



Bylaws of Write by the Rails

Article I

Name

Write by the Rails (WbtR), the Prince William Chapter of the Virginia Writers Club.

Article II

Purpose, Values, and Goals

Section 1. Purpose. Write by the Rails is an initiative by individual writer members of the Prince William Arts Council to raise the profile of the local literary community and explore ways writers can nurture, cultivate and help that community grow.

Section 2. Values. The WbtR's core values are as follows:

- **Integrity.** WbtR credibility rests on a foundation of personal and professional ethical standards that include accountability, transparency, and effective management.
- **Tolerance.** WbtR is an inclusive organization that welcomes members without discrimination of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, national origin or disability. WbtR accepts, recognizes, and fosters a diversity of intellectual and artistic written expression.
- **Respect.** WbtR cultivates an atmosphere of mutual respect for individuals and organizations within WbtR and with those external to the organization.
- **Enthusiasm.** WbtR is passionate about the process of creating and propagating the written word and encourages others to share this passion. WbtR, officers, chapters and members act in concert to meet common goals.

Section 3. Goals. WbtR goals are as follow:

- To foster literary talent and achievement by providing channels of encouragement, opportunity, and learning.
- To build and sustain a positive image that enhances our partnerships and elevates our influence with public and private like-minded organizations and with government bodies concerned with the literary arts.
- To increase membership by establishing viable programs that attract writers, corporate sponsorship, and other champions of the literary arts.
- To develop and maintain management practices and controls that promote efficient and effective operation of the WbtR.

Article III Membership

Section 1. Eligibility. Membership is open to published and unpublished writers affiliated with Manassas, Manassas Park and Prince William County regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, national origin, or disability.

Membership in the Virginia Writers Club is NOT a requirement for chapter membership, but is encouraged to widen the scope of the individual's knowledge and reach of their art and marketing abilities.

However, to meet the requirements to be a chapter of the Virginia Writers Club, at least FIVE chapter members must be active members of the Virginia Writers Club.

Section 2. Membership Categories. The categories are individual member and affiliate.

- **Individual Member.** Eligibility for this category includes candidates who may have (a) written a book, play, movie, or other script, which has been published, produced, or broadcast; (b) edited a published anthology, literary journal, magazine, or newspaper; (c) written and sold to a magazine, newspaper, book publisher, or other communication media, two poems, or one short story, or an article; or (d) who aspire or wish to achieve the aforementioned. Eligibility for this category is also open to individuals, organizations, associations, institutions, foundations, and other groups who have a vested interest in and goals in common with the WbtR.
- **Student Member.** Full time student (10 credit hours or more)

Section 3. Becoming a Member. Individuals and students shall apply for membership by completing a WbtR membership application. The Executive Director or Chapter Development Chairman of the WbtR, and the Membership Committee, will review the application, determine eligibility, and assign appropriate membership category.

Section 4. Voting Rights. Only the WbtR individual members in good standing may elect Officers and vote on membership matters.

Section 5. Membership Termination. A individual's membership may be terminated by resignation, non-payment of dues, or expulsion by the Officers for just cause. In the latter case, charges must be presented in writing to the member involved. The member has the right to contest the decision provided a written request is received by the Officers no less than thirty (30) days prior to the next regularly scheduled Officers meeting. Terminated members forfeit all dues paid.

Article IV Officers

Section 1. Officers. Officers are chapter president, vice president, secretary and treasurer.

Section 2. Elections and Terms. Officers serve one-year terms, beginning in December. Officers will conduct monthly meetings and the normal business of the chapter. Any activities (meet ups, open mics, book signing events, workshops, production of an anthology, participation in Arts Alive! or other arts council events) outside of monthly meetings will be delegated to volunteers.

Any of the FIVE chapter members who are also Virginia Writers Club members will be called on to represent the chapter at quarterly meetings of the Virginia Writers Club.

Section 3. Removal. Any WbtR officer may be removed at any time by a simple majority vote of the BOG, provided that the affected officer has received written notice of that intention ten (10) days prior to the Officers's meeting; and has had the opportunity to appear before the Officers at that meeting.

Section 4. Vacancies. By a simple majority vote, the Officers may fill vacancies for WbtR offices occurring between regular elections.

Article V Meetings

Section 1. Monthly Meetings. Chapter meetings will be held monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the Month at 7pm.

Section 2. Annual Meeting. The December meeting will constitute an annual membership meeting and will include election of officers. Conduct of business requires a quorum of at least five members.

Section 3. Other Meetings. Other meetings may be called by the President or at the request of a simple majority of the Officers.

Section 4. Notice. The membership shall be given at least thirty (30) days notice of the annual meeting and fifteen (15) days notice of other meetings.

