

Building Capacity

The Constitution of CUSW sets out the guiding principles of the organization. The Constitution is set by the members at Conventions of the Union. The Constitution provides the framework through which we achieve our goals. By virtue of being a member of CUSW, every member is bound to the Constitution. It is the role of every member to bring the Constitution to life. The Constitution provides for every member to be involved in the governance of the Union.

It is the responsibility of every member of CUSW to implement the Constitution and to participate in building the organization. The members of the National Executive Board have a **Governance* role in ensuring that the Objects of the Constitution are implemented.

** Governance has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation.*

The National Executive Board

As we make the transition to a truly democratic organization where members direct the internal operation of the union we will continue with the election of the National Executive Board.

Article 7.06 (vii) states that the role of the NEB “shall be to see to it that the affairs and business of the Union are being properly conducted in accordance with the Constitution.” The role of the NEB is to provide oversight and Governance and to ensure that the Model outlined by the Constitution and Policies is being implemented. It is not the role of the NEB to do this work themselves.

The National Executive Board shall be the highest authority in the Union between meetings. The purpose of the National Executive Board is actually to ensure that this Constitution is enforced and it is implemented. The NEB members have a direct role in bringing the Constitution to life.

The National Board does not tell the Union what to do. That topic doesn't even come up at the National Board Meetings. The NEB works on behalf of the members and carries out the duties that are outlined under “National Executive Board” in the Constitution.

Duties Article 7.06

Through the Constitution, the National Executive Board has the responsibility, the authority and the power to actually go about implementing the Objects of the Union. More importantly they have the responsibility to put in place the structure to make this happen. The Constitution has recognized the assignment of duties that support the NEB in carrying out their responsibilities.

The National Executive Board is responsible to ensure that the affairs and business of the Union are being properly conducted in accordance with the Constitution. To implement this requirement, the NEB has a responsibility to put together a governance and oversight Strategic Plan. The Plan will look at the Short-term, Medium-term and Long-term Goals and they do that on an annual basis.

The National Executive Board has the responsibility to appoint organizers and representatives where it is determined necessary to support these activities. These field representatives are hired by the NEB. When it is determined that there is a need for a Vice President to take on some of these duties, an election will be set by the NEB to fill that need.

The National Executive Board has the authority to establish Committees to assist in providing member input that supports the NEB in carrying out their duties. The National Board is responsible for establishing Units and providing the supports to ensure their success. The NEB is responsible for the appointment of Trustees. The NEB is also responsible for hiring the administrative people in the office.



The NEB has the responsibility to disperse the funds of the Union to ensure that the Objects of the Union are being met including support for budget requests from Units and Committees. The Judicial Code Policy sets out the expectations of members of CUSW under the Constitution. Complaints about an alleged violation of the Constitution are handled through Judicial Committee of the National Board. Like a Hearing Committee, but we end up with three people from the National Board that are appointed that do not have a direct interest in the case that they're hearing. This approach provides a Tribunal to hear complaints internally within the organization.

Officers and NEB Members

The Officers identified in **Article 7.01** and **7.02** are elected for a three - year term as per **Article 8** and must qualify as a candidate as outlined in **Article 9**. Members elected to these positions must be prepared to attend 3 to 4 NEB meetings per month. Meetings of the NEB will be held both during normal working hours and/or evenings and weekends. Lost wages are reimbursed. In addition, members of the NEB may be required to attend Planning meetings and other activities as are required to assist them in Building their Capacity to take on the duties outlined in **Article 7.06**.

NEW: As provided for in **Article 7.09**, the NEB has determined that building Capacity within the Officers of the Union will advance the objects and best interests of the Union. To fulfill this objective the NEB has determined that **2 Vice Presidents in addition to the First Vice President** will be elected for the **(3) year term beginning in July 2020 and ending on June 30 2023**. These additional Vice Presidents will be assigned the duties of an Officer under **7.01** (*See above*).

