

BY-LAWS OF  
THE CHICAGO NEWS GUILD (Eff. 11/13/2024)

PREAMBLE

The Chicago News Guild, also known as The NewsGuild - Communications Workers of America (TNG-CWA) Local 34071 (the Local), shall be governed by The NewsGuild-CWA-Constitution, the CWA Constitution, the policies adopted in International Conventions, and the following By-Laws, which are supplementary thereto.

ARTICLE I – STRUCTURE

Section 1. The membership meeting of the Local shall be the supreme authority of the Local. The term “membership meeting” refers to a meeting of the members in good standing (as defined in The NewsGuild-CWA Constitution, Article XIII) and confirms the democratic nature of TNG and the Local and also confirms self-governance, as it is outlined in the above constitutions and these by-laws and meetings shall be conducted in-person or virtually or a combination thereof. At any meeting of the Local or Executive Board or Committee, people present shall identify themselves for the records of the meeting.

Section 2. The governing body of the Local shall be the Executive Board, which also meets between general membership meetings of the Local. The Executive Board shall administer affairs and shall make decisions on the general direction of the Local except where these by-laws specify policies to be made exclusively by the membership meeting. Any matter may be referred to the Membership Meeting by the Executive Board.

Section 3. Units shall exercise only those functions and powers specifically granted by the above constitutions and these by-laws.

Section 4. Any two members in good standing may demand a secret ballot on any question arising within the Local or their own unit during the meeting at which the contested issue arose.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP MEETING – CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Section 1. Unless otherwise ordered by the membership or the Executive Board, regular meetings of the membership shall be held six times a year, on the second Wednesday in January, March, May, July, September and November at a specific time and place to be set by the Executive Board. The annual meeting shall be held in January. Meetings shall be in-person or virtual or a

combination. At any meeting of the Local or Executive Board or Committee, persons present shall identify themselves for the records of the meeting.

Section 2. The Secretary shall give the membership not less than five days' notice of a membership meeting by mail, by email, or by publication on the Guild Website; except that in an emergency the Executive Board may call a special meeting on 24 hours' notice. No motion to reverse or review previous decisions of the membership or the Executive Board shall be acted upon unless it shall have been contained in the notice of the meeting. The Secretary shall include in the meeting notice any motion signed by 10 or more members showing an intention to move for such a review or reversal.

Section 3. (a) A special membership meeting shall be called by the Secretary on instructions of the Executive Board, or on a written petition signed by not less than 10 percent of the membership in good standing at the time of the filing of the petition, or a request from two units properly voted at meetings of the units and delivered by the unit chair to the local Secretary.

(b) The purpose of the special membership meeting shall be stated in the call to the meeting. No other business shall be considered at the special membership meeting.

Section 4. (a) At a regular membership meeting five members present will constitute a quorum.

(b) At any special membership meeting the presence of 10% of the membership in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5. (a) Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order, current edition, with the following exception: Should there be a motion and second to "call the question," a request by the presiding officer for one final comment or observation on the issue at hand shall be granted without a second and heard before the vote to call the question.

### ARTICLE III – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall consist of all elected Local officers, all elected unit chairpersons, and unit delegates and alternates elected by each unit at the rate of one delegate and one alternate for every 25 members of the unit in good standing, or major fraction thereof. A "major fraction thereof" means any amount greater than one-half. In the application of this section, the number of members in good standing in any unit shall be examined by the secretary on the first day of June and first day of December and the number of unit delegates and alternates adjusted accordingly. Where the number of delegates and alternates to which a unit is entitled is increased, the unit shall fill the vacancies in the usual manner. Where the number is decreased, the unit

delegates and alternates shall continue to serve until the next regular unit election. A unit alternate shall not vote at an Executive Board meeting except in the absence of the unit chairperson or a unit delegate from the alternate's unit.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall meet on the second Wednesday of each month except that for good reason another date in the same month may be designated by the Executive Board at a previous meeting or at a special meeting. In the months where the Membership Meeting occurs, the Executive Board may move to an Executive Board session for the purpose of discussing any business before it. This session may occur either before or after the Membership Meeting. Meetings shall be conducted in-person or virtually or a combination thereof. At any meeting of the Local or Executive Board or Committee, people present shall identify themselves for the records of the meeting.

