**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MILITARY SPOUSES OF NEWPORT**

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**THE CONSTITUTION OF**

**THE MILITARY SPOUSES OF NEWPORT**

**PO BOX 5115, NEWPORT, RI 02841**

#

# ARTICLE I: Name and Authority

1. This organization shall be called The Military Spouses of Newport and hereafter referred to as “MSON”. All references to MSON include The Ship’s Bell, unless specifically stated otherwise.
2. MSON is established as a non-tax exempt, non-profit organization under provisions of the federal internal revenue code section 501 (C) (7). Membership fees shall be used to meet the expenses of the MSON organization, therefore, any and all monies derived from the sales from The Ship’s Bell shall be used solely for scholarships and charitable purposes.
3. MSON is and shall be a financially self-sustaining, non-governmental organization, incorporated or not, and constituted, established and operated by individuals acting exclusively outside the scope of any official capacity as officers, employees, or agents of the Government. MSON is not established nor operated pursuant to authority vested in the Navy or any official thereof.
4. The Installation Commander has the authority to enforce compliance by MSON with conditions enumerated herein, to inquire into their activities and to withdraw his/her consent for its existence on the installation if deemed necessary in the interest of the Government. A request is submitted every even-numbered year to the Staff Judge Advocate, Naval Station Newport using the form “Request To Operate A Non-Federal Entity On Board Naval Station Newport.” Once approved, an approval memo is issued and retained by MSON.

# ARTICLE II Purpose

The purpose of MSON shall be to develop and foster a spirit of community and goodwill at Newport Naval Station (NAVSTA) among spouses of active duty, reserve, retired, and deceased U.S. Military, Coast Guard, National Guard, International service members, and affiliated Federal Civilian Employees. MSON shall also offer unrestricted community grants and continuing education scholarships for eligible dependents while promoting friendship and opportunities for social, cultural, and creative pursuits.

# ARTICLE III Activities

MSON creates and supports social activities for members as determined by the purpose and objectives of the organization.

# ARTICLE IV Membership

MSON membership is voluntary; there shall be no discrimination based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, military rank, or religion. Members in good standing shall remain up to date on dues and compulsory event fees.

1. Members in good standing are eligible to:
	1. Vote (when required of Membership).
	2. Participate in all MSON activities and sponsored events.
	3. Hold Executive and Appointed Board Positions.
	4. Participate in committees.
	5. Access MSON membership website, benefits, and discounts.
2. Non-Active Members lose the above privileges until balances are paid.
3. Eligibility:
	1. Active Membership is defined as spouses/partners of Active Duty or Reservist U.S. Military, Coast Guard, and National Guard service members, International service members assigned to NAVSTA, affiliated NAVSTA Federal Civilian employees, and retired or deceased military living in the Newport area.
	2. Advisory membership may be offered to the International spouse liaison and school liaisons for NAVSTA families at no cost.
4. Registrations and Dues:
	1. All members must fill out an online Membership registration.
	2. Membership dues may be charged in 6 or 12 month increments.
	3. Changes in dues will be voted on by the Executive Board.
	4. Membership dues are nonrefundable.
	5. Membership is open year-round and complete upon online registration and full payment of dues.
	6. Renewal of membership is based upon the member's payment date.
	7. Membership Dues are based on a tiered level according to Active Duty Rank and/or Retirement status
		1. **12 Month Membership for Spouses** - $40.00 (USD)

*Subscription period: 1 year*

*No automatically recurring payments*

* + 1. **12 Month Membership for Spouses \*Early Career Discount (E1-E5, O1-O2 only)\*** - $20.00 (USD)

*Subscription period: 1 year*

*No automatically recurring payments*

*\*Discounted membership for spouses of E1-E5 and O1-O2 service members.\**

* + 1. **6 Month Membership for Spouses** - $25.00 (USD)

*Subscription period: Half a year*

*No automatically recurring payments*

*This membership option only includes the electronic version of Off the Record.*

* + 1. **6 Month Membership for Spouses \*Early Career Discount (E1-E5, O1-O2 only)\*** - $12.00 (USD)

*Subscription period: Half a year*

*No automatically recurring payments*

*\*Discounted membership for spouses of E1-E5 and O1-O2 service members.\**

* + 1. **Membership for Spouses of International Students -** $10.00 (USD) *Subscription period: 1 year*

*No automatically recurring payments*

*Membership status for spouses of International Students stationed on Naval Station Newport*

* + 1. **12 Month Membership for Spouses of Retired or Deceased Military\*** - $25.00 (USD)

*Subscription period: 1 year*

*No automatically recurring payments*

*\*Discounted membership for spouses of retired or deceased service members.\**

*\*\*If you are a Gold Star spouse, we would be honored to offer you a complimentary membership in MSON. Please email secretary.mson@gmail.com.*

1. Privileges:
	1. Shall have access to MSON communications, Constitution, membership directory, online version of Off the Record (hard copy free for $40 12 month membership), 10% discount at The Ship’s Bell, and free advertising for their small/home business.
	2. Are eligible to vote using the digital poll option.
	3. Are eligible to hold an executive or appointed position.
	4. Are eligible to participate in all MSON calendar events and may bring guests when permitted.

