



Bylaws of Write by the Rails

Article I

Name

The name of this organization is Write by the Rails (WbtR). It is the Prince William County chapter of the Virginia Writers Club.

Article II

Purpose, Values, and Goals

Section 1. Purpose. Write by the Rails (WbtR) is a non-profit organization formed to raise the profile of the local literary community, to nurture and educate writers in the art, craft, and business of writing, and to help that community grow in Prince William County and the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.

Write by the Rails is an initiative by individual writers in Prince William County, the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park to raise the profile of the local literary community and explore ways writers can nurture, cultivate and help that community grow.

The governing body is the Board of Directors who adhere to these Bylaws.

Section 2. Values. Write by the Rails' 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. From time to time work displayed and published and spoken at WbtR sponsored events may be required to be PG rated.
- **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 follows:

- 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 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, however, is encouraged in order 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 student.

- **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 Board of Directors 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. Membership Termination. An individual or student membership may be terminated by resignation, non-payment of dues, or expulsion by the Board of Directors 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 Board of Directors no less than thirty (30) days prior to the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors' meeting. Terminated members forfeit all dues paid.

Article IV Officers

Section 1. Officers. Officers are chapter president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The Officers serve as the governing body.

Section 2. Elections and Terms. Officers serve two-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 community events, or other writing related events) outside of monthly meetings may be delegated to volunteers. President and Secretary are elected in even-numbered years. Vice-President and Treasurer are elected in odd-numbered years.

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

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

Section 5. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors are the chapter officers (president, vice president, secretary and treasurer) with the committee chairman and individuals that serve as appointed by the Officers.

The Officers may at their pleasure appoint and disband ad-hoc committees, members to serve on committees, committee chairman and individuals to assist in performance of the business of WbtR. These persons shall not be part of the governing body. (Examples would be Webmaster, Editor of Anthology to name a few.)

Article V Meetings

Section 1. Monthly Meetings. Chapter meetings will be held monthly at a time and date set by the Board, generally the second Saturday of each month.

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 Board of Directors.

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 WbtR under the general direction of the Officers, shall manage WbtR. 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 by virtue of office be 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 including administrative privileges.
- Shall be responsible for his or her personal remarks published in any official WbtR document or on the WbtR website, including monitoring the WbtR homepage to ensure accuracy as to WbtR policies and standards.
- Shall monitor, respond to, or forward for action, emails sent to 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 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 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 WbtR financial records for accuracy, ways to save money, and to promote 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 of all records gathered during his or her tenure for eventual transfer to the Treasurer for archival purposes.

- These records 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 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 follows:

- Records and pay all bills via bank account or PayPal as authorized in writing by a second Board Member that is not receiving payment from the organization for goods or services.
- Record all payments received via PayPal, by check, or cash, payments to WbtR will be documented as received by two board members, preferably one being the treasurer.
- 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 President.
- Maintain and monitor WbtR online payment account with full administrative authority and responsibility for WbtR online payment account.
- Maintain the membership roster including dues status.
- Arrange for transference of appropriate WbtR records to their successor.
- Maintains up to date treasurers' records in real time and in the archives (currently WbtR Google Drive).

. 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 WbtR-related messages can pass; provide assistance to individuals interested in WbtR; and direct specific inquiries to the appropriate Officer, or committee Chair responsible for relevant program areas.

Article VI

Publications by WbtR

Section 1: The WbtR reserves the right to edit all submitted and prepared works for publication in print, displays, on-line, displays and all other manner of club events and publications as needed.

Fiscal Year and Dues

Section 1. Fiscal year. The fiscal year of 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 (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 Officer and published on the Website and via email notification.

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 to those with delinquent accounts at the end of January in the New Year. 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.

Article VII Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order. The monthly meetings of this chapter are guided by Robert's Rules of Order, the most recent edition, when there is no conflict with these Bylaws.

Article VIII Relationship to the Virginia Writers Club

To meet the requirements of a chapter of the Virginia Writers Club, at least five (5) WbtR members must be active members of the Virginia Writers Club, one of whom will be the President. Any of those five (5) members will be called on to represent the chapter at quarterly meetings of the Virginia Writers Club.

Article IX Use and Distribution of Assets

Section 1. Write by the Rails is organized exclusively for charitable literary purposes described in Article I. Section 1 of these Bylaws, under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. As such:

- No part of the net earnings of WbtR shall go to the benefit of or be distributed to its members, officers, or other private persons, except as authorized by the Board of Directors to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered or as reimbursement for expenses incurred for the benefit of the membership in furtherance of the purposes described.

- No portion of WbtR assets or activities shall be used in an attempt to influence legislation. WbtR shall not participate to any extent in a political campaign for or against any candidate for public office.

Section 2. Distribution of assets upon dissolution. Upon dissolution of WbtR, assets shall be donated to the Virginia Writers Club, a 501(c)(3) organization.

**Article X
Amendments**

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

These Bylaws have been approved by membership as described in Article X.

Print Name President, WbtR	Signature	Date

Print Name Vice President, WbtR	Signature	Date