Section 3. Special meetings of the Executive Board shall be called by the President or by the Secretary upon written request of three members of the Executive Board.

Section 4. A quorum at any meeting of the Executive Board shall consist of those members present, but not fewer than five.

Section 5. The Secretary shall record those present at each Executive Board meeting.

Section 6. The Secretary shall take roll call vote on any contested issue at the request of any member and the Secretary shall then record in the minutes the votes of all Board members. The vote of any Board member on any issue shall be recorded at the member's request.

Section 7. The Executive Board shall supervise the handling of all funds except for payments of a strictly routine nature.

Section 8. The Executive Board shall have general direction of all Local officers and employees. The Executive Board shall have the sole power to speak publicly or issue press statements for the Guild but may, on majority vote, designate the President, Secretary, or other elected board member to do so, as the need arises.

Section 9. Executive Board meetings shall be open to all members of the Local. Guests may not take the floor at Executive Board meetings without permission of the Board.

#### ARTICLE IV – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. (a) The President shall preside at all membership meetings and Executive Board meetings and shall supervise other officers and employees in the exercise of their respective

duties. The President shall sign all membership cards. The President shall appoint all committees with the approval of the Executive Board, shall have the authority to remove committee appointees for cause, and shall serve as an ex-officio member of every committee.

(b) The President shall have authority to send an initial Guild strike contribution not exceeding \$100 without Executive Board approval in any Guild strike situation that occurs between Executive Board meetings.

Section 2. The First Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of that officer. The Secretary or the Treasurer, in the order designated, shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President and First Vice President.

Section 3. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the Local's records other than financial, shall conduct routine correspondence of the Local other than financial and such other correspondence as may be directed by the Executive Board and the Local, and shall keep accurate minutes of membership meetings and Executive Board meetings. The minutes shall be presented for approval at each subsequent membership meeting.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds of the Local under the direction of the Executive Board, except that no authorization shall be required of routine office expenses, equipment expenses not to exceed \$500 (excluding sales tax), sporadic one-time labor organization support, and routine transmission of per-capita funds to TNG. The Treasurer shall report on the Local's finances at all regular meetings of the Local and whenever called upon by the Executive Board or the Local and shall present Local accounts for audit at any time the Executive Board or the Local desires. The Treasurer shall keep complete and accurate records of the membership, their addresses, their email addresses and dues standing. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the application in the Local of the financial provisions of the Constitutions and of these By-Laws.

Section 5. The Local may hire such employees as may be necessary from time to time to carry out the duties of negotiating contracts, organizing new members, and administering the Local's affairs. Recommendations of the Executive Board on the hiring of employees and their salaries shall be subject to approval at the membership meeting.

## ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall appoint a Local Election Committee (LEC) consisting of five local members. Vacancies on the LEC shall also be filled by Executive Board appointment.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall have the authority to establish Election Rules to carry out the provisions of this Article.

Section 3. All elections and referenda conducted under these by-laws shall be supervised and conducted by the LEC. The LEC shall decide all questions and controversies regarding the conduct of the election or referendum or the counting of ballots in accordance with law, these by-laws and applicable constitutional provisions. Any member aggrieved by a decision of the LEC may appeal that decision in accordance with procedures set forth in the CWA Constitution.

Section 4. Membership in good standing for the purpose of voting in referenda and officer elections shall be as defined in Article 1 Section 1 above.