# ARTICLE IV Officers

1. Officers:
	1. The Executive Board Officers consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer and are elected by Membership.
	2. The Appointed Board Officer shall be a Parliamentarian, appointed by the President.
2. Nominations:
	1. All Active Members may nominate themselves or another Active Member for an Officer’s position by emailing the Parliamentarian no later than March 31st each year.
	2. The Parliamentarian shall submit the slate of nominees no later than April 30th each year for publication to the members via MSON Communications. The slate of nominees, along with their qualifications or short biographies, shall be published in the MSON communications or by other means deemed appropriate by the Board.
	3. In the event that a position is without a nominee, nominations may be submitted to the MSON Parliamentarian or MSON President as soon as the poll has been initiated.
3. Elections:
	1. Voting shall take place at the beginning of May via the digital poll option.
	2. The digital vote shall be verified by the current MSON President and the current Parliamentarian.
	3. Each Active Member is eligible to vote in the election of Officers.
	4. A majority vote shall be required for election to office. If no member receives a majority for any particular office, the vote shall be repeated, using an additional poll.
	5. The newly elected Executive Board will immediately begin turnover with the outgoing Executive Board. The newly elected Executive Board will be installed June 1st, alongside the fiscal year.
	6. Election results shall be sent to membership in June.
4. Terms: Board members shall serve for one year, until one of the following is met:
	1. A successor is elected
	2. Receives a military ordered move (PCS)
	3. Serves three terms in the same position
	4. Removed from office
5. Vacancies:
	1. Vacancies in office shall be filled by appointment of the President, with approval of the Executive Board.
	2. In the case of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice President takes office. Interim President is not permitted. The new President shall appoint an Officer to fill the vacancy in the office of Vice President, with approval of the Executive Board.
	3. Resignation of Executive or Appointed Board Members should be submitted in writing to the President 14 days prior to the time of resignation. Vacancies shall be filled as soon as possible. All documents, digital information, passwords, keys, debit cards, checks, and other MSON property from the newly vacated board position shall be turned over to the board President immediately and ensure account phone numbers and email recoveries are set to the board approved information and log out of all accounts and applications.

