

Sixth Revision  
September 30, 2015  
**Lewis G. Watkins Detachment**  
South Carolina Department  
Marine Corps League

**BYLAWS**

Under Article Five of the National Bylaws of the Marine Corps League, the following Detachment Bylaws are set forth:

**Article I. Name, Purpose, and Resolve**

**Section 1. Name.**

The "Lewis G. Watkins Detachment" (#1131) of the Department of South Carolina, Marine Corps League, is named in honor of Oconee County's only recipient of the Medal of Honor. Staff Sergeant Watkins lost his life in saving the lives of his comrades on 7 October 1952 while serving with the First Marine Division in Korea. The Medal of Honor Citation is given in Appendix One of these Bylaws.

The Lewis G. Watkins Detachment number is 1131 and it is incorporated as a non-profit entity with the State of South Carolina.

**Section 2. Purpose.**

The purpose of this Detachment #1131 is to preserve the traditions and promote the interests of the United States Marine Corps; to band those who have been honorably discharged or retired from that service in fellowship that may effectively promote the ideals of American freedom and democracy; to fit its members for the duties of citizenship and to encourage them to serve ably as citizens as they have served the Nation under arms; to hold sacred the history and memory of the men who have given their lives to the Nation; to foster love for the principles which they have supported by blood and valor since the founding of the Republic; to maintain true allegiance to American institutions; to create a bond of comradeship between those men in service and those who have returned to civilian life; to aid voluntarily to render assistance to all Marines and to former Marines, as well as to their widows and orphans; to perpetuate the history of the U.S. Marine Corps and by fitting acts to observe the anniversaries of historical occasions of peculiar interest to Marines.

**Section 3. Resolve.**

This detachment is formed for promoting the ideals and purposes enumerated above, and is not formed for profit. The net earnings shall be devoted exclusively to charitable, educational, operational, and recreational purposes, as defined by state and local statutes, and also as set forth by the National Bylaws of this organization.

**Section 4.**

Net earnings are defined as moneys in excess of that required in the service and discharge of any and all financial obligations.

**Article II. Membership.**

**Section 1.**

Membership cannot be denied on the basis of race, religion, sex, or national origin as long as all other requirements are met.

## **Section 2. Regular Membership.**

Only persons who are serving on active duty or who have served honorably in the United States Marine Corps, "On Active Duty" for not less than ninety (90) days; persons who are serving or who have served in the United States Marine Corps Reserve and who have earned no less than ninety (90) Reserve Retirement Credit Points; U.S. Navy Corpsmen who have trained with Marine FMF Units in excess of ninety (90) days and earned marine Corps Device (clasp) worn on the Service Ribbon; and those who earn the Warfare Device authorized for FMF Corpsmen, shall be eligible for regular membership in the Marine Corps League. In addition, some Korean War Era Marines with less than ninety (90) days duty may be eligible for regular membership. (See National Bylaws 600a for details.)

## **Section 3. Associate Membership.**

Those individuals not qualified for Regular Membership in the Marine Corps League but who espouse the principles and purposes of the Marine Corps League may be accepted into the League as Associate Members. Upon acceptance, Associate Members will pay dues and initiation fees in the same amounts as Regular Members.

An Associate Member shall be entitled to the rights, privileges, and benefits of a Regular Member, but shall not vote on a membership application, an election of officers, or hold an elective office, however an Associate Member may vote on Detachment internal affairs provided that such vote does not affect a policy of the Marine Corps League. They may be appointed to non-elected offices or committees by the Commandant subject to approval by the Board. (See National Bylaws 600b for information on uniform and other details.)

## **Section 4. Honorary Membership.**

The Detachment may issue Honorary Membership with discretion as prescribed by National Bylaws 600c.

## **Section 5. Life membership.**

Any member of the Marine Corps League who is in good standing may become a Life Member upon proper payment of the required fees. A Life Member shall be subject to the payment of no other dues to a detachment, department, or the National.

Such members shall have the privileges, rights, and benefits enjoyed by a member so long as that Life Member shall live.

Life Membership fees are established by National Headquarters and paid to it through the Detachment Paymaster. There are no discounts, rebates, or installment plan for the fee whether it be paid by the individual or awarded by the Detachment.

All Medal of Honor recipients who are members of the Marine Corps League shall be carried on the rolls as paid up Life Members.

## **Section 6. Members –At-Large.**

Members-at-large shall be handled in accordance with National Bylaws 640.

## **Section 7. Membership Dues and Fees.**

The payment of annual national membership dues entitle all members in good standing an automatic subscription to the Marine Corps Publication and enrollment privileges in any National Group Insurance program that may be in effect.

