

Clement, Brown, Cooper Family Union

Constitution and Bylaws

PREAMBLE

We the Clement/Brown/Cooper families, come to recognize the need to unite and maintain our strong family values, with a continuous indisputable level of communication, genuine concern for each other and a strong sense of unity; and further realizing that unity is the bedrock through which we speak with one voice as a family, we do hereby resolved to establish a Union.

Now, let it be known to all men, that we the Clement, Brown and Cooper families, now, therefore make, form, establish, proclaim and publish this document for the governance of this family union, and that this document shall serve its intended purpose for all families in The United States of America (USA).

ARTICLE I Name & Definition

This Union shall be called "The Clement, Brown, & Cooper Family Union," and can be called or referred to by its acronym (CBC). Mother Ladia J. Clement Brown Cooper of the City of Brewerville, Republic of Liberia, is considered the pillar of the Union.

ARTICLE II Motto

The motto of the Union shall be "Love, Unity, and Care"

ARTICLE III Union Color

The official colors of the Union shall be "White", which represents purity of hearts and minds towards each other. "Yellow", which represents the Union rising like the morning sun, signifying the beginning of a new day, and "Blue", which represents family unity, pictured like a diamond coming together as one body.

ARTICLE IV FAMILY SONG

The Union shall adopt the Brown family song "Lord in the Morning" as its official Union song, which shall be sung at the Reunion and other appropriate events.

ARTICLE V Aims and Objectives

Aims:

The Union shall serve as a forum through which any member or a group of members can offer ideas to promote growth for all families, or to address issues of relevance that are threatening and/or counter-productive to the development, stability and survival of the Union.

Objectives:

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- a. To exchange views on matters of common interests.
- b. ~~To establish a network for family members to associate and sustain a forum for communicating.~~
- ↘ c. To establish goodwill among family members, promote equal rights, encourage unity and resolve disputes.
- d. To encourage human resource exchange as a means to create and strengthen economic ties amongst ourselves.
- ↘ e. To support each other morally, socially and economically when in distress.
- f. To ensure that every member of the Union is given equal respect, especially the elderly, regardless of their social and or economic circumstances.
- ↘ g. To develop cooperation and sustain a sense of common understanding amongst the entire Union.

ARTICLE VI Meetings

Section A: Reunion

The Families shall meet once a year in a Grand Reunion, beginning on the first Friday in August and ending on the Sunday following. This Grand Reunion shall be held at a location agreed upon by the general body during the preceding grand reunion.

The Families shall meet in this Grand Reunion to celebrate the Union's accomplishments and to commemorate the pillar of the Union. The Grand Reunion shall also serve as a setting to bring together all the families in the spirit of love and unity. This Reunion shall acknowledge the achievements made by family members, and recognize all births, marriages and deaths that occurred subsequent to the last meeting. This Reunion shall further serve as a forum to welcome all new members into the Union.

Section B: State of the Union

The Chairperson shall give a State of the Union update to the general body in the 6th month after the grand reunion.

ARTICLE VII Membership

Section A: Descendants

The CBC Family Union shall consist of the living descendants, through birth (biologically), marriage and adoption of Mother Ladia J. Clement Brown Cooper of the City of Brewerville, Mont. County, Republic of Liberia, West Africa.

Section B: Honorary Members

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Honorary membership shall be conferred upon elderly family members with keen interest in the Union's activities, especially those who are always in solidarity with the Union, and helping to advance its objectives.

Section C: Reared (foster) Children

Children reared by any member (s) of the three families shall automatically become a part of the Union, in spite of their family names. These members shall contribute and be obligated to the Union like all other members. They shall be eligible to contest for and be appointed to any position in the Union. They may opt out of the Union if they so desire.

Section D: Marriages

Membership through marriage shall continue if the marriage terminates because of death.

Section E: Associate Members

Associate membership shall be opened to interested person(s), who expressed their desire to become a member of the Union. These individuals must be referred to the Union by a member of the union. They shall contribute and be obligated to the Union like all other members. Associate members shall be eligible to contest for and appointed to any position in the Union.