# ARTICLE V Duties of Officers

1. President shall
	1. Preside at all Board meetings, unless circumstances prevent it, and prepare the agendas to be distributed in advance.
	2. Appoint the Parliamentarian.
	3. Appoint Officers to fill positions that are, or have become, vacant.
	4. Appoint the Chairs of all standing and special committees, with the approval of the Executive Officers, unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution.
	5. Be an ex-officio member of all committees, unless circumstances prevent it.
	6. Act as a liaison between MSON, Command officials, and other civic organizations.
	7. Be responsible for conducting MSON business in accordance with the Constitution.
	8. Give final approval for all MSON communications unless direction is given otherwise.
	9. Meet with the Treasurer during the mid year (January Board Meeting) budget review.
	10. Be a signatory on all MSON financial accounts.
	11. Ensure all accounts are updated with current contact information.
	12. Ensure all contracts are current, update POCs with your current info, and keep a copy in google drive.
	13. Ensure NAVSTA Newport Authority to Operate as a Non-Federated Entity Memorandum is in compliance, along with request to hang banners. The President can delegate to executive board members.
	14. Gain turnover of post office and storage keys as well as banking and marketing items.
	15. Only be permitted to vote to resolve a tie.
2. Vice President shall
	1. Assist the President and, in the President’s absence, assume the duties of the President.
	2. Coordinate the scheduling of meetings, socials, and activities with the Executive and Appointed Board.
	3. Act upon MSON financial accounts in the absence of the Treasurer.
	4. Perform duties of Officers who are absent, or whose positions are vacant, with exception of The Ships Bell.
	5. Be a signatory on all MSON financial accounts.
	6. Assist the Hospitality Committee with the planning and execution of the Annual Welcome Social.
3. Secretary shall
	1. Take minutes at the MSON meetings.
	2. Maintain copies of minutes in Google Drive ensuring access to Executive and Appointed board members. Provide a copy to any member upon request.
	3. Maintain the permanent records.
	4. Handle all Executive Board communications pertaining to MSON business, as directed by Executive Board members.
	5. Assume the duties of the President, when the President and Vice President are absent.
	6. Monitor and maintain membership requests and records in our service portal. Monitor and delete website contacts as needed to not exceed limits.
	7. Give a monthly Membership Report at the board meeting that includes the total number of members and upcoming losses.
	8. Update membership forms as needed.
	9. Assist Hospitality Committee with New Member events.
	10. Perform Hospitality duties should the Chair become vacant and until the President appoints a new Hospitality Chair.
4. Treasurer shall
	1. Be responsible for all funds and keep an accurate record of all MSON financial accounts, to include The Ship’s Bell. Produce records within one week, when requested by the Executive Board and/or Membership.
	2. Solicit and collect budget suggestions from the Board. Along with Treasurer-elect, prepare a one-year budget to be submitted for review and approval of the Incoming Board at the start of the fiscal year.
	3. Collect and disburse funds, as authorized by the Executive and Appointed Board.
		1. Maintain a record of all receipts and disbursements through their tenure: receipts must be received along with reimbursement request form within 60 days of purchase for reimbursement, after 60 days reimbursement is not possible.
		2. Approved Refunds must be made within 14 days of request by way of personal check via mail or in person or digital transfer.
		3. Issue a receipt for all funds accepted and only disburse funds upon receiving properly documented requests.
		4. Submit a written reconciled financial report monthly to the Executive Board.
		5. Copy of record will be saved digitally and made accessible to the Executive Board, and kept in the treasurer’s binder.
	4. Maintain essential tax documents, including Taxpayer ID Number and IRS tax exemption letter. Submit yearly tax documents. May use a paid Accountant for any accounting, bookkeeping, tax filing, or other group needs if the Executive Board chooses.
	5. Submit all records to the President for audit within 30 days following the end of the fiscal year and/or upon position turnover.
	6. Be the primary signatory on all MSON financial accounts.
	7. Oversee the management and accounts of The Ships Bell if the Chair becomes vacant and until the President appoints a new Ships Bell Chair.
	8. Maintain all financial records for the current year. All current year and past year records should be uploaded to the Executive Board digital shared file. This record will include The Ship’s Bell’s Manager’s reconciled fiscal report.
	9. All reports, legal paperwork, contracts, and other pertinent MSON documents are to be kept digitally for historical records and transparency.
5. The Parliamentarian shall
6. Maintain order and guide conduct at monthly Board Meetings based on the most current version of *Robert's Rules of Order*, which shall govern MSON in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the MSON Constitution and any special rules of order MSON may adopt.
7. Maintain the most current and approved Constitution document with all current revisions. Ensure the updated version is accessible on the MSON website.
8. Maintain records of the approved Constitution and all amendments.
9. Ensure all current copies are in the Full Board and Executive Board shared digital file.
10. Form and chair a Constitution committee to review the Constitution in alternating years (odd years).
11. Not have a board vote.

# ARTICLE VI Administrative

1. MSON shall be administered in accordance with the approved Constitution. Unless otherwise provided herein or in the Constitution, all business shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order*.
2. The Committee Chairs are appointed by the MSON President. Committee Chairs may include but are not limited to: The Ship’s Bell, Hospitality, Special Interest Groups, Account Audit, Community Grants, Scholarships, Website, and MSON Communications.
3. The Executive and Appointed Board are expected to attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings even if there is no report to be given, in order to ensure a quorum is present for input and voting purposes.
4. The Executive and Appointed Board will execute MSON Purpose objectives in accordance with the Constitution.
	1. Prescribe the scope of activities, services, and facilities.
	2. Ensure that MSON funds are properly administered and safeguarded, that all due income is received in full and properly recorded, and approve expenditures and creditor relationships.
	3. Administer operational funds.
	4. Budget for the administering of community grants and scholarship awards.
	5. Adhere to the duties as outlined herein the MSON Constitution.
5. The President is authorized to call for a vote from the Executive and Appointed Board when needed as per *Robert’s Rules.*
6. Each Board position shall have one vote except for the President and the Parliamentarian. In the case of a tie, the President will have the deciding vote.
7. Any Board Member may be removed if they fail to comply with, or meet any of their positional duties, perform their position with lack of decorum and/or unprofessional behavior, or fail to comply with any of the MSON Constitution. Removal will be executed by the President with approval of the Executive Board.
8. The MSON year shall be designated as 01 June to 31 May.

