ARTICLE ONE
NAME

1.01 The name of the organization is the “Bell County Genealogical Society, Inc.”

ARTICLE TWO
ORGANIZATION

2.01 The society was organized in 1991 as the East Bell County Genealogical Society. The name changed in 2014 to the Bell County Genealogical Society.

2.02 The society shall operate on a calendar year basis from 1 January – 31 December.

2.03 The principal office of the society shall be in Bell County, Texas; however, the society may have other offices as the affairs of the society may require from time to time.

2.04 The society shall have and continuously maintain in the State of Texas a registered office and an agent whose address is identical with the registered office, as required by the Texas Non-profit Corporation Act. The registered office need not be identical to the principal office, and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time.

2.05 If at any time the society shall be dissolved, no part of its funds or property shall be distributed to or among its members or officers, or to individuals, but after payment of all indebtedness of the society, its surplus assets shall be used in manners which further the purposes of the society. Records and files shall be offered to the Temple Public Library in Temple, Texas.

ARTICLE THREE
PURPOSES

3.01 The society is a not-for-profit educational organization promoting an interest in genealogy and local history in order to perpetuate the memory of our ancestors and their contributions to the cultural heritage of our country. The purposes of the society are to:
a. Locate, collect, acquire, record, conserve, index, reproduce, and publish materials pertaining primarily to the United States and Texas, and especially to Central Texas and Bell County.

b. Associate as members persons interested in researching their family heritage, and to educate members in the preparing and publishing of genealogies, family histories, and local histories.

c. Maintain and elevate genealogical standards and to stress the importance of accuracy through the careful documentation of research.

d. Affiliate with other local regional, state, and national organizations that are active in the fields of genealogy, local history, and preservation.

e. Make donations, by publication, acquisition, or memorial, to museums, public libraries, archives, and private research collections that are open to use by the public.

f. Disseminate knowledge and information among the general public through the support of festivals and museum activities, the conduct of public meetings, and the sponsorship of lectures, classes, and seminars of genealogical and historical interest.

g. Publish a newsletter, journal, or special manuscripts useful to family researchers and scholars.

h. Sponsor awards programs for writing and research projects of genealogical or historical nature undertaken by individuals, students, or organizations, and to participate in similar programs sponsored by schools, colleges, and other societies.

3.02 To achieve the Society’s goals of promoting genealogical research and the preservation of genealogical records, informational programs may be presented at each meeting. There will be no limit set as to the number of guest speakers the Society may have per year, however, no speaker will be given or paid a fee or gratuity except by approval or recommendation of the Society’s Executive Board. The Society may pay a guest speaker mileage in line with IRS and up to $20.00 for printing of handouts required by the speaker, provided a receipt is presented by the speaker. Any speaker will be required to follow the rules as required by the Temple Public Library meeting room use:

No member, speaker, or any other person, will be allowed to sell any product or service before, during, or after any Society meeting or gathering of members of the Society. If a member, speaker, or any other person has or knows of a product or service which would aid genealogical research, record-keeping, or presentation of records, he/she may display catalogs, brochures, etc., at the Society’s meeting or gathering.
ARTICLE FOUR
MEMBERSHIP

4.01 The membership shall consist of the members of the heretofore unincorporated Bell County Genealogical Society, it having consented thereto upon the affirmative vote of the majority of the members.

4.02 Membership is open to all persons who have:

   a. Attained their 12th birthday,

   b. Signified a willingness to abide by the by-laws of the society,

   c. Expressed commitment to supporting the society by serving on committees.

4.03 Membership is by calendar year and is not transferable or assignable. There shall be no month-by-month memberships. Categories of membership and dues shall be established by the Executive Board and approved by the membership not later than December 1 of each year for the following calendar year. Members in good standing are considered to be members who have paid their membership dues or are considered an honorary member.

4.04 Dues are payable January 1. Current members who fail to renew through payment of dues by February 1 will be dropped from the membership roll.

4.05 Membership dues for new members joining after October 1 will be at the annual rate and apply to the following calendar year.

