

GASTONIA COMMUNITY WATCH ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of the Gastonia Community Watch Association, recognize that Community Watch positively influences the quality of life of our city and our communities. Community Watch helps develop environments where crime cannot flourish through a concentrated, cooperative effort. Therefore, we hereby form the following Constitution and By-Laws for the promotion and advancement of Community Watch/Crime Prevention.

ARTICLE I – NAME, JURISDICTION AND DURATION

- Section 1 **NAME:** The name of this organization, as provided in the Articles of Incorporation, is the Gastonia Community Watch Association.
- Section 2 **JURISDICTION:** The jurisdiction of this Association shall be the incorporated city limits of Gastonia.
- Section 3 **DURATION:** The period of duration of this Association shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE II – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Section 1 **PURPOSE:** To aid in the prevention of criminality, the reduction of criminal opportunity and to address all quality of life issues.
- Section 2 **GOALS:**
- A. To provide all citizens within the city an awareness, of their responsibility to prevent criminality and acts of crime.
 - B. To create and promote an awareness of the concepts of Community Watch in **ALL** our communities.
 - C. To promote within state and local government an awareness of the part of its representatives of their responsibility to crime prevention and community policing.
- Section 3 **OBJECTIVES:**
- 1. To create active, viable and dynamic cooperation and exchange of information among and between community watches, businesses,

churches, schools, as well as law enforcement community and other governmental agencies.

2. To create a system of local communication of community watch, crime prevention and community policing information.
3. To develop and disseminate community watch practices, technical and operational, and promote their use in the community on a local level.

ARTICLE III – RULES

- Section 1 The Association is organized and shall be operated exclusively for charitable, scientific and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (C) (3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code. In furtherance of such purposes herein expressed. It may contribute to or otherwise assist other corporations, organizations and institutions to carry out such purposes, and for such purposes it may solicit and receive funds and other property, real personal and mixed, and interest therein, by gift, transfer, devise or bequest and invest, reinvest, hold, manage, administer, expend and apply such funds and property, subject to such conditions and limitations, if any, as may be expressed in any instrument evidencing such as gift, transfer, devise, or bequest.
- Section 2 The Association shall have the power to acquire a gift, purchase property, both within and without the state, including goods, wares, and merchandise, as in the judgment of the Board of Directors may be needful or appropriate to the conduct of its business and also, subject to the limitations of the Association of Bylaws, to see and convey, mortgage or exchange any such property from time to time.
- Section 3 No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to its members, trustees, officers or any other private persons, except that the Association shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions according to the Bylaws.
- Section 4 No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be the carrying on of propoganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Association shall not participate in or intervene in (including publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office, or expend its funds to promote the candidacy or election of any political candidates.
- Section 5 Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles the association shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on,

(A) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Code of 1954 (or correspondence provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

(B) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

Section 6 Nothing contained in these Bylaws shall authorize or empower the Gastonia Community Watch Association to perform or engage in any acts or practices which would cause the NCCWA to lose its status as a tax-exempt organization within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

Section 7 The Gastonia Community Watch Association, being a member of the NCCWA may conduct fundraisers. Written approval must be obtained from the NCCWA Board of Directors prior to conducting fund raising activities. When the fundraiser is completed, a complete written report must be submitted to the NCCWA Board of Directors. This report shall include income and expenditures associated with the fundraiser. Should the Gastonia Community Watch disband or dissolve, any funds remaining shall be turned over to the area youth groups.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 All membership shall be of the organizational type including Community Watch Groups, local businesses, churches, Gastonia Police Department, and Governmental Agencies whose responsibilities include the promotion of crime prevention and quality of life issues.

Section 2 Membership Application
(A) All Gastonia Community Watch Groups will be granted automatic membership upon making application.
(B) Applications shall be received by the Board of Directors. A simple majority vote of the Board of Directors will be necessary for approval of new membership (other than Gastonia Community Watch Groups).

Section 3 Membership Suspension
(A) Any member or member group who violates the Constitution or Bylaws of Gastonia Community Watch Association is subject to suspension or expulsion by the Board of Directors with a two-thirds (2/3) vote.
(B) That member or member group will be notified in writing of the reasons for suspension or expulsion.

Section 4 Membership in Good Standing

- (A) All members of the Gastonia Community Watch Association shall abide by the Code of Ethics established as a professional standard.
- (B) Members shall be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity to maintain the respect and confidence of their fellow members and the general public.
- (C) Members should conduct themselves as to maintain the highest public confidence in their organization.
- (D) A member is considered in violation of good standing if they engage in conduct which is against the best interest of the Gastonia Community Watch Association as prescribed by the Board of Directors or use the Gastonia Community Watch Association in any manner for one's personal benefit or profit.
- (E) Members considered in violation will be subject to membership suspension or expulsion as stated in these bylaws.