The Detachment Board of Trustees shall present its suggested dues rate to the Detachment membership following the National Convention or no later than the October meeting.

The membership and annual dues shall expire on the last day of the anniversary month of each member's original dues having been received at national.

See National Bylaws 615 for details on the exceptions to members in good standing.

**Section 8. Non-Payment of Dues.**

Any member shall be dropped from the membership list when required dues are not paid and transmitted on or before the membership expiration date shown on the membership card.

A delinquent member must pay all dues current and in arrears to be reinstated. (See National Bylaws 525.)

**Article III. Officers and Elections.**

**Section 1.**

The governance and management of the Detachment are entrusted to a Board of Trustees. The elected officers of the Detachment shall be its Board of Trustees. (National Bylaws 525)

**Section 2.**

This Detachment shall have the following elected officers: Commandant, Senior Vice Commandant, Junior Vice Commandant and Judge Advocate. The incumbent Commandant shall appoint the following officials: Chaplain, Service Officer, Sergeant at Arms, Paymaster, and Adjutant, or the latter two may be combined into a join office of Adjutant/Paymaster.

**Section 3.**

The term of office for any elected or appointed officer shall be for one year in a given position. However, any officer may hold consecutive terms in that office if elected or appointed in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article III, Section 5. After one intervening term an individual may be elected or appointed to an office held previously.

Length of term in a given office has no effect upon an individual being elected or appointed to a different office.

An exception to the above may be granted for the office of Chaplain. After having served two consecutive terms an individual may be appointed annually upon the approval by a two-thirds majority ballot of the Board of Trustees at a duly called meeting with a quorum present.

**Section 4.**

All elections of officers shall be by written ballot or voice vote and the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall become elected.

**Section 5.**

The Commandant shall appoint a Nominating Committee of at least three (3) members in January of each year. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a recommended slate of officers for presentation during the March meeting. The Nominating Committee shall have contacted the nominees and obtained their willingness to serve if elected. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the March meeting. Election of officers shall be held annually at the April meeting. Newly elected and appointed officers will be installed during the May meeting. The Adjutant is then required to submit the list of new officers to Department and National prior to June 15.

**Section 6. Vacancies of Offices.**

Unexcused absence of three (3) consecutive meetings by an elected or appointed officer shall constitute a vacancy of said office.

When a vacancy occurs in an elected office for any reason the Board of Trustees shall hold a special election to fill said vacancy for the remaining term of office at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the membership.

**Section 7. Recall**

- a. An appointed officer may be recalled by the Detachment Commandant for cause.

- b. Any elected or appointed officer may be recalled at any regular or special meeting of the Detachment by two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting, provided such actions has been announced a minimum of fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the meeting.

#### **Article IV. Duties of Officers.**

##### **Sections 1. Commandant.**

The Commandant shall:

- a. Preside at all meetings of the Detachment and Board of Trustees as set forth in these Bylaws,
- b. Direct the affairs of the Detachment as prescribed by the Board of Trustees,
- c. Appoint committees deemed necessary subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees,
- d. Have the discretion to serve as an *ex officio* member of all committees,
- e. Make the final ruling on questions of order, subject to an approval by the membership of the Detachment.

##### **Section 2. Senior Vice –Commandant.**

The Senior Vice-Commandant shall:

- a. Serve as acting Commandant in the temporary absence of the Commandant,
- b. Serve as Commandant should the Commandant become unable to perform his duties,
- c. Be the Chairman of the Detachment Budget Committee,
- d. Perform other duties as requested by the Commandant and/or Board of trustees.

##### **Section 3. Junior Vice-Commandant.**

The Junior Vice-Commandant shall:

- a. Assist the Commandant in the discharge of his official duties,
- b. Serve as acting Senior Vice-Commandant in the temporary absence of the Senior-Vice Commandant,
- c. Serve as acting Commandant in the temporary absence of both senior officers,
- d. Serve as Senior Vice-Commandant should that elected officer become unable to complete his term of office,
- e. Be the Chairman of the Audit and of the Membership committees.
- f. Perform other duties as requested by the Commandant and/or Board of Trustees.

##### **Section 4. Judge Advocate.**

The Judge Advocate shall:

- a. Facilitate the administration of all legal matters of the Detachment,
- b. Interpret and advise on any matter or questions concerning the Constitution and Bylaws of the Marine Corps League and of this Detachment,
- c. Be available to the Detachment officers and committees for legal advice pertaining to their official functions,
- d. Be responsible for reviewing the Detachment's books and financial statements at the end of each of the first three quarters of the year and more often if necessary. A report of each review shall be made to the membership at the next meeting following the review. The Audit Committee shall make the annual review in the fourth quarter.

