AMENDMENT  | IF ADOPTED, WILL READ   |
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| <p>ALA Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules</p> <p><i>Corporate Governance</i><br/><i>Paragraph 3, Bullet 4 (Page 31 of 71)</i></p> <p>Periodically review the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma’s structure, procedures, and programs, and determine whether any policies or practices should be changed . . .</p> <p><i>IV. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS</i><br/><i>Department President (Page 38 of 71)</i></p> <p>4. Should a department president be incapacitated, the Department Secretary/Office Director should inform the Department Executive Committee.</p> <p>5. Should there become a vacancy of any office . . .</p> <p><i>IV. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS</i><br/><i>Department First Vice and Second Vice Presidents (Page 38 of 71)</i></p> <p>3. . . . However, it should be understood they are not to assume an official position or attitude in this case and no special courtesies should be accepted.</p> | <p>Amend by striking and inserting<br/>ALA Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules</p> <p><i>Corporate Governance</i><br/><i>Paragraph 3, Bullet 4 (Page 31 of 71)</i></p> <p>Periodically review the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma’s structure, procedures, and programs, and determine whether any policies or practices <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be changed . . .</p> <p><i>IV. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS</i><br/><i>Department President (Page 38 of 71)</i></p> <p>4. <del>Should</del> <b>shall</b> a department president be incapacitated, the Department Secretary/Office Director <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> inform the Department Executive Committee.</p> <p>5. <del>Should</del> <b>shall</b> there become a vacancy of any office . . .</p> <p><i>V. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS</i><br/><i>Department First Vice and Second Vice Presidents (Page 38 of 71)</i></p> <p>3. . . . However, it <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be understood they are not to assume an official position or attitude in this case and no special courtesies <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be accepted.</p> | <p>ALA Department of Oklahoma Standing Rules</p> <p><i>Corporate Governance</i><br/><i>Paragraph 3, Bullet 4 (Page 31 of 71)</i></p> <p>Periodically review the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma’s structure, procedures, and programs, and determine whether any policies or practices shall be changed . . .</p> <p><i>IV. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS</i><br/><i>Department President (Page 38 of 71)</i></p> <p>4. Shall a department president be incapacitated, the Department Secretary/Office Director shall inform the Department Executive Committee.</p> <p>5. Shall there become a vacancy of any office . . .</p> <p><i>V. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS</i><br/><i>Department First Vice and Second Vice Presidents (Page 38 of 71)</i></p> <p>3. . . . However, it shall be understood they are not to assume an official position or attitude in this case and no special courtesies shall be accepted.</p> |

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| <p><i>V. DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE<br/>(Page 40 of 71)</i></p> <p>11. Should the office of Department Secretary/Office Director become . . .</p> <p>12. Should the Department Executive Committee feel limiting . . .</p> <p><i>VI. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES<br/>#6 Core Department Standing Committees, Finance, Paragraph 4 (Page 43 of 71)</i></p> <p>There shall be no term limitations imposed upon the Finance Committee. The Department President should recognize . . .</p> <p><i>X. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION<br/>(Page 50 of 71)</i></p> <p>3. . . .Should any officer fail to be . . .</p> <p><i>XII. CHARTERS, Unit Charters<br/>(Page 54 of 71)</i></p> <p>2. Department charter fees should be in . . .</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #3 (Page 59 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification should be sent thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire</p> | <p><i>V. DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE<br/>(Page 40 of 71)</i></p> <p>11. <del>Should</del> <b>shall</b> the office of Department Secretary/Office Director become . . .</p> <p>12. <del>Should</del> <b>shall</b> the Department Executive Committee feel limiting . . .</p> <p><i>VI. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES<br/>#6 Core Department Standing Committees, Finance, Paragraph 4 (Page 43 of 71)</i></p> <p>There shall be no term limitations imposed upon the Finance Committee. The Department President <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> recognize . . .</p> <p><i>X. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION<br/>(Page 50 of 71)</i></p> <p>3. . . .<del>Should</del> <b>shall</b> any officer fail to be . . .</p> <p><i>XII. CHARTERS, Unit Charters<br/>(Page 54 of 71)</i></p> <p>2. Department charter fees <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be in . . .</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #3 (Page 59 of 71)</i></p> | <p><i>V. DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE<br/>(Page 40 of 71)</i></p> <p>11. Shall the office of Department Secretary/Office Director become . . .</p> <p>12. Shall the Department Executive Committee feel limiting . . .</p> <p><i>VI. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES<br/>#6 Core Department Standing Committees, Finance, Paragraph 4 (Page 43 of 71)</i></p> <p>There shall be no term limitations imposed upon the Finance Committee. The Department President shall recognize . . .</p> <p><i>X. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION<br/>(Page 50 of 71)</i></p> <p>3. . . . shall any officer fail to be . . .</p> <p><i>XII. CHARTERS, Unit Charters<br/>(Page 54 of 71)</i></p> <p>2. Department charter fees shall be in . . .</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #3 (Page 59 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification shall be sent thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire</p> |