# Article VII MSON Board

1. The Board shall consist of the Executive Officers, Appointed Parliamentarian, Appointed Committee Chairs and Advisors. The Board is empowered to act for the membership in all MSON matters, including, but not limited to:
	1. Planning and executing MSON events
	2. Obligating and distributing MSON funds
	3. Approving the MSON Budget
	4. Collecting money to establish membership
	5. Providing for efficient MSON operations
	6. Board Meetings
	7. Public Affairs with base and local authorities, entities, and organizations.
2. The Board shall meet regularly, and as deemed by the President.
3. All regularly scheduled Board meetings will be open to the Active Membership.
4. The President may schedule additional closed board meetings, as necessary.
5. A joint turnover meeting/event shall be scheduled for the outgoing and incoming board members and committee chairs following the election each spring.
6. The recommended order of business is:
	1. Call to Order
	2. Approval of the Minutes
	3. Reports of Officers
	4. Appointed Committee Reports
	5. Special Committee Reports
	6. Old Business
	7. New Business
	8. Announcements
	9. Adjournment

7. Only Board members may make motions. Membership may participate in debate at the discretion of the President.

8. Voting:

1. A majority vote is required for a motion to carry.
2. The Parliamentarian, Advisors, and Active Membership do not vote at meetings. Only Board members may vote.
3. The President may vote to resolve a tie.

9. Quorum:

1. A quorum is required to constitute a board meeting.
2. The quorum is determined by the sum total of current board members divided by 2 and add 1. For example if there are 10 board members then divide by 2 equals 5, add 1, equals 6. The quorum would be 6 board members shall make the quorum.

10. MSON retains the options of outsourcing bookkeeping, operations, and The Ship's Bell to a third party. For this to occur, the Treasurer must present a written fee proposal/contract between MSON and a third party to be voted on by the MSON board. The Treasurer must present to the board, and the board must vote to approve an updated fee proposal contract once per year for the services to continue. Failure to do so nullifies the previous year’s contract.

# Article VIII Committees

The Appointed Committees may include but are not limited to: *Hospitality, Special Interest Groups (SIG), The Ship’s Bell, Account Audit, Community Grants, Scholarships, MSON Communications, Website, and Fundraising.*

These committees are not required to exist in any given year. However, if such committees are in existence, they are required to comply with the rules as set forth below.

1. All committee chairs shall be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Executive Board.
2. The President, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall have the ability to create or eliminate additional committees and appoint chairs, beyond those listed herein, as needed to carry out the mission of the organization.
3. Each committee chair shall:
	1. Maintain the email chains and an online shared drive. Keep a record of all committee activities and reports to be transferred to her/his successor. These records must be maintained for a period of no less than two years.
	2. Not be permitted to open or change user and password info of MSON accounts without discussing with the Executive Board.
	3. Not be permitted to use programs or accounts for MSON that have not been met with Board approval.
	4. Present a brief written and/or oral report at each Board meeting of any pertinent information relating to their duties.
	5. Be expected to attend all relevant Board meetings, unless circumstances prevent it.
	6. Submit budget proposals, as necessary, for approval prior to committee events.
	7. Complete After Action Reports following committee activities, to be submitted to the Executive Board, and at the end of their term, to be passed to the succeeding committee chair, along with any pertinent documents.
	8. Appoint members to their respective committees, as necessary.
	9. Schedule committee meetings, as necessary, to fulfill duties outlined above.
	10. Uphold the duties above. Failure to do so may result in removal by the Executive Board.
4. Hospitality Committee shall:
	1. Plan and execute the Annual Welcome Social and Welcome Events throughout the year.
	2. Coordinate the delivery of meals to members, as necessary (e.g., new moms, surgery/injury, death in the family), with the help of the Secretary using an online sign up option.
	3. Coordinate the recruiting of new members throughout the year at various command/social functions, with the help of the board.
	4. Welcome new MSON Members through MSON Communications options, digital or written.
5. Special Interest Group (SIG) Committee shall:
6. Appoint chairs for the individual SIG and provide support.
7. Collect detailed updates of SIG activities, previous and upcoming, and provide the Board, Communications, and Website with meeting dates, articles, and photos from events.
8. Create monthly SIG flyers that meet MSON Brand logo, color, and trend approved by Communications Chair and Executive Board. Share with Communications and Website Chairs for distribution.
9. Send SIG events to the Website Chair no less than a Month out for proper distribution.
10. Keep a list of groups and their appointed chairs, along with platforms, passwords, or other pertinent information in a Google Drive document.
11. The Ship’s Bell Committee shall:
12. Send operation procedure for allocation of grants and scholarship funds.
13. Coordinate store volunteers using an Executive Board approved platform. Site information, to include log in, password, and coordinator information, must be submitted to the Executive Board for tracking. Logo, and MSON information must meet approved guidelines from the Communications Chair and Executive Board.
14. Create marketing items for approval by the Communications Chair and Executive Board.
15. Present list of store inventory purchase needs to the Executive Board for approval before purchasing.
16. Maintain a list of wholesalers used to purchase store merchandise, along with contracts if applicable, and upload to Google Drive.
17. Submit Buyer contracts to Executive Board for approval.
18. Account Audit Committee shall:
19. Consist of 2-4 active non-board members or a qualified accountant.
20. Conduct a yearly audit of all MSON financial records within 60 days of the end of the fiscal year or upon turnover of the treasurer position.
21. Report findings to the Board at the next meeting and keep the report in an online shared Drive.
22. Community Grants Committee shall:
23. Consist of the Community Grants Chair, President, an Advisor, and three or more active MSON members.
24. Meet to award funds allocated by the board at the end of the application windows.
25. Submit their recommendations for award allocations to the board for a vote. The Community Grants Chair and President will not vote.
26. Scholarships Committee shall:
27. Consist of the Scholarship Committee Chair, President, an Advisor, and four or more Active MSON Members. If the President has a conflict of interest, the board may vote for a different executive board member to take his/her place.
28. Be formed in the Fall to ensure a proper timeline is met.
29. Submit their recommendations for award allocations to the board for a vote. The Scholarship Chair and President will not vote.
30. Submit an estimate of expenses for board approval.
31. Social Media Committee shall:
	1. Create awareness about MSON and The Ship's Bell by promoting the organizations' events, scholarships, community grants, or relevant information to the military public.
	2. Update Social Media platforms.
	3. Coordinate with the Website Chair to keep communications accurate.
	4. Update Off the Record, at a minimum, every other year.
	5. Create/oversee MSON marketing, pamphlets, business cards, fliers, and monthly Member communication.
	6. Update local media and Newport Naval Station press contacts with press releases on MSON events, scholarships, or community grant opportunities.
	7. Ensure brand consistency across communication and marketing efforts.
32. Website Committee shall:
33. Manage the website by making all updates requested by committees and those approved by the board.
34. Create events with provided details from the board. This can be delegated to relevant committee chairs.
35. Stay current with trends to maintain the health, usefulness, and appearance of the site.
36. Bring suggestions to improve the website.
37. Coordinate with Communications for announcements and other PR placed on the website.