4.06 The Executive Board by affirmative vote of two-thirds of all members may, after a hearing, suspend, or expel a member for cause, or may reinstate a member.

4.07 Honorary membership is granted upon recommendation of the Executive Board, and by approval of the membership by majority vote of those in attendance during any society meeting.

4.08 Each member in good standing, including Honorary Members, is entitled to one (1) vote.

4.09 No one is authorized on their own authority to commit time, money, or property of the society, to amend the by-laws, or to establish policy.
ARTICLE FIVE
ORGANIZATION

5.01 The Executive Board is the governing body. It shall have general control of the business, funds, and property of the society and has full authority to direct its operations and establish policy between the general meetings of the society. It consists of the elective officers, the immediate past president, and the chairpersons of special committees except for the nominating and audit committees. All members of the board must be members of the society in good standing.

5.02 The officers shall be elected for a two (2)-year term at the November meeting of the election year. The new officers shall be installed during the December meeting, and they shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified. Officers will be eligible of succeeding themselves if reelected for one additional term.

5.03 The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee not later than the regular meeting in September of an election year. The slate of officers shall be presented to the membership at the October meeting. Elections shall be held at the November meeting. Further nominations, with the consent of the nominee, shall be received from the membership present. When the nominations are closed, a vote shall be taken, and the person receiving the greatest number of votes for each office shall be declared duly elected.

5.04 Standing and special committees shall be appointed and serve for a calendar year or portion thereof.

5.05 Officer vacancies that occur in any position shall be filled by appointment by the President, for the unexpired part of the term of service.

ARTICLE SIX
OFFICERS

6.01 The duties of the elected officers, in order of their precedence, are:

6.02 President. Serves as chief executive officer of the society, serves as chairperson of the Executive Board, appoints committees, serves as ex-officio member on all committees, and presides over all regular and special meetings. May sign, with any other elected officer, any contracts, agreements, or instruments. Obtains the society's mail monthly, examines it for content, and distributes it to the appropriate officers or committee chairpersons for action.

6.03 First Vice-President. In the absence of the President, performs the duties of that office. Serves as Program Development Chairperson.
6.04 Second Vice-President. Presides in the absence of both the President and First Vice-President. Chairs the Membership Committee, and maintains a file of current and past members, including street/email addresses and telephone numbers, and the amount and date of their dues paid. Works closely with the Treasurer to ensure proper accounting and recording of dues and members. Turns in the membership records to the Historian for filing in the society's official files.

6.05 Recording Secretary. In the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, presides until a President pro-temp is selected. Keeps minutes of regular, special, and Executive Board meetings. Upon three days' notice, meets in person with any member of the society who requests to inspect files. Turns in a signed copy of the minutes each month to the Historian for filing in the society's official files.

6.06 Corresponding Secretary. Chairs the Research Committee. Receives correspondence containing requests for research and is responsible for correspondence with external organizations and persons. After processing, requests may be turned over to the newsletter and journal editor, if such positions are active. Is responsible for all other outgoing mail. Turns over all files to the Historian for filing in the society's official files.

6.07 Treasurer. Maintains custody of all funds and keeps a full and accurate account of receipts and disbursements from all sources in accounting books belonging to the society, ensuring that proper vouchers support disbursements. As events occur, informs the Second Vice-President in writing of new members and when members pay dues, and provides this information to the newsletter and journal editor, if such positions are active. Deposits all monies to the credit of the society in depositories designated by the Executive Board. Upon three days' notice, makes all files available for inspection by any member of the society, in the presence of the Treasurer. Provides the Historian with a copy of the monthly financial report for filing in the official files. Makes records available for audit at the end of term. Turns over all papers at the end of the term of service to the successor.

6.08 Historian. Collects and deposits permanent records in the official files of the society, including: 1) an end-of-year membership list from the Second Vice-President; 2) all signed minutes from the Recording Secretary, 3) correspondence files from the Corresponding Secretary, 4) financial records from the Treasurer; and 5) as deemed necessary by the Executive Board.