Section 5 Code of Ethics

Gastonia Community Watch members to attain good standing, must affirm and attest adherence to the following standards of professional and personal responsibility.

1. To make an effort to perform my professional duties in accordance with the highest standards and principles.
2. To be exemplary in obeying federal, state and local laws and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Gastonia Community Watch Association.
3. To ascribe to the belief that a reduction in crime can be best achieved through the implementation of effective crime prevention techniques.
4. To be dutiful in service of the community watch needs of the community, which is the nucleus of our society.
5. To adhere to the principles of honesty, integrity and confidentiality.
6. To promote the Gastonia Community Watch Association in an effort to raise the standards, improve the efficiency and increase the effectiveness of crime prevention.
7. To do all things necessary and proper to promote community watch and crime prevention planning and implementation for our citizens.
8. To maintain membership in good standing with the Gastonia Community Watch Association according to the Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE V – VOTING

- Section 1 Eligible Voters
- A) Each Community Watch group may have up to four (4) votes represented by their Executive Board.
 - B) All other organizations/agencies shall appoint one person to cast their one vote for their organization/agency.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

- Section 1 The Association shall conduct a minimum of four (4) general membership business meetings per year. These meetings will be held on the second Monday of the third month of the quarter. The President may call emergency business meetings of the Board of Directors as he/she deems necessary to conduct the business of the Association during the course of the year.
- Section 2 The Board of Directors may order the President to call a business meeting if there is a majority vote of the Board of Directors favoring such a meeting.
- Section 3 The procedures of this organization shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.

ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS

Officers of the Association shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, Parliamentarian, and Chaplain. These officers shall be elected by secret ballot at the last meeting of the fiscal year (June) and shall serve a term of two (2) years or until their respective successors have been duly elected and qualified. Officers may be reelected and succeed themselves in office but may only serve two (2) consecutive terms. No more than two (2) may serve as officers from one Community Watch. Only active members, in good standing, may serve as officers. In the event an officer is unable to serve out their term, a replacement will be selected in accordance with the Bylaws.

Section 1 **PRESIDENT**

The President is the chief elected officer of the organization and presides at all regular and special meetings of the Association. The President appoints members of all committees, which must be ratified by the Board of Directors as the need arises. The President performs such duties as the Association may require, in the conduct of its business, and preside at all Board of Directors meetings. Responsibilities also include: ensure that the organization abides by its Constitution ad By-Laws and established policies, preside over all meetings of the Board of Directors, general

business meetings and all other meetings as required by this organization; prepare agendas for all meetings of the Board of Directors; an annual report to the membership, represent the organization to other organizations, the media and the public at large; appoint committee chairmen and charge committees; serve as ex-officio member of all committees; receive reports from all officers and committees and monitor their progress; communicate regularly with the Board of Directors; review communications, reports and proposals of the organization; attendance at retreats and special meetings called by the Board; and attend meetings which are set up from time to time as appropriate. President votes only in tiebreakers and may not concurrently serve as president or vice president of a community watch group.

Section 2 VICE PRESIDENT

The vice-president, in the absence or disability of the President, or upon their request, shall perform the roles and duties of the President, if the President is no longer able to continue. The Vice President's responsibilities include: accede to the presidency in the event a permanent vacancy arises; serve as a voting member of the Board; familiarize him/herself with the responsibilities of the President, the activities and positions of the organization; assist the President, as appropriate; represent the organization at the request of the President; serve on appointive committees; attend meetings at the President's request; regular attendance at the requested meetings, such as Board of Directors; and have specific oversight and responsibility for training committee and membership committees.

Section 3 SECRETARY

The Secretary oversees the keeping of records of meetings, policies, activities, membership, and other records required by law. The Secretary is the custodian of the records for the organization and must keep a full and accurate record of all proceedings of the Association, including a list of motions and the voting results, and present the minutes for approval at each succeeding meeting of the Association. These meetings include: Board of Directors business meetings, and other special meetings called by the President or the Board. In addition, the Secretary's responsibilities include: review of the policies of the organization and present to the Board of Directors any policies, which may need to be amended, rescinded, or reaffirmed; serve as a voting member of the Board; assist the President as appropriate; serve on appropriate committees; and assist the vice-president with the membership committee.

Section 4 TREASURER

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to collect and receive all monies belonging to the Association. The Treasurer shall deposit all funds collected and received belonging to the Association in commercial checking/savings accounts. Such accounts shall be placed in commercial banking institutions that are adequately insured. A detailed statement shall be presented to the Association members at each Association meeting.

After a new Treasurer has been elected, the outgoing Treasurer needs to obtain a "Signature Card" from the bank to be signed by the new Treasurer, President, and the Community Watch Police Officer who is in charge of Community Policing. These three will then be authorized to sign the Association checks. Also, two (2) signatures are required on each check. Copies of bills and invoices should be kept by the Treasurer and the dollar amount of each should match the dollar amount of the check written.

