

Society By-Laws

The By-Laws of the Baltimore Folk Music Society

I. Name:

The name of this organization shall be the Baltimore Folk Music Society, hereinafter known as the Society.

II. Purpose:

The main purpose of the Society is the further understanding, investigation, appreciation, and performance of the traditional folk music, folk dance, and folklore of the American people. The Society shall be a non-profit, educational organization.

III. Membership:

A. Membership in this Society shall be open to any person or persons regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or sexual orientation. The following membership classes shall be available:

1. Individual.

2. Family: one or two adults living in the same household, and any dependent children living with them.

3. Honorary: which shall be extended to individuals only on the unanimous approval of the Executive Committee and may be with or without limit of duration.

4. Additional classes of membership that may be established, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, to recognize contributions above the basic membership fee.

B. Membership in the Society shall carry the following privileges and obligations:

1. For all classes of membership:

a. Members are bound by the By-Laws and actions of the Executive Committee and Officers in consequence thereof.

b. Members are entitled to vote at all regular and special meetings. In family memberships, only two people may vote.

c. Members are entitled to attend any regular or special program sponsored by the Society at reduced admission or without charge. The actual charge, if any, shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

d. Members may attend all meetings of the Executive Committee.

e. Members are responsible for informing the appropriate Officers of the Society of any change of address.

2. Members, other than Honorary, shall pay such annual dues as may be determined by the Executive Committee. Honorary Members shall not be required to pay any dues. Dues shall be due and payable on the first day of the month in which affiliation with the Society is first established.

C. Membership in the Society will be considered to have been surrendered by any member more than two months in arrears in dues, or upon the submission by any member of a letter of resignation to the Executive Committee.

D. In the event of resignation from membership, or dissolution of the Society, no member shall have any claim for refund of any monies paid to the Society.

IV. Meetings of the Society:

A. There shall be an annual business meeting of the Society.

B. Meetings shall be open to the public, but non-members shall not vote on any matter.

C. Special meetings shall be called by the Secretary on the request of the President or of any three members of the Executive Committee or by petition of ten members of the Society on ten days written notice to all members. Such notice shall state the matter to come before the meeting, and no other matter shall be determined by the special meeting so called.

D. A simple majority of members voting at a meeting shall suffice for the transaction of ordinary business.

E. The President and the Treasurer shall report to the membership at the annual meeting. At that time the Nominating Committee shall make its report. Election of Officers shall be held in the month following the annual meeting.

V. Officers:

A. The officers of the Society shall be the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Newsletter Editor, the Membership Chair, the American Country Dance Chair, the English Country Dance Chair, the Cajun-Zydeco Dance Chair, the Special Events Chair, the Publicity Chair, and three Officers-at-Large.

B. During their terms of office all officers shall maintain membership in the Society in good standing.

C. The term of each officer shall be 13 months, from June 1 of one year to June 30 of the following year.

D. No officer except the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Newsletter Editor, the Membership Chair and the Publicity Chair shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, nor shall any officer hold more than one office during a complete term.

E. The President shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee and senior executive officer of the Society, responsible to the Executive Committee for the conduct of the Society's program and affairs. He/she may subject to these By-Laws, conduct with the other constituted officers and chairs, the Society's ordinary business. He/she may be an ex-officio member, withvote, of all regular Committees of the Society, except the Nominating Committee. In the year following his/her term(s) of office, he/she shall serve a term as Past President and shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee. He/she may, if elected, serve a term as another officer of the Executive Committee in lieu of his/her term as Past President.

F. The Vice-President shall serve as Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee, and shall have such other duties as are delegated to him/her by the President. He/she shall temporarily succeed to the authority of the President when the President is unable to carry out the duties of his/her office.

G. The Secretary shall serve as Secretary of the Executive Committee and shall be responsible for the maintenance of the Society's minutes, and such other records as may be specified by the Executive Committee. He/she shall be responsible for notifying members of all meetings of the Society and of the Executive Committee.

H. The Treasurer shall have responsibility for preparation and custody of all financial and corporate records of the Society and shall prepare such statements as are required by the Executive Committee or by law. He/she shall be responsible for the collection and payment of all the Society's receivables, and for payment of the Society's just debts. In the year following his/her term(s) of office, he/she shall serve a term as Past Treasurer and shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee. He/she may, if elected, serve a term as another officer of the Executive Committee in lieu of his/her term as Past Treasurer.

