



Bylaws

Blacks In Government

Huntsville-Madison
County Chapter

19 May 2016

Contents

ARTICLE I. - NAME	3
ARTICLE II. - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	3
ARTICLE III. - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION	3
ARTICLE IV. - MEMBERSHIP	4
ARTICLE V. - DUTIES OF OFFICERS, APPOINTMENTS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES	5
ARTICLE VI. - MEETINGS AND QUORUMS	8
ARTICLE VII. - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS	8
ARTICLE VIII. - RESIGNATION, EXPULSION, SUSPENSION, REMOVAL, OR VACANCIES	9
ARTICLE IX. CHAPTER YEAR REQUIREMENTS	10
ARTICLE X. - DUES AND ASSESSMENTS.....	10
ARTICLE XI. - RULES OF PROCEDURE.....	11
ARTICLE XII. - INCORPORATION	11
ARTICLE XIII. - LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY.....	11
ARTICLE XIV. - AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS.....	11
ARTICLE XV. - RATIFICATION.....	12

ARTICLE I. - NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Huntsville-Madison County Chapter of Blacks in Government (BIG).

Section 2. The seal of the organization shall be in the form of two concentric circles and shall bear the words "Blacks in Government" inscribed in the space between the inner and outer circle and/or the letters "BIG" inscribed in the space inside the inner circle.

ARTICLE II. - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Section 1. To be an advocate of equal opportunity for blacks in government.

Section 2. To eliminate practices of racism and racial discrimination against blacks in government.

Section 3. To promote professionalism among blacks in government.

Section 4. To develop and promote programs which will enhance ethnic pride and educational opportunities for blacks in government.

Section 5. To establish a mechanism for the gathering and dissemination of information to blacks in government.

Section 6. To provide a non-partisan platform on major issues of local, regional, and national significance that affect blacks in government.

ARTICLE III. - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION

Section 1. Chapter Organization. The Chapter shall consist of individuals employed by local, state, and federal agencies located in Huntsville-Madison County, Alabama.

Section 2. The Chapter shall consist of persons regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, political affiliation, marital status, or disability who have met the membership requirements prescribed herein.

Section 3. Chapter Officers. The Chapter's officers shall be elected by the regular members in good standing at a regular meeting. The elected officers shall include the President, Executive Vice President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer.

Section 4. Regional Council

- a. This Chapter shall belong to the Region IV Council of Blacks in Government in accordance with the National Constitution.
- b. Regional Representatives. Two (2) elected members and the President shall be the Regional Representatives.

Section 5. National

- a. This Chapter shall be a part of the national organization and participate in national assemblies in

accordance with the National Constitution.

b. This Chapter shall submit quarterly reports to the National Office in accordance with the National Constitution and other reports as requested

ARTICLE IV. - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Individual Membership. Any person, who is in accord with the philosophy, principles, policies, and objectives of this organization and agrees to adhere to the same, may become a member of this organization by paying the annual national membership fee, provided he or she is qualified as stated herein.

Section 2. Membership Categories. There shall be three categories of individual membership: Regular, Associate, and Life. Other categories of membership may be established by the national board of directors. Individual membership in the organization at the national level is a requirement for chapter membership.

a. Regular Membership

- 1) Any employee or retiree of the federal, state, or local government who is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same may become a regular member of this organization by paying the national, regional, and chapter membership dues.
- 2) Regular members shall be afforded all privileges of membership.
- 3) Any person, who at the time of being separated without prejudice from employment by the federal, state, or local government was a regular member in good standing, is eligible for regular membership.
- 4) Any person, who at the time of being separated with prejudice from employment by the federal, state, or local government and such separation is grieved and that person is a regular member in good standing, is eligible for continued regular membership in this organization until such grievance is resolved.

b. Associate Membership

- 1) Any person, who is not eligible for regular membership and is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become an associate member of this organization by paying National, Regional, and Chapter associate membership dues.
- 2) Such members shall have all the rights and privileges of membership, except those of voting and holding elective office.

c. Life Membership

Any person, who is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become a life member of Blacks in Government with the consent of the national board of directors and by paying the life membership fee. Life members must be financial with the chapter and region in order to vote and hold office at the chapter and regional level.

Section 3. Honorary Chapter Status. Chapter members may recommend persons for honorary membership status with the approval of the chapter. The chapter pays the national and regional dues for a member to be in such a status.

- 1) Any person, who is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of Blacks In Government and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become an honorary member of this chapter.
- 2) Such members shall have all rights and privileges of membership based on the category of membership they meet.

