

# **BREMERTON BASE**

## **UNITED STATES SUBMARINE VETERANS, INCORPORATED**

-Established November 5, 1981 -

BYLAWS

(Revised November 19, 2002)

(Article II Amended May 17, 2005)

(Articles IV, V, VI, VIII & IX Amended October 19, 2010 )

(Articles II, IV, V, VIII & XI Amended October 18, 2011)

(Article VIII Amended October 17, 2015)

(Articles V and VI Amended November 18, 2017 )

The **Bremerton Base** of **United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI)** adopts, in its entirety, the **Constitution** of the national organization of United States Submarine Veterans, Incorporated. Should these bylaws conflict with the USSVI national constitution or bylaws, the latter shall take precedence.

The accepted informal name for the Bremerton Base is **Bremerton Subvets**. Within the USSVI national organization, the base will be officially referred to as the **Bremerton Base**. However, for the sake of clarity in press releases and other communications with the media and outside entities, the base may be referred to as the **Bremerton Chapter of USSVI**.

### **ARTICLE I: RULES OF ORDER**

The general procedures for Bremerton Base meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the standard parliamentary procedures established in the current edition of **Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised**.

### **ARTICLE II: DUES**

**Section 1: Establishment of Dues** The Board of Directors (E-Board) shall establish the amount for annual dues. (Amended 5-17-05) .

**Section 2: Payment Period** Dues are payable on **January 1st** of each year and remain effective through **December 31st** of the same year.

**Section 3: Arrears and Delinquency** Any member whose dues are in arrears on **February 1st** of the current year shall be dropped from the membership roster. (Amended 10-18-11) .

**Section 4: Base Life Membership** Bremerton Base Life Membership eligibility shall coincide with the current National Life Membership requirements. National Life Membership must be obtained prior to, or simultaneously with, Base Life Membership.

The dues structure for Base Life Memberships is based on the following age brackets:

Age	Rate
Under 45	\$250
45 - 55	\$150
55 - 65	\$100
65 and over	\$50

(Amended 5-17-05)

### **ARTICLE III: BASE MEETINGS**

**Section 1: Regular Meetings** The Bremerton Base shall conduct regular business meetings. The Base Commander shall designate the specific date, time, and location for these meetings.

**Section 2: Quorum** A quorum for the transaction of business at Base meetings shall consist of five percent of the regular members in good standing, including at least two elected officers. Once a quorum has been established, it shall not be broken by the departure of any member.

**Section 3: Special and E-Board Meetings** The Base Commander may call special meetings or E-Board meetings whenever such meetings are deemed warranted.

**Section 4: Voting Rights** Every member in good standing whose name has appeared on the membership roll for at least 15 days is entitled to vote in person at any meeting of the organization.

## **ARTICLE IV: BASE MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1: Regular Membership** Regular membership is restricted to all U.S. personnel designated as "Qualified in Submarines" by the U.S. Navy. Proof of qualification may be challenged and requested by any elected Base Officer. (Amended 10-19-10) .

**Section 2: Founding Members** Founding Members are those individuals who participated in the original establishment of the Bremerton Base in March 1981. They are identified as: Tudor Davis, Thomas Fiacco, Richard Litscher, William Dean, Kenneth Kerns, and Charles Whitlock.

**Section 3: Charter Members** All members in good standing on or before July 17, 1982, shall be known as Charter Members of the Bremerton Base (119 members).

**Section 4: Associate Membership** A person who does not meet the requirements for Regular membership may join as an Associate Member if sponsored by a Regular Member in good standing.

- **Voting Rights:** Associate Members are not eligible to vote in National Elections. However, they may vote in all other Base election activities.
- **Leadership Roles:** Associate Members may serve in Base elected and appointed positions, with the exception of Base Commander and Vice Commander.

**Section 5: Life Members** Any Regular or Associate Member may become a Base Life Member by paying the required Base Life Membership dues.

- **Requirements:** National Life Membership is required prior to, or simultaneously with, obtaining Base Life Membership.
- **Dues:** Refer to Article II, Section 4 for the dues structure.

