

## **Mile High Chapter AGIF National Constitution Review Committee Recommendations**

**AGIF-US has not yet developed the Procedures Manual. We believe that it would be irresponsible to accept or approve the recommended changes to the AGIF National Constitution without the Procedures Manual. Especially because Article IV, V and VI have been recommended for removal from the Constitution to be placed in a Procedures Manual without us seeing the recommended changes.**

**In addition, all of the text of the existing Constitution with recommended deletions was not provided. Only the recommended additions typed in red with some not all of the current text in black text were provided. This made it very hard to know what the recommended changes were and review them in context. Furthermore, in some cases there were no changes, but the text was in red and should have been in black. Sometimes the text was in black but was changed and needed to be in red.**

**Reinsert Robert's Rules of order wherever it is referenced in the existing Constitution.**

### **Key:**

**Black Text-** as received from the National Constitution Review Committee indicating no recommended changes to the current AGIF National Constitution.

**Red Text-** as received from the National Constitution Review Committee indicating their recommended changes to the current AGIF National Constitution.

**Blue Text-** Recommended changes from the Mile Hi Chapter AGIF National Constitution Review Committee to the document with the text in red and black received by the AGIF National Constitution Review Committee. Recommended deletions are bracketed in blue < > and underlined.

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE UNITED STATES  
Preamble**

We, the various State GI Forum Chapters, GI Forum Women, GI Forum Youth and At-Large Chapters of the American GI Forum, a Congressionally Chartered Veterans Family Organization, in order to better serve our People, our Country, our State and our local Communities, do hereby commit ourselves to the principles of American limited constitutional democracy, to the advocacy of US military service Veterans' rights, education, civil rights and socio-economic equal opportunity by organizing and establishing a National Organization of the American GI Forum (AGIF Organization.) Therefore, we as Veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States, and our families, joined together as the American GI Forum of the United States, do hereby humbly invoke the blessings of Almighty God for This Organization and hereby ordain and establish this Constitution.

This constitution will be followed by National, <all> state, local, at-large chapters, and <including> Washington, D.C. Any addition particular to a state or local chapter will be placed in a State and or Local Procedures Manual. How does this affect our Local By-Laws? The state of Colorado requires organizations to have a set of by-laws in order to be incorporated.

**NAME, PURPOSE, PRAYER, PLEDGE, MOTTO, SEAL AND FOUNDER**

**ARTICLE I**

**SECTION 1: NAME**

The official name of this organization shall be "The American GI Forum of the United States."

**SECTION 2: PURPOSE**

The basic purpose of This Organization shall be to secure and foster our American democracy at every level of life, local, state, and national, for all inhabitants of our Country, as well as to further the rights of all Veterans, of all our members, their families and friends, This Organization, its Officers and Members, therefore, pledge to:

1. Uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America and <to honor> the American flag;

2. Foster and perpetuate the principles of American democracy based on religious and political freedom for the individual and equal opportunity for all;

3. Provide equal educational, economic, and political opportunities under the law for all United States citizens, regardless of age, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability or any other factors protected by law.

4. Secure adequate representation and participation of the ethnic minorities represented by this Organization at policy making, administrative and enforcement levels of local, state and national government in all departments, agencies, bureaus or other governmental units;

5. Combat all practices of a prejudicial or discriminatory nature in local, state or national life, which curtail, hinder or deny to any member of This Organization, and inhabitants an equal opportunity to develop his or her full potential as individuals;

6. Foster and promote the broader knowledge, appreciation, conservation and use by all inhabitants of their cultural heritage and language;

7. Use only non-violent, lawful, civil and peaceful methods of pursuing the objectives of This Organization as set forth above.

### **SECTION 3: OFFICIAL PRAYER**

The official Prayer of the AGIF-US shall be the Prayer of St. Frances of Assisi. This prayer shall be recited at the beginning of every meeting of This Organization, whether local, district, regional, state or national.

#### **Prayer of St. Frances of Assisi**

LORD, Make me an instrument of Thy Peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope.

Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy.

Oh, DIVINE MASTER, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood and to understand, to be loved as to love, for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to

ETERNAL LIFE. Amen.

## **SECTION 4: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America shall be recited by all members of This Organization. It shall be recited at every meeting of This Organization at all levels immediately after the Official Prayer.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.”

## **SECTION 5: MOTTO**

The official motto of This Organization shall be “Education is our Freedom and Freedom Should Be Everybody’s Business.” This motto shall be used in all literature, letterheads, bulletins and other written material distributed by the AGIF at all organizational levels.

## **SECTION 6: SEAL**

The official seal of the American GI Forum shall consist of a shield with seven red and six white stripes running vertically for two thirds of the depth of the shield and a blue field at the top third with thirteen stars set six on each side and one at top center. Across the blue field will be inscribed the word “American” and rays in a white background will run from the center star to the word “American.” Across the face of the shield wherein lie the vertical stripes will be inscribed the words “GI Forum.”

## **SECTION 7: FOUNDER**

The Founder – Dr. Hector P. Garcia, the revered founder of the American GI Forum, has journeyed in full battle gear to join other of our troops in the Kingdom of Almighty God, but his ideas and ideals should be respected and followed as much as practically possible considering the conditions of the time. However, whatever the time, his tireless efforts to achieve social justice, equality of opportunity and a better life for **all** and for Hispanics specifically, shall keep the fires burning in the hearts of all those who continue to fight for the lofty goals he sought. **The words “Founded on March 26, 1948” will appear** on the upper right side of all <=> American GI Forum letterhead.

## **ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 1: GI FORUM CHAPTERS**

Membership in GI Forum Chapters shall be constituted by men and by women who may qualify as Veterans **and whose residency is in the same state and/or city wherein the nearest chapter is located.** <who are American citizens or legal residents> and who have served **honorably or discharged other than dishonorable** or are serving honorably for at least six months in the Armed Forces of the United States of America **including other official components for military service or training set up by** the Armed Forces of

the United States, or who have served in such a unit for as long a time as it may be required to qualify as a Veteran as defined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; shall be eligible for active membership in the GI Forum Chapters of This Organization. The Department of Veterans' Affairs defines the term Veteran shall be defined as all persons, who have served honorably on active duty in the armed forces of the United States of America (Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations) All Veterans must provide <u>a copy of their DD-214 or Veteran Administration Identification card to their Chapter Commander or Vice Commander to verify their veteran status and a log must be kept by the Chapter Secretary.</u> (see Appendix B) Membership in GI Forum Chapters shall also be available to non-veterans to the extent authorized by Article II Section 4.

