



NATIONAL CONVENTION GUIDELINES HANDBOOK

*(NCGH)
Revised Edition
January 2024*

PREFACE

This manual contains quotes extracted from the Ruritan National Bylaws (**RNB**), policies adopted by the Delegates to a National Convention and recorded in the Annual Convention Minutes (**ACM**), policies adopted by the National Board of Directors (**NBOD**) and recorded in the NBOD Minutes (**BDM**), and general guidelines for the operation of Ruritan National Conventions.

Paragraphs related to the Bylaws are referenced to the specific Article and Section from which they were extracted. Policies are referenced to a statement showing the date and document which records the adoption of the policy.

Requirements for conventions set forth in the Bylaws are directive in nature and must be followed. Policies adopted by the **NBOD** will be adhered to where and when possible but depending on circumstances can be suspended with the approval of the **NBOD**. Policies adopted by delegates to a national convention will be adhered to and may only be changed by delegates to another national convention.

Paragraphs in *italics* are guidelines and may be applied as written, deviated from, or ignored at the discretion of the National Convention Program Committee (**NCPC**).

A revision log is placed at the end of this document as an index of changes made to this document since the previous version.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Ruritan National Bylaws **ARTICLE VII Section 1.** reads as follows: “Ruritan National shall hold an annual Ruritan National Convention at which time the officers, directors, and foundation trustee shall be elected. The date and place of Ruritan National Conventions will be determined by the **NBOD**.”

Call to Convention

The call to convention, giving notice of the place, date, and time of the convention, shall be published in the spring, summer, and fall editions of the Ruritan National Magazine.”

Purpose

The primary purpose of the annual meeting is to conduct the business of Ruritan National. In addition, it presents an opportunity to motivate the delegates and attendees and provide worthwhile recognition to clubs and members for accomplishments. Benefits from the conventions to the general membership may depend largely on the impression that each delegate transmits to the club he/she represents.

Annual Report

The Ruritan National Staff, under the supervision of the Executive Director of Ruritan National, will prepare an Annual Report, which will include pertinent statistics for the specific year to include Ruritan National Foundation statistics. A copy of the Annual Report will be distributed to all delegates attending the convention.

APPEAL

Decisions of the National Board of Directors (NBOD)

The Ruritan National Bylaws, **ARTICLE VIII Section 2. Duties:** reads as follows:

“A. Power and Authority. The governing body of Ruritan National shall be the BOD and the decisions of the BOD in all matters shall be final, subject to an appeal by a delegate at the Ruritan National Convention provided, that a written copy of said appeal shall be delivered to the Ruritan National Executive Director at least 30 days prior to the convention. The decision of the BOD shall only be reversed by two-thirds vote of the registered delegates.

AUCTION

National Foundation

*The Ruritan National Foundation may hold an auction, to include a silent auction, during the Ruritan National Convention at a time, date, and location approved by the **National Convention Program Committee (NCPC)**. All proceeds will become a part of the funds of the Ruritan National Foundation.*

AWARDS

*All pertinent awards should be presented at appropriate meetings as determined by the **NCPC**.*

BRIEFING

National Convention Participants

*At a scheduled date, time, and place, the convention participants may be briefed by the **NCPC** chair with reference to their assigned task. All convention participants, regardless of their appointed roles in the convention, are to be informed by the **NCPC** chair that they are to perform*

*only their specific assignments. For example, participants who give invocations and/or lead in the pledge allegiance to the flag are not to give sermons and/or patriotic speeches. Time limits, as determined by the **NCPC**, will apply to all participants, speakers, and entertainment.*

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Preliminary ceremonies, such as the opening ceremonies are not regarded as business. Before a convention can transact any business, it must officially form itself into a single voting body, which is done at the first business meeting. The first order of business will contain reports of the Credentials, Standing Rules, and Program Committees.

In the event amendments to the Bylaws are to appear on the ballot, a time will be made available during the first business meeting for discussion by the delegates. The first business meeting should be held early on in the convention.

Additional business meetings will be held at the discretion of the **NCPC** and the Credentials Committee is required to report at each business meeting.

Presentation of Rudy Bears or other items, such as food and clothing, will be presented to deserving persons/organizations at an appropriate meeting as determined by **NCPC**.

BYLAWS

Amendments at National Convention

The Ruritan National Bylaws, **ARTICLE XVI** reads as follows: "Amendments to these bylaws shall only be made at a Ruritan National Convention by two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting, providing the proposed amendments shall have been presented to and approved by the BOD. Notice of any proposed amendment approved by the BOD shall be given to all Clubs at least 30 days before the opening of the next scheduled Ruritan National Convention."

CAMPAIGN

Paraphernalia

NBOD members and Foundation Trustees should be discouraged from adorning themselves with campaign paraphernalia at the Ruritan National Convention. **(See BDM Aug 1999, motion no. 12)**

CANCELLATIONS AND NO SHOWS

That all "cancellations", which are not received within seven (7) days of the Ruritan National Convention start date, and "no shows" be charged for meals that have been arranged and guaranteed by the **NCPC**. **(See BDM Apr 2008, motion no. 7)** **COMMITTEES/CHAIRS**
NATIONAL CONVENTION

CANDIDATES

Potential

Workshop(s) shall be offered at the Ruritan National Convention for potential candidates seeking leadership roles at district and national levels.
(See BDM Aug 1999)

CAUCUSES BY DISTRICTS

Caucuses by districts at Ruritan National Conventions are optional and are not required. Appearances before caucuses by candidates for national office are voluntary. (See BDM 1988, motion no. 23)

COMMITTEES/CHAIRS-NATIONAL CONVENTION

Appointment Of

*Appointments of committees and chairs shall be a joint decision of the National President, Convention Chair, the two aides, and the Executive Director who will serve as an advisor. Present **NBOD** members should be considered for assignment to key convention committees and appointments.*

Awards Committee

*The National Awards Committee will consist of the three (3) members of the **NBOD** Advancement Committee, one of which will be appointed as chair. Expenses are not reimbursed for members of this committee.*

DUTIES

*Will work closely with **NCPC** chair and assigned Ruritan National staff to assure all pertinent awards, certificates, and plaques are in place. Will carefully examine all national awards, certificates, and plaques to assure they are arranged properly. Assist with the presentation of awards, certificates and plaques at the appropriate meetings at the Ruritan National Convention.*

Bylaws Committee

*The Bylaws Committee will consist of the three (3) members of the **NBOD** Bylaws Committee.*

DUTIES

This committee will sit in session the second day of the convention at a prearranged time and location. When an amendment is proposed to the Ruritan National Convention in the proper manner, the Bylaws Committee, while sitting as a body at the convention, will determine the wishes of the membership and shall make such other investigations as may be necessary for their recommendations to the Ruritan National Convention. The committee shall have no power to change or alter the proposed amendments but may present its recommendations when the proposed amendments are presented to the convention.