Section 5. President. The President, as the executive head of the VWC, under the general direction of the Officers, shall manage the VWC. The President shall call the meetings and preside over them as well as general meetings of the members. With the approval of the Officers, the President may appoint standing and special committees; and shall be by virtue of office a member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee. Additionally, with Officers approval, the President:

- May appoint members to advisory positions, including, but not limited to, Parliamentarian and Community Liaison Representative

- Shall have full website editing privileges, excluding administrative privileges.
- Shall be responsible for his or her personal remarks published in any official the WbtR document or on the WbtR website, including monitoring the WbtR homepage ensuring accuracy as to the WbtR policies and standards.
- Shall monitor, respond to, or forward for action, emails sent to the assigned the WbtR President's email account.
- Shall be responsible for the review and update of his or her information for the digital archives and for the website.

Section 6. Vice President. The First Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in case of absence or vacancy; and will chair the Program Committee.

Additionally, the Vice President:

- Shall recommend for approval by the President the meeting locations as well as those of the general membership.
- Shall monitor, respond to, or forward for action, emails sent to the assigned Vice President's email account.
- Shall be responsible for the review and update of his or her information for the digital archives and for the website.
- Shall serve as the WbtR's Registered Agent.
- Shall chair both the Membership Development Committee and the Finance Committee.
- Shall assist the Treasurer with budget and financial reports.
- Shall chair the annual Audit Committee including review and analysis of the WbtR financial records for accuracy, ways to save money, and eliminate efficiency.
- Shall be responsible for the review and update of his or her information for the digital archives and for the website.

Section 7. Recording Secretary. The Secretary shall keep a record of all regular and special meetings and members; and shall have custody, for eventual transfer to the Treasurer, for archival purposes, of all records gathered during his or her tenure. These include, but are not limited to, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, membership roster, list of Officers and Governors (including terms of office). The Secretary shall monitor, respond to, or forward for action, emails sent to the assigned Secretary's email account. The Recording Secretary is responsible for the review and update of his or her information for the digital archives and for the website.

Section 8. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep the accounts of the WbtR and provide a summary report at meetings and general membership. At the last meeting of the year, the Treasurer will make a full report on the WbtR's finances. The books of the Treasurer shall be readily available for audit as required by the WbtR Bylaws. The duties of Treasurer shall be as follow:

- Pay all bills as authorized by the President.
- Record dues payments.
- Make timely bank deposits.

- Prepare any required filings with the IRS, Virginia Department of Taxation, and State Corporation Commission.
- Ensure compliance with all federal and state financial and records retention laws and regulations.
- Explore opportunities, and prepare proposals to obtain appropriate federal and local grant funding.
- Evaluate and record all new member applications and to include forwarding updated membership information to the Secretary and Executive Director.
- Maintain and monitor the VWC online payment account with full administrative authority and responsibility for the VWC online payment account.
- Maintain the membership roster including dues status.
- Arrange for transference of appropriate the VWC records to the archives annually.

The Treasurer shall have Membership and Events management privileges. The Treasurer shall monitor, respond to, or forward for action, emails sent to the assigned Treasurer's email account. It shall be the Treasurer's responsibility to update his or her information for the digital archives and for the website.

Section 9. General Responsibilities. Officers are expected to attend Board meetings; publish and monitor an email address through which the WbtR-related messages can pass; provide assistance to individuals interested in the WbtR; and direct specific inquiries to the appropriate Officer, or committee Chair responsible for relevant program areas.

Article VI

Fiscal Year and Dues

Section 1. Fiscal year. The fiscal year of the WbtR shall be January 1 through December 31 (the calendar year).

Section 2. Dues. The amount of members' annual dues shall be determined by the Officers. All dues shall be payable by the first day of the New Year (or January 1). For new members joining after the beginning of the New Year, the amount of dues charged and the effective coverage period of these dues shall be determined by the Officers and published in the Standing Rules.

Section 3. Announcement of Dues. The first announcement of dues for an upcoming year shall be published on the WbtR website in the fourth (4th) quarter of the then-current calendar year. A second notice will be sent at the end of January, in the New Year, to delinquents. This will serve as final notice. Failure to pay dues within thirty (30) days of the final notice will result in dropped membership.

Section 4. Reinstatement. Members may be reinstated upon payment of delinquent dues during the current year.

Section 5. Donations & Grants. Any donations or income to this chapter will be collected in a bank account held by the treasurer. If the chapter disbands, any collected funds will be donated to the Virginia Writers Club.

Article VII

Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order. The monthly meetings of this chapter are guided by informal Bob's Rules of Order.

Article VIII

Relationship to the Virginia Writers Club

To meet the requirements to be a chapter of the Virginia Writers Club, at least FIVE chapter members must be active members of the Virginia Writers Club, one of whom will be the President. Any of those FIVE members will be called on to represent the chapter at quarterly meetings of the Virginia Writers Club.

Article IX

Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at any regular meeting, providing notice of the changes are given to members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.