6.09 Immediate Past President. Serves in an advisory role and as a member of the Executive Committee.
ARTICLE SEVEN
COMMITTEES

7.01 Standing and special committees shall be appointed by the President. They are not authorized on their own authority to commit time, money, or property of the society, to amend the by-laws, or to establish policy.

7.02 Standing Committees. Chairpersons and members shall be appointed in January by the President for:

a. Website

b. Newsletter

c. Research (Chaired by the Corresponding Secretary)

d. Membership (Chaired by the Second Vice-President)

e. Refreshments

f. Door prizes

7.03 Special Committees shall be activated by the Executive Board, as deemed necessary, and the duties and responsibilities of each prescribed in the society’s minutes. Chairpersons and members shall be appointed by the President. The committees may include, but are not limited to:

a. Seminar and Workshops

b. Book Acquisition and Circulating Materials

c. Research and Special Projects

d. Awards and Honors

e. Special Publications

f. Organization and By-laws

g. Nominating

h. Audit
ARTICLE EIGHT
MEETINGS

8.01 Executive Board meetings shall be at the call of the President or by request for any Executive Board member, with at least three days’ notice given to all board members.

8.02 A majority of the members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum. Minutes of board meetings shall be taken, read at the next regular meeting of the society, and placed in the official files of the society.

8.03 Committee meetings shall be subject to the call of the chairperson. The committees will establish their own procedural rules but an affirmative vote of the majority of the members attending is necessary for all recommendations.

8.04 Electronic meetings of the Executive Board and Committees may be held as long as all members have access to electronic devices. Minutes shall be recorded, read at the next regular meeting of the society, and placed in the official files of the society.

8.05 In all procedural matters, the society shall be governed by these by-laws and the latest revised edition of Robert’s Rules of Order. All motions, elections, and other actions shall require a majority vote of the members present and voting.

8.06 Minutes of all society meetings shall be taken, read at the next regular meeting, and placed in the official files of the society.

8.07 An Annual Meeting shall be held between October 1 and December 31, at a time and place designated by the Executive Board, and may be held in conjunction with a regular or special meeting.

8.08 Regular society meetings shall be held, usually monthly, in a facility which is open to the public, such as a museum, library, or meeting hall.

8.09 Special society meetings may be called by the President, or by petition of five members of the society plus a member of the Executive Board, or by any three members of the Executive Board.

8.10 Announcement of regular/special meetings shall be made by either:
   a. Oral announcement during open session of a society meeting,
   b. Telephone call to members,
   c. Notice in local newspaper(s),
   d. Notice in the society newsletter,
e. E-mail notification to members and past guests for whom addresses are available.

8.11 The Order of Business at society meetings, subject to modifications by the presiding officer, shall be:

a. Welcome and introduction of guests and new members,

b. Reading of the minutes of last regular or special meeting,

c. Reading of the minutes of Executive Board meetings (as necessary),

d. Treasurer report,

e. Officer reports,

f. Committee reports,

g. Old business,

h. New business,

i. Announcements,

j. Genealogy finds,

k. Program,

l. Adjournment.

ARTICLE NINE
FUNDS

9.01 Funds will be disbursed only as directed by the Executive Board. All checks shall bear the signature of either the Treasurer or President.

9.02 A Treasurer report will be rendered during the business portion of each regular meeting, and at other times when required by the President or Executive Board.

9.03 Audit Committee. This committee, appointed by the President, shall audit the financial records of the society after an election of new officers and before the regular meeting in January of the next calendar year. If the Treasurer changes during a term, an additional audit shall take place before the new Treasurer takes office.
9.04 The Executive Board may accept any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for general purposes of the society or for special projects and memorials.

ARTICLE TEN
AMENDMENTS

10.01 These by-laws may be altered, amended, or repealed by majority vote of the society during any regular or special meeting, provided the amendment has been proposed in writing at a meeting immediately preceding the meeting at which the vote is taken.

These by-laws supersede all by-laws, amendments, and revisions to date:

Date Adopted: November 19, 2019

President: Judy K. Taylor