



**Constitution
Of
The Virginia Baptist State Convention, Inc.**

Ratified – May 15, 2018



Constitution of THE VIRGINIA BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION, INC.

ARTICLE I – Name

This body shall be called “The Virginia Baptist State Convention, Inc.” The abbreviated form of its name shall be VBSC.

ARTICLE II – Objectives

The objectives of this body shall be as follows:

Section 1. The Convention shall promote and support Home and Foreign Missions, Christian Education, Ministerial Relief, Social Justice and collaboration with other Christian organizations to promote and advance the Kingdom of God.

Section 2. The Convention shall support and promote the Children’s Home of Virginia Baptist, the Virginia University of Lynchburg and other Baptist institutions.

ARTICLE III – Time and Place

This Convention shall meet annually on Tuesday after the second Sunday in May at 9:00 A.M. at the place previously specified by the body, or in the interim of its meetings, by its Executive Board.

ARTICLE IV – Membership

The membership of this Convention shall be composed of Delegates, Individual members and Life members, the basis of which shall be as follows:

Section 1. Any **Baptist Church, Association** or **Sunday School Union** of Virginia, the border areas of North Carolina or the District of Columbia may be represented in this body by the payment of the advertised Annual registration fee as is set annually by the Executive Board.

Section 2. Any member in good standing in an acceptable Baptist church may become an **Individual Member** or **Life Member** of this body upon the payment of the advertised amount. This money shall be used for Convention expenses. Individual Members and Annual Members may have voice but no vote.

Section 3. Churches, Associations or Sunday School Unions applying for membership in this body shall be required to give evidence of their faith and practice in Baptist doctrines. Any Church or other organization of this body declaring contrary to the tenets, sacred or secular, forfeits its membership and subjects its name to expungement from the Convention roll.

Section 4. Voting Delegates. Each Church, Association or Sunday School Union is entitled to 10 voting delegates, four of which are included when the full registration fee is paid. Each of the additional six voting delegates will be registered by a fee set annually by the Executive Board. Each Church, Association or Sunday School Union is entitled to the same number of Delegates at the Annual and Mid-year Sessions.

ARTICLE V – Officers

Section 1. The Elected Officers of this body shall be:

- President
- Vice-President At-Large
- 1st Vice President
- 2nd Vice President
- 3rd Vice President
- Recording Secretary
- Assistant Secretary (2)
- Statistician
- Treasurer
- Assistant Treasurer (2)
- Auditor
- Historian
- Parliamentarian

All of whom shall be elected to serve a 3 year term and shall not succeed themselves after having served three consecutive years in that office. At the end of the 3rd year, the office of President shall vacate and all Vice Presidents shall ascend to the next tier of leadership. An election will be held to fill the 3rd Vice President office and any other vacancies.

Section 2. Other Officers of the body shall be:

- The Moderator of an Association affiliating with this body shall also be Vice President of this Convention, and shall be known as General Vice-Presidents.

Section 3. Election of Officers

- A. The Officers shall be elected by the Delegates of the Convention at a meeting during the Annual Session designated for that purpose. No person shall be elected or serve as an officer who is not a Delegate of the Convention and in good standing with the constituent entity of which they are a Delegate (church, association, Sunday school union). The Nominating Committee shall prepare the ballot and/or slate of nominations. Each candidate will be allowed to declare their candidacy for only one office. Each person to be considered a candidate for an office in the Virginia Baptist State Convention shall announce their candidacy by the February Executive Board meeting prior to the scheduled election. Nominations from the floor are always permitted.

- B. Only members of Annually Registered Churches of the Virginia Baptist State Convention, Inc. may vote or hold elected office in the Convention or any of its Auxiliaries.
- C. The Executive Board shall prescribe the nomination, campaign and election process. The parliamentarian will be the preliminary arbiter of disputes based on the New Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches with final judgment on such to be made by the Convention acting as a Committee of the Whole.

ARTICLE VI – Duties of Officers

Section 1. The **President** shall preside over this body, preserve order and see that the purposes of this convention are perfected. He shall decide all questions for consideration; ascertain and announce the decision, which decision shall be silently submitted to unless, by an appeal to be reserved by a two-thirds vote of those present. He shall appoint all committees. He shall strictly enforce the rules of this body, having no vote himself, except to break a tie. He shall see that each meeting is opened and closed with prayer.

Section 2. The rules governing the President shall be applied to any **Vice-President** in the chair. The Vice-presidents shall be charged with the responsibility of working with the President in planning all activities of the Convention; build and promote the Convention and the Convention membership. Each Vice-President shall preside over all meetings in his or her regions and serve as directed by the President.

Section 3. Recording Secretary shall record and publish the Minutes of all Convention and Executive Board meetings; must reside in the Commonwealth of Virginia and shall serve as the Registered Agent of the Convention.

Section 4. The **Statistician** shall collect, report and publish in the Minutes of the Convention. Annually, the statistics of this body, along with highlights of other Baptists of our state and country.