12. Fundraising Committee shall:

* 1. Plan and execute Fundraising events as requested by the Executive Board.
	2. Ensure that all Fundraising activities are in compliance with the rules and regulations of the State of Rhode Island and the Federal Tax Code.

The above aforementioned Committees shall plan and execute events with MSON members only in accordance with their purpose as stated in the Constitution and as it meets the purpose and vision of MSON.

# Article IX Accountability of Funds

1. The fiscal year is 01 June through 31 May.
2. Accounting:
	1. The Treasurer shall account for all funds, including expenses and proceeds from Operations and The Ship’s Bell. Monies should be divided into the following categories:
		1. MSON Operating Fund
			1. Scholarships
			2. Community Grants
		2. Dissolution Money Market Savings Account
		3. The Ship’s Bell
			1. Buyer funds
	2. MSON financial records shall be kept on a cash basis for tax purposes.
	3. A review of MSON’s budget shall be looked at Annually. If deemed necessary, reallocate funds where appropriate for that fiscal year.
	4. An Audit committee shall complete an annual audit at the end of each fiscal year and upon change of the Treasurer.
	5. Annual taxes may be compiled and filed by an independent accounting company or in-house.
	6. Receipts for items needed for MSON events must be turned in to the Treasurer within 60 days, unless otherwise noted herein, or refund for purchases will not occur.
	7. Each month the Treasurer will reconcile the current budget to create the report for the Board Meeting.
3. Checking and Savings Accounts:
	1. MSON maintains an operational checking account, a money market savings account set aside for dissolution, and an operational Ship’s Bell Checking account.
	2. The Treasurer, President, and Vice President shall be approved signatories on all accounts. The Ship’s Bell Chair shall be approved signatory on the Ship's Bell account only.
	3. The Money Market Savings for dissolution of MSON shall not fall below $3,000 at the end of the fiscal year, unless a new amount, fiscally determined and approved by the Board is sufficient or necessary to cover expenses upon dissolution.
4. Budgeting:
	1. The outgoing Board shall submit a proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The incoming Board will approve a budget.
	2. The Board will inform Membership of an approved budget. Active Members may request to see the budget from the Executive Board.
	3. Any Board member whose actual budget differs from the proposed budget shall submit a revision to the Executive Board for approval.
5. Expenditures:
	1. No member of MSON shall have the authority to enter into any contract or render it liable monetarily for any purpose or in any amount, unless so authorized by the Executive Board.
	2. All purchases need to be pre-approved by the Executive Board. That includes an estimate of cost before purchase is made, to include The Ship’s Bell product and general store purchases.
6. Refunds:
	1. Refunds are issued at the discretion of the Board, with approval from at least two members of the Executive Board.
7. Fundraising Activities:
	1. The Treasurer and Fundraising Chair shall account for and witness the collection of all funds at each event where funds are utilized. If they cannot be present at the event, an alternate person(s) shall be designated and approved by the Executive Board.
8. Disposition of excess funds:
	1. MSON operates as a non tax-exempt organization under the provisions of the Federal Internal Revenue Code section 501(c) (7) Not-for-profit organization. It is neither the intent nor the desire of MSON to retain funds in excess of those needed to meet its stated goals and purpose.
	2. Excess Funds shall be defined as gross income less normal operating expenses.
	3. A balance, as allowed by the Federal Internal Revenue Code, shall be left in MSON accounts at the close of the fiscal year. Funds in excess of this amount shall be donated to scholarships or charitable organizations as outlined previously. Check current IRS code.
9. Liability: MSON is a private, independent organization, solely responsible for any obligations it incurs. Neither the United States Government nor the Department of the Navy is liable for the legal or financial obligations of MSON. Board liability is defined in CNICINST 11000.1(d). In accordance with reference (a), a certification indicating that the organization’s members understand they may be held personally liable if the Non Financial Entities assets are insufficient to discharge its liabilities.