Credentials & Registration

*The Credentials and Registration Committee will consist of ten (10) members appointed by the **NCPC**. The committee will be made up of directors and supplemented with district governors, and/or spouses of directors or district governors. The **chair** and **co-chair** need not be a director or district governor and would be subject to be reimbursed for reasonable and ordinary expenses. Expenses for the remaining eight (8) members will otherwise be accounted for.*

DUTIES

- *The committee is to be responsible for registering those attending the convention and collecting, as necessary, registration fees, as set by the **NBOD**.*
- *The Ruritan National Executive Director and/or National treasurer shall periodically collect these funds from the Credentials and Registration Committee each day.*
- *The committee shall verify the credentials of the delegates.*

Flag Ceremony

The Flag Ceremony Committee will consist of three (3) members appointed by the NCPC, one of which will be appointed chair. Expenses reimbursed for chair only.

DUTIES

- *As part of the Vesper Service held on the first day of the Ruritan National Convention, this committee shall be responsible for arranging the presentation to the convention of the United States Flag, the Ruritan Flag, and the flags of the various states represented in Ruritan.*
- *The committee will also present an appropriate ceremony at the rostrum and the overall presentation of the flags and ceremony should last no more than 25 minutes.*

Nominations

The Ruritan National Bylaws, **ARTICLE VI Nominations and Elections Section 1. Nominations**, reads as follows:

- A. "Nominating Committee.** Nominations for officers, directors, and foundation trustee shall be made at the Ruritan National Convention by the nominating committee.
- B. Additional Nominations.** Additional nominations for all officers, directors, and foundation trustee may be made from the floor of the Ruritan National Convention.
- C. Order on the ballot.** All nominees' names shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order under the office to be filled."

This committee shall consist of three (3) members, one who will be appointed chair. The members are appointed by the National President-Elect in January of the year prior to the convention at which they are to serve. (See BDM Jan 2015 motion no. 3A)
Expenses are not reimbursable for members of this committee, unless otherwise accounted for.

DUTIES

- *Shall nominate all qualified candidates who are running for national office and foundation trustee.*
- *Required to select a candidate for each office.*
- *Candidates must meet with this committee on the first day of the convention at a prearranged time and location.*
- *Will properly instruct the nominees to include providing guidelines regarding campaigning and display of campaign material.*
- *At the first business meeting of the convention, the committee will present the nominees to the delegates.*
- *As nominees are presented, they will be permitted to give a two (2) minute speech. Should the speech exceed two minutes, the nominee will be gonged and then allowed to finish the last sentence he or she started.*

Program Committee

The Program Committee shall consist of four (4) Ruritan members, namely the President, a National Convention Program Chair (NCPC) and two convention aides. The chair and two aides will be appointed by the President. In addition, the Executive Director and Convention Planner will serve as advisors. This committee shall be charged with the responsibility of planning and coordinating all aspects of the National Convention.

DUTIES OF NCPC CHAIR

Will include but not be limited to the following:

- *Closely follow the Timeline for planning National Conventions and attempt to meet all deadlines where practical.*
- *Arrange meetings of the **NCPC** as needed.*
- *He/she and the Executive Director will meet with the Convention site hotel staff at least once prior to the convention to finalize details.*
- *Assist with selection of meals.*
- *Assist with the identification of meeting rooms for activities/events at the convention site.*
- *Work with the Ruritan National President to ensure all appointments for the convention are made in a timely manner.*
- *Coordinate confirmation letters to be mailed to convention appointees.*
- *Work closely with the Ruritan National President and Executive Director regarding the confirmation of speakers/entertainment for the convention and once selected coordinate the signing of appropriate contracts by the Executive Director.*
- *Work closely with the members of staff who are responsible for preparing and publishing the convention program and script.*
- *Attempt to meet all deadlines connected with the program and script.*
- *Confirm the selection of workshop topics with the workshop chair and identify presenters.*
- *Prepare articles for the Ruritan National Magazine promoting the convention.*
- *Schedule convention chairs' meeting to be held at the convention site prior to the start of the convention for the purpose of reviewing their responsibilities and to distribute pertinent material.*
- *Hold daily meetings of the convention participants to evaluate the current day's events; review the next day activities; and go over their assigned responsibilities for the next day to ensure all bases are covered.*
- *After the convention, shall write a report which will include an evaluation of the convention; prepare a final financial report which will include items not in keeping with budget line items; and offer suggestions for improving future conventions. The report will be forwarded to the Executive Director of Ruritan National and he/she will distribute copies to the current Ruritan National President and the current President's National Convention Program chair.*
- *Strive to make the convention meaningful and enjoyable for all attendees.*
- *Coordinate the work of the Ruritan National Convention committees and maintain clear lines of authority and communication during the convention.*
Perform other miscellaneous duties as may pertain to the position.

