

CONNECTIONS

It's who you know
Bellingham's premier networking group

Bylaws

Amended 12/20/2025

Section I: Name

The name of this club is Bellingham Connection Club

Section II: Mission Statement

Connections is a group of non-competing businesses representing a wide variety of professional and service industries. Our organization provides an open forum for the exchange of ideas, information, and referrals for our members. We are allied to forward each other's success. We abide by the highest ethical standards and are committed to providing our clients with quality, fair and dependable products, and services.

Section III: Membership

- A. General members are non-competing providers of specific products and/or services or represent businesses providing such products and/or services. No members will be allowed to represent any political office, political agenda, any specific religion or religious agenda. The number of general members is limited to forty (40).
- B. Associate members work for the same company in the same capacity as the general member and may attend in place of the general member.
- C. Associate members may make introductions for their company and be included in the speaker rotation.
 - a. Associate members do not pay fees and/or dues, and do not vote or serve on committees. Associate members do not serve as officers.
 - b. Membership may be transferred to an associate member by the general member as long as the associate member remains with the same business. Normal application process shall apply with the exception that the "three visit rule" and initiation fee are waived.
- D. Visitors
 - a. Members inviting guests should ensure that there are no potential conflicts with existing members and that the guest is not invited in to represent any political office, political agenda or specific religion or religious agenda.
 - b. When membership capacity has been reached, a waiting list of prospective new members who have completed the application process and been approved (with the exception of payment of fees and dues) will be maintained by the Secretary.
 - c. When an opening becomes available, the Secretary will contact members on the waiting list to inquire as to their continuing interest. Date of approval shall apply on a first come, first serve basis.
 - d. If there are two (2) or more prospective new members with the same date of approval, voting will be by at least two-thirds of the members present at the meeting must vote in favor of the application and a quorum of no less than fifty (50) percent of membership must be present at the meeting in order for the application to be approved.

- e. Visitors and/or guests will normally be excused from any part of the meeting involving voting on new member applications.
- E. New Member Application Process
 - a. Prospective new members will be providers of specific products and/or services not in conflict with existing members. Members inviting guests should ensure that there are no potential conflicts with existing members and that the guest is not invited in to represent any political office, political agenda or specific religion agenda.
 - b. The Connections secretary will e-mail guests summary of introduction to the team from first meeting.
 - c. Applicants must attend three (3) consecutive meetings prior to submitting an application.
 - d. Near the conclusion of the third meeting, the applicant will give a three (3) minute presentation detailing his/her specific business. The applicant will be excused from attending the next meeting.
 - e. During the fourth meeting, the prospective member's application will be circulated among the membership. At least two-thirds of the members present at the meeting must vote in favor of the application and a quorum of no less than fifty (50) percent of membership must be present at the meeting in order for the application to be approved.
- F. Member Classification Change: Any member changing business and/or product and/or service, assuming the change does not result in conflict with any existing member, must reapply and pay the initiation fee.

Section IV: Attendance

- A. Absences exceeding twelve (12) per calendar year will result in dismissal from Connections club. If this member wants to rejoin, they will need to follow the new member application process.
- B. An associate member may attend in place of a general member. (Please note: As defined in section III, Membership: Subsection C: Associate members work for the same company in the same capacity as the general member.)
- C. Leaves of absence for medical and/or personal reasons may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- D. If an absence will result in a missed presentation by a member, it is the responsibility of the member to arrange for a replacement speaker and notify the Vice-President of the change as soon as possible. Failure to do so will result in a member forfeiting his/her presentation until the next regular speaker rotation.

Section V: Fees and dues

- A. Initiation fees for new members are seventy-five dollars (\$75), due on at first meeting after voted into group.
- B. Dues are thirty-five dollars (\$35) per month payable by the first meeting of the month.
- C. Members two (2) months in arrears for nonpayment of dues are dropped from membership. Assuming an opening exists, such members may reapply by payment of the initiation fee and any past due amount owing.
- D. Dues exempt: President; Vice-President; Secretary; Treasurer; and Sergeant at Arms

Section VI: Meeting Structure

- A. Meetings are held Thursday mornings from 7:30am to 8:30am.
- B. Meeting Order of Business: (Meetings follow Robert's Rules of Order).
 - a. Call to Order and Welcome
 - b. Introduction of guests and/or visitors
 - c. Member self-introduction – (30 – 45 sec. per member)
 - d. Review and approval of past meeting minutes
 - e. Presentation: Eight (8) Minutes by member or associate.
 - f. Street Talk
 - g. Old Business

- h. New Business
- i. Adjournment

Section VII: Organization

President - Six Month Term: Serves January-June/July-December

- a. Preside over each meeting and provides group leadership
- b. Notifies prospective members of their election to membership or rejection of application.
- c. Notifies in writing, at the direction of the Executive Committee, members being dropped from membership.
- d. Chairs Executive Committee.