## **SECTION 2: GI FORUM WOMEN CHAPTERS**

All Women's Chapters must be subsidiary with a GI Forum Chapter in their city. Previous Women Chapters who were not a subsidiary with a GI Forum Chapter will be grandfathered into This Organization. NOTE: Only one Women's & one Youth subsidiary per Forum Chapter.

All females who are American citizens or legal residents, and who are 18 years of age or older, shall be eligible for active membership in a Women's Chapter by a recommendation of an active member in good standing and approved by a majority vote of the General Membership..

A female Veteran may join either a GI Forum or a GI Forum Women's Chapter.

## **SECTION 3: GI FORUM YOUTH CHAPTERS**

All youth, who are American citizens or legal residents, and between the ages of 10 and 21 years, shall be eligible for active membership in GI Forum Youth Chapters. <u>and whose residency is in the same city.</u>

A Youth Chapter must be recommended by an active forum member in good standing and approved by the Forum Chapter to be recognized by the State AGIF Organization. Youth Chapters must be a subsidiary to a Forum Chapter and not stand alone. <u>and whose residency is in the same city.</u> Note: Only one Youth subsidiary per Forum Chapter.

<u>Youth members will not be allowed to vote for State and National Officers until the age of 16 years old.</u><del>

#### **SECTION 4: NON-VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES**

Any adult person, 18 years of age or older, who does not fulfill the requirements in Article II, Section 1 on Veterans qualifications, who is of good moral character and whose general reputation in the community in which they reside <s> is good may be voted into membership, in a particular GI Forum Chapter. Any adult person's membership must be recommended by an active member in good standing and must be approved by a majority vote of the GI Forum Chapter where membership is solicited and whose residency is in the same city. However, the total non-veteran membership in any GI Forum Chapter 4 must not exceed 25% (when twenty-five percent) has been attained, it shall not decrease if the percentage of Veterans members decreases. Furthermore, all GI Forum Chapters must have at all times at least eight (8) Veteran members. Understandably, the Veterans' requirements do not apply to Women's Chapters and Youth's Chapters. <Angel's Document> (Refer to Appendix B)

Membership in GI Forum Chapters shall also be available to men and women who are active members of the Armed Forces of the United States and they shall be counted as Veterans. On leaving the military, in order for them to qualify as Veterans, they shall have to meet the requirements in Article II, Section 1.

Any person so eligible, who is of good moral character, who is disposed to uphold the principles of the AGIF, who pays their dues and takes the Oath of Members shall be considered a member of their particular Chapter, as well as of the AGIF-US and of any pertinent AGIF Organization there under.

#### **SECTION 5: ACTIVE MEMBERS – DEFINITION**

In order to be considered an active member and eligible to vote in any AGIF Organization, all members must pay their dues as provided in this Constitution and other dues and/or assessments that may be levied through appropriate action of the National Conference, as well as pay such local and state dues and/or assessments as may be imposed by their respective local and state AGIF Organizations, and thereafter take the Oath of Members.

#### **SECTION 6: MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING - DEFINITION**

In order to be considered a member in good standing a member must have paid his or her membership dues, and any other assessments as required by the National, State and Local organizations. They must have promptly returned any AGIF properties or materials upon leaving elected office, appointed office, or the general membership.

Further, a member considered to be in good standing will abide by the Oath of Membership, will conduct himself or herself with respectful behavior at all AGIF meetings and all AGIF-sponsored functions.

Members who are in violation of this section may be removed from the premises and/or will receive a warning letter advising that continued violations will lead to suspension of member privileges with specific time limits, up to and including permanent suspension, as determined by the local AGIF Commander and ratified by a majority vote of the local AGIF membership.

**SECTION 7: Quorum** – The quorum required for all AGIF Chapters to legally transact business shall be eight (8) members. All other AGIF Organizations shall themselves set their own quorum requirements.

## **SECTION 8: OTHER MEMBERS**

### **Honorary**

Any person who has rendered outstanding service to the community wherein he or she resides or who has attained a ranking place in the **field** of letters, human or civil rights, science or the arts, may be elected to honorary membership in **any State, Local GI Forum, <GI Forum> or At-Large Chapter** by a majority vote of the members thereof. **An honorary member shall not hold office or vote or be required to pay dues.**

## **SECTION 9: MEMBERSHIP DENIED OR REVOKED <TO SUBVERSIVES & LITIGANTS AGAINST THIS ORGANIZATION>**

**<No> Any** person who is, or has been, a member of any Communist, Fascist, or other organization or conspiracy that advocates the overthrow or the serious undermining of the Government of the United States shall not be eligible for membership in This Organization. To help enforce this requirement, an appropriate oath may be required by the Officers of This Organization of any person who solicits membership of whatever nature in This Organization.

**< After charges are preferred against a member, and the assembly has ordered that They be cited to appear for trial, they are theoretically under arrest, and are deprived of all the rights of membership until their case is disposed of. Without their consent no member should be tried at the same meeting at which the charges are preferred, excepting when the charges relate to something done at that meeting. In the event that a member becomes part of a lawsuit or testifies against This Organization said member will be automatically dismissed. Admission to This Organization is a matter within the**

complete and exclusive purview of This Organization. This Organization has the right to select its members. Membership in an association is not a constitutional right, but simply a privilege. It is a privilege which may be accorded or withheld. If any member(s) in AGIF-US is involved with a lawsuit case against AGIF-US, the member's or members' current membership(s) will be revoked. They will be denied their membership in the future (see Section 8, Oath of Members). We the AGIF-US has the right to refuse membership, without an explanation. >delete

Membership is a privilege not a right. Membership may be revoked only at the local AGIF Chapter/Organization level and at any time by a simple majority vote of the local AGIF Chapter/Organization in accordance with ARTICLE II, SECTION 6.

### **SECTION 10: OATH OF MEMBERS**

All members of This Organization, active and/or honorary, shall take the following oath when they join the American GI Forum; such oath once taken does not ever have to be retaken.

#### **OATH OF MEMBERS**

“I do solemnly promise and swear that I will uphold the Constitution and honor the Flag of the United States of America and of my State, that I will abide by the Constitution and By-laws of the American GI Forum and that I will neither wrong nor harm, in any way, shape or form the same, nor a member thereof, SO HELP ME GOD.”

Remove all of 9 Redundant for Sections 4 & 5 Not redundant. Put section 9 back in and change back the numbering.

### **SECTION <9>11: TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP (new numbering)**

Any member in good standing of any AGIF Chapter may request transfer of their membership to any other Chapter in any other state by notifying the **Local** Chapter Secretary, whose duty it shall be to notify the proper local, state and national officer(s) of such transfer, except that such transfers shall not be authorized to a member residing in a state where a State AGIF Organization exists, **unless the member involved has established residency in the state they want their membership transferred to.** It is permissible, however, to transfer membership from one AGIF Chapter to another within the same state.