ARTICLE V. - DUTIES OF OFFICERS, APPOINTMENTS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. The executive committee shall consist of the elected officers, the Parliamentarian, Historian, Chaplain, Immediate Past President, and Chairs of Standing Committees. The Parliamentarian, Historian, Chaplain, Immediate Past President, and Standing Committee Chairs are non-voting members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall implement the policies established by the members and shall implement the program of the chapter. The Executive Committee shall transfer routine business between meetings and act in emergency situations; receive and review reports of and receive and pass on matters brought to its attention by the President.

Section 2. Officers

- a. **President.** The President shall preside as Chairperson of the Executive Committee and can vote. Also, the President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except Election, Finance, and Nominating Committees. In addition, the President shall sign, and guide the implementation of policies that have been approved by the Executive Committee; shall recommend to the Executive Committee changes in policies and procedures; shall countersign, with the Treasurer, checks drawn on the chapter treasury; shall provide general guidance over the efforts of the other officers; shall require reports on activities of the committees not directly elected, i.e., Nominating and Election; and shall perform such functions and exercise such other authorities as may be voted by the Executive Committee. The President shall be one of the Chapter Regional Representatives. No later than thirty (30) days after installation, the President shall call an Executive Committee Meeting.
- b. **Executive Vice President.** Executive Vice President shall coordinate and monitor actions of the following standing committees: Program, Membership and Finance. The Executive Vice President shall oversee the tracking of all action items of the Executive Committee and prepare a report on actions to the General Membership; shall in the event of disability of the President, perform all the duties and functions of the office of the President; including counter-signing with the Treasurer all checks for disbursement of chapter funds; shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President.
- c. **Vice President.** The Vice President shall coordinate and monitor actions of the standing committees: Publicity, Bylaws, Training, Affirmative Employment/Equal Employment Opportunity and Awards; shall ensure that these committees develop and implement an action plan to carry out their responsibilities; shall in the absence or in the event of disability of the Executive Vice President, perform all duties and functions of the Executive Vice President; shall perform all the duties and functions of the President in the absence or disability of the President and Executive Vice President; including counter-signing with the Treasurer all checks for disbursement of chapter funds.
- d. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall maintain a record of all general chapter membership meetings; shall produce such records upon request of any member in good standing; shall keep the chapter seal; shall receive copies of all correspondence pertinent to the chapter. Routine correspondence can be routed if requested. The Secretary shall report on attendance for each meeting.

- e. Assistant Secretary. The Assistant Secretary shall be responsible for notification of officers and Executive Committee Members of meetings and perform the duties and functions of the Secretary during the absence of the latter; shall maintain a record of all Executive Committee Meetings. In the absence of the Assistant Secretary, these duties will be performed by the Secretary.
- f. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the chapter; maintain bookkeeping records; shall receive and bank all monies of the chapter; shall countersign with the President or Vice President all checks for the disbursement of chapter funds in accordance with the budget approved by the general membership or at the direction of the Executive Committee and shall provide financial statements as often as required; shall be an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall prepare a report for Chapter and Executive Committee Meetings.
- g. Assistant Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer shall ensure that all chapter members are financial prior to voting at chapter meetings and elections; shall assist the Treasurer with collection of funds and developing written financial reports and in the absence of the Treasurer, shall perform all of the duties of the Treasurer.

Section 3. Standing Committees, Special Committees, and Appointments

- a. Standing committees shall consist of a chair and shall have no fewer than three (3) members for each standing committee.
- b. The President shall appoint the chairperson of each of these committees for that President's term.
- c. All reports and recommendations generated by a standing committee shall be submitted to the Executive Committee in writing. The chair or a representative of each committee shall be present to make a report at the Executive Committee Meeting; shall submit a copy of the written report to the expenditures for and proceeds from programs/projects; shall be present at the regular membership meeting, and if requested by the President, give a report.
- d. The standing committees shall submit an annual plan and committee member roster to the Secretary and Executive Committee within sixty (60) days of appointment. Any budget shall be submitted to the Finance Committee within the time frame requested.
- e. The President may recall or be directed to recall any Chair by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Executive Committee.
- f. The standing committees shall include, but not be limited to:

- Finance
- Training
- Membership
- Program
- Publicity and Public Relations
- Bylaws
- Awards
- Affirmative Employment/Equal Employment Opportunity

- 1) Finance. The Finance Committee shall develop the chapter's yearly budget to be submitted in November for the next fiscal year; shall develop and implement ways and means to raise funds with Executive Committee approval; shall perform a financial review of the chapter's financial records during the thirty (30) days prior to the end of the fiscal year (December 31st), and recommend any changes in the financial operations of the chapter to the membership. Should the committee not be able to perform the financial review in a timely manner, it will be

responsible for obtaining the services of a person outside the Chapter. All checks shall be signed by at least two persons of the four persons designated to sign checks. One of the signers shall be the Treasurer or the Assistant Treasurer. No officers can be members of this committee when performing the financial review function.