ARTICLE VIII Organization Structure

1. Executive Advisory Council (EAC)
2. A Chairperson
3. Co-Chairman
4. Secretary
5. Financial Secretary
6. Treasurer
7. Historian
8. Chaplain

ARTICLE IX Tenures and Duites

1. Executive Advisory Council (EAC):

a. Tenures

The Executive Advisory Council, EAC for short, shall consist of six members, with the oldest bloodline member of each of the three founding families as permanent members. They shall remain members for life or until they become debilitated.

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The other two members shall be appointed by the three bloodline members of the EAC, and shall serve for (4) years with the opportunity to be reappointed for an additional (4) years. These members shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms.

The outgoing Chairperson of the Union shall become the sixth member of the EAC, replacing the previous Chairperson. This membership is routine.

b. Duties

The EAC shall serve as an advisory council to the Union and shall assume the task of mitigating disputes between family members. They shall meet twice a year to discuss relevant issues concerning the Union.

There shall be no ranks assigned to members of the EAC. The oldest member on the council shall assume the leadership role. Any member of the council has the authority to call emergency meetings when necessary, as long as the request receives a two-third majority consensus of the other EAC members.

c. Qualifications

A member of the EAC shall be sound minded, tolerant and of good character. He/She must be an active member seeking to promote the Union objectives. This member must be current with due payments.

2. The Chairperson:

a. Tenure

The Chairperson shall be elected for a period of (2) consecutive years, with the opportunity to be reelected for a second term.

b. Duties

The Chairperson shall serve as the head and official representative of the Union. He/she shall preside over all business sections, direct all activities, and sign and approve all official documents on behalf of the Union.

The Chairperson is empowered to call meetings when necessary, and shall chair all meetings except those of ad-hoc committees.

The Chairperson is empowered to establish and dissolve ad hoc committees.

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The Chairperson is empowered to constitute committees and replace officers of those committees when necessary.

The Chairperson is empowered to appoint other committees that are not mentioned in this constitution and bylaws.

The Chairperson shall make semiannual reports to the Union. He/She shall serve as the secretary of the EAC. The Chairperson is empowered to call emergency election with the consent of the EAC.

c. Qualifications

The Chairperson must have a minimum high school level education or its equivalent, and must be at least 35 years old.

The Chairperson must be an individual who demonstrates the temperament of reasoning and sound-mindedness, tolerance, honesty and have a good character.

The Chairperson must be up to date in all of his/her financial obligations to the Union. He/she must be an active member of the Union for more than three unbroken years, and always regular at meetings.

3. The Co-chairperson:

a. Tenure

The Co-chairperson shall be elected for a period of (2) consecutive years with the opportunity to be reelected for a second term.

b. Duties

The Co-chairperson shall assist the Chairperson in all their responsibilities, and shall assume all responsibilities in the absence of the Chairperson. The Co-chairperson shall serve as ex-official of all standing committees.

c. Qualifications

The Co-Chairperson must have a minimum high school level education or its equivalent, and must be at least 35 years old.

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The Co-Chairperson must be an individual who demonstrates the temperament of reasoning and sound-mindedness, tolerance, honesty and have a good character.

The Co-Chairperson must be up to date in all of his/her financial obligations to the Union. He/she must be an active member of the Union for more than three unbroken years, and always regular at meetings.

4. The Secretary:

a. Tenure

The Secretary shall be elected for a period of (2) consecutive years with the opportunity to be reelected for a second term.

b. Duties

The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings. This person shall prepare and deliver reports of meeting proceedings at all meetings, and correspond with family members.

The Secretary shall assist the Chairperson in planning and coordinating all meetings and family unions. He/she shall make a biannual report to the general body. The Secretary shall keep accurate and up to date records of all members.

c. Qualifications

The Secretary must be at least a high school graduate or its equivalent. This individual must have the capability to effectively record minutes and disseminate information. He/she must be a master of the English grammar and able to produce excellent reports.

The Secretary must be an individual who demonstrates the temperaments of reasoning and sound-mindedness, tolerance, honesty and have a good character.

The Secretary must be an active member of the Union for more than three unbroken years, and always regular at meetings.