### **SECTION <10>12: DUES**

A. The members of all, American GI Forum Chapters shall pay no less in the way of dues than the National Conference may decide, but they may pay more. In accordance with whatever amount of the total dues the State and/or Local American GI

Forum. Organizations shall retain any amount excess of the national & state dues by the Local Chapter.

**B. Lifetime Memberships** – All those members wishing to become lifetime members shall pay any amount which the National Board may hereafter alone determine, but no less than \$250 needs to be in red because was \$100 dollars. On such payment the member involved shall have no further obligation to pay dues to the AGIF-US. Lifetime membership cards will be issued at the time of becoming a lifetime member. Any additional lifetime membership cards will be assessed a fee. Lifetime Membership does not exempt the member; however, from paying their state and/or local dues to maintain full, active membership in the local, district, regional, at-large and state AGIF Organizations of their residence in any of which they shall still have a voice but no vote, unless They shall pay whatever local dues and/or assessments may be ordinarily imposed on its members. At all national AGIF gatherings, Lifetime Members shall have a voice and a vote if selected as a local or state delegate.

<All members in good standing may have a voice at all AGIF Organization gatherings as recognized by the Commander or Chairwoman.> Remove from here and move to **Section 5: Active Members-Definition.**

**C. Other Dues** – All active members shall also pay such local and state dues as may be imposed by their respective local and state AGIF Organization, The National Conference shall decide by a 2/3 vote of the delegates present and voting the amount of dues to be paid to the AGIF-US by members of all AGIF Organizations.

**D.** All such members who fail to pay lawful dues to their local, at-large or state AGIF Organizations or to the American GI Forum of the United States, shall lose their membership, hence their voice and vote in any and all AGIF gatherings. All members must pay all their local, state and national dues 30 days prior to any AGIF State or National Conference. A Lifetime Member shall not ever lose their voice (and/or vote) in AGIF gatherings, except as provided Article II, Section <10.> 11 B.

### **ARTICLE III ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE SECTION 1: NATIONAL ORGANIZATION – AT-LARGE CHAPTERS**

The American GI Forum of the United States shall be in the nature of a confederation composed of its own autonomy, as well as the autonomy of the various State AGIFs, of Local Chapters, and At-Large Chapters, as presently existing at the time this Constitution is adopted, plus any new AGIF Organizations. The autonomy referred to herein is set out merely to insulate fellow (sister) AGIF Organizations from

exposure to civil liability which might be incurred by a given AGIF Organization and/or by an AGIF member, < but all AGIF Organizations and AGIF members shall be strictly bound by the terms of this Constitution. Refer to This Organization's Procedures Manual> Hard to approve without the Procedures Manual. How does this affect our local By-Laws? Clarification is needed or this part deleted.

State AGIFs shall be defined as a State AGIF Organization in the different states of the United States wherein three or more Forum Chartered Chapters exist, regardless of the existence of whatever number of the other type of Chapters may exist in one or more cities of the respective state. There shall be ONE State Organization per State. All Chapters in a given state which do not have the required number of 3 GI Forum Chartered Chapters shall be considered as AGIF At-Large Chapters; except that the District of Columbia shall be recognized as a state AGIF organization and shall be exempt from the requirement of having three GI Forum Chapters, but shall comply with all other requirements of a State AGIF Organization. (wording taken from the existing constitution.) All Women and Youth Chapters shall be a subsidiary of a Forum Chapter with residency in the same region or city.

## **SECTION 2: NATIONAL AND OTHER CONFERENCES OR AGIF GATHERINGS**

A. COMPOSITION – The National Conference of the AGIF-US shall be composed of the national officers, as hereinafter specified, plus the delegates from (the State AGIF Organizations) was in red and needs to be in black and the At-Large AGIF Organizations. The Conference shall be referred to as the National Conference. (Define in glossary)-needed to be in red

B. MEETINGS – The National Conference shall meet at least once each year at a site specified by the National Executive Board. In order for The National Organization to remain solvent; the National Executive Board shall host and stage the mid-year and annual conferences in a state where there are no AGIF organizations to insure that the elections are neutral.

### **C. VOTING PROCEDURE –**

<A.>(a) At the AGIF-US yearly National Conference, each AGIF Organization shall be entitled to three (3) delegate votes, one each corresponding to the States' Commander, the States' Chairwoman and the States' Youth Chair. Each must be on the assembly floor in order to be eligible to cast their vote. Proxy voting is not allowed.

<B.>(b) Additionally, each GI Forum Chapter, GI Forum Women’s Chapter, At-Large Chapter and GI Forum Youth Chapter from all over the United States shall be entitled to six (6) votes for the first eight (8) through ten (10) currently paid members in good standing, and one (1) additional vote for each additional five (5) members in good standing. Proxy voting is not allowed.

<C.>(c) “Unit Rule” voting is prohibited. (see glossary)

We put most of (d) back in under C. At any AGIF gathering, whether national, state, regional, district, local, At-Large chapters, Washington, D.C. Chapter, Board of Directors or Executive Boards (or whatever name designation is chosen by the directors), there shall be no voting under the so called “unit rule” in the entire AGIF Organization, and so every AGIF Organization in good standing shall have as many votes at an AGIF gathering as it has duly registered delegates present and voting on the Conference or meeting floor.

D. Subject to Quorum requirements, voting strength at local chapter meetings shall be based simply on one vote for each member present on the floor. Proxy voting is not allowed.

E. (The cut-off date for receipt of memberships by the National Office to determine the voting strength of any AGIF Organization, at the National Conference or any other conference or meeting)-should be in black print shall be thirty (30) days prior to the opening date of any Conference or meeting. Any membership application or application for Charter received after the cut-off date will not be counted in determining voting strength of any particular AGIF Organization. After the cut-off date, the National Membership Committee shall compile and mail out a report of the potential voting strength of each AGIF State, At-Large, or Local AGIF Organization.

F Roll Call Vote- <Roll Call Vote at the National Conference shall be taken for motions.> At the National Conference- It shall be mandatory that delegates from two state AGIF Organizations request a roll call vote before such vote is ordered by the presiding officer. At State AGIF Organization Conferences, it shall take the call of three (3) individual Chapters before a roll call vote may be so ordered, and at any Local Conference or meeting, it shall take the call of three (3) members before a roll call vote is ordered.

<G.>(h) Voting

Paper Ballot Vote shall be taken for the election of National AGIF Officers.

**<H.>(i) Vote & Elections Results**—Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, or in Robert’s Rules of Order, if applicable, a simple majority vote shall be required to determine any motion which is voted on at any the AGIF Organization gathering. Only members in good standing of chapters, which have paid their charter renewal and membership dues shall be eligible to vote.