Publicity and Public Relations

*The Publicity and Publications committee will consist of the three members of the **NBOD** Publicity & Public Relations standing committee, one of which will be appointed chair. Expenses are otherwise accounted for.*

DUTIES

- *Being responsible for both pre-national and post-national convention publicity.*
- *It shall the responsibility of this committee to conduct a publicity workshop and public relations workshop (50 minutes each).*

Reception and Fellowship

*The Reception and Fellowship Committee will consist of a minimum of seven (7) members appointed by the **NCPC**, one of which will be appointed chair. Due to circumstances the **NCPC** may appoint additional members to serve on this committee. Expenses for this committee are not reimbursed unless otherwise accounted for.*

DUTIES

- *This committee, effective the first day of the convention, is to greet and make all Ruritans and guests feel welcome and perform this function throughout the entire convention.*
- *Responsible for making sure the scheduled speakers, entertainers, etc, are appropriately greeted and escorted to the proper locations and for looking after their needs in general.*
- *Special attention should be given those attending the convention for the first time and these attendees will be designated with a green ribbon on their identification badges. The Reception and Fellowship Committee will host a reception for first timers on the first day of the convention at a prearranged time and place. The National President will participate in the reception.*

Resolutions

*The Resolutions Committee will consist of three (3) members appointed by the **NCPC**, one of which will be appointed chair, and the committee members shall be a national director or district governor. This committee shall sit in session on a prearranged day, time, and location. **DUTIES** This committee is to consider resolutions submitted to Ruritan National by various district conventions, by individual Ruritans or groups of Ruritans. After due consideration, the committee shall prepare such resolutions as it may deem proper and present them to the convention for action*

Sergeant-At-Arms

*The **NCPC** will appoint as many Sergeants-at-arms as deemed necessary. The **NCPC** will appoint a **chair** and **co-chair**. The chair and co-chair will be reimbursed for reasonable and ordinary expenses. Expenses will be paid for other members only if otherwise accounted for. It is recommended that incoming and outgoing district governors and national directors be assigned to this committee unless they are otherwise designated.*

DUTIES

- *This committee shall be responsible for maintaining order at the convention.*
- *They are to ensure the delegates and alternates are seated in the "delegates only" seating area at business meetings.*
- *They are to supervise seating at all other meetings and banquets to make sure the prearranged seating is adhered to.*
- *They are to see that the meeting rooms (excluding workshops) are properly set.*
- *They will perform other duties as may be assigned by the National President.*

WORKSHOPS

*The Workshops Committee will consist of the three members of the **NBOD** Leadership Development Committee, one of which will be appointed chair. Expenses are otherwise accounted for.*

DUTIES - PRE-CONVENTION

Planning and organizing:

- *The Workshops Committee, with input from the **NCPC**, shall plan, organize, and schedule workshops in conjunction with the National Convention.*
- *The **NCPC** must approve the workshop schedule.*

DUTIES - CONVENTION

Directing and evaluating:

- *The Workshops Committee shall direct the workshops.*

DUTIES OTHER

- *(See caption: Workshops – Process for Planning & Implementing Workshops at the Ruritan National Convention)*

COORDINATORS

The Executive Director and Convention Planner/IT will serve as National Convention Coordinators.

DUTIES

- Will work closely with NCPC in making arrangements for the annual convention.
- Responsible for pre-registration and together with the National Treasurer handling of all convention funds.
- Supervise national convention committees appointed by the NCPC and also arrange for workshops and instructors appointed by the NCPC.
- Maintain office at convention. Have awards prepared and see that pertinent materials for the Ruritan National Convention are available.

DELEGATES

Elections – Entitled to and Types at National Convention

The Ruritan National Bylaws **Article VI Section 2. Election of Officers, Directors, and Foundation Trustee reads as follows:** “The election shall be held during the Ruritan National Convention by using voting machines or paper ballots. The official program of the convention shall indicate the day and hours of election. Each certified delegate shall have one (1) vote for each office to be filled and one (1) vote for any other item on the ballot. Election of officers, directors, and foundation trustee shall require a plurality vote.”

Article VII Section 1B reads as follows:

- A. “Voting Body.** The voting body of the Ruritan National Convention shall be composed of the following Ruritan members in attendance, who are certified delegates, and have paid the appropriate registration fee:
 - 1. Members of the NBOD**
 - 2. Foundation Trustees**
 - 3. All Past National Presidents (who are active members)**
 - 4. District Governors**
 - 5. Immediate Past District Governors**
 - 6. Club Delegates**
 - a.** Each adult member club shall be entitled to one (1) delegate for each five (5) members or major fraction thereof, provided that each member club shall be entitled to at least two (2) delegates at any Ruritan National Convention.

- b. Each delegate shall be entitled to one (1) vote upon any question or at any election upon the floor of the Ruritan National Convention. In the absence of any club delegate from the floor, an alternate delegate from the club of the absent delegate shall be entitled to vote.

7. Ruri-Teen and College Delegates.

Ruri-Teen and college clubs' representation shall be limited to two (2) delegates."

Payment of Registration Fee

A payment of National Convention registration fee must be made before a club delegate can be certified by the Credentials and Registration Committee. This notation will be placed on delegates' registration cards. **(See BDM Mar 1982)**

Responsibilities

- *Delegates should vote according to his or her best judgment on the issues and candidates presented.*
- *Delegates should attend all business meetings and other appropriate functions of the National Convention.*
- *Delegates should be familiar with the Standing Rules of the National Convention. The Standing Rules of the National Convention will be included as part of the National Convention Program booklet.*
- *Delegates should utilize every opportunity to gather information for his or her clubs. Delegates should be prepared to present a comprehensive National Convention report to his or her home club.*

Seating

The delegates attending the National Convention shall be seated in a large "delegate only" seating area, without district markers, at the National Convention business meetings. **(See BDM May 2018)**

Suspension of Club

(See National Bylaws – Article XII - Section 1 - G)

ELECTIONEERING

There shall be no electioneering while polls are open at Ruritan National Convention. **(See BDM Apr 1987)**

ELECTIONS

Announcement of Candidates

Candidates for national office and foundation trustee will notify the Executive Director of their intentions. The nominations committee will establish whether or not a candidate is qualified. The nominations committee is responsible for submitting at least one name for each vacancy; but may submit more than one name for each office if so desired. Candidates not nominated may be nominated from the floor, but the nominations committee must determine whether or not they are qualified.

- *Biographical data of qualified candidates may be printed in the fall issue of the Ruritan National Magazine providing that an envelope containing the biographical information is postmarked by July 1. A candidate's biographical information will be published in only one issue of the Ruritan National Magazine.*

- *The Chair of the Nominations Committee and the Editor of the Ruritan National Magazine will establish the format and the information to be provided by candidates.*
- *A table will be provided at the National Convention for campaign literature and a “Meet the Candidates” meeting.*
- *Candidates for National Office will be listed by their primary club in the Ruritan membership database at the time notification of candidacy is made to the Executive Director.*

Report Of

Selected members of the Credential and Registration Committee will serve as tellers and will report the results of elections at the appropriate business meeting.

Speak Time Limit

At the National Convention, all candidates are allowed two minutes or less to speak to the delegates at the first business meeting.