The Secretary must be current in all of his/her financial obligations to the Union.

5. Financial Secretary

a. Tenure

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The Financial Secretary shall be elected for a period of (2) years with the opportunity to be reelected for an additional term.

b. Duties

The Financial Secretary shall make quarterly financial reports to the general body and keep an update of all financial transactions. He/She shall be responsible for collecting all finances on behalf of the Union.

c. Qualifications

The Financial Secretary must be at least a high school graduate or its equivalent. This individual must have the capability to effectively account for money and preparing financial reports.

The Financial Secretary must be an individual who demonstrates the temperaments of reasoning and sound-mindedness, tolerance, honesty and have a good character. He/she must be an active member of the Union for more than three unbroken years, and always regular at meetings.

The Financial Secretary must have a steady source of income, and have a proven record of honesty for handling other persons or organizations monies.

The Financial Secretary must be up to date in all of his/her financial obligations to the Union.

6. The Treasurer:

a. Tenure

The Treasurer shall be elected for a period of (2) years with the opportunity to be reelected for an additional term.

b. Duties

The Treasurer shall be responsible for storing all funds on behalf of the Union. The Treasurer shall maintain the Union's bank account and prepare financial reports. He/She shall make biannual reports to the general body and be a member of the Ways and Means committee.

c. Qualifications

The Treasurer must be at least a high school graduate or its equivalent. This individual must have the capability to effectively account for money and prepare financial reports.

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The Treasurer must be an individual who demonstrates the temperaments of reasoning and sound-mindedness, intelligence, tolerance, honesty and have a good character. He/she must be an active member of the Union for more than three unbroken years, and always regular at meetings.

The Treasurer must have a steady source of income, and a proven record of honesty for handling other persons or organizations monies.

The Treasurer must be current in all of his/her financial obligations to the Union.

7. The Historian:

a. Tenure

The Historian shall be elected to serve for a period of (2) years with the opportunity to serve an additional term.

b. Duties

The Historian shall acquire, register and keep accurate records of all significant events of Union members.

The Historian shall further establish and maintain a genealogy of the CBC family beginning with Henry J. Clements Sr., G. Sherman Brown Sr., and Robert Lee Cooper, of the city of Brewerville, Liberia.

The Historian shall obtain and maintain copies all electronic and non-electronic family documents and events, including and not limited to pictures, videos and CDs recordings, ect.

Qualifications

The Historian must have the equivalent of a high school education with the ability to maintain an accurate record of events. He/she must have substantial knowledge of the family genealogy. The Historian must have the ability to file records manually and by electronic means.

8. The Chaplain:

a. Tenure

The Chaplain shall be elected to serve for (2) years and with the opportunity to serve an additional term.

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b. Duties

The Chaplain shall give all opening and closing prayers at family gatherings. The Chaplain shall sanctify all family meals and preside over all Union religious activities.

c. Qualifications

The Chaplain must be a God-fearing person, who is rooted in Christian principles, understands the Word of God and believes in the Christian faith. He/she must know how to lead devotions and preside over religious occasions.

The Chaplain must be a person of good character and demonstrates the temperaments of intelligence, tolerance, humbleness, thoughtfulness, patience, persuasiveness, trustworthiness, and able to give good counsel.

ARTICLE X Standing Committees

The CBC Family Union shall have the following standing committees to assist the Chairperson in planning and carrying out the activities of the Union. The heads of these committees shall be appointed by the Union Chairperson.

Planning:

The head of this committee shall be empowered to select additional members to serve on this committee, granting the approval of the Union Chairperson. The Union Co-chair will serve as ex-official. Other members of this committee will include the heads of all standing committees.

The Planning committee shall be responsible to plan and execute the Union's activities for which it was established. This committee shall be responsible to solicit members support for food, drinks, cash or kind for use during the family activity.

The committee is responsible to supervise the serving of foods and drinks, and oversee cleanups by family members after Union events.

This committee shall work with the chairperson/host of the Union's event (Reunion) to find accommodations for members' wishing to attend.