In all elections held in any AGIF Organization as specified Article III, Section C.<I;>(j) the winning candidate must carry the election by fifty percent (50%) plus one additional (1)vote taken. In some instances, the election process may require a run-off between the two candidates with the highest votes. In any event, the Elections Committee Chair shall see to it that the votes are tabulated and recorded with the help of their committee. The Elections Committee Chair shall announce the ultimate winner without giving numbers. But, if any candidate or their representative calls for announcement of vote number by results, they shall be orally given to the assembly, or privately given to the candidate, whatever the candidate or their representative may request. If any candidate calls for a canvassing of the votes, they shall be canvassed before him/her immediately and in the most expeditious manner.

**<J.>(k) AGIF ORGANIZATION DELEGATION**—A delegation for the purpose of the voting process, except for voting at the local chapter level is defined as follows:

The AGIF Organization delegation to any AGIF Organization Conference shall consist of the Commander, Chairwoman and Youth Chair or their designee as documented by electronic or hard copy communication on official letterhead. Numeric representation and voting strength shall follow the rules set out in Article III, Section 2C; A, B, C. (combined with I )

**(l) Limited Vote of National Commander(s)/Chair(s)**- In keeping with the tradition of giving the Commander/Chair(s) an aura of impartiality before the assembly, the National commander, National Chairwoman and the National Youth Chair shall not vote on any motion at the National Conference, National Board meetings and in their own respective assemblies, unless it is to break a tie vote. They are eligible to vote in elections

**<L.>(m) Delegations for State AGIF Gatherings** – Delegations to State AGIF, Regional/District or Board Conferences or meetings shall consist of the chapter members including At-Large Chapter delegations from within the particular geographic area. Numeric representation and voting strength shall follow the rules set out in Article

III, Section 2C; A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K correct letters to be consistent with recommended changes.

~~L.~~(n) **Powers** – The National Conference shall be the supreme legislative and governing body of this AGIF-US and except as may be restricted by this Constitution, shall have all powers necessary to administer its affairs and to promote the objectives set forth in the Purpose Clause of this Constitution. The National Conference shall be empowered to make fundamental and basic policy decisions for the AGIF-US, and shall have the power to veto or modify any action or decision of the AGIF-US Mid-Year Conference of the Board of Directors, except for any action taken by such Conference or Board on administrative, ordinary and perfunctory matters, as more specifically set out hereinafter at Section 3 D. Pursuant to the powers herein granted, all resolutions and other actions of the National Conference shall be binding upon all officers and members of this AGIF-US Organization, on the National Board, on all AGIF State Organizations, on local Chapters, District and Regional AGIF Organizations and At-Large AGIF Organizations.

~~M.~~(o) **Income-Expense-Progress** ~~Changes below all other is removed~~  
In the event a profit is made, \$3000 will be paid to the Educational Achievement Scholarship or in an amount lower or higher depending on available funds and on the value of the dollar given time as determined by the National Board, but whatever the amount, it shall be utilized for the Educational Achievement Scholarships.

In the event a profit is made on staging the National Conference, seventy percent (70%) for National, twenty-five percent (25%) will go to the National Women's Treasury and five percent (5%) will go to the National Youth's Treasury to be administered by the appointed youth advisor.

The National American GI Forum of the US has the right to hire an independent Conference Coordinator to help stage the Mid-Year and National Conferences with approval of the National Board, the cost shall be borne by the AGIF US.

The National AGIF US will submit a complete written and oral report with an itemized financial report that includes all receipts and bank statements to the National Board/Conference assembly as follows; Mid-Year of the following year at National Conference and National Conference at Mid-Year of the following year.

<N.>(p) At the AGIF yearly National Conference all Forum Members shall wear an AGIF Hat when addressing the chair or assembly. Women and youth shall either wear a hat or pin or logo on clothing when addressing the chair or assembly.

<Q.>(q) In keeping with the voting procedures at the AGIF National Conference level, such matters being fundamental, voting procedures and/or vote representation at all AGIF State Conferences, AGIF State Board of Directors Meetings, as well as in all AGIF Regional and District meetings, the same rules on voting representation and procedures shall apply, as stipulated in Article III, Section 2 hereof.

### **SECTION 3: NATIONAL BOARD of DIRECTORS**

**A. Composition** – The AGIF National Board of Directors (the National Board) The National Board shall be composed of the elected national officers as hereinafter named, plus the State Commander, State Chairwoman, State Youth Chair of each State AGIF Organization, or their duly designated representative in descending order of office and one representative from each At-Large AGIF Organization. Any designated representative must provide written or electronic (e-mail) documentation from their State Commander, State Chairwoman or State Youth Chair. The designated representative must meet the requirements for the position they are representing.

**B. Voting Procedure** – Each National AGIF officer shall have one (1) vote. Each AGIF State Commander, AGIF State Chairwoman and AGIF State Youth Chair or their duly designated representative, shall have respectively one (1) vote and each At-Large AGIF Organization shall have one vote. Any designated representative must provide written or electronic (email) documentation from their State Commander, State Chairwoman or State Youth Chair. The designated representative must meet the requirements for the position they are representing.

#### **C. Meetings of the National Board of Directors**

The National Board shall meet at least once each year between National Conferences at a place designated at the previous meeting of the Board or by a National Conference. The National Board may also meet during the National Conference and at such other times and places as may be designated by the National Commander with the consent of a majority of the national officers and with 30-day notice to all members of the Board.

#### **D. Powers of the National<, State, Regional & Local> Board**

Besides as hereinafter specified, the National Board shall act as an ultimate judicial body of the AGIF-US, inasmuch as appeals taken under Procedures Manual shall be heard by such body, which shall act as a “court” of last resort. Its decision shall be final.

Implementation as per Procedural Manual. Impossible to approve this change without seeing the Procedural Manual.

a. Such body shall provide momentum and direction to the AGIF Boards above expressed through any matter on which a vote is taken, which shall carry by <two-thirds> a simple majority.

b. The National Board shall make ordinary, administrative, perfunctory type decisions at the national level on a final basis and without National Conference approval.

c. All other decisions of such body, such as those affecting fundamental change or basic policy, shall be made in the way of recommendations to the National Conference, which Conference may either veto in part or in whole a particular decision. <and silently allow such other decisions to stand and be considered as ratified.>

#### **SECTION 4: STATE and LOCAL (REGIONAL/DISTRICT) BOARD of DIRECTORS**

Each AGIF State, Local Chapters and At-Large Chapters may have their own Board of Directors consisting of their officers and any other appointed AGIF Forum member. They shall call such body their Board of Directors or Executive Board or other adequate name. If any Regional/District AGIF organizations are organized in any area of the country their elected Board may consist of whatever level and number of AGIF Officers and Members they choose, provided that no AGIF body referred to in this section is organized such as to include Chapters or Members from more than **ONE**.

