

Northeast Ohio NewsGuild

The NewsGuild Local 1 / Communication Workers of America Local 34001 by-laws

The following by-laws of the Northeast Ohio NewsGuild, a local of The NewsGuild/CWA, hereinafter called the local, are supplementary to the Constitution of The NewsGuild-CWA, and in their application these by-laws shall be governed by the Constitution of The NewsGuild-CWA and its policies adopted in Sector Conference.

Last amended on January 18, 2024

History of amendments:

The by-laws were amended:

- **November 4, 1993:** By membership referendum regarding the Executive Secretary position
- **February 25, 1997:** At an Executive Board/General Membership meeting regarding when to elect delegates to the International TNG Sector Conference and the International CWA Convention
- **November 28, 2000:** At an Executive Board/General Membership meeting regarding Guild representatives on the pension board and hospitalization and medical-surgical services insurance trust board
- **September 28, 2004:** At an Executive Board/General Membership meeting regarding Guild representatives on the hospitalization and medical- surgical services insurance trust board from the Akron unit as well as a revision to pension board language to comply with requirements relative to the fiduciary standards of trustees
- **March 11, 2008:** At an Executive Board/General Membership meeting to clarify and correct several issues and change the number of members required for a quorum at meetings
- **March 27, 2012:** At an Executive Board/General Membership meeting to update and clarify several issues and change the number of members required for a quorum at meetings, change the number of units required for a quorum at meetings, reduce how often the Executive Board must meet, change the mandate of notifying units of their delegates' attendance record to a request basis, change the election of unit treasurer and secretary to a single office of secretary-treasurer, allow units to elect more than one vice chairperson, change the Local president's duty to meet weekly with other officers to confer regularly, eliminate the requirement of new members to pay a \$5 initiation fee and change the basis by which Local and unit treasurers may be exempt from payment of dues.
- **November 15, 2023:** At an Executive Board/General Membership meeting to change references from The Newspaper Guild to The NewsGuild, to account for the dissolution of The Plain Dealer unit, to change language in order to make this document gender neutral, to change the Executive Secretary position name to

Administrative Officer (duties do not change), to add email as an acceptable form of communication to members in lieu of snail mail, to change the number of Executive Board members needed to have the Administrative Officer call an Executive Board meeting from ten (10) to six (6) and to copy edit and reformat this document for accuracy and clarity.

January 18, 2024: At an Executive Board/General Membership meeting and in ARTICLE III, Section 4, to change the number of delegates needed to form a quorum at any Executive Board/Membership meeting from 6 delegates to 2 delegates and 2 officers. Also, to adjust remote participation for quorum from two (2) delegates to one (1) delegate. Effectively allowing for Local 1 business to be conducted with 4 (four) Executive Board members in attendance: 2 (two) officers and 2 (two) delegates.

ARTICLE I

Structure

SECTION 1. The membership meeting of the local shall be the supreme authority of the local, except as the membership may act by referendum.

SECTION 2. Between general meetings of the local subject to the mandates of the membership, and subject to these by-laws, the affairs of the local shall be administered and the authority of the membership shall be exercised by the Executive Board, elected as hereinafter provided except that the Executive Board shall make no decision permanently establishing or affecting the general policies of the local. Between meetings of the Executive Board, a majority of the officers of the local may make decisions, subject to review by the Executive Board at its next meeting.

SECTION 3. Shop units shall exercise only those functions and powers specifically granted by TNG constitution and these by-laws.

ARTICLE II

Meetings

SECTION 1

Regular meetings of the membership shall be held quarterly, the time and place to be set by the Executive Board. The annual meeting will be held in November, so far as possible.

SECTION 2

The Administrative Officer shall give not less than 5 days' notice by mail or electronic notification, including email, to the membership in advance of every membership meeting.

