



APPROVED REVISED
DRAFT
CONSTITUTION

July 28
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Old Timers Sports Association of Minnesota, Inc.
OTSAM.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PREAMBLE	2
Chapter One	General Provisions	2
Article I	Name	2
Article II	Mission	2
Article III	Seal/Emblem	2
Chapter Two	Membership and Responsibilities	2
Article 1	General Membership	2
Article 2	Categories of Membership	2
Article 3	Application for Membership	3
Article 4	Membership Rights and Benefits	4
Article 5	Membership Responsibilities	4
Chapter Three	Organizational Structure & Associated Functions	4
Article 1	The General Body	4
Article 2	Leadership Structure	5
Article 3	Officers of the Association	5
Article 4	Standing Committees	7
Article 5	Ad Hoc Committees	9
Chapter Four	Tenure of Office	10
Article 1	Elected Officers	10
Article 2	Appointed Officers	10
Chapter Five	End of Tenure, Impeachment, Removal	10
Article 1	End of Tenure	10
Article 2	Impeachment, Removal from Office	11
Chapter Six	Official Misconduct and Attendant Consequences	12
Article 1	Official Misconduct	12
Article 2	Official Consequences	12
Chapter Seven	Meetings, Regulations, Procedures	13
Article 1	Regular General Meetings	13
Article 2	Executive Team Meetings	13
Article 3	Executive and Administrative Team Meetings	13
Article 4	Standing and Ad Hoc Committee Meetings	13
Article 5	Informational Meetings	13
Article 6	Ahblawoe Forum	13
Article 7	Quorum	14
Chapter Eight	Finances and Financial Administration	14
Article 1	Fiscal Year	14
Article 2	Banking and Oversight	14
Article 3	Dues and Assessments	14
Article 4	General Funds	15
Article 5	Financial Administration	15
Chapter Nine	Benevolent Program	16
Chapter Ten	Elections and Transitions	16
Article 1	Elections Commission	16
Article 2	Schedule	16
Article 3	Elected Positions	16
Article 4	Candidate Eligibility	17
Article 5	Registration Fees	17
Article 6	Voting Eligibility	17
Article 7	Voting and Results	17
Article 8	Transition of Leadership	17
Chapter Eleven	Amendments	18
Article 1	Amendment Provisions	18

PREAMBLE

We, the members, residing in Minnesota, United States of America, and elsewhere around the world; being duly cognizant of the need to promote unity among ourselves and to secure the pleasure and benefit of sports and social association; and, committed to the cause of providing for our common good and the good of our community; do hereby enact and establish this Constitution for the Old Timers Sports Association of Minnesota, Inc. (OTSAM)

Chapter 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- Article 1.0 **Name**
This organization shall be named, *Old Timers Sports Association of Minnesota, Inc.* hereinafter referred to as OTSAM, The Association, Ahblawoe, or Veteran Ahblawoe.
- Article 2.0 **Mission**
The mission of The Association shall be "*Fraternity and community building through sports*".
- Article 3.0 **Seal/Emblem**
The seal and Emblem of the Association shall comprise the following colors and symbols:
- 3.1 Colors and Symbols of the Association**
- a) Green: shall represent the green field that we play on
 - b) Orange: shall represent the energy we derive from the rising sun.
 - c) White: shall represent the purity, togetherness, and brotherhood.
 - d) Balls and boots: shall represent sportsmanship, fitness, and good health.
- Article 4.0 **Motto**
The motto of Ahblawoe shall be "*We Used To Play*".

Chapter 2 MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Article 1.0 **General Membership**
Membership shall be accorded to any person who is thirty-five (35) years of age as stipulated by a legal US and documents of other National Governments or older; who subscribes to the mission and core values of Ahblawoe, who pledges allegiance to this Constitution, and who vows to abide by the Association's By-Laws and Code of Conduct at all times.
- Article 2.0 **Categories of Membership**
Membership shall be of three categories: Regular, Associate, and Honorary.

2.1 Regular Membership

- a) Shall be accorded to anyone who meets the general stipulation of membership as prescribed in Chapter 2, Article 1 of this Constitution
- b) Shall apply to all persons who reside in the State of Minnesota with valid proof of age and residency in the form of a driver's license, a State ID, or a current passport.

2.2 Associate Membership

- a) Shall be accorded to anyone who meets the general stipulation of membership as prescribed in Chapter 2, Article 1 of this Constitution.
- b) Shall apply to any non-resident of the State of Minnesota who provides valid proof of age/residency in the form of a driver's license, a State ID, or a current passport.

2.3 Honorary Membership

- a) Shall apply to all former sports persons or "hall of famers" who have an interest in the Association.
- b) Shall apply to all spouses of Regular Members and widows of Deceased members of the Association who express interest in Ablahwoe.
- c) Shall apply to all responsible individuals (i.e. public officials, non-profit executives, professionals, etc.) who may not be 35 years old, but have vested interest in the development of the Association.