#### Section 5. Schedule of Nominations

- (a) The President, First Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Local shall be elected biennially, in even-numbered years, by secret ballot membership referendum. Nominations for these positions shall be received at the January membership meeting. Prior to the nominating meeting for these offices, the Executive Board may establish additional offices, such as “Co-Vice Presidents” or “Second VP,” to be filled by election for the upcoming term.
- (b) Nomination of unit officers shall be received biennially in January or February of even-numbered years. Those officers include unit chairperson, delegates and alternates to the Local Executive Board and whatever other officers are determined by that unit to be necessary for the operation of the unit.
- (c) Nomination of delegates and alternates to the Guild Sector Conference and CWA Convention shall be received at the March membership meeting in years in which those biennial meetings will be convened.

Section 6. In the event the number of nominees in any election does not exceed the number of members needed to fill the post, the nominee(s) shall be declared elected by acclamation. In the event the number of nominees exceeds the number of members needed to fill any post, the meeting shall defer the election and make provisions for a secret ballot election on not less than 20 days’ notice to the membership.

Section 7. Title IV of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, as Amended (LMRDA) establishes election procedures that must be followed by all unions covered by the Act. The LMRDA is administered and enforced by the Department of Labor (DOL). The LMRDA requires a secret ballot vote for local officers and Executive Committee members. As of the 2024 amendments to these bylaws, the DOL does not recognize any form of on-line voting as adequately protecting the secrecy of the ballot. In the event the DOL revises its position and recognizes some method of digital voting as sufficient to meet the privacy standards of the LMRDA, the Executive Board is authorized to implement a digital voting system, in conformance with DOL and LMRDA standards, consistent with the requirements in this Article for paper balloting.

Section 8. Elections shall be held not less than 30 days, nor more than 45 days, after the nominations meeting.

Section 9. In any local or unit election, when the number of nominees exceeds the number to be elected, the meeting shall defer to a secret ballot election and schedule an election date. Not less than 20 days prior to the election, the Local shall mail to each eligible member a list of qualified candidates, together with notice of the time and place of election. This notice will be mailed to the address on file with the Local. If the election is to be held by mail, mailing the ballot shall satisfy this notice requirement.

Section 10. Ballots shall be counted no fewer than 7 days nor more than 21 days after the date of distribution. There shall be no cumulative voting.

Section 11. No write-in votes will be counted.

Section 12. The LEC shall tally the ballots in all elections and notify the membership of its tentative certification of the results by posting on workplace bulletin boards and the Guild website as soon as practicable following the ballot count. Absent a challenge to the election, the LEC's certification of the results shall become final 10 days after the tentative certification is issued.

Section 13. Local officers, Executive Committee members and unit officers shall take office at the meeting immediately following the final certification of the election and shall hold office for two years, or until their successors are elected in the next biennial election.

Section 14. Vacancies in the post of Local officer, Executive Committee member and unit officer shall be filled by a vote of the eligible membership, except that the President, with the approval of the Executive Board, may appoint a member to fill the vacancy if the unserved balance of the term is five months or less. If the unserved balance of the term is more than five months, an election will ensue according to these bylaws.

Section 15. Prior to the nominations, the local EB shall determine the number of delegates and alternates to be elected for each meeting, up to the maximum allowed under the unions' constitutions. The number of delegates approved by the EB may be lower than the maximum allowed under the unions' constitutions.

Section 16. In the event that the number of nominees exceeds the number of delegates or alternates to be elected, the meeting shall defer the election and make provisions for a secret ballot election according to the provisions of this article.

Section 17. The delegates and alternates shall be declared elected and serve in the order determined by the number of votes each nominee received. If alternates are elected in the absence of a contest, the March membership meeting that elects them shall determine the order in which they serve.

Section 18. (a) Delegates shall have necessary expenses to the Convention paid by the Local. The membership may, at the nominating meeting, also vote to pay necessary expenses of a specified number of alternates to the TNG and CWA conventions, even if they are not taking the place of an elected delegate.