Voting

The Ruritan National Bylaws **ARTICLE VI. Nominations and Elections – Section 2. Election of Officers, Directors, and Foundation Trustee**, reads as follows: “The election shall be held during the Ruritan National Convention by using voting machines or paper ballots. The official program of the convention shall indicate the day and hours of election. Each certified delegate shall have one (1) vote for each office to be filled and one (1) vote for any other item on the ballot. Election of officers, directors, and foundation trustee shall require a plurality vote.

ENTERTAINMENT/SPEAKERS

*The **NCPC** will acquire speakers and/or entertainment for applicable events, based on the approved National Convention budget.*

EVENTS

With the First Spouse or Family

*An event with the First Spouse or Family may be held at the National Convention on a date and time determined by the **NCPC**. The person presiding will be selected by the **NCPC** and the **NCPC** will prepare the agenda. Attendance at the event will be optional and fees charged should cover the costs for the room, meal (if served), favor, and speaker/entertainment.*

With the National President

*An event with the National President for retiring **NBOD** members, retiring foundation president, retiring non-**NBOD** members, and outgoing district governors, and may be held on a day and time determined by the **NCPC**. Ruritan National will assume any cost for this event.*

Veterans Event

*A veterans' event may be held on a day and time determined by the **NCPC**. The presiding officer will be appointed by the National President. The **NCPC** will prepare the agenda and arrange for an appropriate speaker. Attendance at the event will be optional and fees charged should cover the costs for the room, meal (if served), and speaker.*

EXHIBITORS

Approved exhibitors will be permitted to display their goods and/or services at prearranged times and locations throughout the convention site.

EXPENSES

Area Zone Governors

To reimburse area zone governors for the National Convention in the same manner as district governors as provided below. **(See BDM Aug 2013, motion numbers 4 & 5.)**

District Governors (Incoming And Outgoing)

1. One half of the authorized expenses of outgoing and incoming district governors who attend the Ruritan National Convention are reimbursable providing:
2. The incoming district governor attends the District Governors' Training meeting at the National Convention.
3. If the incoming district governor served as Lt. Governor prior to being elected governor, he/she must have attended the Summer Leadership Conference, unless otherwise excused by the National President.
4. The district's form 990 has been filed with the IRS by the February 15 filing deadline for a fiscal year end of September 30. **(1-4 updated See BDM Mar 2022, Motion no. 3)**
5. Expense vouchers should be submitted promptly. Expense vouchers submitted with line items which are dated more than 90 days prior to the submission date, are considered to have been submitted "late" and those line items will not be paid. The Executive Director may approve the late line items, at his discretion, if the total amount of late line items on the voucher is less than \$250.00. The Executive Director must seek approval from the Executive Committee, to approve any "late" line items exceeding a total of \$250.00. The Executive Committee may approve the late line items, at its discretion, if the total amount of late line items on the voucher is less than \$750.00 and the approval would occur within the same fiscal year in which the expenses were incurred. The Executive Committee must seek Board Approval for any "late" line items totaling more than \$750.00 or for those which would be approved in a different fiscal year from the one in which they were incurred. **(See BDM Mar 2017, motion no. 1)**

NBOD

All officers and directors who are members of the **NBOD** shall be reimbursed for reasonable and ordinary expenses to the convention at which they retire. All newly elected officers and directors will not be reimbursed for expenses for the convention at which they are elected unless it is otherwise provided for. **(See BDM Jun 1985)**

FEE

Registration

*The registration fee will normally be based on the negotiated costs related to use of space in hotel(s) and convention centers, equipment to include electronic devices, meals, speaker/entertainment, and other miscellaneous charges. The installation banquet will be included as part of the registration fee. After taken in account costs for the above, and the estimated number of attendees, the budget and finance committee will calculate estimated costs for each person attending the convention. The registration fee will be included as part of the proposed budget presented to the **NBOD** for approval/disapproval at the first **NBOD** meeting each year.*

Walk – Ins

Walk-in fees are to be the same for Ruritans and non-Ruritans. **(See ACM Jan 1993)**

FELLOWSHIP EVENT

*A Fellowship Event may be held on a day and time determined by the **NCPC**. If such an event is planned, it will be an opportunity for attendees to enjoy a time of fellowship and may include an appropriate speaker or entertainment as determined by the **NCPC**. Attendance at the event should be optional; however, based on convention site and the negotiations process, it can be included as part of the registration fee. If optional, fees charged for the event should cover the costs related to room, meal (if served), and speaker /entertainment. (See **BDM Aug 2016**)*

FIRST TIMERS

*There should be a reception for “First Timers” attending the convention on a day and time scheduled by the **NCPC**. The Reception and Fellowship committee should be responsible for the reception, and it is recommended that the National President attend and share in the greeting of first timers.*

FLAG CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS

It shall be the prerogative of the National President as to who will carry the American Flag and the Ruritan Flag at the National Convention Opening Ceremony.

A drawing will be held by the Flag Ceremony Chair to determine who will carry the State Flags. (See **BDM Aug 1996**)

FUNDS - DISPOSITION OF

It shall be the policy of Ruritan National that each annual convention stands on its own, making sure that the budgeted receipts and income are sufficient to cover budgeted convention expenses. Any surplus from a convention shall be deposited in the Convention Reserve Account. (See **BDM Apr 2009, motion no. 4**)

GIFTS

Presented to National President and/or Spouse

Gifts for the National President and his/her spouse at the National Convention shall only be presented at the “Installation Banquet.”

That only the outgoing President’s district and his/her home club(s) be allowed to present him/her with gifts at the “Installation Banquet.” All other gifts for the National President and his/her spouse should be presented at other appropriate Ruritan functions.

At the “Installation Banquet” the incoming National President will be given a gong and gavel, and the outgoing National President will be presented with a pin and an engraved plaque. (See **BDM Aug 2023, motion no. 11, Apr 1996**). **Present the outgoing National President with a lapel pin with the President’s option to buy the President’s ring. (See *BDM Apr 2001, motion no. 15*)**

GUESTS OF OUTGOING AND INCOMING PRESIDENT

The outgoing and incoming National President may receive up to 9 room nights and up to 5 free registrations and banquet tickets at the Annual Ruritan National Convention to be used at their discretion. (See **BDM Mar 2014, motion no. 4**)

The incoming and outgoing National Presidents will be allowed to purchase banquet tickets, at cost, for guests attending the National Convention banquet in addition to the complimentary registrations or tickets. **(See BDM Mar 1994)**

HEAD TABLES

Seating at head tables at the various meetings of the Convention will be at the discretion of the NCPC, while keeping in mind appropriate protocol.