Article 3.0

Application for Membership

All persons seeking membership to The Association:

- 3.1 Shall vetted, complete a membership form and be screened by the Membership Committee
- 3.2 Shall pay a non-refundable application fee of \$20.00 and pay one-year membership due in full
- 3.3 Anyone seeking re-admission to Ablahwoe after prolonged absence or delinquency for a period exceeding twelve (12) months shall:
 - a) Pay 50% of a full year membership due
- 3.4 Anyone who has been absent from the Association for a period of twenty- four (24) months or more shall pay a full year membership and reapply for membership plus a non-refundable fee of \$20.00

Article 4.0

Membership Rights and Benefits**4.1 Regular Member**

- a) Shall have the *right to vote* provided s/he has attained 6 months of active membership; is in good financial standing; and has no pending disciplinary actions at the time of voting.
- b) Shall have the *right to contest an elected office* provided s/he resides in the Twin Cities Metro area; has attained 24 (twenty-four) consecutive months

of active membership; is in good financial standing; and has no pending disciplinary actions at the time of voting.

- c) Shall have the *right to full benevolent funding* provided s/he has attained one (1) year of active membership and in good financial standing.

4.2 Associate Members

- a) Shall pay an annual due of 50% of the regular membership due and have the *right to associate* with Ablahwoe having attained 3 (three) months of active associate membership.
- b) Shall *represent* the Association at events in his/her city/State as the Executive Body shall deem essential.
- c) Shall *not have the right to vote* nor to contest elections
- d) Shall *receive fifty percent (50%) of benevolent funding* having attained two years of active Associate membership and in good financial standing.

4.3 Honorary Members

- a) Shall *have the right to associate* with Ahblawoe having attained 3 months of honorary membership.
- b) Shall *not have the right to vote* nor to contest elections
- c) Shall not be accorded the *right to receive benevolent funding*
- d) Shall, based on qualification and experience, be permitted to serve on Ad hoc committees of the Association.

Article 5.0

Membership Responsibilities

Membership responsibilities are defined in the broad contexts of responsible conduct, public interest, honesty, and integrity.

- 5.1 All members are obligated to act in ways that validate and enhance the trust of the Association and the community in which we live.
- 5.2 All members must exhibit responsible behavior at all Ahblawoe forums as prescribed in Chapter 7, Article 6 of this Constitution and the Code of Conduct.
- 5.3 All members must not knowingly be a party to any illegal activity or engage in acts that tend to discredit the integrity of Ablahwoe.
- 5.4 All members are required to meet up with their yearly dues and all other financial obligations as agreed to by the Association.
- 5.6 All members must respect and abide by the provisions and standards contained in this Constitution and the Code of Conduct.

Chapter 3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND AFFILIATED FUNCTIONS

Article 1.0

The General Body

The General Body shall be the highest organ of decision-making in the Association, and shall have the powers to:

- 1.1 Make decisions by a simple majority of the voting membership present at a regular meeting .

- 1.2 Elect, through secret ballot, or impeach, any elected officer of the Association.
- 1.3 Review and evaluate the overall policies of the Association and impose corrective measures it considers necessary.
- 1.4 Suspend any provision of this Constitution or By-Laws in order to accommodate what it considers unusual situations.
- 1.5 Authorize the creation of other offices and committees it considers appropriate to implement the association's objectives
- 1.6 Dissolve the Association with the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the Voting Members present.
- 1.7 Amend the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association with an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present

Article 2.0

Leadership Structure

The Association shall have two leadership teams: Executive and Administrative.

2.1 Executive Team

- a) Shall provide the leadership needed to achieve the Association's objectives
- b) Shall consist of the President, Vice President, General Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Technical Director and Chaplain.
- c) Shall be the primary decision-making body and charged with the role of meeting the Association's objectives in the absence of the General Body.
- d) Shall appoint, remove and prescribe the duties and term of reference of all Standing and Ad Hoc Committee
- e) Shall approve all budgets and allocate money for budgetary items

2.2 Administrative Team

- a) Shall consist of the Executive Team and Chairpersons of all Standing/Ad Hoc Committees
- b) Shall manage the day to day activities of the Association.

Article 3.0

Officers of the Association

3.1 The President

- a) Shall be the chief executive officer and principal spokesperson, and shall account to the General Body for the conduct of the Association's affairs.
- b) Shall convene and preside over all meetings of the Association; and shall, in consultation with members of the Executive Team, prepare meeting agendas
- c) Shall submit a balanced annual budget to the General Body for review and action at the First Quarterly Meeting in February of the Fiscal Year.
- d) Shall recommend programs and other initiatives to the General Body only after the recommendations have been presented to the Executive Team.
- e) Shall give an annual (State of the Association) report that summarizes the Association's financial profile and the status of programs/projects.
- f) Shall, in collaboration with the Executive Team, appoint chairpersons of standing and Ad hoc committees; and shall, in consultation with committee chairpersons, appoint members to the respective committees.
- g) Shall implement the Association's initiatives which include resolutions and recommendations by the General Body.