(b) The local shall reimburse members for regular wages lost from their bargaining unit job while attending and traveling to and from these meetings. A member required by their employer to

take vacation time to attend the meeting will be reimbursed by the local for the equivalent of the wages paid for vacation they were required to use to attend these meetings. The EB shall also determine a per diem for meals which may consider Federal employee rates set for the city where the meeting is held, and that per diem shall be paid by the local.

Section 19. No delegate or alternate shall be bound by a delegation unit rule in speaking or voting.

Section 20. Delegates to other organizations with which the Local is affiliated shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Board.

#### ARTICLE VI – REFERENDA

Section 1. Any matter to be decided by the Local, which is not precluded from consideration by another provision of these by-laws, may be submitted to a referendum of the membership by either the Local membership meeting or the Executive Board and shall be submitted to such a referendum upon a petition signed by not less than 10 percent of the membership in good standing at the time of the filing of the petition.

Section 2. Provisions for the holding of a referendum shall be made by the Executive Board and shall take the form of a vote by mail. No ballot shall be mailed to a member not in good standing at the time of the mailing of the ballots, and all members shall be given 15 days' notice in advance of any referendum by mail.

#### ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. An applicant for membership shall submit a written and signed application to the Executive Board and final action upon any application shall be by the Executive Board, subject to appeal as provided by the Constitutions. The names of new member applicants shall be read aloud, and, upon approval, the Local President shall sign all membership cards. The Executive Director or General Counsel or other person designated by the Executive Board shall collect, preserve and maintain original membership cards after full color scanning each card and preserving the electronic file in a readable format.

Section 2. (a) Good standing requirements of the Constitutions in respect to dues shall apply equally to initiation fees payments, even if initiation fees are waived and paid from the treasury.

(b) Members who have become unemployed for any reason may remain members in good standing for one year, or the time period designated on the rehire list, whichever is shorter, so long as they pay dues in accordance with Article XI, Section 1(b). Upon learning of

members' unemployment, the chair of the unit shall inquire whether the member wishes to remain in good standing.

(c) Members of units who have signed membership cards but have not yet ratified a first contract shall be deemed members in good standing upon payment of Full Dues as described in Art. 18.2(c) of the Guild Constitution. Upon ratification of a first contract those members will pay the dues described for members in Article XI, Section 1 (a)(1) below.

Section 3. (a) Reinstatement fees are equal to initiation fees.

(b) Members unemployed for periods longer than described in Section 2 of this article may seek reinstatement or transfer to General Press membership through the procedure outlined in this article, Section 1.

## ARTICLE VIII – COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Section 1. Negotiators in collective bargaining on behalf of the Local or any of its units shall be selected by the Executive Board. Negotiations shall be open to members of the unit.

Section 2. The terms of a proposed contract will be submitted to the NewsGuild Contracts Committee for approval to ratify, then to the unit membership for ratification. Ratification of the proposed contract shall require a majority of votes cast. The Executive Board shall be provided with a copy of the ratified contract without delay.

## ARTICLE IX – DISCIPLINE

The Guild constitution, Article 15.1 assigns control of Member discipline to the CWA Constitution.

The discipline of the employees of the Local is a separate matter to be addressed according to individualized employment situations. The President shall preside over any such disciplinary action unless the President has a conflict of interest, at which time Article IV Section 2 will apply as to the designation of a presiding officer. The presiding officer shall seek review and recommendations by the Personnel Committee. Any employee disciplinary actions taken shall also be guided by relevant employee policy statements adopted by the local.

## ARTICLE X – DUES



Section 1. (a) Dues shall be payable monthly by the last day of each month and graduated in accordance with the wages of members as follows:

- (1) The normal dues schedule shall be 1.8% of regular wages. The dues amount may be increased solely by member vote in a secret ballot in accordance with the procedures for referenda in Article VI. The Executive Board may decrease dues however; the dues amount shall never be less than the Minimum Dues Schedule set forth in Section 2(c) of Article XVIII of The NewsGuild – CWA Constitution.
- (2) In the event dues levels shall change, in accordance with the Constitutions or these By-Laws, a new dues schedule shall be prepared and distributed to the membership.