SECTION 3

The order of business at the annual meeting shall be as follows:

- reading and approval of minutes of the last regular meeting and intervening special meetings
- submission and approval of minutes of the Executive Board for the past year
- reports from the president, Administrative Officer, treasurer and standing committees
- unit reports
- unfinished business
- new business
- good and welfare
- nomination of officers who shall be president, first vice president, second vice president, third vice president, fourth vice president, and treasurer.

At all other regular general membership meetings and Executive Board meetings, the order of business shall be as follows:

- reading of minutes of last regular meeting and intervening special meetings
- correspondence (including applications for membership)
- financial report
- committee reports
- unit reports
- unfinished business
- new business
- good and welfare

The order of business at any meeting may be changed by a simple majority vote of the officers and delegates in attendance at a meeting.

SECTION 4

A special general membership meeting shall be called by the Administrative Officer in accordance with Article II, Section 2, upon request by the Executive Board, or upon written petition signed by not fewer than ten percent of the members in good standing. Any group petitioning for a special meeting shall specify the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called. The action of any special meeting shall be limited to the business announced in the meeting notice.

SECTION 5

At any regular or special meeting, a quorum shall consist of eight (8) members present and in good standing, provided they include members of two of the largest units of the

local, further provided that two (2) of the necessary eight (8) members for quorum may attend by utilizing electronic means in such a way that those persons physically present may be heard by and may hear the person(s) not physically present at the meeting.

SECTION 6

At meetings of units, committees, divisions or any group within the local, any action taken shall be merely advisory to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE III

Executive Board

SECTION 1

(a) The Executive Board shall consist of the president, first, second, third, and fourth vice presidents, treasurer and unit delegates elected at the rate of two delegates from each unit, and one additional delegate for every twenty-five members (or major fraction thereof) of each unit in good standing.

(b) In a delegate's absence the unit may be represented at Executive Board meetings by an alternate. Alternates will be candidates not elected to the Board serving in the order of vote totals or as requested as such during the nominating process if election is by acclamation. It will be the responsibility of the delegate and unit chairperson to see that the unit is fully represented. Alternates so identifying themselves will be entitled to vote.

(c) The Local is committed to ensuring, as much as possible, that the Executive Board is inclusive of representatives of all genders, racial minorities and other employee groups.

SECTION 2

New officers and new members of the Executive Board shall be installed at the first regular Board meeting held after the annual election in so far as possible.

SECTION 3

At the request of any six (6) Executive Board members, the Administrative Officer shall call a meeting of the Executive Board as promptly as possible.

SECTION 4

A quorum at any meeting of the Executive Board shall consist of at least two (2) unit delegates and at least two (2) officers, provided they include members of the two largest units of the local, further provided that one (1) of the necessary four (4) members for quorum may attend by utilizing authorized communications equipment, such as

telephonic or internet equipment, so that those persons physically present may be heard by and may hear the person not physically present at the meeting.

SECTION 5

At all meetings of the Executive Board, each member, including the presiding officer, shall be entitled to one vote.

SECTION 6

The Executive Board shall approve the handling of all local funds except for payments of a routine nature which shall be handled by the Administrative Officer. All checks shall require the signature of any two of the three following officers/staff person: treasurer, president and Administrative Officer.

SECTION 7

The President with the approval of the Executive Board may at any time appoint committees to perform certain duties and may delegate specific authority to such committees. Such committees and their members shall at all times be subject to control, removal or replacement by the local and the Executive Board.

SECTION 8

The Executive Board shall have general direction of all local officers and staff persons.

SECTION 9

The Executive Board shall meet at least quarterly on a regular day, as it shall provide.

SECTION 10

Members of the Executive Board who absent themselves from three consecutive meetings of the Board without valid cause shall lose membership on the Board upon a majority vote of the other members of the Board. In such case the Executive Board shall instruct the unit to elect a new delegate. The Administrative Officer shall notify all units, upon request, of the attendance record of their delegates. Valid cause for absence shall be determined by the Executive Board, but an appeal from the decision of the Board may be made to the general membership.

SECTION 11

Notice of all action of the Executive Board shall be transmitted to the general membership through shop papers, by posting the minutes of Board meetings in each unit and/or by email.