- h) Shall serve as principal representative of the Association at ceremonial functions as long as said functions do not contravene this Constitution.
- i) Shall countersign or endorse all checks, vouchers, and all other pertinent documents relevant to doing the Association's business.
- j) Shall sign all official documents of the Association
- k) Shall receive and review all reports from standing and ad hoc committees
- l) Shall exercise the right to vote in meetings (General Meetings, Executive or Administrative meetings) only in the event of breaking a tie in matters brought up to a vote.

3.2 The Vice President

- a) Shall be the principal assistant to the president
- b) shall assume all designated responsibilities when the president is absent or is unable to perform authorized, constitutional duties
- c) Shall perform duties that may be assigned by the president.
- d) Shall assume all designated, authorized, constitutional duties of President in the case of resignation, incapacitation, death, and relocation, and be sworn in by the Chaplain at the very next meeting after such an occurrence.
- e) Shall serve as Ex-Officio on all standing/ad hoc committees and perform other duties assigned by the President.
- f) Shall vote in all meetings only when not deputizing for the president.

3.3 The Secretary General

- a) Shall maintain the official records and correspondence of the Association.
- b) Shall be the custodian of the Association's documents, including its Seal.
- c) Shall record and maintain accurate minutes of all meetings, and shall prepare out-going correspondences and invitations
- d) Shall collaborate with the requisite committees for creating and maintaining current, up-to-date mailing lists and roster of the Association's membership.
- e) Shall be responsible to send members text or email notices in a timely fashion.
- f) Shall respond to and/or prepare inquiries and press releases for the Association
- g) Shall perform other duties assigned by the President
- h) Shall, in an event wherein both the President and Vice President are unable to lead, assume leadership of the Association and be sworn in accordingly.
- i) Shall have one vote

3.4 The Financial Secretary

- a) Shall be the sole official custodian of the Association's financial records.
- b) Shall create and maintain orderly, accurate records of financial transactions and present periodic reports to the General Body and the Executive Team.
- c) Shall collect/receive funds for all financial transactions and transfer all funds received, along with pertinent accurate documentation, to the Treasurer.
- d) Shall maintain a record of revenue and expenses, and issue official receipts for all funds collected or received for the Association.

- e) Shall present written, periodic reports (every four months) to the General Body and a joint session of the Executive and Administrative Leadership Teams, and shall make copies of the reports available. Each report shall include:
 - f) The account's beginning balance
 - g) All financial activities since the preceding report
 - h) The account's ending balance
 - i) Shall sign all orders and vouchers for the disbursement of funds as authorized by the Executive Leadership Team.
 - j) Shall receive and issue receipts for all monies paid to the Association
 - k) Shall compile and keep records of all financial transactions and provide accurate account of all monies received and expended by the Association
 - l) Shall work in close collaboration with the Treasurer to develop and maintain the Association's financial management system
 - m) Shall prepare, receive and review all financial reports and requests submitted by standing and ad hoc committees
 - n) Shall, in concert with the Treasurer, prepare and submit the annual budget to the President and the Executive Team.
 - o) Shall be a Signatory to the Association's Account and shall.
 - p) Shall have one vote

3.5 The Treasurer

- a) Shall maintain all accounts in the Association's name and shall do so with an accredited financial institution designated by the General Body.
- b) Shall be the sole custodian of the Association's funds and shall oversee all collection of revenue and payment of debts.
- c) Shall co-sign with the President on checks written to conduct authorized Association business.
- d) Shall organize and execute the collection of dues, fees, and special assessments.
- e) Shall create and maintain orderly and accurate accounting records of the Association's transactions that reliably reflect the financial status of the Association
- f) Shall be the chief custodian of the Association's finances
- g) Shall receive/issue receipts for all monies paid to the Association from the Financial Secretary
- h) Shall collaborate with the Financial Secretary to prepare timely, accurate financial statements
- i) Shall have one vote

3.6 The Technical Director

- a) Shall supervise the coaching staffs of both the soccer and basketball programs.
- b) Shall plan and manage tournaments, including Annual Memorial Day games.
- c) Shall identify and secure venues and other facilities for practices and games.
- d) Shall plan yearly calendar of activities/events including travels for games.
- e) Shall supervise the management of the Club's sporting equipment, including ball and uniforms.

3.7 The Chaplain

- a) Shall lead opening and closing prayers of at all meetings and functions
- b) Shall perform other duties assigned by the President.
- c) Shall have one vote

Article 4.0

Standing Committees

There shall be the following standing committees: Audit Committee, Disciplinary Committee, Membership Committee, Technical Committee, Social Committee, and Public Relations Committee.