- 2) **Training.** The Training Committee shall plan and implement the chapter's Professional Development Seminar (PDS) to be held each year in accordance with appropriate chapter operating procedures; shall revise/update the standard operating procedure for the PDS as needed.
- 3) **Membership.** The Membership Committee shall develop and implement a comprehensive membership drive, which will be directed to all levels of government employees and shall implement ways to recruit associate members from industry. The committee shall address chapter recruitment and accountability of all chapter members. The Membership Chair shall collect membership applications and dues and forward them to the national office.
- 4) **Program.** The Program Committee shall develop and implement necessary programs and requirements to fulfill the goals and objectives of the chapter. All programs pursued by this committee must be approved by the Executive Committee and/or General Membership and certified feasible by the Finance Committee.
- 5) **Publicity and Public Relations.** The Publicity and Public Relations Committee shall maintain a publicity and public relations program within the chapter and the general public; shall generate media coverage of all chapter events; issue news releases, manage and maintain the Chapter's Website, publicize and project a positive image of the chapter and shall provide assistance as requested to the newsletter editor in publishing the chapter newsletter.
- 6) **Bylaws.** The Bylaws Committee is responsible for periodic review of chapter bylaws to recommend amendments, along with rationale for changes, where appropriate; shall render constitutional opinion to the membership; shall update chapter bylaws to conform to any changes in national bylaws or regional bylaws; shall be responsible for incorporating all approved amendments into the chapter bylaws and distribute them to the membership within thirty (30) days of the amendment.
- 7) **Awards.** The Awards Committee is responsible for establishing and maintaining a listing of local, state, regional, national, agency, community, etc., awards, including qualifications and deadlines for application; for apprising the chapter of these awards in time for a chapter nomination to be made; for establishing and maintaining a file of members who have outstanding qualifications for the various awards; for establishing and managing the chapter's award program; and for submitting data nominating the chapter for any regional and national awards when applicable.
- 8) **Affirmative Employment/Equal Opportunity (AE/EEO).** The committee shall direct the chapter's Affirmative Employment/Equal Employment Opportunity Program. The committee shall assist members in evaluating their agency/activity plans, particularly in relation to equal opportunity for blacks and make recommendations to members for improvement of their agency plans; develop a cadre of BIG members who may serve as consultants on affirmative action, personnel grievances, adverse actions, and discrimination complaints; offer assistance to EEO Officers to attain a balanced work force of qualified employees who are treated non-discriminately when necessary; respond to inquiries for advice or assistance in relation to affirmative action or discrimination complaints; provide guidance and support to members involved in individual discrimination complaints, grievances, appeals, or comparable actions; assure training is

conducted annually on affirmative action and discrimination complaints. The committee should request professional advice from EEO personnel and from BIG national leadership as necessary.

g. Special Committees

- 1) Select or Ad Hoc Committees may be established at the discretion of the President with approval of the Executive Committee to meet chapter objectives.
- 2) Select or Ad Hoc Committees shall serve at the discretion of the president or until the purpose which they were established has been accomplished.

h. Appointments

- 1) Parliamentarian (optional). The Parliamentarian shall give parliamentary opinions upon request and shall serve as the principal advisor to the President, the officers, and the committee chairpersons regarding parliamentary questions.
- 2) Historian. The Historian shall prepare a narrative account of the chapter activities which, when approved by the Executive Committee, will become a permanent part of the chapter's official history, shall have custody of any collection of books or other written or printed material relating to the chapter.
- 3) Chaplain. The Chaplain shall provide invocations at all chapter functions as necessary; ensure that communications of concern/sympathy is expressed to chapter members and their family members during a time of loss or illness in accordance with chapter policy.

ARTICLE VI. - MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

Section 1. Regular Meetings. Regular meetings shall be held bi-monthly at a time and place determined by the Executive Committee or general membership. The President shall ensure that the schedule of meetings be published. The quorum for regular meetings shall be at least four (4) members and one (1) officer to conduct official business.