# Article X The Ship’s Bell

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1. The purpose of The Ship’s Bell is to generate funds for MSON Scholarships and Community Grants through the retail sale of gift items. In doing so, The Ship’s Bell will execute and maintain a non-compete agreement or similar document with the local Navy Exchange and the Naval War College Museum Gift Shop. The Ship’s Bell will also obtain and maintain any necessary outgrant or license for ongoing fundraising operations as The Ship’s Bell, as deemed warranted by the installation commander. If operating under a license or outgrant, The Ship’s Bell will maintain liability and property insurance as necessary, as well as workman’s compensation insurance for any paid employees. The signatory for all legal documents is the President.
2. The Ship’s Bell shall be managed by The Ship’s Bell Committee Chair.
	1. The Chair may appoint an Assistant Manager with approval of the Executive Board.
	2. The Assistant Manager will assume the buyers duties and train a volunteer to assist in the duties.
	3. The Committee Chair will oversee the store account and work with the Treasurer to meet MSON Constitution and Bylaws agreements, to include ensuring the transfer of funds for community grants and scholarships. In addition, be the signatory on the Ships Bell Bank account.
	4. The Assistant Manager will ensure the Committee Chair has pertinent information for all Board reports and any additional requests by the Executive Board.
	5. The Chair may appoint a Volunteer Coordinator with approval of the Executive Board.
	6. The shop shall be staffed by volunteers who are Active Members. Non-member volunteers may be permitted on a case by case basis, as determined by the Committee.
	7. Operating Procedures of The Ship’s Bell shall be in accordance with MSON Constitution.
	8. The Chair will ensure all reports, contracts, legal paperwork, and other pertinent documentation is uploaded into the online shared Drive.
3. The Ship’s Bell shall inform the Board about its operation in the following ways:
	1. The Ship’s Bell shall maintain a checking account (tied to the main MSON bank account) to which all daily sales receipts are deposited and from which all expenses are paid. Authorized signatories on the account shall be The Ship’s Bell Chair, President, Vice President, and Treasurer.
	2. The Ship’s Bell Chair will submit a financial report at Board meetings and any additional requests made by the Executive Board.
	3. The Ship’s Bell shall maintain accurate records and inventory of all gift items, purchases, and sales.
		1. An inventory review shall be conducted annually preceding the annual audit of the Treasurer and upon turnover of the The Ship’s Bell Chair.
		2. Accounting procedures and yearly audit shall be coordinated with the Treasurer.
		3. The Ship’s Bell shall submit requests for modifications of its Operating Procedures to the Executive Board for approval.
		4. Prior to awarding of monies, The Ship’s Bell will transfer all profits (after reasonable reserve for the future purchase of inventory and expenses) to the MSON general account, for distribution to community grants and scholarships.
4. Dissolution:
	1. The Board may initiate dissolution of The Ship’s Bell if they determine it is in the best interest of the organization. This decision must be approved by a majority vote of the membership and such vote shall be publicized at least 30 days in advance using the MSON communications.
	2. All bills and valid debts shall be paid.
	3. Any and all remaining assets shall be given to MSON for distribution to Scholarships and Charities that benefit the Military Community in the Newport area under applicable sections of the federal tax laws.
	4. In the event of the dissolution of MSON, The Ship’s Bell shall cease to exist as an entity of MSON. The existing MSON Board shall either:
		1. Dissolve The Ship’s Bell through liquidation of assets, as outlined above.
		2. Establish The Ship’s Bell as an entity separate from MSON with a new nonprofit organization sponsor.
			* 1. The transfer of inventory assets and fixtures shall be recognized as a charitable donation to the receiving nonprofit organization for the purpose of furthering additional fundraising to support the U.S. military community in the Newport area.
				2. Thirty percent of The Ship’s Bell profits to date shall be given to MSON for distribution to Scholarships and Charities that benefit the military community in the Newport area under applicable sections of federal tax laws.
				3. The new sponsoring organization for The Ship’s Bell shall assume responsibility for any outstanding debts and contractual commitments.