SECTION 12

Negotiators in collective bargaining on behalf of the local or any of its units shall be selected by the Executive Board and shall be answerable to the Board. Any agreement reached in negotiations shall be submitted to a vote of the units concerned. Such vote shall be considered by the Executive Board, but an affirmative unit vote shall not be binding on the Board. Before signing, an agreement shall require ratification by the Executive Board. Units which include editorial and commercial departments shall have adequate representation from all departments on the negotiating committee.

ARTICLE IV

Elections

SECTION 1

The officers of the local shall be elected annually by secret ballot membership referendum in January. Nomination of officers shall be received from the floor at the annual meeting of the Guild next preceding, by not less than thirty days, the annual election. The meeting notice shall state that nominations of officers will be made at that meeting. Not less than fifteen days prior to the election, the Administrative Officer shall mail to the home address or email to an active email address of each member a list of the qualified candidates, together with notice of the time and place of elections.

SECTION 2

The number of delegates to be elected and sent by the Local to the International TNG Convention and to the International CWA Convention shall be determined at a meeting of the membership. Delegates shall be nominated at the same meeting and elected by secret ballot in a special election for which at least 15 days' notice has been given to the membership by mail to the home address or email to an active email address of each member. Candidates not elected will be alternates in order of their total respective votes. Convention delegates' expenses shall be paid by the local.

SECTION 3

Vacancies in the post of local officers or executive board delegates shall be filled by the Executive Board. Persons so designated shall hold office only until the next regular membership meeting of the local for which proper notice can be given.

SECTION 4

(a) In any election for local or unit office, including that of convention delegate, persons nominated shall not be recorded as candidates unless they signify acceptance in person at the nominating meeting or in a written statement given beforehand to the meeting chairperson.

- (b) If the nominees for any local or unit office do not exceed the number to be elected, the person or persons nominated shall be declared elected at the nominating meeting.
- (c) In contests for local and unit offices, a majority of those voting shall be required to elect. If no candidate receives a majority, a runoff election between the candidates with the highest number of votes shall be conducted by secret ballot referendum within 14 days.
- (d) In contests for the posts of executive board member and convention delegate, candidates receiving the most votes, up to the number required to fill the posts, shall be declared elected.
- (e) In all secret ballot elections, position of names on ballots will be determined by lot.

ARTICLE V

Units

SECTION 1

(a) Each unit shall meet annually during the week following the election of local officers (see Article IV, Section 1) to receive nominations for and elect a unit chairperson, one or more vice chairpersons, secretary-treasurer and delegates to the Executive Board as per Article III, Section 1, of these bylaws. If there is a contest for any office, the winner(s) will be decided by a vote of the members present at the unit meeting. Or the members present at the unit meeting may by majority vote provide for a secret ballot referendum.

(b) Notice of the meeting for the nomination and election of unit officers and delegates to the Executive Board, including nominations and elections to fill vacancies under Article V, Section 5, shall be sent by mail to the home address or email to an active email address of each member no less than fifteen days before the meeting. The notice shall state that nominations will be received and election held for the unit officers and unit delegates to the Executive Board up for election, and shall specify the time and place of the meeting.

SECTION 2

The unit officers, and such members as the unit may elect, shall comprise the Unit Council, which shall call unit meetings when necessary and direct the affairs of the unit between meetings.

SECTION 3

Unit election disputes shall be decided by the local Executive Board.

SECTION 4

Each unit shall, after each unit meeting, file promptly with the Administrative Officer a report of all action taken and all questions raised. Such report shall be filed within five days.

SECTION 5

Vacancies in the post of unit officers, or delegates to the Executive Board, shall be filled by nomination and a unit election by secret ballot at the next meeting for which proper notice can be given. Notice for such meeting shall be given in accordance with Article V, Section 1 (b).