Section 2. Executive Committee Meeting. Executive Committee meetings shall be held at least monthly; Teleconference and/or email are appropriate meeting vehicles. Executive Committee meetings can be changed or postponed by the President. The Secretary must notify all Executive Committee members within two (2) days of a rescheduled or postponed meeting. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. Special Meeting. The President, a majority of the Executive Committee, or any five (5) regular members may call special meetings of the membership. Meeting requests must be submitted to the President, a majority of the Executive Committee, or all financial members at least five (5) days prior to meeting date. The quorum of a special meeting shall be at least four (4) members and one (1) officer to conduct official business.

ARTICLE VII. - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nomination and Election Committees. The Nomination Committee, consisting of three (3) primary and one (1) alternate member, and the Election Committee, consisting of three (3) members, shall be elected by the general membership in September. The committees shall follow procedures as stated in the chapter Policy and Procedures Manual.

Section 2. Nominations. Nominations for chapter officers shall be submitted to the Nomination Committee at least forty-five (45) days prior to the date of election or made from the floor at the general membership

meeting held for the election of officers. The committee shall distribute a list of all known candidates for office(s) at least two (2) weeks prior to the election and will accept nominations from the floor.

Section 3. The Nomination Committee shall present the slate of nominees for all positions to the general membership prior to the election.

Section 4. Elections. Chapter elections shall be held in the November meeting each year with a two (2) week written notice to chapter members. The officers shall be elected by secret ballot and by a simple majority. Any regular member in financial status with the chapter and national shall be eligible to nominate, vote, and hold office with the exception of the office of President and Vice President as stated in Section 8. All newly elected officers shall be installed in the January meeting.

Section 5. The Election Committee will coordinate with the Assistant Treasurer to ensure that only regular members in financial status are provided a ballot, will collect/tally votes, and report the election results to the general membership.

Section 6. The Assistant Treasurer will read a list of members certified to vote in chapter elections on the day of the election.

Section 7. Term of Office. All officers shall be elected to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected. Officers shall serve no more than two (2) two-year terms or four (4) consecutive years in the same office. However, they shall be eligible for election to all other offices. Each selected officer shall maintain files and records and shall deliver them to his/her successor upon vacating his/her office.

Section 8. Officer Qualifications. Candidates for the office of President shall have served as a member of the Executive Committee for at least two years. Candidates for Executive Vice President and Vice President shall have been a financial member of a BIG chapter for at least one year.

Section 9. Chapter Delegates and Representatives. The chapter shall annually elect chapter members to be delegates to the annual National Delegates Assembly, in accordance with the scale of the national organization. Regional representatives shall be elected in March and September each year to the Regional Council. When a member of this chapter serves as an officer of Region IV Regional Council, that member shall automatically, without further requirement for nomination, be elected to serve as a representative of this chapter at all Region IV Council Meetings.

ARTICLE VIII. - RESIGNATION, EXPULSION, SUSPENSION, REMOVAL, OR VACANCIES

Section 1. Any officer wishing to resign from office shall submit his/her resignation in writing to the President, who shall present it to the Executive Committee.

Section 2. In the event of the resignation, death, or incapacitation of the President, the Executive Vice President shall succeed to the President's duties and responsibilities.

Section 3. Vacancy. Any vacancy, with the exception of the vacancy defined in Section 2, shall be filled by a special election at a general membership meeting following the announcement of the vacancy and notification of the membership. Nominations may be made from the floor and the election process will be conducted in accordance with Article VII, Sections 4, 5, and 6.

Section 4. Expulsions, Suspensions, and Removal

- a. Any officer or member may be temporarily expelled/suspended/removed after due process in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws with at least a 2/3 vote of the general membership at a special meeting held for the purpose. If either part is dissatisfied with the decision rendered,

they may appeal within ten (10) calendar days to the next higher level, i. e. Region IV Council, and lastly to the Board of Directors.

- b. Notice of such intended action shall be given to the general membership and the officer/or member concerned in writing by registered mail, at least twenty (20) days prior to the conduct of such a meeting. The officer/member shall be permitted to make presentation verbally or in writing on their own behalf and/or select an advocate and witnesses, but may not vote on the matter being considered. The complainant shall be permitted to make a presentation, but may not vote on the matter being considered.
- c. All complaints filed at the inappropriate organizational level shall be forwarded to the appropriate body for consideration and resolution.

Section 5. Grounds for Disciplinary Action. Disciplinary actions may be brought against a chapter officer or member who is guilty of conduct not in accord with the principles, aims, and purposes of Blacks in Government as set forth in these bylaws, or is guilty of conduct that is not in the best interest of Blacks in Government.