#### **SECTION 5: NATIONAL OFFICERS – ELECTED**

All elected positions shall be elected by the delegates present at the National Conference. All state <local and> chapters <at-large> shall follow the same election procedure.

A. Designation – The National Officers/Executive Board of This Organization shall be as follows:

a. National Commander

<b. Past National Commander> Delete. If not deleted then they should be ex-officio members without voting privileges.

c. National Vice-Commander

d. National Secretary

e. National Treasurer

f. National Sergeant at Arms

g. National Chairwoman

<h. Past National Chairwoman> Delete. If not deleted then they should be ex-officio members without voting privileges.

- i. National Vice-Chairwoman
- j. National Women's Recording Secretary
- k. National Women's Treasurer
- l. National Youth Chair

## **B. TERM OF OFFICE**

The term of office of all officers of the AGIF-US shall be for a ~~two~~ one year term. All national officers shall be elected at the National Conference and all AGIF state officers at their respective conferences. The choices of all AGIF-US and AGIF State Officers, whether GI Forum, GI Forum Women and GI Forum Youth entities, shall be elected by all the qualified delegates of the entire respective Conference, although each of the three named entities shall have their own set of officers. If there is a position available at the state or local level; other than Commander and Vice Commander, and there aren't any veterans available a non verteran may be elected to the position at the state and local level by a majority vote. Commander and Vice Commander must be veterans at all levels.

a. A female Veteran AGIF member shall be free to join and serve in any capacity in either a GI Forum Chapter or a GI Forum Women's Chapter and shall be free to serve in any officer position at the National, State or Local AGIF levels.

b. All officers shall be administered the Oath of Office and shall take office immediately following their election. The National Appointed Positions may do likewise as soon as they are appointed by National, State, Local or At-Large Commander or Chairwoman.

### **Oath of Office**

"I, (give name) do solemnly promise and swear that I will uphold the Constitution and respect the flag of the United States of America and of my State, that I will abide by the Constitution and By-laws of the American GI Forum of which I am (give position); my conduct and thoughts shall be for the betterment and advancement of said Organization and the people it serves. That I will serve to the best of my ability and will strive for cooperation with all officers, members and committees of said Organization and that I will adhere always to such end and uphold the same to the utmost, SO HELP ME GOD".

## **C. QUALIFICATIONS, POWERS AND DUTIES, LINE OF SUCCESSION**

The qualification powers and duties of the AGIF National Officers shall be as follows and their line of succession shall be in the order which is set forth hereinafter. **The AGIF State Organizations elected positions shall meet a 1 year tenure provision. Local AGIF Organizations elected positions shall meet a 1-year tenure provision.**

### **1. National Commander**

#### **National Commander Qualifications**

Veteran, a U.S. Citizen and otherwise fulfill the qualifications of Article II Section 1 of this Constitution, except that They must be 21 years of age or older and must not be on active full-time military service. In addition, They shall be a member in good standing in the American GI Forum for a minimum of five years next preceding his/her election. **If they have held a state officer or a national office in the American GI Forum for at least two years, the five-year requirement herein set forth shall be reduced to three years.**

#### **National Commander Duties**

They shall be the presiding officer, official spokesperson and official representative of the National Organization. They will preside at the National Conference and at National Board meetings. They will appoint all standing, interim and **conference committees** and all members thereof, as well as the Chair for same. They will appoint National Conference committees with the advice of the National Chairwoman. They shall appoint all members to the National Conference committee.

The National Commander shall exercise such powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of such office as specified in this Constitution.

#### **National Commander Line of Succession**

The National Vice-Commander will succeed to any vacancy in the office of the National Commander for the unexpired term thereof. In the event the National Vice-Commander is unable to serve or after assuming the office ceases to continue in same for whatever reason, then such ensuing vacancy shall be filled by the next officer in the line of succession, as listed hereinafter

## **2. National Vice-Commander –**

Must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Commander. They shall assist the National Commander in every manner in which They is called to do so and shall perform the duties and functions of the National Commander in the absence or illness of the latter or at the request of current National Commander. They will exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of their office as specified in this Constitution. Any vacancy in this office shall be filled by the next officer in the numerical line of succession.

**3. National Secretary – Only at the National level** must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Commander. The duties of the National Secretary will be to take and keep the minutes or have such minutes done under their supervision of the National Board meetings and National Conference and any other lesser conferences called by the National Commander. The National Secretary will ensure that the minutes of all sessions of the National Board and National Conferences are recorded and printed so that such minutes are submitted to the body for final approval, track all resolutions passed by the National Conference and shall report at the National Board meetings and Conferences the follow-up actions taken and needed for said resolutions. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the National Commander shall appoint an Interim Secretary to serve until the next National Conference, at which time one can be elected.

**4. National Treasurer - Only at the National Level** must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Commander. They preferably should have accounting experience **and provide general accounting reports**. The National Treasurer shall, working with the National Officer, ensure that all books and records are kept subject to an annual audit; ensure that an annual budget is prepared. It shall be required that **they** be bonded. This officer shall be the chair of the National Finance Committee. **They shall serve on the National Conference Committee. They shall be the chair of the National Conference Credentials Committee. They shall keep a log of the bonding; and errors and omissions insurance policies.** In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the National Commander shall appoint an Interim Treasurer to serve until the next National Conference, at which time one can be elected.

**5. National Sergeant at Arms – Only at the National Level** must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Commander. The Sergeant at Arms will maintain order and enforce any floor rules under the direction of the National Commander or the presiding officer at all National Board meetings and at all National Conferences. At the directions of the National Commander, the Sergeant at Arms shall have the power to deputize other persons to help maintain order and enforce floor rules. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the National Commander shall appoint an Interim Sergeant at Arms to serve until the next National Conference, at which time one can be elected.

**6. National Chairwoman – The National Chairwoman must fulfill the qualifications of Article II, Section 5 of this Constitution and shall be a US Citizen.** She must also meet the five-year or three-year membership requirement set forth for the National Commander in **Article III Section 5, C1. Match with Forum elected for a two-year term.**

**a. National Chairwoman Duties**

She will be the presiding officer, official spokesperson and official representative of the National American GI Forum Women. Her power, functions and duties will be the same in relation to the American GI Forum Women Organizations as are those of the National Commander to the entire AGIF Organization, except that she will serve under the direction of the National Conference and the National Board. Any issue or conflict arising between her and the National Commander shall be resolved by the National Board or by the National Conference by proper motion or resolution. She will exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of such office as specified in this Constitution.