##### **Section 5. Adjutant.**

The Adjutant shall:

- a. Produce and keep a full and complete record of the proceedings of all called meetings,
- b. Keep and, upon the Commandant's approval, submit such records as the Department and National may require,
- c. Maintain a current membership roster complete with their names and addresses. Their telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and fax numbers should be included when available. When possible such information shall be kept of former members,

- d. Under the direction of the Commandant read and process all communications and correspondence of the Detachment,
- e. As a member of the Membership Committee record and bring all applications for membership to the Committee and then notify the applicant whether the applicant has been accepted or rejected by the Committee,
- f. Maintain a repository for posterity of the Detachment's official reports of business meetings and other documentation judged important,
- g. Perform related duties as may be assigned by the Commandant.

### **Section 6. Paymaster.**

The Paymaster shall:

- a. Have charge of all finances and see that they are safely deposited in a local bank or banks as designated by the Board of Trustees,
- b. Report monthly on the condition of the Department's finances. Recommendations as deemed necessary or expedient for raising funds to carry out Detachment activities may be included in the report,
- c. All checks disbursing the Detachment's moneys shall be signed by two officers. At least one of the signers shall be the Paymaster or the Commandant, both of whom are bonded by National. The signatures of these two officers shall be on file with the bank. These procedures shall be in accordance with Article IX, Section 1,
- d. Retain and produce, upon request, all financial records, vouchers, and papers required for proper maintenance of the Detachment's account or for the annual audit.

### **Section 7. Chaplain.**

The Chaplain shall:

- a. Be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the members and will offer divine but non-sectarian services for such events as dedications, funerals, public functions, and meetings
- b. Adhere to such ceremonial rituals as are recommended by the Department or National,
- c. Perform any additional duties as may be assigned by the Commandant and/or the Board of Trustees.

### **Section 8. Sergeant-at-Arms.**

The Sergeant-at Arms shall:

- a. Assist the Commandant in keeping order at all meetings,
- b. Ensure that only paid members of the Marine Corps League and authorized guests are admitted to official business meetings of the Detachment,
- c. Perform any additional duties as may be assigned by the Commandant and/or Board of Trustees.

### **Section 9. Service Officer.**

The Service Officer shall:

- a. Be responsible for informing all members and their dependents of the rights and benefits granted to them by law,
- b. If the Board of Trustees names a Service Committee, the Service Officer shall be its chairman. Such a committee would be concerned with veterans' affairs and rehabilitation,
- c. Perform and additional duties as may be assigned by the Commandant and/or the Board of Trustees.

### **Section 10. Immediate Past Commandant.**

The Immediate Past Commandant shall:

- a. Assume this position immediately without election upon the new Commandant taking office,
- b. Automatically become a member of the Board of Trustees and serve as its Parliamentarian,
- c. Perform any additional duties as may be assigned by the Commandant and/or the Board of Trustees.

### **Section 11.**

All officers or committee chairmen giving oral reports to the members at a meeting shall give a legibly written abstract of the report to the Adjutant.

## **Section 12. Contracting Authority**

- a) No Detachment Officer, Committee Chairperson, or Member of the Marine Corps League shall enter into, or sign any contract or agreement, for the purpose of binding the Detachment, Department or National Organization of the Marine Corps League without first submitting such contract to the Detachment Judge Advocate for consideration and the forwarding of recommendations to the Detachment Board of Trustees for review and approval/disapproval.
- b) The Contracting Authority shall be limited to the Detachment Commandant, Judge Advocate or such other Member as may be designated in writing by the Detachment Commandant for a specific purpose.
- c) No Member may enter into an agreement or contract in their own name and paid for by them if that agreement or contract names the Detachment or the Marine Corps League as the primary organization or beneficiary of the agreement or contract.

## **Article V. Meetings.**

### **Section 1.**

Regular meetings shall be held on the third Tuesday of each month. Any notice of special meetings or change of regular meeting dates shall be given to the membership by the Adjutant by mail, e-mail, or telephone at least five (5) days in advance of said meeting. If the monthly meeting cannot be held on the regular date because it falls on a holiday or for some other valid reason the Board of Trustees, by majority vote, may select some other day in that month or delete the meeting for just cause.

### **Section 2.**

Meetings of this Detachment shall be conducted with the order and precedence of the National Marine Corps League Bylaws and Roberts Revised Rules of Order.