HOST DISTRICT

The Host District will establish Publicity and Public relations guidelines for the National Convention. **(See BDM Aug 2003, motion no. 9)**

INSTALLATION BANQUET

An "Installation Banquet" will be held on the last day/evening of the Convention. The costs related to attending the banquet will be included as part of the registration fee.

The NCPC will appoint a presiding officer. The incoming National President will appoint a Past National President to install him/her, as well as other Ruritan National Officers, Directors, Foundation Trustee, and Foundation President.

The outgoing National President will be given time for brief remarks, and time will be allotted for presentation of appropriate gifts to the outgoing National President.

*The newly installed National President will give an address to last no more than 20 minutes. A suitable speaker or entertainment will be provided. The installation banquet is limited to 3.5 hours **(See BDM Mar 1986)**.*

INSTALLATION SCRIPT FOR TRUSTEES, NATIONAL DIRECTORS & NATIONAL OFFICERS - NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

Installation Officer

(Opening Remarks)

Good evening, Fellow Ruritans and guests. I am honored to have been asked to install our newly elected National Foundation Trustee, National Foundation President, National Directors, and National Officers. This is a responsibility that I do not take lightly.

- *As leaders you need to recognize the importance that leadership continuity and communications has on the future of Ruritan.*
- *You should be aware of how your decisions and actions affect others.*
- *Be a good listener, try not to be defensive and work towards resolving issues.*
- *Don't allow personal goals to get in the way of Ruritan goals.*
- *Conduct yourself professionally and show respect for others at all times.*
- *Attempt to agree and/or disagree regarding subject matter without personalizing the issues.*
- *Cooperate and focus your energy on setting directions and providing strategic thinking as you serve in your respective leadership positions.*
- *Encourage the resolving of issues at the lowest possible level through established chain of command.*
- *Make your decisions based on the facts as you know them.*

- *Pledge to support Ruritan programs and policies regardless of your personal feeling regarding programs and policies.
Your ultimate goals should be to work together to ensure Fellowship, Goodwill, and Community Service.*

FOUNDATION TRUSTEE

Installation Officer

Ask the newly elected Trustee (Insert name) and Foundation President – Elect (Insert name) as well as, their spouses/guest to join you on the stage.

Installation Officer

Fellow Ruritans and guests, through the Foundation we have been able to provide very important services to deserving people.

_____ as a newly elected trustee and _____ as the President of the Foundation, each of you have an obligation to encourage your fellow Ruritans and others to continue their support for the Foundation.

Installation Officer

Ask the newly elected National Foundation Trustee, along with his/her spouse/guest to step forward and to raise his/her right hand at which time you will administer the following Oath:

“Do you promise that you will to the best of your ability, carry out the duties and responsibilities of your office as a Trustee of the Ruritan National Foundation, and with the help of God and your fellow Ruritans, you will make every effort to promote and administer the funds entrusted in your care?”

Your response is: “I will.”

Installation Officer

Have spouse/guest pin Trustee.

Installation Officer

Congratulations and I officially install you as a National Foundation Trustee. (Ask trustee and spouse/guest to return to their seats)

FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

Installation Officer

Ask the Foundation President, along with his/her spouse/guest, to step forward, at which time you will ask the Foundation President to raise his/her right hand and repeat after you the following oath:

“I hereby promise that I will to the best of my ability, carry out the duties and responsibilities of my office as President of the Ruritan National Foundation. With the help of God and my fellow Ruritans, I will make every effort to promote and administer the funds entrusted in my care. “

Installation Officer

Have spouse/guest pin Foundation President.

Installation Officer

Congratulations and I officially install you as the President of the Ruritan National Foundation. (Ask Foundation President and spouse/guest to return to their seats.)

NATIONAL DIRECTORS

Installation Officer

Ask the seven (7) newly elected National Directors and their spouses/guests to join you on the stage. (List the names on the following lines)

Once they have assembled on the stage read the following:

Your fellow Ruritans have bestowed upon you a special honor by electing you to serve as National Directors. Your duties and responsibilities, which are specified in the National Bylaws and the Handbook for National Officers, Directors, and Committees, will be reviewed with you at a special training session for newly elected directors. I would urge you to endeavor to fulfill your obligations in a manner that will bring personal satisfaction to you and prove beneficial to all Ruritans as we strive to make our communities BETTER PLACES IN WHICH TO LIVE.

Installation Officer

Ask each director to raise their right hand and administer the following oath:

“As Directors of Ruritan National do you promise that you will, to the best of your ability, with the help of God and your fellow Ruritans, carry out the duties and responsibilities of your office, uphold the Bylaws of Ruritan National and continually strive to establish those policies which will give greater meaning to the objectives of Ruritan?”

Your response is: **“I will.”**

Installation Officer

Have spouses/guest pin newly elected directors.

Installation Officer

Congratulations and I officially install each of you as Directors of Ruritan National. (Ask directors and their spouses/guests to return to their seats)

NATIONAL OFFICERS

Installation Officer

Ask the newly elected officers (excluding the President) and their spouses/guests to join you on the stage.

Treasurer

(If applicable)

Secretary

(If applicable)

President-Elect

Installation Officer

(name of Treasurer, if applicable) your fellow Ruritans have bestowed upon you a special honor by electing you as Treasurer.

(name of Secretary, if applicable) your fellow Ruritans have bestowed upon you a special honor by electing you as Secretary.

(name of President-Elect), your fellow Ruritans have bestowed upon you a special honor by electing you as Vice President.

Your duties and responsibilities, which are specified in the National Bylaws and the Handbook for National Officers, Directors, and Committees, will be reviewed with you at a special training session for newly elected officers.

I would urge each of you to endeavor to fulfill your obligations in a manner that will bring personal satisfaction to you and prove beneficial to all Ruritans as you strive to make our communities BETTER PLACES IN WHICH TO LIVE.

