

The P.E.O. Constitution

For new chapters OR for those wanting to know why we do what we do!!!

All references in this program are to the 2013 version with the turquoise cover.

This program is best done with two people: one to read the script and one to hold up the Constitution and read select passages from it. If the references are marked or highlighted ahead of time, the program takes 15 minutes.

(Hold up the Constitution, with your index finger on page 85) This book, called the “Constitution Bylaws and Standing Rules of the P.E.O. Sisterhood,” governs our organization. It has a detailed 17- page index in the back (*show pages 85-101*) to help you quickly find answers to your P.E.O. questions.

(Show page 1) Our Constitution was adopted October 13, 1893, at Waterloo, Iowa. Since then, it has undergone four major revisions.

(Show page 7). The book begins with the Articles of Incorporation. P.E.O. is a corporation based in Des Moines, Iowa, of which we are all members.

(Show pages 3 and 4, table of contents). The Constitution begins with an Introduction and is divided into 3 parts – the International Chapter, the State Chapter and the Local Chapter.

Introduction

(Turn to page 11 and read Articles I, II and III.)

You probably noticed that Article III – OBJECT AND AIMS is missing the last paragraph that we recite during our chapter meetings. They used to be the same, but in 1961, in order to qualify as a tax-exempt philanthropic organization under the IRS Code, we couldn't print the last paragraph in the Constitution. The last paragraph has always been in our President's Book.

(Read from page 11, Article IV.) Our star insignia was registered with the U.S. Patent Office on March 4, 1964.

Part One

(Show page 13). Part One deals with the International Chapter, which governs the entire Sisterhood. *(Read from page 13, Article I, Sections 1, 2 and 3.)*

Our P.E.O. projects—the P.E.O. Educational Loan Fund, Cottey College, P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship Fund, P.E.O. Program for Continuing Education, P.E.O.

Scholar Awards and P.E.O. STAR Scholarship—are under the jurisdiction of the International Chapter.

Our state sends delegates to Convention of International Chapter every biennium according to Part I, Article II (*Read from page 13, the last paragraph.*)

In addition to spelling out the requirements for Convention of International Chapter and for the Executive Board of International Chapter, the finance section spells out our international dues (*Read from page 21, Article VIII, Section 1 paragraph one.*)

Part Two

(*Show page 25.*) Part Two deals with the state chapters of P.E.O. There must be at least nine local chapters in a state for International to organize a state chapter.

Each state is required to have an annual convention. (*Read from page 26, Article III, Section 2. Also read the paragraph right above that starts with “Delegates...”*)

The officers of the state chapter are president, vice president, organizer, treasurer and secretary. To be eligible for the state board, you must have served as president of a local chapter for one term and be a member of convention. (*Read from page 28, Article VI, Section 1 first sentence.*)

The purpose of official visits to chapters is spelled out in the organizer’s duties (*Read from page 31, Article VIII, Section 4 second paragraph.*) Most visits today focus on encouraging chapter health.

Part Three

(*Show page 36.*) Part Three of the Constitution governs the local chapter. Local chapters are organized by the state chapter (*Read from page 36, Article I, Section 2 sentence one.*)

(*Read from page 38, Article II, Section 1.*) Part Three of the Constitution also defines members – active resident, active nonresident and inactive – and provides meeting requirements (*Read from page 39, Article III, Section 1 paragraph one.*)

Part Three also spells out how to conduct nominations and elections, the duties of officers, how to transfer or be reinstated and how to become a member (*Read from page 44, Article VI, Sections 1, 2, 4 and Section 10 paragraph one.*)

In the section on Finance, it says “All net income shall be used exclusively for educational and/or charitable purposes.” (*Read from page 47, Article VIII, Section 2, next to last paragraph.*)

Lastly, Part Three of the Constitution spells out the purpose of Reciprocity Groups (*Read from page 51, Article XIII, Section 2*).

If you want to change some of these P.E.O. requirements, you can propose an amendment to the Constitution. (*Read from page 53, Article XVII, first paragraph plus the first three lines of (a), and from page 54 next to last paragraph*).

Bylaws

(Hold up page 55.) The Bylaws were adopted in 1919 and have been amended at every Convention of International Chapter since then.

The Bylaws provide the details governing the Administrative Staff under the Executive Board of International Chapter, the various International committees, the P.E.O. Supply Department, The P.E.O. Record, the six international P.E.O. projects and the P.E.O. Foundation.

Standing Rules

(Hold up page 81.) There are only three pages of Standing Rules. Standing Rules to note are #2 - Circularization (*Read from page 82, #2 paragraph one*), and #16 – Ceremony of Initiation Booklets (*Read from page 83, #16*).

In closing, this book (*hold it up closed*) has held the unity of P.E.O. for many years. It provides the framework for consistency between the 5,900 chapters in the United States and Canada, allowing our 235,000 active members to feel at home in P.E.O. wherever they go.