(Amended 10-19-10 & 10-18-11)

## **ARTICLE V. ELECTED OFFICERS**

### **Section 1: Composition and Authority of the E-Board**

The Executive Board (E-Board) is responsible for the control and general management of the organization's affairs and business.

- **Membership:** The E-Board consists of the immediate Past Base Commander and the currently elected officers: the Base Commander, Vice Commander, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Chief of the Boat.

- **Participation:** Appointed Committee Chairmen and Project Managers are permitted to attend E-Board meetings to provide input; however, they do not have voting privileges.
- **Quorum Requirements:** Three members of the E-Board constitute a quorum. Once a quorum has been established for a meeting, it cannot be broken by the departure of any member.

**Section 2: Responsibilities** The E-Board is responsible for long-range planning regarding recruiting, membership activities, finances, ceremonies, and other organizational goals.

**Section 3: Term of Office** The term of office for all elected officials is two years, or until their successors have been elected. The Base Commander and Vice Commander are prohibited from holding the same office for more than four consecutive years. (Amended 10-19-10)

**Section 4: Meeting Schedule** Regular meetings of the E-Board shall be held prior to general business meetings.

**Section 5: Vacancies** Any vacancy occurring on the E-Board shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by a majority vote of the remaining board members.

**Section 6: Removal from Office** An E-Board member may be removed from the board for cause by a two-thirds vote of the E-Board.

### **Section 7: Travel Reimbursement Policy**

The Bremerton Base will reimburse only one claimant per travel event. This policy may be modified at the discretion of the E-Board.

**A. Representation** For events requiring an official representative (e.g., funerals, memorials, Sailor of the Year ceremonies), the Base Commander shall select the individual to represent the Base.

#### **B. Expense Rates**

- **Mileage:** Paid at a rate of **\$0.40 per mile**.
- **Per Diem:** Provided at a rate of **\$40.00 per day** for official event days only (e.g., one day for a Base visit, two days for a Regional Meeting).

**C. Travel Mode Selection** Members must select the most cost-effective travel mode between ground and air transportation. Authorized individuals will be reimbursed for the lesser of commercial airfare or private travel based on the following criteria:

- **Private Travel:** Reimbursement is based on the E-Board-approved mileage rate. Hotel and per diem are typically not authorized for private travel except for the days of the official USSVI function, unless prior approval is granted by the E-Board.

- **Airline Travel:** Includes airfare (Coach fare only), baggage fees, airport parking, round-trip mileage to/from the airport, and rental car expenses including fuel. The choice of flight should be appropriate for the schedule and the needs of the organization rather than just the lowest available fare.

#### **D. Reimbursement Procedures**

- **Documentation:** A "Request for Reimbursement" must be submitted with all travel receipts and a detailed travel itinerary.
- **Exemptions:** Individual fuel receipts for private vehicles are not required, as mileage is covered by the per-mile rate.

**E. Overnight Stays** The E-Board has the discretion to approve necessary overnight stays and per diem based on travel distance. A "necessary" stay may include instances where a late-day meeting makes it impractical to drive home the same evening.

*(Amended 11-19-17)*

#### **Section 8: Duties of the Base Commander**

The duties of the Bremerton Base Commander shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Executive Leadership:** Act as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Chairman of the Base Executive Board (E-Board).
- **Meeting Oversight:** Authorize the calling of all regular and special meetings and preside over these sessions.
- **Compliance and Governance:** Enforce the organization's Constitution and Bylaws while directing and supervising all Base operations.
- **Official Representation:** Serve as the official representative of the Bremerton Base at formal functions.
- **Appointments:** Submit all appointed officers and committee chairpersons in writing to the E-Board for confirmation.
- **Financial Authorization:** Sign all certificates, notes, drafts, bills of exchange, warrants, or other orders for the payment of funds drawn by the Treasurer, subject to E-Board approval and constitutional provisions.
- **Communication:** Ensure the timely distribution and promulgation of all pertinent information to the Base membership.
- **Committee Participation:** Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees, with the specific exceptions of the Nominations Committee and the Resolution Committee.

- **Succession Planning:** Maintain and keep current a “Turnover Folder” containing all official correspondence, records, and materials, to be passed immediately to their successor.

