

## BY-LAWS OF THE CENTRAL TEXAS CHEROKEE TOWNSHIP

### **MISSION PURPOSE**

The Central Texas Cherokee Township (CTCT) is a community of Cherokees dedicated to Cherokee history, language, culture, heritage, tradition, and fellowship. We are a non-political, non-profit Native American organization whose members reside outside the boundaries of the Cherokee Nation and Bands. We have come together on the basis of our shared history and heritage, and out of an interest in the continuation of and a love for the Cherokee People and Nations.

It is critically important that we find innovative ways to retain Cherokee people in stronger ties of culture and responsible citizenship. We believe the concept of new towns is one way to achieve this goal.

Although the CTCT is directed predominantly by citizens of the Cherokee Nation, our Membership is not restricted to Cherokee citizens. Anyone interested in Cherokee culture possessing a sincere commitment to the continued well-being of the Cherokee Nation are openly welcome to participate in a spirit of good Cherokee fellowship.

### **ARTICLE I: CHARTER**

The Central Texas Cherokee Township is a charter member of the Cherokee Nation Community Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organized to establish a point of connection for Cherokee Nation citizens residing outside the historic boundary of the Cherokee Nation in north eastern Oklahoma with each other and their elected officials; to foster civic and cultural connections between the Cherokee Nation and its citizens outside the boundaries; and to assist regional chapters of diasporic Cherokees in maintaining language, cultural traditions, civic activities, and fellowship.

### **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP**

#### 1) Qualifications of Members

A community of Cherokees, registered and unregistered, family and friends, dedicated to Cherokee history.

Membership shall be granted to an applicant upon payment of annual dues and completion and approval of the application form of the CTCT. At the time of application each household shall designate the names of participating members over eighteen (18) years of age at the same address for voting purposes.

Participating members should update their status by notifying the Council in writing by email or letter.

Dues for membership in the CTCT will be set by the Council and presented to the general membership for approval. At the beginning of each fiscal year (September). The Council reserves the right to make hardship decisions concerning membership dues on a case-by-case basis.

The approval of all membership applications is at the discretion of the Council.

2) Rights and Obligations of Members

Upon payment of membership dues, each household shall receive regular communications and individual members 18 years older shall receive voting rights in CTCT.

3) Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated by the Council for the following reasons: (a) violation of the bylaws of the CTCT and/or (b) action that is detrimental to the organization.

Only the Council has authority to investigate and/or terminate a membership. A membership may be terminated only after a majority vote of the Council is reached. If a member of the Council is under investigation, he or she may not participate and shall not be counted in the process of reaching majority on the question of their termination. The decision of the Council is final.

**ARTICLE III: CORRESPONDENCE**

The Council will maintain regular correspondence with the membership. This can include an e-mail newsletter, Facebook postings, e-mail or other correspondence Council members deem to be effective.

**ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS**

1) Types of Meetings

The CTCT will arrange for a meeting space for all visits by the nation. The Council will plan at least one local meeting annually.

In addition, the Council shall also meet at least quarterly, with additional meetings as necessary to maintain the business of the township.

2) Notifications of Meetings

The membership will be notified in advance of the time and place of all general meetings.

**ARTICLE V: COUNCIL**

1) Composition of the Council!

The Council shall be comprised of a minimum of three members and maximum of seven if enough candidates are available. Each must be a CTCT member in good standing. No more than two members of any household may serve as members at any given time, nor

may the members of one household comprise the majority of the board membership. Should five candidates not identify themselves during the election process, the elected council will attempt to identify additional members to fill the positions on the board during the interim.

2) Terms of the Council

Council members shall serve a term of two years. A Council member may serve two full terms (four years) and then must sit out one term before running again.

3) Council Duties

Council members may volunteer for or be appointed one or more of the following duties upon election:

- (a) facilitate meetings: organize the agenda, coordinate, and conduct Council meetings;
- (b) keep records: take attendance and keep minutes at Council and general meetings, and who shall maintain all other records except as herein provided;
- (c) coordinate membership: keep updated membership rolls, compile an annual membership directory for distribution to the membership, provide notification of pending renewal dates to members, and supply current membership lists and meeting attendees if requested by the Council;
- (d) keep all financial accounts: convey information concerning the dues of new and renewed memberships to the membership coordinator;
- (e) act as the representative spokesperson for the organization to the public as directed by the Council: organize the agendas for coordinated general meetings with the Nation and otherwise maintain communications;
- (f) coordinate technology: maintain electronic media sites with updated information as submitted by the Council.