4.1 Audit Committee

- a) Shall consist of an odd number no fewer than three (3) members. They shall have the requisite professional training and expertise in accounting, auditing and/or related fields and shall be responsible to ensure that periodic financial reports reflect accurately the Association's financial profile.
- b) Shall be responsible for reviewing, analyzing and recommending changes in the fiscal and financial management practices of the Association
- c) Shall provide regular professional auditing services in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting, Auditing and Financial Management principles.
- d) Shall operate free and clear of any undue influences and manipulations.
- e) Shall conduct an end of term audit of the out-going Administration immediately after the General Elections to ensure a smooth transition for incoming Administration.
- f) Shall perform other duties as assigned by the President.

4.2 Disciplinary Committee

- a) Shall consist of an odd number no fewer than three (3) members who have exhibited exemplary character in the Association and the larger community.
- b) Shall decide all issues of violation to the Constitution, Code of Conduct and By-Laws of the Association.
- c) Shall investigate all grievances and violations, report findings, and make recommendations to the Executive Body for appropriate actions.
- d) Appeals by this Committee shall be heard by a Special Emergency Session of the Executive and Administrative teams in no later than (10) days after said decision is presented and received
- e) A simple majority vote of the Special Emergency Session shall constitute final closure and shall be binding on all parties.

4.3 Membership Committee

- a) Shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members and collaborate with other committees for developing strategies to recruit, retain, and increase membership.
- b) Shall collaborate with the General Secretary to maintain current up-to-date roster of active, delinquent, resigned/expelled members, including current contact information.
- c) Shall collaborate with the General Secretary and Financial Secretary to periodically reconcile the membership roster develop strategies to reduce delinquency.
- d) Shall collect the application \$20.00 fees, \$50.00 readmission fees, and submit the same to the Treasurer.
- e) Shall furnish all new members with an orientation package that will include copies of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association.

4.4 Technical Committee

The Technical Committee shall consist of the Technical Director, Coaches, Captains, and Team Managers, and shall coordinate and manage all technical matters relative to team practices, training and sporting events of the Association.

a) The Technical Director

- i. Shall supervise the coaching staffs of both the soccer and basketball programs
 - ii. Shall plan and manage tournaments, including annual Memorial Day games
 - iii. Shall identify and secure venues and other facilities for practices and games
 - iv. Shall plan yearly calendar of activities, including travels for games
- Shall supervise the management of the clubs' sporting equipment, including balls and uniforms

b) The Coaches

- i. Shall appoint the Captain and Team Manager
- ii. Shall supervise all sporting activities of the Association
- iii. Shall negotiate for fields, sporting venues and conduct training exercises
- iv. Shall draw up Teams for all games in which the Association shall participate
- v. Shall collaborate with the Captain and Team Manager to institute discipline during all events sanctioned by the Association.

c) The Team Managers

- i. Shall be official custodian of the Association's equipment
- ii. Shall collaborate with the Coach and the Captain to ensure that the Team is prepared and in high spirit for any match
- iii. Shall make all travel arrangements, including lodging.

d) The Captains

- i. Shall collaborate with the coach on the field of play
- ii. Shall enforce the "rules of the game" in keeping with the By-Laws
- iii. Shall be chief spokesperson of the Team at games and/or practices.

4.5 Social Committee

- a) Shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, spearhead outreach efforts to members or former members, and collaborate with the Membership Committee.
- b) Shall plan, publicize and execute all social events of the Association, including family day, memorial day, visitations, ...
- c) Shall collaborate with the Public Relations Committee for promotional purposes.
- d) Shall liaise with the Secretary General to forward all such information to the General Body.
- e) Funds collected by the Social Committee shall be turned over promptly to the Financial Team for proper record-keeping and accountability.

4.6 Marketing and Public Relations Committee

- a) Shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members who shall coordinate and handle all public relations matters of the Association.
- b) Shall construct and maintain the Association’s website as well as explore and manage the branding of the Association’s Logo.
- c) Shall design and acquire all souvenirs of the Association.
- d) Shall, in conjunction with the website, develop other communication processes such as social media and newsletters.

5.0 Ad Hoc Committees

5.0 Benevolence Committee

- a) Shall consist of an odd number no fewer than three (3) members, who shall oversee policies/procedures which determine the type, amount, and frequency of assistance needed for families of deceased members, and recommend to the Executive Team for action.
- b) Shall administer benevolence resources as provided by this Constitution.
- c) Shall make reports to the Association according to policy and inform and involve the General Body to support benevolent efforts.
- d) The Financial Secretary shall serve as member on this committee.

5.1 Elections Commission

- a) The President shall constitute an Elections Commission of no more than 7 (seven) active members at the General Meeting in July of the election year.
- b) The Elections Commission shall present the Elections Guidelines at the General Meeting in no later than August of the election year.
- c) Those members in good financial and disciplinary standing wanting to contest elections will do so in writing listing the Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates on their ticket.

