

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY SQUARE DANCERS ASSOCIATION

Constitution and Bylaws

Revised 1/11/09

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. Name

The name shall be the "Northern New Jersey Square Dancers Association." It shall be a nonprofit organization.

ARTICLE II. Membership

The membership of the Association shall consist of organized square dance clubs governed by elected officers.

ARTICLE III. Area of Eligibility

Section 1. The area of eligibility for membership shall be northern New Jersey and surrounding counties.

Section 2. Clubs in other counties in and out of New Jersey that border the initial area outlined above may be included upon mutual agreement.

ARTICLE IV. Purpose

Section 1. To promote square dancing in the area by:

- a. Organizing and providing special activities.
- b. Serving as a clearing house for area activities and information.
- c. The promotion of square dancing through publicity.
- d. Working in harmony with others interested in the promotion of square dancing.

ARTICLE V. Organization

Section 1. All members in good standing of Member Clubs shall be considered members of the Association.

Section 2. Each Member Club may elect or appoint one or two members as Delegate, and up to two couples or individuals as Alternate Delegates, none of whom may be members of the Executive Committee of the Association. Each club has one Delegate vote.

Section 3. Callers or cuers receiving remuneration from any Member Club, directly or indirectly, are not eligible to be Delegates or elected officers of the Association.

Section 4. The Delegates shall elect the officers of the Association.

Section 5. All Past Presidents of the Association shall be Lifetime Honorary Delegates without voting privileges.

Section 6. The term of office of the Delegates and Alternates shall be from June 1 to May 31.

Section 7. Delegates and Alternates must be members in good standing of the club they represent.

Section 8. Delegates and Alternates may not represent more than one club simultaneously.

ARTICLE VI. Officers

Section 1. The officers shall be President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer.

Section 2. All officers and appointees of the Association shall serve without remuneration.

Section 3. Officer positions may be held by one or two people. At no time may anyone hold more than one officer position.

ARTICLE VII. Advisors, *Grand Square* Editors, Liaisons

Section 1. The immediate Past President shall remain on the Executive Committee in an advisory capacity until replaced by another immediate Past President.

Section 2. Advisors may be appointed by the President as non-voting members of the Executive Committee to serve during the current term.

Section 3. There shall not be more than six people appointed as advisors.

Section 4. Advisors shall render general advice and assistance to the Executive Committee.

Section 5. The President, with the concurrence of the majority of the elective officers, shall appoint the Editor and Associate Editor of *Grand Square* for a period of one year.

Section 6. The President shall appoint liaisons with other organizations who share our interest in the square dance activity.

ARTICLE VIII. Election of Officers

Section 1. Individuals receiving remuneration from any Member Club, directly or indirectly, are not eligible for election to office.

Section 2. To be eligible as an officer in the Association, candidates for office must have served as a Delegate of the Association or an officer of a Member Club.

Section 3. To be eligible to hold office as President of the Association, candidates must have served as an officer of the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Election of officers shall take place at the spring Delegates meeting from a slate presented by the Nominating Committee and nominations from the floor. Any nominations from the floor must have the prior consent of the candidates. The Nominating Committee's slate shall be presented to the Delegates not less than 30 days prior to the spring Delegates meeting.

Section 5. Election shall be by simple majority of the Delegates present and voting. The vote shall be by secret ballot whenever a contest occurs.

Section 6. The elected officers shall serve for a one year term, starting June 1.

Section 7. In general, no person shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. Additional terms are permitted with the approval of a simple majority of the Delegates.

ARTICLE IX. Duties of Officers

Section 1. The President shall preside at all Association meetings and ensure that all business is covered; be spokesperson for the Association; call all meetings of the Delegates and the Executive Committee; and appoint an agent of the Association who shall maintain the corporation in good standing by filing the required annual incorporation report with the Secretary of State of New Jersey.

Section 2. The 1st Vice President shall be responsible for special events, halls, and callers except as specified in other Sections of the Constitution. The 1st Vice President shall assume all duties of the President if the President is absent from any scheduled function.

The 2nd Vice President shall be in charge of beginner classes, the Mid-Term Student Dance, the Spring Fling, and all other items in connection with new recruits to square dancing. The 2nd Vice President shall assume all duties of the President if the President and the 1st Vice President are absent from any scheduled function.