**b. National Chairwoman Succession**

**The National Vice-Chairwoman shall succeed to any vacancy in the office of the National Chairwoman for the unexpired term thereof. In the event the National ViceChairwoman is unable to serve or after assuming the office ceases to continue in same for whatever reason, then such ensuing vacancy shall be filled by the next officer in the line of succession.**

**7. National Vice-Chairwoman - Must meet the same qualifications as the National Chairwoman and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman.** She shall assist the National Chairwoman in every manner in which she is called to do so and shall perform the duties and functions of the National

Chairwoman in the absence or illness of the latter or at the request of same. She will exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of their office as specified in this Constitution. Any vacancy in this office shall be filled by the next officer in the numerical line of succession.

**8. National Women's Secretary** - Must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman. She shall also be subject to the five year or three-year membership requirement set forth in Section 5 subsection D 1 of this Article. Her duties will be to record the minutes of all sessions of the National Women's meetings. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the National Chairwoman shall appoint an Interim Secretary to serve until the next National Conference, at which time one can be elected.

**9. National Women's Treasurer** – Must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman. She shall also be subject to the five-year or three-year membership requirement set forth in Section 5 subsection D 1 of this Article. She shall be the custodian and the one responsible for all national women's fundraising projects, **the Educational Achievement Scholarship** monies and will be responsible for disbursement of expenses and payment of said programs. She shall submit to an annual audit of the books. It shall be required that she is bonded.

**She shall transfer to her successor in office, or anyone designated by the National Chairwoman, all monies, securities, vouchers, ledger, receipts or any financial records or properties of the GI Forum Women in her possession or under her control, immediately upon change of administration.**

In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the National Chairwoman shall appoint an Interim Treasurer to serve until the next National Conference, at which time one can be elected.

**10. National Youth Chair** – The National Youth Chair, whether male or female, must fulfill the qualifications of Article II, Section 3 of this Constitution, provided that such a person must be a U.S. Citizen and between the ages of 17 and 21 and must have been a member for **two** years in good standing. The powers, functions and duties of this office shall be the same in relation to the National Commander to the entire organization, except that the person filling this office is subject to the supervision of the National Commander, the National Chairwoman and National Youth Advisor. Any issue or conflict arising between her and the

National Commander shall be resolved by the National Board or by the National Conference by proper motion or resolution. But until such matter is resolved, such officer shall abide by the supervision of the National Commander, National Chairwoman and National Youth Advisor. Vacancy in this office shall be filled by the National Vice-Youth Chair for the unexpired term.

**11. National Youth Vice Chair--** Must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Youth Chair. He/she shall assist the National Youth Chair in every manner in which they are called to do so and shall perform the duties and functions of the National Youth Chair in the absence or illness of the latter or at the request of same. They will exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of their office as specified in this Constitution.

Any vacancy in this office shall be filled by the next officer in the numerical line of succession.

**12. National Youth Secretary-** Must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Youth Chair. He/She shall record the minutes of all sessions of the National Youth meetings. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the National Youth Chair with the guidance of the National Youth Advisor shall appoint an Interim Secretary to serve until the next National Conference, at which time one can be elected.

**13. National Youth Treasurer--** Must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Youth Chair. He/She shall be the custodian and the one responsible for all national youth fundraising projects. They shall be under the supervision of the National Youth Advisor. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the National Youth Chair with the guidance of the National Youth Advisor shall appoint an Interim ~~Secretary~~ Treasurer to serve until the next National Conference, at which time one can be elected.

## **NATIONAL OFFICERS – APPOINTED**

**1. National Chaplain –** The National Chaplain shall be appointed by the National Commander and must meet their same qualifications; but shall not be subject to the five/three-year tenure requirement. They shall serve at the will of the National Commander. If possible, They should be a duly ordained Minister or Priest. They shall render the Official Prayer Invocation and Benediction at the

National Conference and National Board meetings at which They is present. They shall also look after the spiritual welfare and guidance of This Organization and of the officers and members hereof.

**2. National Parliamentarian** – The National Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the National Commander and must meet their same qualifications; but shall not be subject to the five/three year tenure requirement. They shall be the person in charge of keeping parliamentary order in all meetings of the AGIF-US and of the National Board. It would be advisable that the parliamentarian be a lawyer. Their rulings on any parliamentary law and procedure issue arising in the course of business of This Organization shall govern unless and until they are overruled by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting whichever way a vote is taken in accordance with this Constitution. The National Parliamentarian shall serve at the will of the National Commander. They shall have a voice and vote at all gatherings of the AGIF-US, AGIF gatherings in their own State, their own Regional/District AGIF level gatherings and in their own Chapter.

**3. National Legal Advisor** – The National Legal Advisor shall be appointed by the National Commander as soon as practical following election of the Commander. They must meet the same qualifications as the National Commander but shall not be subject to the five/three-year tenure requirement. The position shall be filled by a lawyer in good standing with their State Bar Association and shall serve at the will of the Commander. The National Legal Advisor may attend all meetings of the AGIF-US, the National Board and all State, Local, District/Regional, At-Large and Board of Directors meetings of AGIF gatherings in any state where the AGIF may have an Organization. They shall advise and represent the AGIF-US on all legal matters, claims, transactions and cases at law, or to be litigated in the Courts. **They shall have a voice and a vote at the National Conference and in all AGIF gatherings of their own State, Regional/District and Local Chapter.**

**4. National Women's Chaplain** – The National Women's Chaplain shall be appointed by the National Chairwoman and must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman **with the exception of tenure requirement.** She shall also look after the spiritual welfare and guidance of the members during the women's meetings. The National Women's Chaplain shall serve at the will of the National Chairwoman.

**5. National Women's Parliamentarian** – The National Women's Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the National Chairwoman and must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman **with the exception of tenure requirement**. She shall be in charge of keeping parliamentary order in all the women's meetings of the AGIF-US. Her rulings on any parliamentary law and procedure issue arising in the course of business of the National Women's meetings shall govern unless and until they are overruled by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting however a vote is taken in accordance with this Constitution. The National Women's Parliamentarian shall serve at the will of the National Chairwoman.

**6. National Women's Sergeant of Arms** – The National Women's Sergeant at Arms shall be appointed by the National Chairwoman and must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman **with the exception of tenure requirement**. She shall maintain order and enforce any floor rules under the direction of the National Chairwoman or presiding officer at all National Women's meetings. The National Women's Chaplain shall serve at the will of the National Chairwoman. At the direction of the National Chairwoman, the National Women's Sergeant at Arms shall have the power to deputize other persons to help maintain order and enforce floor rules.

