

Why new Bylaws - Kenneth M. Laustsen

Back in 2014, in order to continue to be incorporated in Maryland, SAF had to undergo a major change in their constitution and bylaws. The most obvious change to NESAF members was the title change from our previous District 6 representative to the current District 6 Board member.

In 2018-19, a small sub-committee, of which I was a member, met to develop a new set of "State Society Minimum Standard Bylaws Template" so that these respective units could come into compliance. The proposed new Minimum Standards were then adopted by the SAF Board on December 8th, 2019.

Underlying the new minimum standards is a twofold intent by SAF. The first effort is to streamline the relationship between SAF and its respective State Societies (NESAF), its Divisions (Granite State, Green Mountain, Maine, and Yankee), and its Chapters (Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island). The second effort is to formalize and strengthen the connection with a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) that details our respective commitments.

The new Minimum Standards provide a major revision from the current versions, with a reduction in Articles from 14 to 10, a switching of the order and combining of the Articles, and extensively more condensed language. More importantly to respective Divisions and Chapters, there is the opportunity to accept the NESAF State Society Bylaws as their own, allowing just a single set of Bylaws for NESAF and its other units (Divisions and Chapters). That blanket acceptance requires some major accommodation from current subunit Bylaws, specifically in regards to Article IV – Meetings, in which a quorum will now consist of those members present for the transaction of business; Article V – Divisions and Chapters, where there is the choice of complying with the State Society Bylaws or developing their own as long they are approved; Article VI – Officers, which details the allowed elected officers and their terms; and Article VII – Committees, which describes who is a voting member of the respective Executive Committee.

It is the intent of NESAF to work through these changes, at whatever unit level that may be required, and to then offer a compiled referendum for voting this fall at the same time as the election of new officers.

I am quite willing to discuss Bylaws with respective subunits to help them understand their complete set of options in order to come into compliance with the new State Society Minimum Standards.