

From the *Constitution of the Alabama Writers' Conclave as Amended*

Appendix to Alabama Writers' Conclave Constitution

No. 92. S. 143. Powell
CODE OF ALABAMA

An Act to create the honorary office of Poet Laureate of Alabama, to designate the method of selection, to authorize the use of the insignia of the office, and to authorize the issuance of a commission by the Governor.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. That the honorary office of Poet Laureate of Alabama is hereby created as hereinafter provided. Section 2. The Writers' Conclave, a voluntary organization of Alabama historians, playwrights, fiction writers, poets, and newspaper writers, may at any annual meeting of said Writers' Conclave, designate a suitable person to hold the honorary office of Poet Laureate of Alabama, and upon the election of a nominee by a majority of the membership present and voting, the name may be certified to the Governor of Alabama by the President of said Writers' Conclave as duly elected to the position. Whereupon the Governor shall issue a commission to said Poet Laureate, bearing the Great Seal of the State of Alabama. Section 3. The term of office of Poet Laureate of Alabama shall be indeterminate and retroactive to June 10, 1930. Vacancies shall be filled by the method described in Section 2 of this Act. Section 4. No salary or other emoluments of a monetary nature shall be paid to the Poet Laureate of Alabama by the State by virtue of said office. Section 5. The Poet Laureate of Alabama may be entitled to wear upon his person as an insignia of the office a small gold metal simulating in design an open book, upon which may be inscribed the title of office, the name of the incumbent and the date of the commission issued by the Governor, said medal to be provided by the Alabama Writers' Conclave from its own funds.

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Basic Steps in the Procedure for the Election of a Poet Laureate

1. President of the AWC, with suggestions from the AWC Board, appoints a Poet Laureate Nominating Committee Chairperson.

It would be good if this individual were an active member of the AWC, but this is not necessary. The chairperson should be a resident, recognized, published writer (poet or other) in the State of Alabama. He/she should have a working knowledge and be active in their genre. They should also have a good understanding of the other major genres in creative writing and have contact with other writers and writing organizations in the state. This person will interact closely with the President of the AWC as the liaison between the PL nominating committee and the AWC Board. The Chairperson's first responsibility will be to create the committee of 2-3 individuals of his/her choosing (these committee members must be residents of Alabama, not necessarily connected with any writing organization, but have a good knowledge of vagaries of creative writing).

2. The Chairperson and nominating committee determine and collect criteria and materials needed to establish qualifications of a nominee to the honorary office, e.g., letter of nomination, nominee's bio, education, work experience, publication record with examples, public service, presentations, reference/testimonials, etc.

Essentially, any person (the nominator) who nominates a PL candidate should, in addition to the letter of nomination, collect the necessary materials that support and verify a nominee's qualifications for the position of Poet Laureate of the State of Alabama. The letter of nomination and credential packet, when complete, is then submitted to the PL Chair. The PL committee examines the credentials to verify the qualification. The committee can, if so desired, do further research on a candidate beyond what is provided by the nominator.

3. The request for nominations to the honorary position of Poet Laureate of the State of Alabama is advertised through various public media services over a period of at least four to six months. This ad should state the qualifications required for the position of Poet Laureate of the State of Alabama. It should also mention the materials a nominator needs to provide in support of the nominee (see #2 above). A deadline should be set by the PL Chair that closes the public nomination and collection of supporting materials. The ad should also contain the contact information (mailing address) of the Chairperson of the PL Nominating Committee to whom the nominations must be sent.

Each nomination should be given careful considerations by the nominating committee. If a candidate should not qualify, the Chairperson needs to notify the nominator and return all the materials sent.

4. The Chairperson of the PL Nominating Committee arranges with the Office of the Governor to set a date to certify the PL by the Governor of the State of Alabama. This date must be scheduled early on in the process and should not happen until after the annual meeting of the AWC. This is a ceremonious event and consequently an important media event. It is advertised and open to the public.

5. After the PL Nominating Committee verifies a nominee's qualifications, his/her nomination and credentials are sent by the Chairperson of the PL Nominating Committee to the President of the Alabama Writers' Conclave. (This can be done any time after a nominee's materials are examined or as a group after the deadline for submission.) The president distributes the nomination materials to the AWC board members. A formal board meeting is held to discuss the nominees and one is selected. This nominee is put forth to the AWC membership for election at the next annual meeting of the AWC. **AT NO TIME IN THIS PROCESS SHOULD THE NAMES OF THE QUALIFYING NOMINEES BE MADE PUBLIC.**

All the qualifying nominees are invited to the annual AWC. **THE NAME OF THE CANDIDATE THE AWC BOARD SELECTED TO BE PUT FORTH FOR VOTE BY THE MEMBERSHIP, IS NOT RELEASED UNTIL THE TIME OF THE VOTE. AT THIS TIME THE AWC PRESIDENT** can announce the name, provide rationale for the selection, and ask the membership for a vote of approval. The names of the other nominee can after this be announced.

6. Once certified by the Governor of the State, the new PL commences his/her duties for the State of Alabama.