SECTION 6

(a) A special unit meeting shall be called by the chairperson or vice chairperson upon written petition signed by not fewer than 20% of the membership of the unit in good standing. Any group petitioning for a special meeting shall specify the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is to be called, and the action of the meeting shall be limited to the business announced in the meeting notice.

(b) Any vote on calling a strike, respecting a picket line or acting on a contract settlement must be by secret ballot by the members present at a legally constituted meeting for which adequate notice has been given. The adequacy of the notice, if challenged, shall be determined by a vote of the members present. Only members in good standing shall vote. Eligibility shall be checked and confirmed by the unit officers or acting officers via a good-standing list supplied by the Local 1 office.

(c) In normal working conditions, forty-eight hours bulletin-board notice must be given for all unit meetings. During a strike or lockout, twelve hours notice must be given by posters, internet, radio, television, email and/or telephone to whatever extent possible.

SECTION 7

(a) Shop stewards shall be appointed by the unit chairperson to assist him or her in the duties of the office.

(b) The unit chairperson shall also appoint a Grievance Committee.

ARTICLE VI

Duties of Officers

SECTION 1. The president shall: preside at all membership meetings and at meetings of the Executive Board; supervise other officers in the exercise of their duties; and confer regularly with the other officers, unless otherwise provided.

SECTION 2. The first vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president.

SECTION 3. The second vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president and the first vice president.

SECTION 4. The third vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president, the first vice president and the second vice president.

SECTION 5. The fourth vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president, the first vice president, the second vice president and the third vice president.

SECTION 6. The treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the local under the direction of the Executive Board. They shall provide annually a professional, independent review or audit of accounts. The treasurer shall be bonded in a sum set annually by TNG and paid for by the local.

ARTICLE VII

Administrative Officer

SECTION 1. The Administrative Officer shall be the chief administrative staff person of the local union and shall be primarily responsible for the conduct of its business. They shall see to it that notices of the union's desire to open contract negotiations are delivered on time and shall be answerable to the Executive Board for the conduct of the office. They shall recommend to the Executive Board the hiring of office staff and shall direct its work. The Administrative Officer shall keep the local's records in accordance with the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959; shall conduct the correspondence of the local and shall cause the minutes of membership meetings and Executive Board meetings to be kept. They shall also keep records of the resolutions of grievances.

SECTION 2. Effective with its first meeting of 1994, the Executive Board shall appoint the Administrative Officer.

SECTION 3.

(a) The contract between the local and the Administrative Officer shall be ratified by the Executive Board.

(b) Individual contracts shall not exceed two years. But they can be extended or renewed by mutual consent.

(c) The Administrative Officer's wage and fringe package shall be determined by the Executive Board.

SECTION 4. Applicants for the position of the Administrative Officer need not be members of Local One or The NewsGuild-CWA. But upon appointment, the Administrative Officer shall join and pay regular dues and assessments.

SECTION 5. The Administrative Officer shall attend Executive Board meetings, with voice but no vote.

SECTION 6. In the event the Administrative Officer leaves office during the term of their contract, the Executive Board shall select a temporary administrator until a permanent appointment can be made.

ARTICLE VIII

Membership

SECTION 1. An applicant for membership shall submit an application card to the Executive Board of the local. Final action shall be by the Executive Board, subject to the appeals provided in TNG constitution.

SECTION 2. Good standing requirements of TNG constitution in respect to dues shall apply equally to initiation fee payments and assessment payments required by TNG constitution and these by-laws.

ARTICLE IX

Discipline

SECTION 1. Discipline under these by-laws shall be governed by the constitution.

ARTICLE X

Referendum

SECTION 1. Any matter to be decided by the local may be submitted to a referendum of the membership by vote of the Executive Board, or upon a petition signed by not less than 20% of the members in good standing and representative of two or more units.

SECTION 2. Provisions for holding a referendum shall be made by the Executive Board and may take the form of a vote by mail or a vote in person at designated polling places.

ARTICLE XI

Dues and Assessments

SECTION 1.