(b) For unemployed members, dues shall be \$1.00 per month. The Executive Board can waive the payment of the dues by unemployed members.

(c) For members working in a shop not under Guild contract<sup>1</sup> and earning \$50.00 per week or more, dues shall be \$120 per year.

(d) For members of the General Press unit, dues shall be an amount not less than the per capita dues payment for such members set by CWA or \$120, whichever is greater.

(e) Retiree members shall, upon their request, be permitted to become members of the General Press unit and pay annual dues as stated in subparagraph (d) of this Article XI.

(f) For all paragraphs under this Article X, the extent of membership rights the local extends to people who are not paying the full dues rate and are not a recognized exception under Article 18.2(e) of the Guild constitution.

Section 2. Each applicant admitted to membership shall pay an initiation fee and one month's dues, unless the applicant demonstrates they have signed up for payroll deduction of dues when they apply for membership. The initiation fee shall be \$3.00 for applicants covered by a Guild contract, \$3.00 for reinstatement to membership and \$1.00 for applicants not covered by a Guild contract. The Executive Board can waive the payment of the fee by the applicant and pay the fee from the treasury.

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<sup>1</sup> Guild constitution Art. 14 states organizing members have no dues obligations. Section 1(c) allows locals to determine what rights organizing members have at the local level. Section (d) 1 provides organizing members full membership rights only with the payment of full dues as described in Art. 18.2(c).

Section 3. The rates of Local dues and initiation fees may be increased only by majority vote of members in good standing in a referendum, notice of which shall be given 30 days in advance and shall state the intent to vote upon such dues question in the referendum.

Section 4. The Local may, by a majority vote by secret ballot of the members in good standing, at a membership meeting levy an assessment of not more than \$1.00 per member per week. Notice of such meeting shall be given in accordance with Article II, Section 2, and shall state the intention to vote on the proposed assessment at the meeting.

Section 5. The Local shall establish and maintain a Local Defense Fund by depositing to this fund not less than 5 percent of members' monthly dues payments. Expenditures from the Defense Fund shall be made only to support a local strike or other defense activity, or other activities of an emergency nature, to contribute to other unions, and to pay assessments levied by CWA.

Section 6. All monies collected on behalf of or in the name of the Local, except those collected for TNG or another branch of TNG, shall be the property of the Local.

#### ARTICLE XI – FINANCE

Section 1. (a) The Treasurer shall report the Local's finances at all regular meetings of the membership and Executive Board. The Treasurer shall present the accounts for audit within a reasonable time following a request by the Executive Board or the membership.

(b) The Executive Board shall cause an annual audit of all the Local's books and funds to be conducted by a professional accountant designated by the Board. Such audits shall be made available to the membership of the Local and a copy of the annual audit shall be sent to the International Executive Board within 30 days of its completion.

Section 2. (a) The Executive Board prior to its December meeting shall provide a budget for the Local's financial operation for the following year. The proposed budget for the following year shall be submitted for approval at the January membership meeting.

(b) The budget shall provide for such expenditures necessary for the operation of the Local. The form of the annual audit shall be used as a guide in the preparation of the budget.

(c) No funds other than those provided in the budget shall be used for any item listed without approval of the Executive Board.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall determine in which bank, or banks, the funds of the Local shall be deposited, and among which accounts they shall be distributed.

Section 4. The local president, treasurer, executive director and one other person designated by the Executive Board shall be established as authorized signatories to the Guild's accounts. Two signatures will be required on all checks and any digital transfer of local funds.

Section 5. The local will pay the premium for Local officers and staff to be bonded in amounts required by federal law, as provided in the CWA Constitution.