### **Section 3.**

The Detachment Commandant or a majority of the Board of Trustees will have the power to call a special meeting of the Detachment at any time so long as it meets the requirements of advance notice to the membership specified in Article V, Section 1.

### **Section 4.**

A minimum of five (5) members of the Detachment and a majority of the elected officers must be present to constitute a quorum at a monthly meeting.

### **Section 5.**

The Board of Trustees shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the Commandant and as often as the Commandant may deem necessary. The Commandant shall call a meeting of the Detachment Board of Trustees and all appointed officers upon the joint written request of three (3) or more members of said Board. A majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for said meetings.

### **Section 6.**

The Detachment charter, or a copy thereof, the National and Marine Corps Colors, and a Bible shall be displayed at all regular business meetings.

## **Article VI. Committees.**

### **Section 1.**

The Detachment shall have four standing committees; 1. The Budget Committee, chaired by the Senior Vice-Commandant; 2. The Audit Committee, chaired by the Junior Vice-Commandant; and 3. The Membership Committee, also chaired by the Junior Vice –Commandant and to which the Adjutant shall be a member; and 4. The Awards Committee, chaired by the Senior Vice-Commandant.

The Board of Trustees may appoint additional members to these committees as it deems necessary.

**Section 2.**

Except for the above four standing committees, the Board of Trustees may appoint committees for the purposes it deems necessary or cancel committees as it feels necessary.

Except for the chairmen of the four standing committees, the Adjutant on the Membership Committee, the Service Officer chairing the Service Committee, should one be appointed, and the Commandant as an *ex officio* member of all committees, committee members serve at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees.

**Article VII. Subsidiaries and Subordinate Groups.**

National Bylaws Article Seven (7) shall be applied as needed by this Detachment.

**Article VIII. Grievance and Discipline.**

National Administrative Procedures, Chapter Nine (9), shall be applied when needed.

**Article IX. Financial Procedures.**

**Section 1.**

All checks disbursing the Detachment's moneys shall be signed by authorized officers. For those checks requiring two signatures at least one of the signers shall be the Paymaster or the Commandant, both of whom are bonded by National. The signatures of these two officers shall be on file with the bank.

All checks disbursing the Detachment's moneys in excess of \$100.00 shall be signed by two officers. All checks written by the Paymaster and payable to the Paymaster shall also be signed by two officers. All other checks shall require only one signature.

The Senior Vice-Commandant and Adjutant are authorized to cosign checks with one of the above named officers, but are not authorized to initiate expenditures not specifically approved by the Commandant or the Board of Trustees or to hold moneys since they are not bonded. The cost of bonding in their cases would have to be borne by the Detachment.

When the duties of the Adjutant and the Paymaster reside in one individual the Board of Trustees may authorize the Junior Vice-Commandant to cosign checks providing that either the Commandant or the Adjutant/Paymaster is the other signer.

**Section 2.**

Normal expenditure of funds will be those in accordance with the annual budget that has been approved by the membership at a duly constituted meeting.

The Commandant may spend or authorize the expenditure of no more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) on non-budgeted emergencies between the monthly meetings of the membership without prior approval of the membership. Such expenditure shall be reported in the financial report at the next monthly meeting following the expenditure.

The Board of Trustees may spend or authorize the expenditure of no more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) on non-budgeted emergencies between the monthly meetings of the membership without prior approval of the membership. Such expenditure shall be reported in the financial report at the next monthly meeting following the expenditure.

The Commandant's authorization and that of the Board of Trustees cannot be pooled to exceed the Board's \$100.00 limitation on a given emergency.

### **Section 3.**

A member may be given permission by the Commandant to spend up to \$50.00 or by the Board of Trustees to spend up to \$100.00 on an emergency non-budgeted project. Any such expenditures will count against the Commandant's or the Board's monthly authorization limit as the case may be.

### **Section 4.**

All expenditures, whether budgeted or for non-budgeted emergencies, will be backed up by legible and valid receipts, vouchers, or other documentation providing proof of the transaction. These will be given to and maintained by the Paymaster and retained in archives for a period of three (3) years.

### **Section 5.**

All expenditures of this Detachment shall be devoted exclusively to charitable, educational, operational, and recreational purposes, as defined by state and local statutes, and also as set forth by the National Bylaws of the Marine Corps League.

## **Article X. Uniforms.**

### **Section 1.**

The mandatory minimum uniform for all members at public functions of the Detachment as designated by the Commandant or where a member representing the Detachment at a public gathering, funeral, patriotic talk to school children, or other such public function shall be the red Marine Corps League cap and emblem with the Detachment's name, and appropriate cap strips for officers.

