## Timely Topics Discussion Group

DUTIES

This Group shall provide Old Guard members with the opportunity to meet regularly for the purpose of discussing topics of timely interest in a milieu conductive to general discussion and full audience participation.

PROCEDURES

A Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall provide leadership and guidance and assume the Group’s administrative responsibilities.

Group members assist in the selection of topics. Each member of the Group should, to the extent practicable, be willing to serve as a discussion leader at one or more of the monthly meetings. At times, Old Guard members, though not members of the Group, or other persons with special expertise may be invited to serve as a discussion leader.

The program shall consist of monthly meetings, generally to be held on the second Tuesday of each month. However, no meeting will be held in October, usually, because the Old Guard’s Ladies Day luncheon is held in that month. Further, since many of the Old Guard’s members will be engaged in the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, no Timely Topics discussion will be held in December.

Timely Topics meetings will generally be held in the front of the Council Chamber of the New Providence Municipal Center following the Old Guard’s regular meeting there. When meetings cannot be held in-person, they can be held through teleconferencing (e.g. Zoom). The discussion group’s meetings shall begin promptly, no later than 11:45 A.M. and should end no later than 12:45 P.M. Members will thus have the opportunity to lunch together after the meeting, should they so desire.

On occasion, the Timely Topics discussion may be held during the Old Guard’s regular meeting, serving as the “program” in lieu of an invited speaker.

### Role of Moderators

The Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Group shall be present on the dais, chair the discussion and, at the outset, briefly describe the subject to be discussed and introduce the discussion leader or the two such leaders, as the case may be.

Then, each discussion leader shall open the discussion with brief, informative Opening Remarks. These Remarks should generally be about five minutes in length. Under no circumstances, should such Remarks exceed ten minutes.

After the Opening Remarks, the discussion leader or leaders shall lead and guide the ensuing discussion and continually encourage the broadest participation by members of the audience. When appropriate, each leader may stimulate the discussion by interjecting questions, comments, and additional information pertaining to the topic under discussion, much of which may have been prepared in advance, but for reasons of brevity were not included in his Opening Remarks.

After the Opening Remarks, it should be borne in mind that each discussion leader’s primary role is to encourage and induce the fullest participation by members of the audience. He should exercise discretion to ensure that he does not dominate the ensuing discussion at the expense of participating members of the audience.

By like token, no one member of the audience should be permitted to monopolize the conversation. When necessary, the Chair shall diplomatically, but firmly, take the floor away from such a speaker, as well as moderate the discussion so as to obtain a fair and full coverage of the various issues and broad participation by those present. On occasion, the chair may also serve as the sole discussion leader.

Absent extraordinary interest and general consensus, the meeting should not last more than one hour. When appropriate, the Chair may ask each discussion leader to make very brief concluding remarks, generally not more than two minutes in length.