

WHAT DO BYLAWS DO OR ACCOMPLISH?

By Robert McConnell Productions

One of the more challenging things that organizations do is create, revise, or amend their bylaws. Some members often find this boring, unnecessary, and a waste of time. These members don't understand the purpose of self-government, which is that law, and individual's consent to be governed by this law is the very basis self-government and freedom. In the original *Noah Webster's Dictionary*, he defines "free":

"Subject only to fixed laws, made by consent, and to a regular administration of such laws. Instituted by a free people, or by consent or choice of those who are to be subjects, and securing private rights and privileges by fixed laws and principles."

The difference between self-government, or constitutional government, and tyranny is that all the people get together and agree on the laws that will govern them instead of one person determining the laws that will govern them. Therefore, in organizations the members get to decide by proposing laws, amending them, discussing them, and voting on them how they shall be governed.

Bylaws give a body of people a governing document that establishes a framework or structure in which the body carries out its functions and operations harmoniously to benefit the members individually and collectively.

Bylaws establish a basis from which the organization deliberates and make decision for the benefit of the members and the body as a whole. It establishes who is to govern or represent the members in the administration of its affairs, which usually appears in bylaws as officers, directors, and committees. It establishes how the affairs are to be administered and sets limits to those who are to administrate its affairs.

The bylaws determine the qualifications of these representatives and administrators, how they are selected, how long they are to serve in these positions, and if necessary how to remove them and fill vacancies.

Bylaws determine who can join, how to join, and the responsibilities after joining. Bylaws then ensure the rights of these members individually and collectively.

Finally, bylaws provide for order, equality, justice, and continuity and perpetuity of the organization.

Bylaws should be written and composed by people who understand basic parliamentary principles, law, order, equality, fairness and justice—those who truly love freedom and self-government. If these are the ones who the members select for this work, they will never have to fear any form of tyranny invading the organization and usurping power of free men and women.