At such functions all members, and most specifically the officers, are encouraged to wear the Marine Corps casual uniform which is the red single breasted blazer with two large Marine Corps League buttons on the front and three small ones on each sleeve and worn as prescribed by the League, white shirt, black tie, black trousers, black belt, black sox, and black shoes.

### **Section 2.**

The work uniform shall be the red shirt of the appropriate Marine Corps League shade, khaki pants, and red or navy baseball cap with either the appropriate Marine Corps or Marine Corps League emblem sewn on.

### **Section 3.**

All uniforms will be worn in a tasteful, respectful manner and as prescribed by the Marine Corps League.

### **Section 4. Honor Guard.**

The Honor Guard is to be used for funerals and such other events as deemed appropriate by the Commandant. It will consist of a rifle team, bugler, and flag folding and presentation team. Its uniform will be per Section 1 above with the addition of white gloves and black raincoats to be worn as weather dictates.

### **Section 5. Color Guard.**

The Color Guard is to be used for parades and at other public events, as requested, to present, post and retire the colors. It will consist of two riflemen and two or more flag bearers based on needs.

The uniform will consist of:

- a. Summer: short sleeve white aviator shirt, open at the neck with a Marine Corps League patch on the left shoulder and US flag on the right shoulder, blue trousers with red stripe, wide white belt with large brass buckle bearing the USMC emblem, black shoes and socks, red Marine Corps League cap, white gloves, and black raincoat as weather dictates.

- b. Winter: long sleeve white aviator shirt with a Marine Corps League patch on the left shoulder and US flag on the right shoulder with black tie and USMC approved tie clasp. The remainder of the uniform will be the same as the summer uniform listed above.

**Article XI. Amendments.**

**Section 1.**

These Bylaws may be amended or altered in whole or in part at any regular or special meeting of the Detachment by two-thirds vote of the members present providing:

- a) A quorum is present at the meeting.
- b) That the proposed amendment or alteration shall have been discussed at a regular or specially called meeting held at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken.
- c) The proposed revision, amendment, or repeal, voted on will be in typewritten form and in the exact wording intended to be incorporated into the Bylaws.

**Section 2.**

These Bylaws will be critically reviewed in their entirety every five (5) years by an ad hoc Bylaws Committee for the express purpose of seeing that they are current and adequately functional and to propose such changes that are necessary to make them so.

**Section 3.**

These Bylaws shall become effective providing:

- a) They have been discussed at a regular or specially called meeting held at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken.
- b) The vote will be taken at a regularly scheduled business meeting or specially called meeting that meets the requirements of Article V, Section 3. Approval of the Bylaws requires an affirmative vote approved by two-thirds of the members in attendance providing a quorum is present at the meeting.
- c) They are approved by the Department Judge Advocate.

**Adopted by the members of the Lewis G. Watkins Detachment**

Date:

Signed:

Commandant: \_\_\_\_\_

Judge Advocate: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by the South Carolina Department**

Date:

Signed:

Judge Advocate: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix One

The President of the United States in the name of Congress takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

**Staff Sergeant Lewis G. Watkins  
United States Marine Corps**

for services set forth in the following Citation

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Guide of a Rifle Platoon of Company I, Third Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), in action against enemy aggressor forces in Korea during the hours of darkness on the morning of 7 October 1952. With his platoon assigned the mission of re-taking an outpost which had been overrun by the enemy earlier in the night, Staff Sergeant Watkins skillfully led his unit in the assault up the designated hill. Although painfully wounded when a well-entrenched hostile force at the crest of the hill engaged the platoon with intense small-arms and grenade fire, he assisted in pinning down an enemy machine gun holding up the assault. When an enemy grenade landed among Sergeant Watkins and several other Marines while they were moving forward through a trench on the hill crest, he immediately pushed his companions aside, placed himself in a position to shield them and picked up the deadly missile in an attempt to throw it outside the trench. Mortally wounded when the grenade exploded in his hand, Staff Sergeant Watkins, by his great personal valor in the face of almost certain death, saved the lives of several of his comrades and contributed materially to the success of the mission. His extraordinary heroism, inspiring leadership and resolute spirit of self-sacrifice reflect the highest credit upon himself and enhance the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

/S/ Dwight D. Eisenhower

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Note: Staff Sergeant Watkins was born June 6, 1925 to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Watkins of Seneca, South Carolina. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on September 12, 1950. He is buried in the cemetery of Wolf Stake Baptist Church, Wolf Stake Church Road, S.C. His memory is ceremoniously honored each year by this Unit.