

# Arlington Business and Civic Circle By-Laws

Adopted December 9, 2002

Revised March 2007

## 1. Name

- a. The organization shall be called **Arlington Business and Civic Circle** (ABCC)

## 2. Purpose

- a. Understand and promote the businesses of other members;
- b. Enhance business skills and knowledge;
- c. Expand members' professional networks to provide better service to our clients.
- d. Make a contribution to our communities with commitments of time and/or money.

## 3. Definitions

- a. Various terms are used throughout this document and are defined in the sections indicated below:
  - i. Active Member..... Section 4.b.
  - ii. Executive Committee..... Section 6.a.
  - iii. Inactive Member ..... Section 4.b.
  - iv. Membership Committee ..... Section 6.h.
  - v. Qualified Referral..... Section 4.b.viii.
  - vi. Quorum Vote ..... Section 8.c.

## 4. Membership Standards

- a. Applicants / Membership Process
  - i. There shall be only one member per professional category. Each member may represent only one category.
  - ii. If an applicant presents a potential category conflict with an Active Member, the Membership Committee will work with the applicant and Active Member to attempt to resolve the conflict before deciding on the status of the applicant.
  - iii. Guests may attend three meetings before they are required to submit an application for membership.
  - iv. Applications for membership will be submitted to the Membership Committee for review and approval. The Membership Committee should grant membership to individuals who will fulfill their membership responsibilities.
  - v. A membership is assigned to an individual, not the company they represent. A member may change the professional category they represent as long as the change does not create a category conflict with another member.
- b. Ongoing Membership Standards
  - i. Membership shall be continuous as long as the member is considered an Active Member, as described below.
  - ii. Active participation in the group is critical to the success of each member and the group as a whole. Members are expected to attend all group meetings. Exceptions can be granted for illness, unexpected family obligations or vacations.
  - iii. Members may designate other individuals within their company to attend on a permanent, temporary or alternating basis.
  - iv. Members may designate a substitute to participate on their behalf if they are unable to attend a meeting. Members who secure a substitute (who is not a member themselves) will not be counted as absent.
  - v. Members, who are absent for three consecutive meetings, or for five of the previous ten meetings, will be considered Inactive Members.
  - vi. Inactive Members cannot protect their professional category within the group and may not renew their membership unless the Membership Committee grants an exception.
  - vii. Members are expected to learn about other members' businesses, remain aware of potential opportunities for other members and give Qualified Referrals.

## Arlington Business and Civic Circle By-Laws

Adopted December 9, 2002

Revised March 2007

- viii. A member gives a Qualified Referral when they:
  - 1. Connect another member to an individual or business that has expressed a need for their product or service;
  - 2. Connect another member to an individual that could refer business to the member; or
  - 3. Bring a guest to a meeting
- ix. Members are expected to help keep the group successful and growing by promoting the group, volunteering for leadership or committee assignments, lending expertise or general assistance, etc.
- x. Members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner within the group and especially with referrals passed from another member. High quality service to mutual clients is critical to the ongoing success of each member and the group.
- xi. Members must respect the privacy of client information and ensure the confidentiality of mutual clients.
- c. Dispute Resolution
  - i. Disputes may arise in various areas such as (but not limited to), category definitions, quality of service, quality of referrals, etc.
  - ii. In dealing with any disputes that involve clients, any resolution should place the highest priority on maintaining the high quality service and confidentiality expected from members.
  - iii. Members are expected to first try to resolve disputes amongst themselves, as professionals.
  - iv. Any disputes that cannot be resolved between members should be referred to the Membership Committee for review and a recommendation.
  - v. Dispute resolutions proposed by the Membership Committee shall be binding on members.
  - vi. Members not satisfied by a Membership Committee resolution can appeal the decision to the full membership.