# Article XI Community Grants

1. The Community Grants Committee will consist of the Community Grants Chair, President, an Advisor, and three or more active MSON members.
2. Grant Application Window:
	1. Application window is Jan 01- April 15
	2. If there is no volunteer for the Committee Grants Chair, the President has the authority to defer the Application to the next application window.
3. Funds:
	1. Funding is supplied by profits of the Ship’s Bell.
	2. Funds available will be decided by the Executive Board.
	3. Award funds will be allocated by April 15 of the current MSON year.
4. Eligibility: Local and national nonprofit organizations that directly benefit military members and/or their families.
	1. There will be emphasis upon activities and services that support or immediately benefit military members in the Newport community.
	2. Organizations must demonstrate a nondiscrimination policy regarding staff, employment, executive board, and service delivery on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, or national origin.
5. Publicity: Information concerning the Community Grant Program may be disseminated through local community and base media channels and MSON communications.
6. Application Procedure:
	1. Applications may be distributed as follows:
		1. Downloading from the MSON website.
		2. Contacting the Community Grant Chair.
	2. Only those organizations submitting a completed MSON application will be considered for distribution of funds.
	3. To be considered, applications must be signed by the appropriate board authority or executive director, authorizing the application and agreeing to implement the proposed activities, if funded. Applications for funding for a school must be signed by the school’s principal.
	4. Requests shall be considered confidential and shall be kept on file for one full year, after which time they shall be destroyed.
	5. Refer to the most recent application for procedure updates.
7. Selection Process:
	1. The Community Grant Committee shall review the request yearly to select (an) organization(s) for the current application window. Applications will be considered within the disbursement period in which they are received.
	2. The committee will determine a rubric to use for distribution. The rubric will be kept in a shared online drive with the applications and follow those procedures.
	3. The committee will confirm the authenticity of the requestor.
	4. Funding will not typically be made for the following purpose: fundraising campaigns; re-granting of funds in an organization’s own name; or where there is a duplication of services, religious, non-profit, corporate, or otherwise. The number of requests approved may vary according to the availability of funds each year, which shall be determined by the Board.
	5. The proposed organization and contribution amount shall be submitted, in writing, to the Board for vote prior to disbursal of funds.
8. Notification Process: Recipients shall be notified in writing, digital or otherwise, following approval by the Board.
9. Publication of Contributions: At the end of each selection process year, the Committee Grants Chair may submit the awarded community organization’s information to the Communications Chair for publication.
10. Distribution of Funds:
	1. The Treasurer shall write a check for each approved community grant to the charitable organization.
	2. The committee chair and/or representative(s) shall present donation checks prior to the end of each application window and before the end of the fiscal year for MSON.
11. Expenses: The committee chair shall submit an estimate of any expenditures to the board for approval. Receipts will be turned into the Treasurer for reimbursement within 30 days of notifying the recipients. The reimbursement form is located in the Google drive.

# Article XII Scholarships

1. Eligibility for all scholarship types is determined by the board, changes need to be presented to the board for a vote at a Board meeting.
2. Eligibility for Military Children:
	1. Must be a DEERS Dependent child possessing a current, valid military ID card of:
		1. An active duty military personnel, any branch, attached to a base in Rhode Island at the time of application submission.
		2. Retired military (with pay) member, any branch, currently living in Rhode Island.
		3. Deceased military (while on active duty or paid retired status) member, any branch, previously attached to a base in Rhode Island.
		4. National Guard and Coast Guard service members, attached to a base in Rhode Island at the time of application submission.
	2. Must be graduating or graduated from High School, a High School Equivalency Program (HEP), or obtaining a General Education Development test (GED) in the year of application for the MSON scholarship.
	3. Must have applied to, or be enrolled in, an accredited post-secondary institution or certification program.
	4. A past scholarship recipient may not be awarded another scholarship.
	5. An applicant who accepts an appointment to one of the service academies is not eligible for an MSON scholarship.
	6. Dependents of Scholarship Committee members are ineligible to receive scholarships.
	7. Refer to the most recent application for eligibility updates.
3. Eligibility for Military Spouses:
	1. Must be a DEERS Dependent possessing a current, valid military ID card of:
		1. An active duty military personnel, any branch, attached to a base in Rhode Island at the time of application submission.
		2. Retired military (with pay) member, any branch, living in Rhode Island.
		3. Deceased military (while on active duty or paid retired status) member, any branch, previously attached to a base in Rhode Island.
		4. National Guard and Coast Guard service members, attached to a base in Rhode Island at the time of application submission.
	2. Must have applied or be enrolled in an accredited post-secondary institution or certification program.
	3. May not be a dependent or related to any member of the Scholarships Committee.
4. Information concerning the Scholarship Program may be disseminated through local community and base media channels, MSON Communications, and email or in-person communication with surrounding area high school counselors.
5. Application Procedure:
	1. A scholarship application may be obtained by:
		1. Downloading from the MSON website.
		2. Contacting the Scholarships Chair.
	2. An MSON Application must be submitted to the Scholarships Committee, including: completed scholarship application, transcript(s) from the applicant’s school(s), 2 letters of reference.
	3. Deadline for applications shall be determined by the Scholarship Committee and posted on MSON website.
	4. Applications shall be considered confidential and shall be kept on file for one full year, after which time they shall be destroyed.
	5. Refer to the most recent application on the MSON website for application procedure updates.