**7. National Youth Chaplain** – The National Youth Chaplain shall be appointed by the National Youth Chair and must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman **with the exception of the tenure requirement**. They shall also look after the spiritual welfare and guidance of the members during the youth meetings. The National Youth Chaplain shall serve at the will of **the National Youth Advisor and National Youth Chair**.

**8. National Youth Parliamentarian** – The National Youth Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the National Chairwoman and must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman **with the exception of the tenure requirement**. They shall be in charge of keeping parliamentary order in all the youth meetings of the AGIF-US. Their rulings on any parliamentary law and procedure issue arising in the course of business of the National Youth meetings shall govern unless and until they are overruled by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting however a vote is taken in

accordance with this Constitution. The National Youth Parliamentarian shall serve at the will of **the National Youth Advisor and National Youth Chair**.

**9. National Youth Sergeant of Arms** – The National Youth Sergeant at Arms shall be appointed by the National Youth Chair and must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Youth Chair. They shall maintain order and enforce any floor rules under the direction of the National Youth Chair or presiding officer at all National Youth meetings. The National Youth Chaplain shall serve at the will of the National Youth Chair. At the direction of **the National Youth Advisor and National Youth Chair**, the National Youth Sergeant at Arms shall have the power to deputize other persons to help maintain order and enforce floor rules.

**10. National Youth Advisor** – **The National Youth Advisor shall be selected by the National Youth Chair in agreement with the National Commander and National Chairwoman.** They must serve or have served as a local, state or national officer and be familiar with the AGIF-US Constitution. The National Youth Advisor shall advise the National Youth Chair, their officers and members on issues pertaining to youth. They shall inform the National Commander and National Chairwoman of any concerns or changes pertaining to the Youth. They shall serve at the will of the National Youth Chair.

## **SECTION 6: COMMITTEES AND BOARDS**

**The National Board may establish committees, for a limited purpose, abolish committees, change personnel within a committee and determine the jurisdiction of committees, subject to the provisions of this Article and guided by the direction of the National Conference, if a direction has been delineated.**

**A. National Advisory Committee** – An AGIF National Advisory Committee, composed of all past National Commanders, National Chairwomen and National Youth Chairs is hereby created. Its main function shall be to counsel and guide incoming National AGIF Officers in order that fundamental American GI Forum policies and objectives are continued. It shall be incumbent on the National Commander and other national officers to seek the counsel of such Committee whenever basic policy decisions affecting the entire organization are to be made without time being available for submitting such issues to the National Board or the National Conference. This Committee, however, shall have no veto powers.

## **B. NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP—Limitation (add to)**

The National Commander has the right to appoint AGIF-US members to the following organizations below and under the terms and conditions, the appointed members will participate at all National, State, and Local gatherings by providing a report to our membership about the appointed organization. If the members in the following committees fail to provide a report, they will be automatically removed from the organizations they have been appointed to.

1. SER Jobs for Progress, Inc. - allowed five (5) members.
2. VA Veterans Committee in Washington D.C. - allowed two (2) per organization.
3. HACR - National Commander and **National Chairwoman** -allowed two (2).
4. NAHL - National Commander and **National Chairwoman** - allowed two (2).
5. AGIF- NVOP - the NVOP Board will select the members.

To avoid any apparent partiality, obligation or conflict of interest, any member employed by the AGIF, HEF, NVOP, SER or any similar or successor organization, shall not be eligible to vote for the AGIF National Commander, the National Chairwoman and the National Youth Chair.

## **SECTION 7: NATIONAL OFFICE**

The AGIF National Office of This Organization shall be located at a site selected by the National Board. All financial, administrative and other records of the AGIF-US shall be kept at such office and shall be in the care of an AGIF member to be entitled as National Executive Director/Administrative Manager, as the National Board may choose, and they shall be bonded at the cost of the AGIF-US. Mailing lists and other confidential material and records of the AGIF Organization will not be released to any person or entity except by authorization of the National Board. The National Board alone shall appropriate such monies as are necessary for the proper administration of such office, keeping in mind personnel salaries, subject to submission of an annual accounting and budget.

## **SECTION 10: THE FOUNDER MONTH**

The month of March shall be known as the Founder's Month. Every effort should be made to hold all events honoring the Founder and the "Legacy" of the American GI Forum.

## **SECTION 11: NATIONAL PUBLICATION**

The National Board and/or the National Conference shall have the authority to provide for an electronic publication of all official newsletters for the AGIF-US. (Future Item)

## **SECTION 12: FINANCES**

**1. Fiscal Year** – The fiscal year of the AGIF Organization shall coincide with the annual elections in order to assist with the transition when there is a newly elected Treasurer. <be established from January 1st to December 31st of each year.>

**2. Annual Operating Budget** – With the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the National Board shall adopt an annual operating budget.

**3. Accounting Procedures – Bank Signature Cards** – The National Treasurer and the National Office or the Commander's designee shall utilize accounting procedures and fiscal procedures in preparation of financial statements and financial reports that conform to generally accepted accounting principles as promulgated by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. In such spirit, it shall be strictly required that in all AGIF bank or financial accounts at any AGIF level, at least two (2) signatures shall be required on all documents used to pay, withdraw funds or debit AGIF accounts. The signatures should include the Commander, ViceCommander, & Treasurer and officers must not be related. <The above applies to all AGIF Organizations.> (already stated above)

**4. Annual Audit** – The accounts of the AGIF-US shall be audited not less than annually by a certified public accountant who shall provide a report to the National Board. State & Local AGIF Chapters shall have their financial records reviewed annually by an outside company who will provide a report to their executive boards.

**5. National Budget** – The National Treasurer/ National Office or the Commander's designee shall present a proposed budget at the Mid-Year National Conference of anticipated income and expenses for the AGIF Organization for the fiscal year.

## **SECTION 13: THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF AGIF ORGANIZATIONS – NON-PROFIT CORPORATE REQUIREMENTS – PROPERTY TITLES**

A. Every AGIF Organization beneath the National level shall be affiliates of This Organization and Chapters beneath the State level shall be affiliates of their respective State AGIF Organizations as well. All shall be subject to follow this Constitution The

relationship of all AGIF Organizations shall be exclusively to help pursue the benevolent tenets of the Purpose clause of this Constitution, but all AGIF Organizations shall be autonomous and shall be individually responsible for any civil liability or criminal penalty incurred by them.

The AGIF National, State, At-Large and Washington, D.C Chapter, shall be required to operate under a non-profit corporate entity and all AGIF Organizations at any level engaged in the operation of or which shall operate a hall for a meeting and/or recreational purposes (such as bingos, dances, social programs, and sports) or which shall operate a bar providing beverages and/or food shall immediately have to achieve non-profit corporate status as well; else, they shall not operate under the AGIF name. No operation under the AGIF name shall exist for the personal monetary gain of AGIF members.