- a. **Complaints.** A complaint against a chapter member or officer may be initiated by any three (3) members of the chapter and must be in writing and signed by such members and transmitted to the Chapter President. Upon receipt thereof, the President shall forward a copy of the complaint by registered mail to the chapter member or officer involved at the last address on file. The chapter member or officer shall have fifteen (15) calendar days from date of receipt of charges to answer in writing.
- b. The Executive Committee reserves the right to hear and act upon the charges and the chapter member or officer is entitled to a hearing before the Executive Committee if desired. The chapter member or officer may elect to have the decision made ex-parte on the basis of the complaint and the answer. The Executive Committee may appoint a special committee to hear the matter.

ARTICLE IX. CHAPTER YEAR REQUIREMENTS

Section 1. Chapter Memberships. The Chapter must maintain at least ten (10) active members in order to remain in active status with the national organization.

Section 2. Chapter Reporting. The Chapter shall file written reports with the National Board of Directors and the Regional Council as requested. Other reports may be submitted as often as deemed necessary.

Section 3. The Regional Council has the authority to require copies of all reports and correspondence sent to the National Office.

Section 4. Chapter Fiscal Year. The fiscal year shall be from January 1st to December 31st inclusive.

ARTICLE X. - DUES AND ASSESSMENTS

Section 1. Annual dues of the chapter shall not change unless recommended by the Finance Committee and adopted by the body. Chapter dues for associate members shall be \$10.00 less than for regular members. Chapter dues shall include local, regional, and national dues.

Section 2. Annual chapter membership renewal is due and payable to the chapter by the member's anniversary date. Delinquent members shall be placed on inactive status immediately after the expiration of their anniversary date.

Section 3. The chapter will make reasonable assessments on its members to defray the costs of activities of the chapter as may be agreed upon by its members, provided that such monies shall be exclusively for the purpose to implement the objectives of this chapter.

ARTICLE XI. - RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rules of procedures as laid down in Roberts Rules of Order; Newly Revised shall govern the chapter, except as otherwise provided herein.

ARTICLE XII. - INCORPORATION

The Huntsville-Madison County Chapter is a member of the National Organization of Blacks in Government, which is incorporated as a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation under the appropriate laws of the District of Columbia.

ARTICLE XIII. - LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY

Section 1. Chapter Fiscal Responsibility. No member of the chapter shall have authority or power to impose or incur financial liability on the part of the Chapter without the express authorization of the Executive Committee in writing and obtained in advance.

Section 2. Chapter Legal Corporate Responsibility. The National Organization nor the Regional Council, other chapters, officers, or members of this Chapter shall have the authority to legally obligate this Chapter without the express authorization of the Executive Committee or as delegated in these bylaws. No officer or member of this chapter shall be deemed legally liable for actions taken during the performance of duties on behalf of the Chapter so long as said actions are consonant with the honesty, integrity, goals, and objectives of this Chapter as determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 3. There shall be no general distribution of monetary or property assets to members or officers of the Chapter, and all gains realized shall be devoted solely to the implementation of the objectives of the Chapter. No member or officer shall be personally liable to the creditors of the Chapter for an indebtedness of liability, and any and all creditors shall look only to the assets of the Chapter for payment.

Section 4. In the event of dissolution of this Chapter, its property shall be forwarded to the Regional Council. The assets of the Chapter shall in no event be distributed to any of its members or officers.

ARTICLE XIV. - AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of chapter members present and eligible to vote at a regular meeting provided quorum requirements are adhered to. An annual call to submit amendments to the bylaws will be made, with the requirement that proposed amendments be submitted in writing. The Bylaws Committee will review the bylaws and make recommendations in accordance with the Chapter Policy and Procedures Manual. Copies of the proposed amendments shall be provided to the member no later than ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is voted on. The amendment shall become effective upon approval by the body. Amendments made to these bylaws shall be provided to all chapter members electronically or by mail. No article or section of these bylaws shall conflict with those of the National Organization.

ARTICLE XV. - RATIFICATION

These bylaws became effective on ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members eligible to vote at a meeting of the Huntsville-Madison County Chapter held in Huntsville, Alabama on 19 May 2016 and as approved by the National Board of Directors. This ratification superseded the previous bylaws, which were ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present at the meeting held on 22 Feb 2011

Ronnie D Hawkins

Ronnie Hawkins, President

Date: 19 May 16

Arlene Erskine

Arlene Erskine, Secretary

Date: 19 May 2016

Mary Peoples

Regional Director, Region IV

Date 23 May 16