(a) Monthly dues shall be as provided by the local, subject to schedules drawn by the International Convention of TNG and to temporary increases resulting from international assessments.

(b) The rates of dues and initiation fee may be changed by a majority vote in a secret ballot of members in good standing at a regular or special meeting, notice of which, given in accordance with Article II, Section 2, shall state the intent to vote upon such question at the meeting. Members at such meeting may instead provide, by majority vote, that the question be submitted to a secret ballot referendum which shall be held within fourteen (14) days. In no case shall these rates be lower than the dues schedules set forth in The NewsGuild-CWA constitution.

SECTION 2. Each applicant admitted to membership shall pay one month's dues, or submit a signed checkoff card in lieu of first month's dues.

SECTION 3. Reinstatement fees, where required or allowed by TNG constitution, shall be set by the local Executive Board. The Board may impose a fine or penalty.

SECTION 4. In instances where there is no paid office staff person to handle the Local's bookkeeping duties, the local treasurer shall be exempt from dues payment. Unit treasurers may, upon written recommendation by the local treasurer and with the approval of the Executive Board, be exempt from dues payments in units that do not have negotiated dues checkoff. Members regularly designated to record minutes of local meetings may also be exempt from dues payments by the Executive Board. The local shall pay TNG per capita taxes for any member exempt from dues.

SECTION 5. The local may, by majority vote by secret ballot of the members in good standing at a membership meeting, levy an assessment. Notice of intent to vote upon the proposed assessment shall be contained in the notice of the meeting (given under Article II, Section 2) at which it is proposed such action shall be taken. Members at such meeting may instead provide, by majority vote, that the question be submitted to a secret ballot referendum which shall be held within fourteen (14) days.

SECTION 6. All money collected on behalf of or in the name of the local, or any other branch of TNG, shall be the property of the local.

ARTICLE XII

Pension Board

SECTION 1. Guild representatives on boards governing any pension plans in which Guild members participate will be appointed from the units involved by the local president, after prior consultation with the applicable unit's officers and with the approval of the Executive Board. If no unit exists for a pension plan in which former Guild members participate, the President will appoint representatives with approval of the Executive Board. All representatives shall serve at the pleasure of the President, subject to removal by the President, after prior consultation with the applicable unit's officers, where possible, and with the approval of the Executive Board. Alternates may be appointed in the same manner.

SECTION 2. Except as provided in Section 1, appointments of Guild representatives to a pension board will be made annually.

SECTION 3. The trustees shall report at each regular meeting of the Executive Board, which may direct the trustees on any proposed major policy agreements before they are entered into by the trustees.

ARTICLE XIII

Hospitalization and Medical Surgical

Services Insurance Trust Boards

SECTION 1.

(a) The President, after prior consultation with the Beacon Journal unit's officers and with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint from the Beacon Journal unit two regular and two alternate trustees to serve as Guild representatives on the board. All trustees and alternates shall serve at the pleasure of the President, subject to removal by the President, after consultation with the Beacon Journal unit's officers and with the approval of the Executive Board.

SECTION 2. Except as provided in Section 1, appointments of Guild representatives to the insurance trust boards will be made annually.

SECTION 3. The trustees shall report at each regular meeting of the Executive Board, which may direct the trustees, after prior consultation with the applicable unit's officers, on any proposed major policy agreements before they are entered into by the trustees.

ARTICLE XIV

Amendments

SECTION 1. These by-laws may be amended by any membership meeting provided that:

(a) the proposed amendments have been approved by the Executive Board or submitted to the Board in a petition signed by not less than 20% of the membership in good standing and that

(b) at least ten (10) days before the meeting the proposed changes have been mailed to members or posted on unit bulletin boards.

ARTICLE XV

Interpretation

SECTION 1. These by-laws shall be interpreted by the Executive Board, subject to appeal by the membership to the Sector Executive Council, and the next international convention of The NewsGuild-CWA. Questions of procedure not covered by TNG constitution, convention decisions, or these by-laws, shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.