Chapter 4 TENURE OF OFFICE

Article 1.0

Elected Officers

- 1.1 The President and Vice President shall be the only 2 (two) elected positions
- 1.2 The tenure of President and Vice President shall be 2 (two) years
- 1.3 The Presidential tenure shall be limited to two consecutive terms.
- 1.4 A member serving 2 (two) consecutive terms as President can contest the Presidency 4 years after his/her second term.
- 1.5 The Vice President is eligible to contest the presidency after his/her second term as Vice President.

Article 2.0

Appointed Officers

- 2.1 Shall serve at the will and pleasure of the President
- 2.2 Shall be relieved of their position for reasons including being nonfunctional, non-productive, corrupt, in violation of this Constitution or Code of Conduct of the Association.
- 2.3 Shall serve successive administrations with no term limitation.

Chapter 5 END OF TENURE, IMPEACHMENT, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Article 1.0

End of Tenure

- 1.1 Newly elected officers shall assume office at the next general meeting after the elections.
- 1.2 Outgoing officers shall collaborate with the newly elected officers to execute a prompt and efficient transfer of pertinent Association property. All appropriate transfers and transitions, including name or signature changes, shall be completed within thirty (30) days after an election.
- 1.3 All officers (Elected or Appointed), shall upon the expiration of their term and/or removal from office, turnover all properties of the Association to a member of the Executive Body within 30 days.
- 1.4 An executive clearance shall be issued for said properties turned in to the Executive Body at the point of the return.
- 1.5 A fine of \$500.00 will be assessed to any member failing to turn over properties of the association 30 days after the elections.
- 1.6 Disciplinary actions to include suspension, expulsion, or a legal suit may be pursued against any member who willfully refuses to return Association properties sixty (60) days following the end of his tenure.

Article 2.0

Impeachment, Removal from Office

Impeachment and Removal from Office shall define the process through which formal charges of official misconduct shall be filed against an elected member of the Executive Team.

- 2.1 The process of impeachment or removal from office shall begin with the filing of an *articles of impeachment* with the Executive Team within 30 (thirty) days of the alleged misconduct. The filing shall be typewritten and shall include the name(s) of the petitioner(s) and the target officer. It shall list and describe in detail each article (item) that forms the basis of the misconduct. Each article shall cite specific references to the Constitution, Bylaws, or Code of Conduct of the Association that was violated. A complaint not in compliance with the filing requirements shall be dismissed.
- 2.2 Only voting members shall be eligible to file notices of impeachable misconduct.
- 2.3 The Executive Team shall appoint, within two (2) weeks of receipt of complaint, an impeachment committee cloaked with the authority to investigate and hear the misconduct.
- 2.4 The impeachment committee shall submit a written report to the Executive Team within one (1) month of the assignment. The report shall include:
 - a) The original text of the articles of impeachment, as filed;
 - b) The committee's findings and opinion on each article of impeachment;
 - c) The committee's conclusion and recommendation to submit or not submit the case to the General Body
- 2.5 The Executive Team shall forward its decision in writing to the complainant(s) and the target officer within two (2) weeks of receipt of the impeachment committee's report. The decision shall specify whether or not the case shall be submitted to the General Body for a full hearing.

- 2.6 A 'submit' decision shall transfer the impeachment proceedings to the General Body and shall empower automatically the impeachment committee to conduct the proceedings.
- 2.7 The impeachment committee shall make a formal presentation of the charges to the General Body by reading the entire list of the articles of impeachment, as filed.
- 2.8 After the reading as described, the impeachment committee shall inquire from the General Body whether it wishes to proceed with the impeachment process by asking for a 'yes' or 'no' voice vote. The committee shall resolve disputes in this vote by calling for either a show-of-hands or a stand-up-and-be-counted format.
- 2.9 Yes - A 'yes' vote shall require the impeachment committee to read each article of impeachment separately. After each article is read, the General Body shall proclaim it 'impeachable' or 'not impeachable'. A majority of voting members proclaiming 'impeachable' shall render a particular article an official misconduct - Doing so *impeaches* and shall expose the official to a hearing in the General Body based on the impeachable offenses only.
- 2.10 An official found culpable of impeachable offenses, as described, shall be removed from office with the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present.
- 2.11 A 'do not submit' decision shall render baseless the allegation of official misconduct and shall be cause to dismiss the case.
- 2.12 In the event of resignation, impeachment, incapacity, relocation or death of the Vice President, the president shall appoint a new Vice President within 30 days.
- 2.13 The new Vice President shall be sworn in by the Chaplin.