Installation Officer

Ask the officers to raise their right hands and administer the following oath:

(Say name) as Treasurer

(Say name) as Secretary

(Say name) as President-Elect

“Do each of you promise that you will to God and your fellow Ruritans, carry out the duties and responsibilities of your offices, uphold the Bylaws of Ruritan National and continually strive to establish those policies which will give greater meaning to the objectives of Ruritan?”

Your response will be: “I will.”

Installation Officer

Have spouses/guests pin respective officers.

Installation Officer

Congratulations and I officially install each of you for your respective office. (Ask officers and their spouses/guests to return to their seats.)

NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Installation Officer

Ask the newly elected National President and his/her spouse/guest to join you on the stage.

Installation Officer

(Say name of President)

As you accept this gavel, signifying your willingness to assume the role of President of our great organization, I'm sure you are not only aware of the special honor which you have received but are aware of the opportunity which is yours to provide a very special service to your fellow Ruritans and your Country. It is my privilege to administer to you the Oath of Office as President of Ruritan National.

Please raise your hand and repeat after me:

"I hereby promise that I will, to the best of my ability carry out the duties and responsibilities of my office, and will uphold the Bylaws of Ruritan National, and will, with the help of God and my fellow Ruritans, make every effort to promote Fellowship, Goodwill and Community Service throughout America."

Installation Officer

Have spouse/guest pin President

Installation Officer

Fellow Ruritans and guests, I am proud to install _____ as our (year _____) Ruritan National President.

(At this time the newly installed President will give his/her address.)

LODGING RATE

Ruritan National will pay motel/hotel rate for lodging regardless of single or double rate. **(See BDM Aug 1994)**

MINUTES

National Convention

Convention minutes shall be approved by the **NBOD** at the first **NBOD** meeting following the National Convention. **(See BDM Aug 2000, motion no.7)**

NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Banquet

A National Foundation Banquet may be held at the National Convention on a day and time as deemed appropriate by the NCPC after consulting with the National Foundation trustees. Should such a banquet be held, the National Foundation President should preside and may include an appropriate speaker or entertainment. Attendance at the National Foundation dinner will be optional, and fees charged for the event should cover the costs of the room, meals, and speaker/entertainment.

NECROLOGY CEREMONY

A definite place on the program should be set-aside at each respective National Convention for "Necrology Ceremony" in memorial of Ruritan members who answered their last roll call during the preceding year. (See ACM Jan 1948)

OPENING CEREMONY

The opening of the Ruritan National Convention will begin with a "Vespers Service". The NPCP will appoint a presiding officer. The "Vespers Service" will include appropriate music; presentation of Past Ruritan National Presidents and their spouses; presentation of the Ruritan National President and his or her spouse; a "Memorial Service," a "Flag Ceremony and a "Vespers Speaker." The NPCP will determine the remainder of the agenda.

ORGANIST

It is the responsibility of the NPCP to select an organist. The organist is to be reimbursed by Ruritan National for all reasonable and ordinary expenses in connection with their attendance at the convention.

DUTIES

- The organist will provide appropriate music at prearranged places and times when directed by proper authority. (See BDM Jul 1961)

PARLIAMENTARIAN

The Parliamentarian appointed for the Ruritan National convention is to be certified by the American Institute of Parliamentarians or registered by the National Association of Parliamentarians and may/may not be a Ruritan member. (See BDM Mar 2017, motion no. 2)

The Parliamentarian will be reimbursed for all reasonable and ordinary expenses.

DUTIES

- Shall advise the Ruritan National President on matters pertaining to parliamentary procedures at appropriate business meetings. (See BDM Apr 1998, motion no. 26)

PRESIDENT'S ESCORTS

The President's escorts will be composed of four (4) members appointed by the Ruritan National President. Expenses for this committee are not reimbursed unless otherwise accounted for.

DUTIES

- *This committee shall be responsible for escorting the Ruritan National President to the rostrum at the opening of the convention and to escort him or her at other meeting(s) if required.*

PROGRAM BOOKLET

A Program Booklet, containing all pertinent information related to the convention, will be published, and distributed to members and guests attending the convention. The Ruritan National staff, under the guidance of the Executive Director of Ruritan National, shall prepare the "Program Booklet" with input provided by the NPCP.

PROTOCOL

*When feasible and practical, protocol will be in accordance with **Roberts' Rules of Order**.*

RESERVE ACCOUNT

Ruritan National will establish a contingency fund known as Convention Reserve Account, the purpose of which shall be to cover any situation in which expenses at an annual convention exceed the revenue received at such convention. Any surplus from an annual convention that is the amount by which revenue exceeds expenses shall be deposited in the Convention Reserve Account. In the event funds in the Convention Reserve Account reach \$200,000 then any funds in excess of \$200,000 shall be transferred to the general operating fund or as otherwise directed by the NBOD. **(See BDM Apr 2009, motion no. 5)**

RESUME'

*The Ruritan National staff, under the supervision of the Executive Director of Ruritan National, will prepare a **Resume'** which will be all inclusive as to what functions will be performed and who will perform them at the National Convention, (to include the date, time, and locations). The **Resume'** will be disseminated to pertinent staff and Ruritan members who will have an active part in the Convention.*

SCRIPT

*A script will be prepared by the convention planner at the direction of the **NCPC** detailing a timeline for all meetings at the convention.*

SEATING

When feasible and practical, seating at the First Spouse's Event, Fellowship Event, and Installation Banquet should be by reserved seating. For delegates seating at business meetings see the paragraph entitled "Delegates – Seating" in this handbook.

SITE CHECK-LIST AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

To approve a National Convention site checklist and **RFP** for use in current and future site selections. The site selection committee will revise the site selection checklist and **RFP** as deemed necessary. The committee will develop site visit guidelines. All site selection materials are available for review of the **NBOD** at any time. **(See BDM Apr 2008, motion no. 4)**

SITE COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The Site committee for National Conventions shall be composed of the three (3) members of the Board Advisory Committee (**BAC**). **(See BDM Jan 2012, motion no. 4A)**

They shall recommend to the **NBOD**, a city or cities and the convention facilities in which the annual convention might be held, at least two (2) years in advance of the convention. The recommendation should include cost of rooms, meals, parking, and other pertinent information. **NBOD** may reject or give approval to the recommendation. **(See BDM Aug 2014, motion no. 2A)**

SITES NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The Ruritan National Convention sites selected after January 1, 1994, *should* be within an approximate 350-mile radius of the Ruritan National Office, provided a suitable site is available (94% of Ruritan members live within this area). Once every five (5) years, allow site to be a reasonable distance outside the 350-mile radius. This provision to be reviewed every fifth year based on the growth of Ruritan. **(See ACM Jan 1993)**

SONG LEADER

The Song leader is a volunteer position which is not reimbursed for expenses in conjunction with traveling to and from and attending the convention. (See BDM Mar 2014, motion no. 5)

DUTIES

- The song leader will provide appropriate music at prearranged places and times when directed by proper authority. (See BDM Jul 1961)

STATUS OF RURITAN NATIONAL

The National President, together with the Executive Director of Ruritan National, shall report on the status of Ruritan National at the National Convention at a prearranged business meeting.