Section 5. The **Treasurer** of this Convention shall receive all funds contributed to the body and hold all deeds and bequeathment donations. The Treasurer shall pay out all money as specified by the instructions of the body.

Section 6. The **Auditor** of this Convention shall audit the annual accounts of its Treasurer and the accounts of all Auxiliaries, or any other entities of the Convention, as deemed necessary. The Auditor shall be Chairman of the Auditing Committee which shall be appointed annually to assist him.

ARTICLE VII – Boards and Departments

This convention shall have the following **Boards**;

- Executive
- Corporate
- Home Missions
- Foreign Missions
- Evangelism
- Christian Education

The duties of which are hereinafter set forth.

This convention shall have the following **Departments**;

- Moderators
- Music
- Women in Ministry
- Young Pastors & Ministers
- Youth and Young Adult

The duties of which are set forth by the President.

The President shall appoint, and define the scope of work of Boards, Departments, Commissions and Committees, from time to time, as needed for the work of the Convention.

Section 1. The **Executive Board** shall be composed of the following officers; the President, the Vice President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, the Recording Secretary the Treasurer, the Auditor, the Statistician, the Presidents of all the Convention Auxiliaries, the leaders of all state wide Departments, Board Chairs and Commission Chairs; nine of whom shall constitute a quorum for ordinary business. Annual appointment of up to six at-large members may be appointed by the President according to the needs of the Convention.

When the Executive Board meets it shall have charge of all the business of the Convention and shall exercise general supervision over all the other Boards, Auxiliaries, Departments, Commissions and all other entities of the Convention.

The Executive Board shall meet at least twice annually on a date set by the President.

Section 2. The **Corporate Board** shall be composed of the following officers; the President, Vice President, 1st Vice Presidents, 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, the Recording Secretary, the Treasurer, the Auditor, the Statistician and the Presidents of all the Convention Auxiliaries.

The Corporate Board shall be the legal fiduciary of the Convention; and shall have charge of all the business of the Convention only in cases of extreme emergencies when neither the Convention nor the Executive Board is in session.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of the **Home Mission Board** to establish Baptist churches and mission stations on neglected territories, strengthen weak churches, tone up the spiritual system of churches throughout the State and provide for Disaster Relief.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the **Foreign Mission Board** to establish Baptist churches and encourage mission experiences in neglected territories, strengthen weak churches, tone up the spiritual system of churches internationally and provide for Disaster Relief.

Section 5. The **Evangelism Board** shall have charge of and shall use every possible influence in promoting evangelism.

Section 6. The **Christian Education Board** shall be responsible for providing and encouraging educational experiences that will strengthen the work of the local church.

Section 7. Each Board shall manage the business committed to its trust, and shall be composed of the spiritual, capable and judicious members of the Convention.

Section 8. Five members of each respective Board shall constitute a quorum for ordinary business.

ARTICLE VIII – Auxiliaries

Section 1. The following entities, their successors in identity, purpose or interest, and all other entities or bodies of such nature or similarity situated, whether created and established prior to incorporation of this Convention or at some other time, whether specifically identified in this Constitution or not, are hereby recognized and designated as subsidiary or auxiliary bodies of this Convention, as the case may be, and shall work in harmony with this Convention to contribute to the accomplishment of its mission, fulfillment of its needs, and attainment of its corporate purposes:

- The Women’s Missionary and Educational Auxiliary of the Virginia Baptist State Convention
- The Virginia Baptist State Congress of Christian Education
- The Virginia Baptist State Convention Laymen
- The Virginia Baptist Deacon and Deaconess Auxiliary
- The Virginia Baptist Ushers Fellowship

Section 2. Auxiliary and subsidiary entities and their officers and directors shall not possess or exercise power or control over their affairs and properties independent of the Convention. All such entities shall amend their charters to reflect that they are subordinate and subject to the governance, jurisdiction and control of the Convention.

The Auxiliary shall have the right to elect their own officers, managers and directors, and each and all said auxiliary and subsidiary entities, either at their annual session or at such other time as provided by the by-laws or specified by resolution of the Board of Directors, subject to review and ratification by the Convention acting as Committee.

Section 3. Auxiliary and subsidiary entities and bodies shall submit annual reports of their activities, calendar of events and activities, revenues, and all assets, expenditures and operations to the Convention. These reports shall be received and approved by vote of the Convention.

Section 4. All officers, directors, agents, employees and missionaries of auxiliary and subsidiary entities to this Convention shall be members in good standing of churches affiliated with this Convention.

ARTICLE IX – Faith and Practice

The Holy Bible shall be the supreme rule of faith and practice of this Convention.

Baptist Doctrines as described in commonly held Baptist confessions of faith including, the New Hampshire Confession (1833, 1925), the Baptist Faith and Message (1963, 2000) or similar shall be held the Conventions and all its entities.

ARTICLE X - Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution shall be made at the annual meeting of the Convention by two-thirds vote of the registered delegates; provided twelve months' notice has been given to the proposed amendment.