Chapter 6 OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT AND ATTENDANT CONSEQUENCES

Article 1.0 Official Misconduct

- 1.1 Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, a member shall be exposed to disciplinary measures for official misconduct. A member who commits any of these acts of official misconduct shall be exposed to a level of disciplinary action equal in measure to the breach committed.
- a) Fraud (Deception, scam, forgery, etc.)
 - b) Embezzlement (Misappropriation, stealing, theft, etc.)
 - c) Wasteful spending
 - d) Failure to be Current with Dues Payment
 - e) Failure to Attend Meetings
 - f) Misrepresentation (Falsification, distortion, fabrication, etc.)
 - g) Impersonation (Unauthorized representation)
 - h) Failure to Perform As Constitutionally Required (Incompliance with constitutional mandates)

Article 2.0 Official Consequences

- 2.1 Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, the following menu of consequences shall suffice as remedy for misconduct by a member who

- 2.2 engages in behavior that obstructs or injures execution of the Association's objectives as defined in the Preamble of this Constitution.
- a) Impeachment (Process of bringing formal charges of official misconduct)
 - b) Expulsion (Ejection, removal, etc.)
 - c) Discharge (Relieved of responsibility, release, etc.)
 - d) Suspension
 - e) Fine (Monetary penalty)
-
- f) Reprimand (Verbal or written warning)

Chapter 7 MEETINGS, REGULATIONS, AND PROCEDURES

Article 1.0 Regular Meetings

- 1.1 The General Body shall meet on the first Saturday of every other month in accordance with this Constitution, beginning in November of the Association's fiscal year. The Regular Meetings of the Association shall be held at a place and time to be determined by the Executive Team
- 1.2 General Meeting citations in the form of text messages shall be served to members no later than 3 days prior to the date of the meeting by the Secretary General.
- 1.3 Citations shall include core agenda items for the Regular Meetings.
- 1.4 Issues of the Executive and Administrative teams or the general membership shall be reserved for Regular Meetings only.

Article 2.0 Executive Team Meetings

- 2.1 Executive Team meetings shall be held at least once a month on a prescribed date, at a prescribed time, and venue.
- 2.2 Special Meetings of the Executive Team shall be called only by the president or the president's designee.
- 2.3 Executive Team members shall be notified of the reason and specifics in advance of such meetings

Article 3.0 Executive and Administrative Meetings

- 3.1 The President shall convene all Executive and Administrative Body meetings, except otherwise delegated.
- 3.2 Decisions reached at the Executive meetings shall be binding on all members of the Association, consistent with the provisions in this Constitution and shall be announced on or before the next regular meeting of the Association.

Article 4.0 Standing and Ad Hoc Committee Meetings

Each committee shall decide the frequency of its meetings based on the nature or urgency of the work entrusted to it.

Article 5.0 Informational Meetings

Shall be held after practice sessions should the President or Technical Team have information s that need to be delivered or issues needing urgent discussion.

Article 6.0 Ahblawoe Forum

- 6.1 An Ahblawoe Forum shall be any meeting as hitherto prescribed in this Constitution.

- 6.2 An Ahblawoe Forum shall be any gatherings evolving from official announcements, via texts, emails or other forms of communication, for visitations, bereavement, graduation, or a simple hang out.
- 6.3 All Ahblawoe Forums shall be void of any member making physical threats, attempting physical assault, causing verbal or physical assault, or engaging in character assassination. Such actions shall be punishable under the terms as stipulated in Chapter 6, Articles 2 of this Constitution.
- 6.4 No member shall knowingly invite a suspended member to an event to which Ahblawoe is also invited. The member who invites the suspended member shall be fined in accordance with Chapter 6, Article 3 of this Constitution. Should the host be notified of the member(s) suspension and refuses to remove his/her property or event, the host shall be subjected to a fine and or possible suspension.
- 6.5 Any member who, knowing of their suspension and its attendant consequences, including not attending Ahblawoe forums, attends an Ahblawoe forum and exhibits an official misconduct, shall be expelled in accordance with Chapter 6, Article 2.1b of this Constitution.
- 6.6 Penalties such as suspension and expulsion shall be determined by the Disciplinary Committee.

Article 7.0

Quorum

7.1 Regular Meetings

- a) Shall be based on the count of Voting Members recorded by the Treasurer and verified by the Secretary General
- b) Except where specified in the Constitution and Bylaws, 20% of the Voting Members shall constitute a quorum to conduct the Association's business.
- c) The President or his/her designee shall ensure the presence of a quorum prior to calling the meeting to order.
- d) A challenge by any Voting Member to the presence of a quorum shall be resolved by an official roll call by the Secretary.

7.2 Executive Team Meetings

- a) Fifty percent (50%) of the Executive Committee membership shall constitute a quorum for all meetings.

7.3 Executive and Administrative Meetings:

- a) Fifty percent (50%) of Executive Committee members and Fifty percent (50%) of Administrative Committee members shall constitute a quorum.

7.4 Committee Meetings

- a) A simple majority shall constitute a quorum for committee meetings.