### **Section 9: Duties of the Base Vice Commander**

The duties of the Bremerton Base Vice Commander shall include, but are not limited to:

- **Executive Support:** Assist the Bremerton Base Commander in the discharge of all official duties.
- **Succession of Command:** Assume the duties, powers, and authority of the Base Commander in the event of their absence, illness, or "call to eternal patrol".
- **Board Participation:** Serve as an active member of the Base Executive Board (E-Board).
- **Committee Leadership:**
  - Act as the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.
  - Serve as a member of the Base Membership Committee.
- **Financial Oversight:** Conduct an audit of the Base financial records every January and submit a report detailing their accuracy or any deficiencies to the E-Board during the February meeting.
- **Succession Planning:** Maintain and keep current a “Turnover” folder containing all official office correspondence, records, and materials, to be passed immediately to their successor.

*(Amended 10-19-10)*

### **Section 10: Duties of the Base Secretary**

The duties of the Bremerton Base Secretary shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Executive Support:**
  - Officiate Bremerton Base matters when required in the absence of both the Base Commander and Vice Commander.
  - Serve as a member of the Base Executive Board (E-Board).
- **Committee Involvement:**
  - Serve as a member of the Base Membership Committee.
  - Act as the Chairman of the Public Relations Committee.

- **Clerical and Record-Keeping Responsibilities:**
  - Serve as the clerk of the Bremerton Base.
  - Act as the custodian of all non-financial records and materials, which remain the property of the Bremerton Base.
  - Maintain permanent records as required by the Articles of Incorporation, the National and Base Constitutions, and these Bylaws.
  - Keep permanent records of the proceedings of all Bremerton Base meetings.
  - Collect and retain all historical records pertaining to the Base and its membership.
- **Election and Voting Oversight:**
  - Prepare and distribute the Base Ballot.
  - Ensure that only Base members in good standing participate in votes regarding organizational business.
- **Correspondence and Succession:**
  - Serve as the official organizational correspondent, forwarding relevant communications to officers and committee chairmen to assist in the performance of their duties.
  - Develop, maintain, and immediately pass on a "Turnover" folder to their successor, containing all office correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to their care.

### **Section 11: Duties of the Base Treasurer**

The duties of the Bremerton Base Treasurer shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Board and Committee Participation:**
  - Serve as a member of the Base Executive Board (E-Board).
  - Serve as a member of the Base Membership Committee.
  - Serve as a member of the Base Ways and Means Committee.
- **Financial Leadership and Custodianship:**
  - Act as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Bremerton Base.
  - Act as the custodian of all financial records for the organization.

- **Financial Management:**
  - Receive and manage the collection of all funds due and payable to the organization.
  - Maintain custody of all organizational funds, ensuring their safekeeping, retention, disbursement, and investment in a manner approved by the E-Board.
  - Maintain financial accounts that are appropriate for the organization's structure and activities, adhering to generally accepted accounting principles.
- **Reporting and Compliance:**
  - Complete the annual summary financial report and forward it to the National Treasurer.
  - Prepare and submit all reports and returns required by federal, state, and local governments, the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and these Bylaws.
  - Ensure the timely disbursement of all appropriate taxes and fees.
- **Succession Planning:**
  - Maintain and keep current a "Turnover" folder containing all official correspondence, records, and materials, to be passed immediately to their successor.

*(Amended 10-19-10)*

## **Section 12: Duties of the Chief of the Boat (COB)**

The duties of the Chief of the Boat shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Meeting Protocol and Order:** Serve as the Master at Arms and Parliamentarian at all meetings. The COB is responsible to the Base Commander for verifying that only members in good standing and bona fide guests are admitted to meetings.
- **Ceremonial Duties:** Symbolically toll the bell for "Lost Boats" during all meetings.
- **Custodianship:** Act as the custodian of all Base ceremonial paraphernalia. (Amended 10-19-10).
- **Event Coordination:** Serve as the official Point of Contact and Officer in Charge (OIC) for the annual Breakfast meeting, Base picnic, and Christmas party. (Amended 10-19-17).