STATUS OF RURITAN NATIONAL FOUNDATION

The President of the Ruritan National Foundation shall report on the status of the National Foundation at a prearranged business meeting.

Standing Rules of the National Convention

Rule 1. Delegate Certification:

Delegates of the National Convention shall attest that their club has certified them as a delegate on their registration form. Delegates will be assigned based on the order the registrations are received and until the allocated number of delegates for the club has been filled. An Alternate may be transferred to a delegate upon proper clearance by the Credentials Committee. At the beginning of each business meeting the Registration/Credentials Committee will present the registration and credentials report.

Rule 2. Admission:

For admission to the assembly hall and all Ruritan activities, all attendees will be required to wear the appropriate badge issued by the Registrations/Credential Committee.

Rule 3. Debate:

Any delegate addressing the chair must identify himself or herself by name, club affiliation or office held if a Delegate-at-large. No member shall speak in debate more than once on the same question, or longer than two minutes without permission of the convention granted by a two-thirds vote without debate.

Rule 4. Certification:

Each Convention delegate shall be certified only one time. Each certified delegate will be allowed only one (1) vote on each matter before the National Convention.

Rule 5. Conduct of Delegates:

During the business meetings, delegates should, to the extent possible, be seated and keep the aisles clear. All cell phones and/or other types of electronic devices shall either be turned off or placed in a silent mode.

Rule 6. Nominations for Office:

Nominees for each office to be filled by the convention shall be limited to one nomination speech of two minutes each.

Rule 7. Voting:

All voting shall be held in accordance with the Bylaws of Ruritan National. The total number of votes for any office will be the number of votes recorded. A quorum shall consist of 50% plus 1 of all delegates in attendance.

Rule 8. National Bylaws Amendments:

All proposed amendments to the Ruritan National Bylaws shall be referred to the Convention Bylaws Committee. Any active Ruritan member may present proposed changes to the Bylaws of Ruritan National to the Convention Bylaws Committee. The member shall provide the committee in writing, preferably electronic copy, a copy of each proposed change. At a business session before the official vote, time shall be allowed for discussion of proposed bylaws changes identified on the ballot.

Rule 9. Convention Resolutions:

All proposed Convention Resolutions shall be referred to the Convention Resolutions Committee. Any active Ruritan member may present proposed Convention Resolutions to the Convention Resolutions Committee. The member shall provide the committee in writing, preferably electronic copy, a copy of each proposed resolution. The Convention Resolutions Committee shall prepare suitable resolutions to carry into effect recommendations referred to it, and shall submit to the convention, with the Committee's own recommendations as to appropriate action, these and all other resolutions referred to the committee, except questions which by a vote of two-thirds of its members may decide not to report. Courtesy Resolutions need only to be summarized and not read in their entirety. The convention delegates, by a majority vote, may suspend this Rule and immediately consider a question, or may order the Resolutions Committee to report a question at a certain time, even if the Committee has voted not to report it.

Rule 10. Reports:

All reports and other material for the permanent record shall be in writing, (preferably electronic copy) and, immediately upon presentation, shall be sent to the Secretary.

Rule 11. Announcements:

Notices for announcements to the convention shall be in writing, signed by the person (or proper representative of the persons) under whose authority the announcement is issued and shall be sent to the Secretary.

Rule 12. Solicitations:

There will be no solicitations at the National Convention except for; the sale of music or memorabilia by convention speakers and entertainment vendors, by exhibitors inside an approved exhibit booth, or those previously approved by the National Board of Directors. Members will not be assessed for any purpose.

Rule 13. Campaigning:

Campaigning by future candidates for Ruritan National Offices (i.e., handing out literature/ brochures) will not occur until after election results are announced.

Rule 14. Parliamentary Authority:

The rules contained within Ruritan National Bylaws and these standing rules shall govern this convention in all cases. In the absence of guidance in the Ruritan National Bylaws and these standing rules the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order will apply.

NOTE:

The standing rules of the convention are adopted by the delegates at the first business meeting.

TIME LIMIT

SATURDAY NIGHT INSTALLATION BANQUET

Saturday night banquet be limited to 3½ hours. (See BDM Mar 1986)

TIMELINE

FOR PLANNING THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

A timeline for planning the Ruritan National Convention has been established. Whenever possible the timeline should be adhered to in order to assure plans are completed in a timely manner, up to and during the convention. Any variation from the timeline should only occur when circumstances dictate other plans of action. The timeline is as follows:

Task / Months	Fall of year before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1 1	1 2	1
Give National Convention Guidelines to President-Elect his/her Convention Chair	X													
Convention Chair, President-Elect and staff visit site	X													
Convention Chair, President-Elect and staff finalize lodging forms and hospitality suite information. Representative from hotel/city agrees to host a booth at the next convention and agrees to speak to attendees to promote future convention.	X													
Representative from hotel/city hosts a booth at the next convention and speaks to attendees to promote future convention.		X												
Task / Months	Fall of year before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1 1	1 2	1
Convention Chair and newly elected president name their aides so the final Convention Program Committee can be listed in the March newsletter			X											
Ruritan staff completes credit application with hotel(s) and convention centers			X											
March Newsletter announce convention program committee and list lodging information				X										