Chapter 8 FINANCES AND FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Article 1.0

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Association shall commence on the first day of November each year and end on the last day of October the following year.

Article 2.0 Banking Oversight

- 2.1 The Association shall maintain a bank account at an accredited financial institution designated by the Executive Team.
- 2.2 Oversight responsibility of the Association's bank account shall be exercised by the Treasurer who, along with the Financial Secretary, shall ensure the account's integrity.

Article 3.0 Dues and Assessments

The Association shall determine and levy dues and may obligate, as deemed necessary, special assessments as part of its revenue-generating regime.

- 3.1 Each member of the Association shall pay an Annual Membership Due at a minimum of a \$150.00 or an amount to be determined by the General Body based on Cost of Living and the general economic climate of the United States.
 - a) Dues payment shall be in lump sum or by installment, and shall be evidenced by the issuance of an official receipt from the Treasurer.
 - b) Installments shall be accepted by the Treasurer by March 31st and full payments are required by June 30th of each year.
 - c) Payment delinquency shall result in Associate status as described in Chapter 2, Article 2.2(c) of this Constitution.
- 3.2 The Executive Body reserves the right to apply special assessments to finance special projects like trips, games, events, programs and other projects as it sees fit, or to accommodate budgetary shortfalls.

Article 4.0 General Funds

The Association shall derive its revenue from the following sources:

- 4.1 Membership dues and registration fees
- 4.2 Income from functions and other activities
- 4.3 Contributions, grants, and donations from various organizations, foundations, and individuals
- 4.4 Special assessments as deemed necessary by the General Body

Article 5.0 Financial Management

The Association shall manage its financial affairs as described below:

- 5.1 **Financial Transactions:** All financial transactions shall be authorized and conducted in a manner consistent with the terms of the authorization and in consonance with Chapter 8, Article 2.2 of this constitution.
- 5.2 **Authorized Withdrawals:** Only the President and Treasurer shall co-sign all checks written to conduct authorized Association business. No other activity shall justify funds withdrawal from the Association's account.
- 5.3 **Deposits:** all Association funds shall be deposited in the organization's account.
- 5.4 **Petty Cash Provision and Management:** A petty cash fund shall be established using a contingency allowance provision. Such funds shall be used to provide accommodation for emergencies and expenses for small purchases. A petty cash expense shall not exceed \$200 per event, and shall be budgetary. The Treasurer shall maintain a log of all petty cash activity which shall describe each expense, the amount allocated, and the date of the authorization.
- 5.5 Financial management practices and procedures shall be consistent with generally accepted accounting principles and sound financial management. The Association shall pursue legal actions against any member or members for

- 5.6 misappropriation of funds and resources.
- a) The Treasurer shall receive all funds collected on behalf of the Association and shall deposit same into the Association's Bank Account within (48) hours with a transaction receipt issued to the Financial Secretary.
 - b) The accounts shall not be closed, funds transferred, or withdrawn ~~without~~ the approval of the President.
 - c) The President, Financial Secretary and the Treasurer shall be the Principal Signatories to all the accounts of the Association.
 - d) Withdrawals from the Association's Accounts in excess of \$501 (Five Hundred one dollars) and above require approval by the President and the Treasurer.
 - e) Funds allocated in the approved Annual Budget shall not require additional approval for disbursements and expenditures to be made.
 - f) The Account Pin number shall be with the President and debit card shall be with the Treasurer.

Chapter 9 BENEVOLENCE PROGRAM

- Article 1.0 The Association shall establish and maintain a Special Benevolence Account to contribute to families of deceased members the cost for home going.
- Article 2.0 Ten percent (10%) of all the membership dues collected by the Association every year shall be deposited in the special Benevolence Account to sustain the Association's Benevolence Program.
- Article 3.0 Only individuals who have attained membership for at least two consecutive years without a break in between and are good financial standing shall benefit from the Benevolent Program.
- Article 4.0 The Association shall contribute the amount of \$5,000.00 (Five Thousand Dollars) for an active Regular member's home going.
- Article 5.0 Associate Members who have attained at- least two consecutive years of membership without any break in between the Association shall contribute \$2,500.00 (Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars) for Associate Member(s) home-going.
- Article 6.0 The Benevolent Program is members who are good financial standing and have met all requirements in the Association.
- Article 7.0 For family member(s) to benefit from this Benevolent Program, the member(s) must notify the Membership Committee Chairperson via official communication (text, email or in writing) of any absences following two years of consecutive membership. Failure to comply with this Constitutional provision shall disqualify the member(s) family from receiving the Benevolence Funding.
- Article 8.0 In the event of the death of a member(s) WIFE, HUSBAND, FATHER, MOTHER and or CHILD, and upon request from the member(s), the Association shall visit with the member(s) and put down the "Traditional Hat" for collections. Any amount collected will be giving to the family.