6. Selection Process:

1. The Scholarships Committee shall determine the selection rubric criteria to be used each year.
2. All complete application packets shall be considered.
3. Only the committee chair(s) shall know the identity of the applicants during the selection process.
4. The number and amount of scholarships awarded may vary according to the availability of funds each year raised by The Ship’s Bell. The Board will notify the Chair of available funds.
5. The list of proposed recipients and scholarship amounts shall be submitted to the Board in writing prior to the notification of recipients
6. Non-awardees will be notified in writing and encouraged to reapply next year.
7. The committee chair shall retain a summary of applicant ranking and selection on Google Drive for one full year.

7. Notification of Scholarship Recipients:

1. Scholarship recipients shall be notified in writing, digital or otherwise, prior to the end of May.
2. Recipients and their families may be invited to a Scholarship Recognition Ceremony, held after notification.
3. After the recipients are notified of their award, or following a Scholarship Recognition Ceremony if held, the Committee Chair shall submit awardee information for inclusion in the MSON communications.

8. Funding is supplied by profits of The Ship’s Bell.

1. Funds available for distribution will be decided by the Executive Board in April upon review of the accounts and in consideration of grants funding.

9. Distribution of Funds:

1. The Treasurer shall send a check to the scholarship recipient no later than May 31st.
2. Scholarship funds may be used to defray the cost of tuition, fees, books, room and board or any other educational expenses.

10. Reception Receipts should be submitted to the Treasurer for reimbursement within 30 days of the reception. A reimbursement MSON form must be used and can be found in the MSON Google Drive.

# Article XIII Amendments

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1. Amendment Procedure:
	1. An amendment to the Constitution may be proposed by any voting member and submitted in writing to the Parliamentarian, including written justification for consideration.
	2. The proposed amendment must be approved by a majority vote of the Board.
	3. The Active Membership shall be notified, by appropriate means, of the proposed amendment no later than 15 days prior to a vote.
	4. The proposed amendment must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the participating Active Membership via the digital polling option. If the Active Members do not submit what is necessary for discussion and a new vote within 7 days, the Board will consider the By-Laws passed. Items for review are to be resubmitted for a second ⅔ participating Active Membership vote. All other agreed upon measures are considered passed. If the measure does not pass a second time, the Board reverts to the original wording and the matter is closed until the bi-annual Constitution review and update.
2. Review Procedure:
	1. A Constitution review committee will be formed in alternating years. The committee will be chaired by the Parliamentarian and will consist of no less than the President, at least one non-board member and at least one Advisor. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Executive Board, Board, or Active Members from proposing changes as needed outside of the review process.
	2. The committee will submit a proposal of recommended changes to the Executive Board in writing no later than the February Board meeting. Any proposed changes must be approved by a majority vote of the Board.
	3. Membership shall be notified through MSON Communications of the proposed amendments no later than 7 days prior to a vote. The amendments must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the participating Active Membership via the digital polling option.

Amended Constitution, having been duly approved by the Active Membership, supersedes all previous Constitutions, except that amendments shall not affect specific agreements and contracts entered into under the terms of previous Constitution until such terms of agreements or contracts have reached their expiration dates unless renegotiated by the Executive Board.

# Article XIV Dissolution

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MSON may be dissolved by a 2/3 vote of the participating Active Membership using the digital polling option. The membership must be notified, by appropriate means, at least 60 days prior to a vote. Upon dissolution, all bills and valid debts shall be paid. All remaining assets of MSON shall be given to charity receiving organization(s) benefitting the Military Community in the Newport area under applicable sections of the federal tax laws. The charity receiving organization(s) and distribution of funds shall be determined by the Executive Board.