Spring Ruritan Magazine lodging information				X														
Ruritan staff blocks rooms for convention staff, key volunteers, and board members				X														
Ruritan staff collects lodging preferences from Board and secures rooms for board members on a master account				X														
Chair makes a presentation to the national board at the Spring meeting of the board.				X														
Chair & National President meet with National staff around the time of the Spring meeting of the board.				X														
Menus (with ++ prices) are given to Chair and President so that meal costs can be provided to the Budget and Finance Committee				X														
Decision on favors for First Spouse's Event				X														
Budget and Finance finalizes a proposed convention budget that also outlines the convention registration fees				X														
Conv. Budget approved by Board				X														
Determine Host District's responsibilities					X													
May Newsletter contains lodging information						X												
Decision on tours & off site group activities so they can be included in registration form						X												
Task / Months	Fall of year before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	1	1		
Selection of Conv. Cmte. Chairs by President							X											
Notification of cmte. chairs by staff							X											
Summer Ruritan Mag. (Mid-June): registration form, lodging information							X											

Staff provides National Leadership Conference with list of workshop rooms and sizes								X								
Select Workshop Topics & contact presenters in cooperation w/National Leadership Development Committee								X								
Chair and President make a presentation at Summer leadership Conference								X								
July Newsletter (Mid July) registration and lodging again									X							
Finalize Workshops/Presenters/Room Setups including A/V									X							
Complete Cmte. appointments & mail confirmation letters										X						
Finalize program of events and share a mini schedule with Board of Directors										X						
Final selection of Speakers & Entertainment (Mid-August) and all contracts signed and deposits paid.										X						
Prepare Conv. Prog. package for assigned representatives to District Conventions										X						
Board of Directors update on condensed Program of Events										X						
Give National Convention presentation to August Board meeting										X						
Task / Months	Fall of year before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	1	1	1	1
Fall Ruritan Mag. (mid-August) should contain registration form, lodging info, letter from program chair, mini schedule, bus transportation and tours if appropriate, a preview of speakers and entertainment and candidate bios and pictures										X						

October Newsletter (Mid-Sept.) registration form and lodging information again												X						
Prog. Chair to present Conv. information at Foundation Weekend												X						
Draft Conv. Program booklet													X					
Complete draft of Scripts reviewed with Convention Program committee and various emcees in a series of conference calls													X					
Issue draft of Conv. Resume'													X					
Finalized scripts are used as a blueprint for convention program contents - shared with committee in Word format first														X				
Winter Ruritan Mag. (Early November) should contain convention registration form, additional speaker, and entertainer information														X				
Approved and edited Word format of convention program is pulled into InDesign and the final layout is shared with committee														X				
Packing list shared with staff and items are staged at the national office for packing																		
Print Conv. Program															X			
Award notification letters and/or emails are sent out																	X	
Annual Report finalized and printed																	X	
Final packing for convention																	X	
Travel to convention																		X

TRAINING

Appropriate training of pertinent club, zone, and district officers will be scheduled and presented during prearranged times and locations during the course of the convention.

WORKSHOPS

Suitable and appropriate workshops may be conducted during the convention at prearranged times and locations.

Process for Planning and Implementing Workshops

To adopt the following process for planning and implementing workshops at Ruritan National Conventions:

The Leadership Development Committee (**LDC**) will coordinate planning and implementation of all workshops for the upcoming National Convention. The **LDC** chair, or **LDC** designee, will serve as workshop chair.

The National President may appoint another **NBOD** or **non-NBOD** member to the committee at his/her discretion. The individual would act as a consultant to the committee.

Prior to the second **NBOD** meeting of the year (i.e., normally during March or April), the workshop chair will send a letter (or e-mail) to all **NBOD** members requesting suggestions for workshops.

Suggestions should be submitted to the workshop chair prior to or at the second **NBOD** meeting, at which time the **LDC** will prioritize the workshops in order of importance.

The **LDC** will ensure that individuals plan and conduct workshops with curriculum materials that have been appropriately approved through Ruritan National.

Presenters will submit a summary of their workshop to the workshop chair during the first week of June, at which time they will be reviewed with the **LDC**, Executive Director, and **NCPC**.

The workshop chair, working with the **LDC** and the Convention Program Chair, will schedule workshops in various rooms at the convention site, keeping in mind the anticipated number of attendees. Also, avoid scheduling "important" workshops in the same time slot.

The workshop chair will confirm workshops with all presenters by the end of July. The planned workshops will then be reviewed with the **NBOD** at the August **NBOD** meeting.

The Convention Program Chair, or designee, will ensure that workshops are printed in the convention program giving date, time, and location of each workshop.

The workshop chair, along with the **LDC** and the Advancement Committee shall direct and evaluate the workshops at the National Convention. These duties include, but are not limited to the following:

- Checking physical arrangements for each workshop and making adjustments as necessary.
- Distributing signs and/or announcements for each workshop and making adjustments as necessary.
- Introduce and give proper recognition to the workshop leaders at the start of each session.
- Ensure that each workshop starts and ends on time.
- Maintain attendance records of participants, including name, district/area, and club.
- Provide assistance, as needed/requested, for providing audio/visual equipment, recording or videotaping workshops.
- Provide evaluation forms for each workshop, and ensure the forms are collected at the end of the workshop.
- Workshop evaluations should be summarized and provided to the **NBOD** at the second **NBOD** meeting of the year.
- Provide a written report of the workshops, including attendance, to the Executive Director to share with the following year's **NCPC**.

Workshops that were successful at the convention (i.e., high evaluations, good attendance, etc.) should be given consideration for repeating at the upcoming convention.

The Convention Program Chair, Executive Director, and the National President will provide input/guidance on workshops selected and will be kept informed during the year of the status of all workshops. *(See BDM Apr 2008, motion no. 14)*

WORSHIP SERVICE

The NCPC may schedule a worship service prior to attendees departing the convention.

Revision Log

- i) **22-03-03 Conditions for Expense Reimbursement for District Governors to National Convention updated to remove references to R-35 and R-36 and include updated requirements.**
 - (1) **RATIONALE:** The districts having their own EIN and filing their own 990s with the IRS makes the R-35 and R-36 forms obsolete. Having the 990 filed as a condition for National Convention expense reimbursement puts emphasis, inspection, and follow-up on completion.
 - ii) 23-01-07 Move to create policy that candidates for national office are listed by their primary club in Ruritan membership database as listed at time notification candidacy is made to the National Executive Director.
 - iii) 23-07 Added information regarding NBOD expenses and President's gift from the RIM to the appropriate sections.
- 08-2023 - Updated formatting to be consistent with other handbooks