The Treasurer monitors the financial condition of the organization, is the custodian of all funds of the Association and keeps a complete and accurate record of monies received and disbursed. The Treasurer meets with the President prior to each Board of Directors meeting to discuss the financial situation of the Association, review accounts and prepare the financial statements. The Treasurer must complete a report and financial statement to be given to the Board of Directors at their regular meeting. The Treasurer's responsibilities also include: oversight with the President of the fiscal affairs of the organization, present to the Board an annual budget for the organization, develop in concert with the President at least three months prior to year end; monitor budgetary performance of the organization, recommending modifications as needed; review for approval all actions and policies with major financial implications; serve as a voting member of the Board of Directors; assist the President as appropriate; and have specific oversight responsibility of the finance committee.

Section 5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

The Sergeant-At-Arms serves as a voting member on the Board of Directors. The responsibilities of the Sergeant-At-Arms include: maintaining order at the meetings of the Board of Directors and any other meetings the Association may hold; to assist the President as appropriate.

Section 6 PARLIAMENTARIAN

The Parliamentarian serves as a voting member on the Board of Directors. The responsibility of the Parliamentarian is to see that proper procedures are followed at all meetings held by the Association. *Robert's Rules of*

Order, Revised shall prevail for parliamentary law instances of disagreement over procedure. The Association shall provide the President and the Parliamentarian with a copy of this publication and said publication shall be available for reference by any member at all meetings of the Association to simplify solutions.

Section 7 CHAPLAIN

The Chaplain serves as a voting member on the Board of Directors. Responsibilities include: support to the organization and its members; open meetings with prayer; assist the President and other officers as appropriate.

Section 8 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board members' responsibilities include: attending the Board of Directors meetings and any other meetings held by the Association; encourage membership growth, monitor and help facilitate membership retention and recruitment; assist in the establishment of training programs and guest speakers to meet the Association's need; assist the President as appropriate.

ARTICLE VIII – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1 The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:

President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, Parliamentarian, Chaplain, and two members of the Gastonia Police Department, Community Services (as appointed by the Chief of Police).

Section 2 The Board of Directors shall hold a minimum of four (4) meetings during the year, but may hold more if called by the presiding officer or the Board in response to an emergency.

Section 3 All elected members of the Board shall be elected to a two (2) year term.

Section 4 Positions on the Board of Directors shall be considered vacant if for any reason the incumbents relinquish their position in the Association. Such vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a majority vote of the Board.

Section 5 When a member of the Board of Directors of the Gastonia Community Watch Association conducts him/herself in a way that brings the Association into disrepute the President shall convene a Special Board meeting to review the actions of such member. The member shall receive notice in writing of the meeting and shall be allowed to appear before the

Board at that time; said notice will set forth the allegations against the member. The Board of Directors may proceed with the hearing in the presence or absence of such member. If the member does appear, he/she shall have appropriate time to present any mitigating information to the Board. An affirmation vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors present and voting shall suspend or remove such member from his/her elected or appointed position. The action of the Board of Directors is not subject to appeal.

ARTICLE IX – ELECTIONS

Section 1 Elections shall be held at the last membership meeting of the fiscal year (June) every year. Each organization provides the President with a list of potential candidates. Each candidate's name needs to be in by the third quarterly meeting. The Board selects candidates from this list to be presented to the membership at this last meeting of the fiscal year.

Nominations will also be heard from the floor. Any active member having been in good standing for forty-five (45) days prior to this meeting may be nominated from the floor. If such a nomination receives a second, said nominee shall be eligible for write-in status on the ballot. No other write-in ballots will be considered valid in the election.

Section 2 All elections shall be by secret ballot. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall escort all candidates away from the voting area and detain them until a decision has been reached. The President shall then request their return and congratulate the winners.

Section 3 Members seeking elective office should show professional respect for incumbents and those seeking the same positions. Professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion. It does, however, preclude attacking a person's motives or integrity in order to be elected to a position. Members seeking elective office must conduct themselves in a manner as to not violate the Code of Ethics or the Constitution and By-Laws of this Association. Failure to maintain a standard of good conduct may subject the member to suspension or expulsion as provided for in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

Section 1 Provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws may be altered, amended, or revised at any duly called or scheduled meeting of the voting membership if approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members in good standing and voting. All recommended alterations, amendments, and revision of the Constitution and Bylaws must be furnished to members in good standing at least ten days prior to voting.

ARTICLE – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Association, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Association, dispose of all the assets of the Association exclusively for the purposes of the Association in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, education, religious or scientific purposes, and must be dedicated to citywide organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors shall determine.