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Ways and Means:

The head of the Ways and Means Committee shall be appointed by the Union Chairperson. The Treasurer of the Union shall be a member of the Ways and Means Committee. The head of the committee is empowered to select at least two members from the Union to serve on the committee. The Union Chairperson must ratify the selections by the Committee's head.

The Ways and Means Committee shall be responsible for finding resources and generating funds for the Union's activities.

ARTICLE XI Nominations and Elections

Nominations and elections shall occur according to schedule and whenever a position becomes vacant. No absent member shall be nominated for a position.

Permanent vacancies shall be filled by nomination, and voting will occur during regular meetings.

Temporary vacancies shall be filled by appointment made by the Union Chairperson with the consent of the EAC.

Elections shall be done by secret ballot and majority vote.

Only members in attendance and current in their financial obligations to the Union are eligible to vote.

No member under suspension is eligible to vote.

Section A: Exemptions

Under the circumstances of illnesses, travels, or incarcerations, a member may be given the privilege to cast a vote or compete for a position. These exceptions may be approved by the Union Chairperson after consultation with the EAC. A traceable notice of intent must be expressed by the member and received by the Chairperson before the request is granted.

Section B: Officers in the USA

Considering the large concentration of family members residing in the United States of America, a set of officers, apart from those of the EAC, shall be elected to manage the affairs of the Union. There shall be only one Executive Advisory Council (EAC).

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The Union shall be compliant to all the laws and regulations of this Constitution and Bylaws, and the elected officers shall enjoy and exercise all rights and privileges there in.

ARTICLE XII Eligibility for Office

To be eligible for office, a member must be current in his/her financial obligations to the Union. The contender must have attended three successive years of family reunions, except where an excused was granted.

A contender must give a sixty (60) day notice of intent to qualify to contest a position.

ARTICLE XIII Non-elected Positions

All positions not contested for through election aside for those positions of the EAC, shall be filled by appointments made by the Union Chairperson.

ARTICLE XIV Tenure of Service

No elected officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same position. A member may be elected to serve in another position after serving two consecutive terms. A member can serve in the same position after sitting out one full term.

ARTICLE XV Amendments

This Constitution and Bylaw may be amended by an affirmative vote of at least 75% of the members present, and who are current in their dues and other financial obligations to the Union. Proposals for amendments must be submitted sixty (60) days prior to vote.

Voting and adoptions of proposed amendments will occur during the next scheduled general meeting. The Chairperson in consultation with the EAC may call an emergency meeting to vote on and adopt an amendment.

ARTICLE XVI Dues

Section A:

1. All CBC family members between the ages of 25 and 66 years, permanently residing in the United States of America for more than six months, are required to pay an annual due of \$100.00 USD (\$8.33 per month).

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2. All CBC family members of age 67 and above shall NOT be required to pay annual dues. However, these individuals may choose to pay dues if they are willing and able.
3. A member may be exempt from paying because of incarcerations lasting more than one year, or because of an illness that restricts their ability to earn income. These conditions must be proven by documentations.

Section B:

1. All dues shall be collected no later than April 30TH by the financial secretary. All dues and funds collected by the financial secretary shall be turned over to the treasurer within one week.
2. In an event where the treasurer is not available, the financial secretary shall deposit the monies into the Union's bank account and must obtain an official receipt.

ARTICLE XVII Bylaws

The following shall constitute the bylaws of the Union.

1. No member(s) without the consent and/or mandate of the Union Chairperson or the consensus of the general body shall solicit money, materials, favors, or anything on behalf of the Union and then exploit such gifts for their personal enrichment.
2. Any member(s) found engaged in such behavior shall be suspended or dismissed from his/her position if elected. The person shall be required to return the gift to its donor or redirect the gift to the Union.
3. Any member(s) found guilty of such behavior shall be ex-communicated from the Union until they have served whatever punishment is levied against them.
4. The location of the family reunion shall be rotational as agreed.

This document is prepared on this 21st day of July 2012, A.D., in the United States of America, by the Constitutional committee.

Committee members:

1. Fred S. Trotmon -----Committee Chair
2. Wellington C. Brown ----- Member