### 5. Meeting Format

- a. Meetings shall be held on Wednesday mornings, begin promptly at 7:30 a.m. and end promptly at 9:00 a.m. The membership may change the location of the meeting with a Majority Vote.
- b. The suggested meeting format is
  - i. Informal networking, welcome 7:30 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.
  - ii. Members' 60-second introductions 7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.
  - iii. Scheduled 10-minute presentation 8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
  - iv. Referrals and testimonials 8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
  - v. Officer reports 8:45 a.m. – 8:55 a.m.
  - vi. Announcements 8:55 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
- c. Members will periodically be responsible for the 10-minute presentation and may, at their discretion:
  - i. Present information about their business.
  - ii. Educate the group about a business (e.g., marketing, networking, etc.) concept you have used or recently learned; or
  - iii. Arrange for a qualified guest speaker to present information on a business concept; the guest speaker should not treat this as a sales presentation.
- d. During the last meeting of every month, the time allocated for the 10-minute presentation will be used to discuss organization business, administrative issues, civic projects, etc. This time can also be used for guest speakers from community or civic organizations.
- e. Meetings will not be held on holidays. A Quorum Vote of the membership is required to cancel regularly scheduled meetings.

## **Arlington Business and Civic Circle By-Laws**

**Adopted December 9, 2002**

Revised March 2007

- f. In case of inclement weather, meetings will follow the school-closing schedule of the Arlington County Public Schools, as reported by local media. When the County schools are closed, no meeting will be held; if County schools are opening late, members who choose not to attend will not be considered absent.

### **6. Leadership**

- a. The elected leadership shall consist of a President, Membership Coordinator, Secretary/Treasurer and Civic Coordinator. These four, plus the most recent past President, shall comprise the Executive Committee.
- b. The Executive Committee shall appoint two members, who are not part of the Executive Committee, to serve with the Membership Coordinator on the Membership Committee
- c. The President shall preside over meetings, ensuring they begin and end on time, welcome and announce visitors, and chair the Executive Committee.
- d. The Membership Coordinator shall keep a roster of all members, keep a log of attendance, track qualified referrals passed and received, preside over meetings if the President is absent, and chair the Membership Committee.
- e. The Secretary/Treasurer shall oversee the finances of the group, collect dues, make disbursements and maintain a schedule of members responsible for 10-minute presentations.
- f. The Civic Coordinator shall seek input from members on possible civic projects, research potential time and financial costs, report on active projects and recommend future projects to the membership.
- g. The Executive Committee is responsible for maintaining the viability of the group. The Executive Committee may present recommendations on issues such as (but not limited to) meeting format, membership criteria, promotion of the group, administrative functions, etc. All recommendations are subject to a Majority Vote of the membership.
- h. The Membership Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving applications for membership, resolving disputes between members, encouraging regular attendance by all members and following up with visitors.
- i. Elected leaders shall serve a term of six months.
- j. The Membership Committee is responsible for identifying members who are capable and willing to serve as elected leaders. The Membership Committee will seek input and interest from all members and present nominees to the membership at the first meetings in December and June.
- k. Nominations may also be made from the floor during the election meeting.
- l. Elections will be held on the second meetings in December and June with new officers beginning their terms at the first meetings in January and July.

### **7. Finances**

- a. Dues shall be set at \$100 per year, collected semi-annually, due January 1 and July 1 of each year.
- b. New members will be charged a pro-rated amount so that all member dues are collected at the same time. New members who join in the last month of a dues period will be charged the full semi-annual dues and their membership will extend through the upcoming dues period.
- c. Members who do not remit dues within 30 days will forfeit their membership.
- d. All expenditures over \$50 require a Majority Vote of the membership; the Executive Committee may approve expenditures under \$50.
- e. The group is not a charitable organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, and therefore may only solicit donations on behalf of other charitable organizations. No donations will be accepted directly by the group.

## **Arlington Business and Civic Circle By-Laws**

**Adopted December 9, 2002**

Revised March 2007

### **8. By-law Changes**

- a. A Majority Vote of the membership may change the organization by-laws. Proposed changes will be presented and read at two meetings prior to a vote being taken.
- b. All items that require a Majority Vote will be approved if they receive a number of votes greater than half of the number of Active Members.
- c. All items that require a Quorum Vote will be approved if they receive a number of votes greater than half of the number of Active Members in attendance at the meeting when the vote is taken. A Quorum Vote may only be taken if at least 60% of Active Members are present at the meeting when the vote is taken.

### **9. Document History**

- a. This document was originally adopted on December 9, 2002 by the founding members.
- b. Amended May 28, 2004. Paragraph 5.d. updated to reflect intended time for community speakers.
- c. Amended March 7, 2007. Paragraph 4.a.ii. updated to move category conflict resolution to the Membership Committee.