I. The Newsletter Editor shall have responsibility for preparation, publication, and mailing of the Society's Newsletter which shall be issued at regular intervals as specified by the Executive Committee.

J. The Membership Chair shall keep the Society's membership lists, reporting to the Executive Committee upon request, the status of current membership. He/she shall issue all membership cards and membership renewal notices. He/she shall collect membership dues and transmit them to the Treasurer.

K. The American Country Dance Chair shall be responsible for coordination of all regular and special dances of the Society with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. His/her duties shall include contacting callers and musicians, securing halls for the dances, and appointing a clean-up Committee for events.

L. The English Country Dance Chair shall be responsible for coordination of all regular and special English country dances of the Society with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Her/his duties shall include contracting callers and musicians, securing halls for the dances, and appointing a clean-up Committee for events.

M. The Special Events Chair shall be responsible for coordination of all special events of the Society with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee.

N. The Publicity Chair shall be responsible for all publicity, advertising, promotion, and public relations activities of the Society. These duties shall include issuing timely press releases concerning the Society's activities to the appropriate media.

O. The Officers-at-Large shall assume duties as may be delegated by the President and Executive Committee. Such duties may include chairmanship of special committees.

P. The Cajun-Zydeco Dance Chair shall be responsible for coordination of all regular and special Cajun and Zydeco dances of the Society with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Her/his duties shall include contracting musicians, securing halls for the dances, and appointing a clean-up Committee for events.

VI. Election and Replacement of Officers:

A. The President, with the approval of two-thirds of the Executive committee, shall appoint:

1. A Nominating Committee of five members of the Society, of which no more than two shall be, at the time of their appointment, members of the Executive Committee.

2. A person to produce the ballot in accordance with Article VI, Section D, Paragraphs 2 and 3.

3. A Committee of Tellers. No member of this committee may appear on the ballot as a candidate for office.

B. The Nominating Committee shall select a slate of candidates for office and shall report to the membership at the annual meeting. At that meeting, additional nominations for any office may be made and seconded from the floor.

C. Candidates for office must be members in good standing of the Society.

D. If there is no more than one candidate per office the nominees shall be deemed elected; otherwise:

1. Ballots for the election shall be mailed to the membership within 30 days after the annual meeting.

2. The ballots shall include the names of all candidates for office, space for write-in candidates, instructions for returning the ballots, the date by which ballots must be returned, and a method of authentication.

3. The ballots shall not include statements by the candidates or comments concerning the candidates, but any candidate may submit a brief statement concerning his or her qualifications to be included in the same mailing.

4. The Committee of Tellers shall receive the ballots, confirm their authenticity, tally the votes, and report the results of the election to the Executive Committee.

E. For each office, the candidate with the most votes shall be elected. In the case of a tie the President shall submit the matter to the vote of the Executive Committee and shall declare elected the person receiving the greatest number of votes.

F. An Officer may resign by submitting a written resignation to the Executive Committee, which will become effective when accepted by the Committee.

G. 1. An Officer may be suspended for cause by a vote of the Executive Committee. The Officer shall be notified in writing of the Executive Committee's action and may appeal the suspension at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. If the suspension is sustained by two-thirds of the remaining members of the Executive Committee, the Officer shall be removed from office as of that date, unless he/she wishes to appeal the action to the membership of the Society. In that event, written announcement of the proposed removal shall be made to the membership at least one week prior to a special meeting of the Society. The question shall be raised at the meeting of the Society following the announcement, and a two-thirds vote of those present shall be required to reverse the action of the Executive Committee.

2. No Officer shall be removed without being given all reasonable opportunity to be heard.

3. Removal of an Officer shall not affect his/her membership in the Society.

H. Upon resignation or removal of an Officer, the Executive Committee shall fill the vacancy from the eligible membership by a two-thirds vote of the remaining members of the Executive Committee.

VII. Executive Committee:

A. The duly elected Officers constitute the Executive Committee of the Society, hereinafter known as the Committee. Each member of the Committee shall have one vote.