## ARTICLE XII - COMMITTEES

Section 1. (a) The following committees shall be appointed by the President in accordance with Article IV, Section 1(a):

(b) Finance: Its duties shall be to supervise the audit of the Local's funds, to supervise the preparation of the annual budget, to study and make recommendations on appeals for funds, and to supervise all drives for funds.

(c) Guild Communications: Its duties shall be to supervise the publication of the Guild website and to supply news of the Local regularly to the Guild Reporter, to the labor press, to area newspapers, and to advise other labor organizations in press relations and publications.

(d) Personnel: Its duties shall be to study and make recommendations on the hiring of employees, personnel policies and procedures, and on employees' salaries. The committee shall also be responsible for nominating a slate of candidates for delegates to convention to the membership, and to recommend the size of the convention delegation. In doing so, the committee will consider the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

(e) By-Laws, Legal Affairs and Professional Concerns: Its duties shall be to maintain these By-Laws in accordance with the union's constitutions and convention policies by preparing and recommending amendments as required. The committee shall also be responsible for dealing with the professional concerns of members as they arise and making recommendations to the Executive Board.

(f) Elections and Special Events: Its duties shall be to conduct Local elections and referenda. The committee shall also plan and administer the Stick-O-Type<sup>2</sup>, Guild Service Award<sup>3</sup>, upcoming conventions and special events.

(g) Office and Technology: Its duties shall be to supervise, study and make recommendations concerning the Local's office, furnishings, office machinery, utilities and meeting places.

(h) Human Rights, Health and Safety: Its duties shall be to monitor and research human rights abuses and health and safety problems in the workplace and make recommendations for their alleviation; and to make the Executive Board aware of human rights and health and safety laws affecting the workplace.

(i) Solidarity Team: Its duties shall be to develop, promote and sustain a program to increase member engagement within units, the local, the international union and the labor movement and to build knowledge and skills for internal and external organizing, contract negotiations and enforcement.

(j) Organizing Committee: Its duties shall be to research organizing opportunities, develop member-organizers and guide staff and prospective members through the development organizing campaigns for new units.

Section 2. Special committees may be appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Board from time to time to consider matters not covered in the assignments of the standing committees.

Section 3. Standing and special committees shall report as the Executive Board may direct.

### ARTICLE XIII – POLITICAL CANDIDATES / STATEMENTS

The Chicago News Guild shall refrain from endorsing political candidates, financially or otherwise. Likewise, the Chicago News Guild shall refrain from making political statements. Nothing in these by-laws will bar individual Guild members from exercising their individual rights in a political or activist arena, or collectively through the Communications Workers of America, or through their

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<sup>2</sup> The "Stick-O-Type" Award is a CNG Award for the best public service or investigative reporting. Ray Hanania, John Schrag, and Ben Joravsky won it in 1987.

<sup>3</sup> The Guild Service award is known as the Charles B. Dale Guild Service Award, last awarded in 2019 to this local's past Local President Grace Catania.

individual Guild units so long as it is made clear that they are not representing the entire Chicago News Guild.

The Executive Board shall encourage all members to freely express themselves on all Guild issues through personal appearances and letters. Such communications shall be received by the Executive Committee, and made a part of the record, so long as the rules of decorum are met. Unlike formal petitions designed to call for meetings, as otherwise referred to in Article II of these By-Laws, “personal appearance and letters” means any expression of the sentiment of members shall be received as correspondence, without any minimum number of signatures.

#### ARTICLE XIV – AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended by any membership meeting upon submission of the proposed amendment by the Executive Board upon its own motion or by petition signed by not less than 20 percent of the membership not less than 10 days prior to the meeting, with notice of the time and place of the meeting.

#### ARTICLE XV – INTERPRETATIONS

These By-Laws shall be interpreted by the Executive Board subject to appeal to the membership meeting, to the Sector Executive Council and the next TNG Convention. Questions of procedure not covered by The NewsGuild-CWA Constitution, TNG Convention decision or these By-Laws, shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order, current edition.

#### THE CHICAGO NEWS GUILD

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