## **ARTICLE VI: APPOINTED BASE OFFICERS OR POSITIONS**

### **Section 1: Appointment and Tenure**

- **Designated Positions:** The appointed officers of the Bremerton Base consist of the Chaplain, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, Storekeeper, and Parade Float Manager.
- **Term of Office:** Their terms begin immediately following confirmation and notification by the Base E-Board.
- **Authority:** These officers serve at the pleasure of the Base Commander and may be removed or replaced at the Commander's discretion.

*(Amended 11-19-17)*

### **Section 2: Base Chaplain**

- **Appointment:** The Base Chaplain is appointed by the Base Commander.
- **Responsibilities:** The Chaplain serves as the primary consultant for all Base matters related to the spiritual life of the membership.
- **Succession:** Upon leaving the position, the Chaplain recommends potential successors to the Base Commander.

### **Section 3: Newsletter Editor**

The "Puget Soundings" Newsletter Editor is appointed by the Base Commander and manages the following duties:

- **Content Management:** Gathers, organizes, and publishes information for the Base newsletter, including taking or soliciting photographs from Base gatherings.
- **Distribution:** Edits, prints, and distributes the newsletter to all paid-up Bremerton Base members and specified entities noted in the National Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM), such as National officers and local veteran organizations.
- **Revenue and Budget:** Solicits advertisements from local businesses, researches cost-cutting measures, and maintains an annual budget account of all transactions to be reported to the Base Commander and E-Board.
- **Records and Succession:** Maintains hard copy and digital archives, manages a business invoice account, and keeps a current "turnover" folder of all official records to be passed to their successor.

*(Amended 10-19-10)*

#### **Section 4: Base Webmaster**

- **Appointment:** The Webmaster is appointed by the Base Commander.
- **Responsibilities:** Maintains the official Base website and serves as a member of the Base Membership and Publicity Committee.

#### **Section 5: Base Storekeeper**

- **Appointment:** The Base Storekeeper is appointed by the Base Commander.
- **Merchandising:** Obtains submarine memorabilia from qualified vendors and solicits sales to Base members to generate revenue for Base financial obligations.
- **Reporting:** Submits a written annual report by June 30th to the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee detailing sales, expenses, profits, and inventory.
- **Record Keeping:** Maintains detailed records of acquisitions and sales by date and keeps a product brochure for member review.
- **Meetings:** Offers a display of products for sale at each Base meeting.

#### **Section 6: Parade Float Manager**

- **Appointment:** The Parade Float Manager is appointed by the Base Commander.
- **Maintenance:** Schedules all upkeep and improvements to the float, ensuring systems are in working order, license plates are current, and a copy of the title is kept on board.
- **Coordination:** Works with the NWRCP OA to ensure the float and shelter remain in good condition and provides repair recommendations.
- **Reporting:** Informs the Base Commander and E-Board of the float's condition.
- **Deployment:** Ensures the float is prepared and ready for all road trips, parades, and displays.

*(Amended 10-19-10)*

### **ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES**

#### **Section 1: Definitions**

- **Standing Committees:** Permanent committees established for ongoing Base functions.

- **Annual Committees:** Committees that are disbanded automatically at the conclusion of the calendar year.
- **Special Committees:** Committees appointed by the Base Commander for a specific, temporary purpose. These are disestablished once their objective is met or if the E-Board deems them no longer necessary.

## Section 2: Standing Committees

The Base Commander shall appoint a Chairperson for all committees and serves as an ex-officio member of every committee.

### A. Scholarship Committee

- **Chairmanship:** Appointed by the Base Commander.
- **Responsibilities:** Manages the annual scholarship project, which includes fundraising, soliciting applicants, and selecting recipients for local awards.
- **National Contribution:** Ensures a donation is made to the National Scholarship Fund.

### B. Membership and Publicity Committee

- **Chairmanship:** Appointed by the Base Commander.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** Responsible for recruiting new members and retaining current ones.
- **Reporting:** Maintains accurate records and provides a membership status report at every business meeting.
- **Promotion:** Publicizes all Bremerton Base events through all available media and communication channels.

### C. Ways and Means Committee

- **Financial Planning:** Establishes the annual budget.
- **Fundraising:** Determines and executes methods to acquire the funds necessary to meet budgeted expenses.

## Section 3: Annual Committees

### Nominations Committee

- **Term:** Expires at the end of each calendar year.
- **Composition:** Consists of three current members appointed by the Base Commander.