B. The Committee shall be responsible for the proper conduct of the Officers of the Society under these By-Laws and shall carry out the policy decisions of the membership.

C. The Committee shall meet at least once a month. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be seven members of the Committee, except for expenditures in excess of one hundred dollars, for which purpose eight members of the Committee shall be required for a quorum. A simple majority of members voting, a quorum being present, shall suffice for the transaction of ordinary business except as otherwise restricted herein.

D. The President, Vice-President, and Secretary of the Society shall serve, respectively as Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of the Committee.

E. For the determination of any matter before the Committee, the Chair or anyone acting in that capacity shall have a vote.

F. Special meetings of the Committee may be called by the Chair on his/her own initiative or at the request of any three members of the Committee. All members of the Committee must receive actual notice of the time, place, and issue to come before a special meeting not less than forty-eight hours in advance, and no other matter may be determined at that special meeting. Members of the Committee who are not able to attend may exercise their vote on such issue in writing, signed and delivered to the Chair before the question is called or voted.

G. Committee meetings shall be opened to all members of the Society.

H. The Committee shall have the power to:

1. Approve budgets for Society events and all expenditures in excess of fifty dollars, in advance of commitment for the expense being undertaken.

2. Approve all programs and projects bearing the name of the Society, as herein after provided.

3. Fill vacancies of the Committee, by a two-thirds vote of the remaining members of the Committee.

4. Approve appointments made by the President.

5. Require a statement or statements of income and expenses to be prepared and an annual audit of Society funds to be made.

VIII. Rules of Order:

All questions of Parliamentary procedures shall be resolved by reference to the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

IX. Committees:

A. Committees, which may be committees of one, may be empowered by the Executive Committee to conduct one or more of the Society's programs or functions.

B. The organization, operation and membership of any committee shall be determined by the Chair of that committee.

C. Chairs of special Committees are appointed by the President, subject to the concurrence of the Executive Committee. They must be members of the Society. Chairs of Special Committees may be removed by the Executive Committee or by the President, subject to the concurrence of the Executive Committee.

X. Financial and Fiscal Affairs:

A. The funds of the Society shall be kept in a checking account only to the extent needed for current operation. Additional funds and all reserve shall be kept in interest-bearing accounts insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the particular bank or banks being selected by the Executive Committee.

B. No monies greater than \$300 may be disbursed from any account except on the countersignatures of two Officers, designated by the Committee.

C. The Treasurer and all others designated to receive and/or disburse monies for the Society shall furnish such bond and surety on the bond as may be required by the Executive Committee.

D. An annual audit of the books, accounts, and assets of the Society shall be made at the direction of the Executive Committee.

E. No contract or expense not covered by Article VII, Section H, Paragraph 1, nor any other obligation of the Society's funds, facilities, or reputations shall be made or undertaken except with the express approval of the Executive committee as herein provided.

F. No member or Officer of the Society shall be entitled to receive any compensation for any goods or services supplied to the Society except on the express approval of the Executive Committee.

G. The fiscal year of the Society shall run from July 1 of one year to June 30 of the following year.

XI. Use of the Name of the Society:

The Society shall not allow the use of its name in connection with any activity not under its direct control without the express prior approval of three-fourths of the Executive Committee. No Officer or member of the Society may claim to represent the Society in any matter unless specifically empowered to do so under these By-Laws.

XII. Amendment of By-Laws:

Amendment of the By-Laws or any new By-Laws may be proposed at any regular Executive Committee or membership meeting. The proposed amendment shall be read and the question shall be tabled until the next annual election of Officers, or shall be submitted to the membership for a special ballot. At that time, the membership shall be advised in writing of the proposed amendment(s) and/or new By-Laws, and may vote for or against each proposed amendment or new By-Law. A two-thirds majority of those voting shall be required in order to adopt each amendment or new By-Law.

XIII. Dissolution:

A. The Society shall not dissolve except upon the written ballot of two-thirds of the total membership.

B. In the event of dissolution, none of the remaining assets may be distributed to, or for the benefit of, any member or class of membership. Such remaining assets shall be distributed to the Archive of Folk Song of the Library of Congress for the use in such purposes as recording, duplicating, and cataloging, and/or to any other worthy, non-profit, educational organization. The selection of the distributee or distributees shall be made by the membership on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.