FOR CLARITY: **Article 7.04** and **Article 18** will not apply to these additional Vice Presidents. Vice Presidents elected to fulfill these duties will not become representatives of the Union and will not be paid Salaries as determined under **Article 18 (18.01–18.09)** of the Constitution.

The National Executive Board consists of President, First Vice President, three National Executive Board Members, a Treasurer and a Recorder. When sitting as the NEB these members collectively have all of the Duties and responsibilities set out above. In addition to these responsibilities, each person also has specific duties:

PRESIDENT – In addition to the Governance role she/he shall advance the Objects of CUSW in the best interests of the Union. The President shall preside as Chairperson at all NEB meetings or meetings specifically called by the NEB. It is the responsibility of the President to prepare the agenda for these meetings and to provide a report to the NEB on his/her activities. Together with the Treasurer, she/he will sign checks or other orders for payment of monies from the Union's accounts. Additional duties as determined by the NEB.

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT – In addition to the governance role she/he will fulfill the duties of the President in her/his absence.

Vice-Presidents including First Vice-President shall fulfill such duties as the NEB or the membership determines necessary to advance the objects and best interests of the Union

RECORDER – Shall be responsible for the preparation and signing of the minutes of the NEB meetings and conference calls including financial approvals. Minutes shall be turned over to the Treasurer and once a year to a public auditor for inspection. The time required to carry out these responsibilities are in addition to the time spent at NEB meetings. Lost wages are reimbursed.

TREASURER – Shall be responsible for the handling of all monies of the Union. Shall keep records of monies received and approved disbursements. Report to monthly meetings of the NEB, the Union audit committee and external public auditor as required. The time required to carry out these responsibilities is in addition to the time spent at NEB meetings. Lost wages are reimbursed.

The NEB is empowered by **Article 7.06** to act on behalf of the members between Conventions but only to the extent that actions are required. Changes to the Constitution are through Resolutions presented and passed by the Members at a Convention.

Committees - Contributing to Governance

The foundation of the Participation Model in the Constitution of CUSW is based on the concept that every member will have a voice in the continuous development of CUSW.

The CUSW Constitution sets the framework every 3 years for how we function as a Union but we cannot stand still between Conventions. Every day we are faced with opportunities and challenges from the environment around us and every day we are required to make decisions about how we as members want to respond in those situations.

In many traditional Unions and other organizations, members get frustrated by the log jam that is created as they attempt to get the “people in charge” to answer a question or to implement a change in the way that the Union operates. In CUSW we have broadened the points of access for members by setting up specific areas of interest and then providing the interface between the Member and the Committees to expedite the response and to capture the good ideas that flow into the Committees.

See *National Committee Participation Model* at right.

The NEB is highest authority in the Union between Conventions however our Constitution does not mandate them to make decisions about the future of CUSW on their own. To assist the NEB in their role, the CUSW Constitution also provides that members have input into building the future direction of the Union between Conventions through the National Committee structure.

The role of the National Committees is to provide the opportunity for members to have a voice in setting the direction of the Union between Conventions. Members of the National Committees are appointed by the NEB with a direction to set a vision and to build a mission statement.

The effectiveness of these Committees is dependent on the level of knowledge of the committee members involved about the topic they are working with, the access the members have to provide input into the Committees and the ability of the Committees to work with the NEB on implementing the recommendations going forward.

The Committee structure provides a vehicle where members can receive information about the workings of CUSW and also have input into the day to day incremental changes that keep us moving forward towards our goals. The Committees report back to the National Board directly or through the assigned NEB mentor with suggestions and recommendations for changes or additions that would improve the lot for CUSW members and or their families.

The NEB has the latitude to implement suggestions or recommendations that enhance but do not conflict with the Constitution. Recommendations that would require a change to the Constitution would need to go to the next Convention as a Resolution for debate and implementation.

Committees provide supports to the members and to the NEB in the areas where the members are not able to have direct control of the activities of the Union.

Learn More

To learn more about CUSW Elections, NEB and Officers positions, sign in with your CUSW username and password at Alliance Learning and visit the "CUSW ELECTIONS" section.

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