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| <p>emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, the e-mail should give . . .</p> <p>c. The notice should contain etc.</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #4 (Page 61 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification should be sent out at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, e-mail should be followed up with a phone call to make sure everyone received notice.</p> <p>c. The notice should contain the following information . . .</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #5 (Page 63 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification should be sent at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, the e-mail should be followed up with a phone call to make sure everyone received the notice.</p> <p>c. The notice should contain the following information . . .</p> | <p>b. The notification <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be sent thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, the e-mail <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> give . . .</p> <p>c. The notice <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> contain etc.</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #4 (Page 61 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be sent out at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, e-mail <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be followed up with a phone call to make sure everyone received notice.</p> <p>c. The notice <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> contain the following information . . .</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #5 (Page 63 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be sent at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, the e-mail <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> be followed up with a phone call to make sure everyone received the notice.</p> <p>c. The notice <del>should</del> <b>shall</b> contain the following information . . .</p> | <p>emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, the e-mail shall give . . .</p> <p>c. The notice shall contain etc.</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #4 (Page 61 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification shall be sent out at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, e-mail shall be followed up with a phone call to make sure everyone received notice.</p> <p>c. The notice shall <b>I</b> contain the following information . . .</p> <p><i>XV. MEETINGS, #5 (Page 63 of 71)</i></p> <p>b. The notification shall be sent at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting unless it is a dire emergency. In the event of a dire emergency, the e-mail shall be followed up with a phone call to make sure everyone received the notice.</p> <p>c. The notice shall contain the following information . . .</p> |



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| <i>XVI. RECORDS (Page 65 of 71)</i><br><br>. . . Should there be extenuating . . . | <i>XVI. RECORDS (Page 65 of 71)</i><br><br>. . . <del>Should</del> <b>Shall</b> there be extenuating . . . | <i>XVI. RECORDS (Page 65 of 71)</i><br><br>. . . Shall there be extenuating . . . |

**Proposed by:** Charlene Marshall, PDP 1990-1991

**Rationale:** Time to spring clean your Constitution & Bylaws *Posted On: Tuesday, 19 March 2024***3. Shouda, woulda, coulda — it all amounts to nothing. “Should” has no place in your governing documents.** If the word “should” is anywhere in your governing documents, you better grab your cleaning caddy and bleach it right out of your C&B. Remember: Your governing documents state the fundamentals of your unit. These rules and procedures should be as clear as possible, and the word “should” leaves far too much room for interpretation. Consider swapping “should” for “may” or “must/should.”

Also as per National Blog: What’s the big deal? The words used in governing documents have precise legal meanings. If your documents say **“shall” then it means that whatever it is, it MUST” happen and it must ALWAYS happen.** If an action of the organization is challenged in court, the court will look at the organization’s governing documents to see if they have been followed. So, governing documents not only explain how the organization will function and govern itself, they have a direct impact on the rights of its members. The National organization engages a professional registered parliamentarian from the National Association of Parliamentarians to review proposed amendments for clarity and consistency with our governing documents.

**Consequential Amendments** None

**Constitution & Bylaws Notes & Recommendation** None

The Department of Oklahoma Constitution & Bylaws Committee **RECOMMENDS / DOES NOT RECOMMEND** this amendment.

**Notes:**