- Article 9.0 In the event wherein the Association's Benevolent Account is insufficient to underwrite cost of home going, a taxation of members shall be required, but such taxation shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the annual membership due.

Chapter 10 ELECTIONS AND TRANSITIONS

Article 1.0 Elections Commission

- 1.1 The President shall appoint an Elections Commission of no fewer than 5 active members at a General Meeting in July of the election year.
- 1.2 The Elections Commission shall present the Elections Guidelines at the General Meeting in no later than August of the election year.
- 1.3 Only members in good financial and disciplinary standing wanting to contest elections will do so in writing listing the Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates on their ticket.
- 1.4 All Elections Guidelines must be consistent with the provisions in this Constitution and in the Code of Conduct.

Article 2.0 Schedules

- 2.1 Elections shall be conducted every two years for a President and a Vice President
- 2.2 The elections shall be held on the first Saturday of October in the election year.
- 2.3 In a situation when the General Elections cannot be held on the specified date above, the General Body shall assemble to make a determination on a future date for Elections.

Article 3.0 Electoral Positions

- 3.1 The Presidency and Vice Presidency shall be the only elected positions of the Association.
- 3.1 Any member who seeks to contest the Presidency shall be required to submit a ticket bearing the name of his/her Vice Presidential running mate to the Elections Commission.
- 3.2 Any member seeking elected position shall reside in the Twin Cities Metro Area, which is the administrated headquarters of the Association.

Article 4.0 Candidate Eligibility

- 4.1 Only persons with two or more consecutive years of active membership, who are in good financial standing and have no pending disciplinary issues, shall be eligible to contest elections.
- 4.2 Prospective candidates must be cleared by the Financial Secretary on due payments and other assessments before registering with the Elections Commission to contest elections.
- 4.3 Prospective candidates must NOT have ANY disciplinary action(s) against them within the last two years prior to the elections

Article 5.0 Registration Fee

- 5.1 The Elections Commission shall charge no more than \$500.00 (Five Hundred) non-refundable fees for each team contesting the elections.
- 5.2 Elections Registration Fee will be used by the Elections Commission to finance the cost of the entire election. Any unspent amount of the registration fee,

along with a detailed expense report, will be turned over to the incumbent Executive Team to be deposited into the Association's Bank Account.

Article 6.0 **Voting Eligibility**

All members of Ahblawoe are eligible to vote provided they meet the following requirements:

- 6.1 All old and inactive members must reactivate their status with the Executive Body and meet all stated financial requirements prior to Election Day.
- 6.2 All members must be in good financial standing with the Association and cleared by the financial team prior to voting.
- 6.3 Members wanting to vote must be in good disciplinary standing at the time of the elections.
- 6.4 Members under any form of suspension at the time of the elections will be deemed ineligible to vote.
- 6.5 Eligible voters are those who have attained at least 6 months of active membership, be cleared by the financial team as current on all dues and assessments, void of any disciplinary action prior to voting.
- 6.6 All members must be 100% (percent) financial on their membership due and all other assessments by the Second Week of September in an election-year to be eligible to vote.

Article 7.0 **Voting and Results**

- 7.1 Voting shall be by secret ballot only.
- 7.2 A simple majority vote is required to win elections.
- 7.3 The Elections Commission shall order a run-off election in the event of a vote-tie within a period not to exceed 30 (thirty) days.

Article 8.0 **Transition of Leadership**

- 8.1 A transitional team shall be announced one (1) week after the election results to facilitate a smooth and seamless transition of power. Failure on the part of any leadership team to abide by this provision shall be subjected to disciplinary action.
- 8.2 The swearing-in of the newly elected officials shall take place at the General Meeting 30 (thirty) days after the elections, at which time all of the Association's properties, equipment, documents and files shall also be turned over to the new Leadership Body as prescribed in Chapter 5, Article 1 of this Constitution. This process shall mark the end of the transitional process.

Chapter 11 **AMENDMENTS**

Article 1.0 **Amendment Provisions**

- 1.1 This Constitution shall be amended by two-thirds majority of members of Ahblawoe in good standing. They shall vote affirmatively on the proposed amendment(s) at scheduled regular meeting of the Association or at a Special Session of the Association.
- 1.2 Proposed amendment(s) shall be accompanied by statements of reason on why the amendments are necessary and shall be submitted to President no later than (20) days before the next scheduled meeting of the Association.
- 1.3 The amendment (s) shall be published and distributed by the Secretary to all Members of Ahblawoe at least (10) days before a referendum is held on said amendment (s).

Amended this 28th Day of July, A.D. 2021, in the City of Brooklyn Park, State of Minnesota, United States of America

Constitution Review Commission

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|-------------------------|----------|
| 1. Writthers Nyenie-Wea | Chairman |
| 2. Yaya Freeman | Member |
| 3. Moses Woart | Member |
| 4. Buster L. Mondeth | Member |
| 5. Christopher Wreh | Member |
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