These duties can be combined and shared as deemed best served by members of each newly elected council.

These positions will be designated by the Council members at the first Council meeting after the annual election, and will be designated for a period of time that is at least, but not limited to, one year. The Council may identify additional duties necessary to serve the township and assign them as necessary.

All Council members shall transfer any records that they maintain in their possession to their successors throughout the life of the organization.

4) Quorum

A quorum of the Council shall be reached when a majority of members are present. No official business shall be acted upon unless a quorum is present.

5) Attendance

Council members shall be required to attend at least two (2) quarterly annual

Council meetings and one (1) scheduled general meetings.

6) Vacancy

In case of a vacancy, the remaining Council members shall elect a member to serve the remainder of the vacated term.

7) Youth Representative

The council may appoint a non-voting honorary member to the Council to represent the youth. This member is not bound by attendance requirements. This position shall be appointed by the Council.

**ARTICLE VI: ELECTIONS**

1) Election Committee

Four months (120 days) before the election the Council will appoint an election committee to recruit potential candidates and oversee the election.

2) Announcements of Candidates

Candidates must declare their candidacy no later than sixty (60) days in advance of the election. They will provide a written statement of candidacy and a biographical sketch of no more than 200 words to the Election Committee for publication.

If not enough candidates declare within sixty days prior to the election, then the Election Committee will recruit additional candidates.

3) Election Procedures

The Council shall conduct secret balloting by e-mail. Each voting member shall receive a ballot. Ballots shall be sent out at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the election.

Ballots must be received by the day prior to the election in order to be valid.

E-mail ballots will sent to each member asking them to rank candidates in order of preference. The candidates receiving the most favorable overall ranking will be elected to the council.

Members who do not have access to e-mail may request a written ballot to be submitted by mail provided they do so a month in advance.

The technology coordinator will keep the ballots and make them available to all members of the Council should there be question of a recount. He will remove the addressee names from the ballots before submitting them to council members.

In case of a tie, a runoff will be conducted by e-mail the following week.

The election results will be posted by e-mail to the members the week following the election, but the vote totals will not be announced. Individual candidates may inquire privately of the Election Committee to obtain their own vote totals.

After thirty days the ballots shall be destroyed and the Election Committee disbanded.

4) Quorum

A quorum of fifty percent plus one (50% plus one) of the eligible voting members must be achieved in order for the election to be valid.

**ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENTS**

1) Proposing Amendments

Any member may propose an amendment to these by-laws. Should the Council believe the amendments have merit they may propose the amendment for vote to the general membership in the general or in a special election.

2) Accepting Amendments

A quorum of sixty per cent (60%) of total ballots needs to be returned for a valid election to amend by-laws.

An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the returned ballots is required to pass an amendment.

**ARTICLE VIII: GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

1) Acceptance of Gifts and Donations

All gifts and donations must be approved by the Council before acceptance.

2) Contributions by the Organization (CTCT)

All donations or honorariums made by the CTCT up to fifty dollars (\$50 US) must be approved by the Council. Donations or honorariums over fifty dollars (\$50 US) must also be approved by the membership by vote. The upcoming vote shall be announced and shall be taken at the next general meeting. A simple majority shall prevail.

**ARTICLE IX: REPORTS**

1) Required Reports

The Council will post annual financial and voting reports to the membership online.

The Council will make semi-annual written reports to the membership.

The membership coordinator shall compile a membership directory for distribution to members.

**ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES**

The Council shall oversee the function of all committees.

Other committees may be formed as necessity dictates.

**ARTICLE XI: ENDORSEMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

1) Endorsements

No member of CTCT shall use the name of the CTCT in political campaigns or as an endorsement of any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

The CTCT as an organization is prohibited from campaigning for or endorsing any candidate for political office in the Cherokee Nation or any other election.

2) Representations

No member of the CTCT shall use the name of the organization to represent themselves for direct commercial gain, or for purposes of self-promotion or the promotion of any individual's outside interests, except with permission from the Council.

CTCT members may state their membership for identification purposes only on resumes and other similar applications.