- **Leadership:** Chaired by a member appointed by the Base Commander no later than July 1st.

## **ARTICLE VIII: BIENNIAL ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1: Oversight**

The Chairman of the Nominating Committee is responsible for conducting the nomination process for the five elected offices.

### **Section 2: Nomination Process and Timeline**

The election cycle follows a specific schedule to ensure all members have the opportunity to participate:

- **Call for Nominations:** The Chairman of the Nominating Committee must issue a call for nominations for the five elected offices to all members on or before **August 30**.
- **Submission Deadline:** Any member in good standing may submit nominations on or before **October 30**.
- **Nominee Requirements:** All nominees must be members in good standing and must provide consent—either written or oral—confirming they will accept the position and serve if elected.
- **Publication of Candidates:** Once nominations are received, the Chairman shall publish the names of all properly nominated candidates in alphabetical order at least 30 days prior to the election date.
- **Floor Nominations:** Additional nominations may be made from the floor on the day of the election, provided the nominee gives consent to serve.
- **Election and Installation:** Elections are typically held during the **November** business meeting, with new officers installed in **January**.

*(Amended 10-19-10 & 10-18-11)*

### **Section 3: Voting Procedures**

The method of voting depends on the number of candidates for a given position:

- **Contested Elections:** For any position with more than one candidate, voting shall be conducted by secret ballot among attending members in good standing.
- **Uncontested Elections:** If a position has only one candidate, the election may be decided by a simple show of hands from attending members in good standing.

*(Amended 10-18-15)*

## **ARTICLE IX: ORDER OF BUSINESS AT BASE MEETINGS**

**Section 1: Agenda Procedure** The Base Commander shall determine the specific order of business for membership meetings. At a minimum, the following items shall be included as appropriate:

### **I. Opening Rituals and Introductions**

- **Salute to the Flag:** Formal opening with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- **The USSVI Creed:** Recitation of the organization's purpose.
- **Moment of Silence:** Honor for departed shipmates.
- **Tolling of the Boats:** Ceremonial remembrance of submarines lost during the current month.
- **Introduction of Visiting Officers:** Recognition of National, Regional, District, or other visiting Base Officers by name and office. This includes Bremerton Base members currently holding upper-echelon offices.
- **Introduction of Guests:** Welcome for new members, potential members, and guests.

### **II. Administrative and Financial Reports**

- **Secretary's Report:** Reading and approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Presentation of the Base financial status.
- **Committee Reports:** Updates from Standing, Annual, and Special committees.

### **III. Business and Elections**

- **Unfinished Business:** Addressing items carried over from previous meetings.
- **New Business:** Introduction of new resolutions or other organizational business.
- **Special Orders (Elections):**
  1. Accepting nominations from the floor for the election of officers.
  2. Validation and counting of election ballots.
  3. Formal introduction of newly elected officers.

### **IV. Closing**

- **For the Good of the Order:** General comments, announcements, or informal discussion for the benefit of the Base.
- **Adjournment:** Official closing of the monthly business meeting.

*(Amended 10-19-10)*

## **ARTICLE X: FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the organization shall begin on **January 1st** and conclude on **December 31st**.

## **ARTICLE XI: BYLAW AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1: Submission of Amendments** Any member in good standing is authorized to submit recommendations for amending these Bylaws to the Executive Board (E-Board).

**Section 2: Presentation to Membership** All recommended amendments to these Bylaws shall be placed on the Base Commander's docket and read formally to the membership.

**Section 3: Voting and Notification Requirements** These Bylaws may be amended during a general business meeting of the Bremerton Base subject to the following conditions:

- **Vote Threshold:** Approval requires a two-thirds majority vote of the regular members in attendance.
- **Advance Notice:** The membership must be provided with the proposed amendments at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- **Communication Methods:** Notification may be delivered via the Base webpage, newsletter, email, or standard mail.

*(Amended 10-18-11)*

**Section 4: Effective Date** All amendments that are certified as passed shall take effect immediately.

**Section 5: Recording of Results** The Secretary is responsible for recording the specific vote count of any balloting related to these amendments in the official minutes book.