Vice President - Six month Term: Serves January-June/July-December

- a. Serves in the absence of the President.
- b. Assumes the office of President for the next term.
- c. Times speaker's presentations.
- d. Schedule all programs.

Secretary - Twelve Month Term: Serves January-December

- a. Records minutes of the meetings, takes attendance and maintains attendance records.
- b. Prepares minutes and agenda for each meeting.
- c. Updates current roster on a quarterly basis.
- d. Maintains correspondence file on all internal/external communication.
- e. Presents membership packages to new members including current roster and bylaws.
- f. Notifies Executive Committee of pending dismissals of member(s) for nonattendance, with prior notice to such member(s).

Treasurer - Twelve Month Term: Serves July-June

- a. Processes receipts and disbursements.
- b. Prepares annual calendar year budget for Executive Committee.
- c. Reports to Executive committee on an as-needed basis.
- d. Notifies Executive committee of pending dismissals of member(s) for nonpayment of dues, with prior notice to such member(s).

Sergeant at Arms - Twelve Month Term: Serves July-June

- a. Responsible for unlocking room, setting up coffee and water, tables, chairs and member name signs.
- b. Responsible for cleaning up after meeting.

Immediate Past President

- a. Conduct elections held in December and June
- b. Appoints Audit committee.
- c. Serves as liaison between Executive and Past Presidents Committees.
- d. Chairs Past Presidents and Audit Committee

Section VIII: Committees

Executive Committee (Chaired by President)

- A. Consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Immediate Past President.
- B. Responsible for ensuring bylaws are followed.
- C. Recommends material and procedural matters to the general membership upon counsel with the Past Presidents Committee.
- D. Presents calendar year budget to membership at first December meeting. Annual budget approved by two-thirds majority with a quorum of two-thirds of membership present prior to first meeting of new year.
- E. Determines validity of members' claim of a business conflict with the prospective new member if that claim is presented to the Executive Committee by the day of the prospective member's second consecutive meeting.
- F. The Executive Committee will be empowered with authority to conduct the day-to-day business of

the organization within the limits of the approved annual budget or as approved by the general membership or as approved by unanimous vote of the executive committee only if the issue is time sensitive and unable to wait for the next meeting. This authority will include, but not be limited to, payment of all bills generated by the organization, selection of banks for checking and/or savings accounts, and scheduling events and trade shows. This authority will not include, without the general membership's approval, investing the organization's funds in any investment other than a passbook savings account or committing the organization to any long-term obligations or contracts exceeding one year in length.

Past Presidents Committee (Chaired by Immediate Past President)

- A. Consists of the immediate five Past Presidents.
- B. Advises Executive Committee on material and procedural matters.
- C. Reviews any proposed bylaw changes and presents to the general membership at its discretion.

Audit Committee (Chaired by Immediate Past President)

- A. Consists of President, Immediate Past President and two general members
- B. Appointed one month prior to elections by Immediate Past President
- C. Reviews all financial records provided by Treasurer.
- D. Reports to the membership at a regularly scheduled meeting during the first month of the new term.
- E. In the event that a third party has been contacted to oversee reconciliation and financial transactions, then no audit is needed. Instead, the bank statement is mailed to an outside bookkeeper who will review check signatures and monthly receipts.

Sections IX: Amendments

- A. Proposed amendments to these bylaws may be presented, in writing, to the Past Presidents Committee by any general member.
- B. Any proposed amendments will be reviewed by the Past Presidents Committee. Such proposed amendments may be presented to the general membership at the discretion of the Past Presidents Committee.
- C. Proposed amendments presented to the general membership by the Past Presidents Committee will be open for discussion for the next three (3) meetings.
- D. Proposed amendments will be voted on by the general membership at the conclusion of the third meeting. Amendments will require two-thirds approval with a quorum of two-thirds of membership present.
- E. Effective date of amendments cannot be earlier than the date of vote.