The 3rd Vice President shall be responsible for all publicity, the Poster Contest, the Association Scrap Book, and new Member Clubs of the Association. The 3rd Vice President shall act as liaison representative of the Association in connection with any disputes between

Member Clubs, and assist Member Clubs that may have financial or membership difficulties. The 3rd Vice President shall assume all duties of the President if the President, the 1st Vice President, and the 2nd Vice President are absent from any scheduled function.

Section 3. The Recording Secretary shall take and distribute minutes of the Delegates and Executive Committee meetings. The Recording Secretary shall be Chairperson of the Clearance Committee and shall keep accurate records of all Member Clubs' regular dance schedules.

Section 4. The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for all other correspondence. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary shall assume those duties.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all income, moneys on hand, and expenditures. The Treasurer shall be prepared to present the financial status at each meeting of the Delegates and Executive Committee. The President shall authorize all expenditures and may delegate to the Treasurer authorization of routine bills/invoices in accordance with the annual budget. The Treasurer and all other members of the Executive Committee shall be bonded by the NNJSDA insurance policy.

Section 6. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer at all Association Dances and Special Activities. The Assistant Treasurer shall assume all duties of the Treasurer if the Treasurer is absent from any scheduled function.

Section 7. Other duties may be assigned to any officer by the Bylaws or by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE X. Executive Committee

Section 1. The officers, editors of *Grand Square*, and immediate Past President shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall formulate policies and programs and, with the help of committees, carry out the activities of the Association.

ARTICLE XI. Meetings

Section 1. The President shall call, in addition to the annual spring meeting, a minimum of one fall and one winter meeting of the Delegates, giving at least two weeks notice for these meetings. A quorum shall exist when at least 50% of the Member Clubs are represented.

Section 2. The President shall call meetings of the Executive Committee as required. At least two-thirds of the committee officers shall be required to make the meeting official. One individual of an officer couple attending shall constitute attendance by that office.

ARTICLE XII. Voting

Section 1. At Delegates meetings, a simple majority of the Delegates present and voting shall be required to approve items of business requiring a vote, except as otherwise noted. Each Member Club present shall have one vote.

Section 2. The President shall call at least one Executive Committee meeting at least four weeks prior to each Delegates meeting and one changeover meeting prior to June 15. A two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee present and voting shall be required to approve items of business requiring a vote. Each individual has one vote.

ARTICLE XIII. Succession of Officers

Section 1. If there is a vacancy in the office of President, the remaining partner, if any, may carry on the office. If neither is able to continue, the office shall be filled by the Vice Presidents in order of their titles. If this is not possible, the Executive Committee shall appoint the President for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 2. All other officer vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the President with the concurrence of the Executive Committee for the remainder of the term.

Section 3. Any elected officer may be removed for cause on the recommendation of the majority of the Executive Committee and a two-thirds vote of the Delegates present and voting.

ARTICLE XIV. Committees

Section 1. The President shall appoint the following committees, giving geographical consideration to such appointments:

- a. September – Nominating Committee: consisting of a chairperson couple or individual and two member couples or individuals; at least one of the committee members shall be a former officer of the Association.
- b. June – Audit Committee: to audit the books annually and at each change of Treasurer.
- c. As needed – Administration: for review of Constitution, Bylaws, and other Association procedures.

Section 2. Special committees may be appointed as necessary.

ARTICLE XV. Finances

Necessary operating expenses shall be defrayed by fund-raising events and/or membership dues.

ARTICLE XVI. Suspension

Section 1. A club may be suspended from membership in the Association for failure to comply with or for acting contrary to the Articles and Bylaws of this Constitution. Temporary suspension of membership may be invoked by the Executive Committee until such time as action shall be taken at the next Delegates meeting.

Section 2. For a club to be suspended or expelled, a vote of two-thirds of the Delegates (one vote per club) present and voting at a scheduled meeting shall be necessary.

Section 3. If temporary suspension is recommended by the Executive Committee, participation by the temporarily suspended club in any and all activities and benefits of the Association, except insurance coverage, is temporarily suspended until the case is voted upon by the Association Delegates.

ARTICLE XVII. Amendments

Section 1. Proposed amendments to the Constitution may be submitted by any dancer belonging to a Member Club. A vote shall be taken at a Delegates meeting following the schedule below.

- Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Association President at least eight weeks prior to the Delegates meeting at which the first discussion of the proposal is held.
- The President shall notify all members of the Executive Committee of the proposed amendment at least two weeks prior to the next Executive Committee meeting.
- The Executive Committee shall discuss the amendment and make a recommendation.
- The Recording Secretary shall transmit the amendment and the Executive Committee's recommendation to the Delegates at least four weeks prior to the Delegates meeting at which discussion of the amendment and the Executive Committee's recommendation takes place.
- The Recording Secretary shall transmit the amendment or a revised version of the amendment and the Executive Committee's recommendation to the Delegates at least four weeks prior to the next Delegates meeting, at which time a vote on the proposed amendment shall be taken.

Section 2. To be ratified, an amendment must receive a two-thirds majority with at least two-thirds of Member Clubs present and voting.

ARTICLE XVIII. Bylaws

Bylaws shall be adopted, amended or rescinded by a two-thirds vote of the Member Clubs present and voting at a regular meeting with prior notification as for Constitutional amendments, Article XVII, Section 1.

ARTICLE XIX. General

“Robert’s Rules of Order” shall be the governing Parliamentary Law in all cases not covered in this Constitution or Bylaws.

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY SQUARE DANCERS ASSOCIATION

BYLAWS

Section 1. **Procedure for Becoming a Member of the Association**

- a. A written application shall be filed with the Recording Secretary of the Association setting forth the name of the club, list of membership, elected officers, names of callers, dates, program, and location of dances, and number of paid up members.
- b. An officer of the club shall appear at the next meeting of the Executive Committee to answer any questions regarding the application.
- c. An announcement of the application shall be made at the next Delegates meeting following the filing of the application.
- d. The 3rd Vice President shall visit the club prior to the Executive Committee review.
- e. Application shall be voted upon at the next regular Executive Committee meeting. By a majority vote, the application may be rejected, postponed or recommended to the Delegates for acceptance.
- f. The recommendations of the Executive Committee shall be presented at the next regular Delegates meeting. A majority vote of those Delegates present and voting is required for approval.

Section 2. **Qualifications for Eligibility for New Member Clubs**

- a. New Member Clubs must consist of at least one square with a reasonably stable membership over a period of at least one year.
- b. New Member Clubs must be devoted to Western style square dancing with a regular caller or callers, have a regular meeting place, and be governed by regular elected officers.
- c. New Member Clubs must not dance on the same date as another Member Club within a 15-mile radius (defined as a straight line distance between the two clubs' regular dance locations).
- d. Associate Member Clubs have all the rights and responsibilities of Member Clubs other than voting privileges. They may have non-voting Delegates with the right of discussion.
 - Caller-run clubs with a reasonably stable membership of at least one square over a period of one year may become Associate Members.
 - Clubs that restrict their membership to teens and have a reasonably stable membership of at least one square over a period of one year may become Associate Members.

Section 3. **Continued Eligibility for Clubs**

- a. To continue membership, a club must conduct regular dances and maintain, as a minimum, the qualifications for eligibility defined in Section 2.
- b. When unusual circumstances arise in regard to the above qualifications, any club, upon obtaining permission in writing from all conflicting clubs, may request consideration as specified in Section 9, the decision to be binding on all. Any party may appeal to the Delegates within one year of the decision.
- c. A club must be represented at a majority of the Delegates meetings each year and be in good standing.

Section 4. **Annual Dues and Assessments**

- a. The annual dues for each Member Club and Associate Club for the following fiscal year (June 1 through May 31) shall be recommended by the Executive Committee. If there are any changes in

the annual dues, notification shall be made to the Delegates at least 30 days prior to the first fall meeting of the Delegates, at which time it shall be voted upon.

- b. Annual dues shall be payable before or at the winter Delegates meeting (January).
- c. Dues not paid within 30 days after the second Delegates meeting are in arrears and shall result in disciplinary action by the Executive Committee.
- d. The fee for dances sponsored by the Association shall be set by the Executive Committee and may be changed without notice.
- e. The Association shall make available liability insurance for Member Club and Associate Club dances through an annual assessment to each participating club as determined by the Executive Committee.
- f. The Association shall publish the *Grand Square* with an annual assessment to be determined by the Executive Committee.
- g. The Association shall make any other assessment that the Executive Committee deems necessary.