All AGIF Organizations shall file an IRS 990 tax form each year and shall report to their state the local chapter name and Employer Identification Number (EIN). See Glossary for definitions of 501 (c )(4) and 501 (c )(3).

## **B. TITLE TO AGIF PROPERTY**

1. All charters issued to AGIF Chapters or AGIF Organizations shall contain a paragraph providing that title to any personal and real property acquired by a Chapter or Organization which may cease to exist, shall be vested in the State AGIF Organization wherein the defunct Chapter or Organization existed, if same is itself viable, otherwise title shall be vested in the American GI Forum of the United States.

2. On the loss of an AGIF Charter by an AGIF Organization, if same is not reinstated within a reasonable time, or on the cessation of the existence of an AGIF Organization, title to any realty and personally acquired by the Chapter or AGIF Organization shall be vested in the State Organization within which the Chapter or AGIF Organization existed and, should a particular State AGIF Organization not exist in viable form, then title shall be vested in the American GI Forum of the United States. The provisions of this paragraph B shall apply currently and retroactively.

What happened to Article IV, V, and VI of our current AGIF National Constitution???

We will need to see them in the Procedures Manual before we approve these recommended changes.

## **ARTICLE V. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **SECTION 1: BASIC DOCUMENT**

This Constitution adopted at the national AGIF-US level, shall be the basic law governing This Organization, all State AGIF Organizations, At-Large AGIF Organizations and all Local, District/Regional AGIF Organizations. Any constitutional provision in the constitutions of any of the AGIF Organizations mentioned hereinabove which may be in conflict with the provisions of this Constitution shall be invalid and of no force or effect.

### **SECTION 2: NEPOTISM CLAUSE**

No national officer or member of the National Board of Directors shall vote or participate in any manner (speak) in the naming or selection of any officer who is related to him/her within the third degree by blood or marriage to a position **for pay or compensation** in This Organization, nor shall such person vote or participate in any manner (speak) on any issue affecting such a position.

### **SECTION 3: RULES OF PROCEDURE**

<This adopted constitution shall serve as the rules of procedures at all meetings of This Organization and of all State AGIF Organizations, At-Large AGIF Organizations and all Local, District or Regional AGIF Organizations.> The latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order shall be adopted as the rules of procedure at all meetings of This Organization and of all AGIF Organization, At-Large AGIF Organizations and all Local District or Regional AGIF Organizations, except as such may be altered or changed by properly adopted rules of procedure of any AIF gathering, so long as such rules are adopted.

### **SECTION 4: POLITICAL ENDORSEMENT PROHIBITED**

While This Organization seeks the participation of all citizens as individuals in political affairs, it is forbidden of all officers and members of This Organization and of all AGIF Organizations at every level to use the name "American GI Forum", or any other derivative or abbreviation of the same, for the support of any candidate for public office or political party.

Letterheads, emblems, hats, shirts, pins, and other insignia or material identified with the AGIF shall not be used by any member or by any AGIF Organization when participating in political events as individuals. Members of the AGIF will do their utmost not to be identified politically as officers or members of the AGIF. Do not take pictures with political candidates while wearing any of the above.

## **SECTION 5: POWERS OF STATE AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

All State, Local AGIF Organizations and At-Large AGIF Organizations may adopt their respective procedures manuals and bylaws, setting up their own structural organization, officers, board of directors and providing for the titles or names thereof, provided that nothing therein shall conflict expressly or in substance with the provisions of this Constitution, Appendices, and National Procedures Manual. Such Organizations shall have the power to raise money by dues, projects and by other lawful means for their own purposes and to set up their own procedures for contests and other fundraising functions within their jurisdiction and sphere of activity. Provided, however, that all local Chapters shall elect their officers no later than the month of January of each year and notify their respective state officers of the names, addresses, zip code, phone numbers, and email address of each member and newly elected officers. The State Office will notify the National Office of the newly elected officers contact information by January 31st.

## **ARTICLE VI PROCEDURE MANUAL**

### **SECTION 1: PROCEDURES MANUAL**

The Procedures Manual shall be developed and or revised as needed by a committee appointed by the National Commander & National Chairwoman with approval by the National Executive Board.

The Procedures Manual shall be reviewed annually by the committee appointed above.

## **ARTICLE VII AMENDING PROCEDURE**

### **SECTION 1: PROCEDURE**

This Constitution shall be reviewed by a constitutional committee on an annual basis and they will be responsible for minor revisions. Any proposed minor revisions will be submitted and voted upon at the Mid-Year Conference by the National Board.

Proposed amendments to this Constitution, which has reference to piecemeal amendments or to the adoption of an entire document, (Text), must first be submitted to the National Legal Advisor, the National Parliamentarian, the National Commander and the <National Office> National Executive Director. The first three (3) named officers shall determine whether the proposed Text is stated in proper form. They shall be free to suggest and/or aid in re-writing, if necessary.

Next, within thirty (30) days from submission to the named officers or from the re-writing, whichever is later, but in any event not later than sixty (60) days from the

date of submission to the officers, the Text shall again be immediately submitted to the <National Office> National Executive Director who shall forthwith send a copy of the Text to all legally constituted Chapters of the AGIF-US for their review.

Thereafter, an AGIF State Board of Directors must adopt the Text in principle by simple majority vote.

Next, the Text shall be sent forthwith to each member of the AGIF National Executive Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days before a meeting thereof called by the National Commander. The members of the National Board shall consider and debate the Text and vote on adoption or rejection in part or in whole. Adoption must carry by two-third (2/3) vote of such Board.

Finally, the Text shall be presented to the ensuing AGIF National Conference, which shall forthwith consider the Text. Upon approval of the Text in part or in whole by two-third (2/3) vote of said National Conference, the National Commander shall pronounce the Text as approved in final form.

**ARTICLE VII ENACTING AND REPEALING PROVISION SECTION 1: ENACTMENT and REPEAL:**

At such time as this Constitution is approved under the provisions of the pre-existing or predecessor Constitution of This Organization, the same shall become the supreme law of the AGIF Organizations and all other constitutional provisions, <by-laws>, customs and usage or action of the National Board of Directors or National Conference or State and/or At-Large and Local AGIF Forum Organizations in the past in conflict herewith shall stand automatically repealed. All previous existing constitutions and <bylaws> are null and void upon approval of this Constitution.

Will the Local AGIF Procedures Manual replace the Local AGIF By-laws? States require organizations to have a set of by-laws in order to be incorporated.

ADOPTED by the AGIF-US on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in National Conference gathered at \_\_\_\_\_.