Section 5. Classes

The Association or Member Clubs may organize and run classes in various sections of the area covered by the Association.

Section 6. Class Promotional Material

The Association shall make available various instructional pamphlets, diplomas, and 100% attendance dangles for classes of Member Clubs, regardless of the club's program level.

Section 7. Priorities

The Association shall have first priority on all 5th Fridays, all 5th Saturdays, all Wednesdays from June 20 to August 31, the 3rd Saturday in October, and the 2nd Sunday in November for Association dances.

Section 8. Special Dances

- a. The Association and any Member Club planning to hold a special dance on a day other than its regularly scheduled day shall notify the Recording Secretary and shall be limited to days when no regular club dances within a 25-mile radius are scheduled. Excluded from this provision are December 31 (unless claimed by the Association per Section 7 of the Bylaws), non-dancing activities, and trips to dances occurring outside the Association area (including but not limited to picnics open only to club members, raids, and bus trips).
- b. Dates shall be recorded as written notification is received. In no event shall the Recording Secretary acknowledge any specific date for more than three years in advance. Regularly scheduled dances of Member Clubs have priority over workshops or any extracurricular activities of any Member Club of the Association. This restriction shall not apply to dance classes or class level dances prior to Mainstream graduation.
- c. In the event any such notification indicates a conflict with another Member Club's regularly scheduled dance or previously scheduled special dance of a Member Club to be held within a 15-mile radius (as appropriate) of such proposed dance, or conflict with an Association dance, the Recording Secretary shall advise the club of the conflict and suggest a new date be selected.

Section 9. Difficulties

In the event of any difficulty between two or more clubs, or between the Association and clubs, upon receiving such advice in writing from the Secretary, or upon request from an involved club, the 3rd

Vice President shall attempt to effect a mediation satisfactory to all concerned. If unsuccessful, the President shall appoint an impartial committee consisting of at least three members from at least three different clubs (other than those clubs that are affected). This committee shall meet with representatives from each club to effect a mediation. Upon failure to effect a mediation, the Executive Committee shall rule on the controversy.

Section 10. *Grand Square*

- a. The official publication shall be known as *Grand Square*. It shall be made available to all dancers of its Member Clubs, the beginner classes of Member Clubs, and other interested persons. No advertisement or announcement shall be accepted for any dance, workshop, or extracurricular activity that is in conflict, as defined in Section 8, with a previously scheduled dance of a Member Club to be held within a 15- or 25-mile radius (as appropriate) of such Member Club's dance or in conflict with an Association dance.
- b. Any advertisement not related to square dancing may be accepted at the discretion of the editors of *Grand Square*.

Section 11. **Club Information**

- a. The Association shall keep and maintain records of each Member Club, including the names and addresses of its officers, delegates, callers, program of dance, and location of its regular place of dancing.
- b. Any change in officers, delegates, club callers, or program of dance is to be reported to the Recording Secretary as soon as reasonably possible.
- c. Any contemplated change in regular place or dance schedule is to be reported immediately to the Recording Secretary for clearance.
- d. In the event a club finds it necessary to disband and will no longer hold square dances, notification in writing should be made to the Recording Secretary with all pertinent information including the date of disbandment.
- e. The day, time, and location of the disbanded club shall be protected for a period of six months after the date of disbandment. After six months, another club may apply for the day, time, or location in writing to the Recording Secretary.

Section 12. **Special Programs**

The NNJSDA Executive Committee may establish special programs and determine incentives and rewards for participation in or completion of those programs. Special programs may include:

- a. Patron – A dancer shall attend regularly scheduled dances at a specified number or percentage of Association Member Clubs. Regularly scheduled dances are those included on the Recording Secretary's master list of each Member Club's dance season. The dancer shall present a written record thereof to the Treasurer. There shall be no time limit.
- b. Freeloader – A dancer shall attend a specified number of summer NNJSDA dances and the Mini-Festival. The dancer shall present a written record thereof to the Treasurer.
- c. Raid – A Member Club that completes the annual Raid program as defined by the Executive Committee shall receive a reduction in its annual dues the following year.
- d. One Square is Fair – A Member Club that completes the annual One Square is Fair program as defined by the Executive Committee shall receive a reduction in its annual dues the following year.