

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY SQUARE DANCERS ASSOCIATION

Constitution and Bylaws

Revised and Approved April 21, 2013

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. Name

The name shall be "Northern New Jersey Square Dancers Association." It shall be a nonprofit 501(c)7 social and recreational organization.

ARTICLE II. Purpose

The purpose of the NNJSDA shall be to promote square dancing in the area by:

- a. Organizing and providing special activities.
- b. Providing services for square dancers that the Member Clubs cannot provide.
- c. Serving as a clearinghouse for area activities and information.
- d. Publicizing events of Member Clubs and the Association.
- e. Working in harmony with others interested in the promotion of square dancing.

ARTICLE III. Membership

The Association shall consist of organized square dance clubs (Member Clubs) governed by elected officers.

ARTICLE IV. 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 area outlined above may be included upon approval of the Delegates.

ARTICLE V. Bylaws

Bylaws shall be established to specify procedures for carrying out the business of the Association.

ARTICLE VI. Delegates

Section 1. Each Member Club shall elect or appoint one or two members as Delegate, and may elect or appoint one or two members as Alternate Delegate.

Section 2. The Delegates' and Alternates' term of office shall be from June 1 to May 31.

Section 3. Delegates and Alternates must be members in good standing of the club they represent and may not be members of the Executive Committee of the Association.

Section 4. Delegates and Alternates may not represent more than one club simultaneously.

Section 5. Individuals receiving remuneration from the Association or any Member Club, directly or indirectly, are not eligible to be Delegates.

Section 6. All Past Presidents of the Association shall be Lifetime Honorary Delegates without voting privileges.

Section 7. The President shall schedule at a minimum a spring meeting, a fall meeting, and a winter meeting of the Delegates, giving at least two weeks notice for these meetings.

Section 8. A majority of Member Clubs represented at a scheduled Delegates meeting by a Delegate, Alternate Delegate, or President shall constitute a quorum.

Section 9. Unless specified otherwise, all actions shall be approved by a majority of the Delegates present and voting. Each club has one Delegate vote.

Section 10. The Delegates shall elect (and remove, if necessary) the officers of the Association, approve new Member Clubs (and suspend Member Clubs, if necessary), approve changes in dues and *Grand Square* assessments charged to Member Clubs, approve new assessments to be charged to Member Clubs, and approve amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 11. The Delegates shall serve as liaisons between their clubs and the Association and as spokespersons for their clubs.

ARTICLE VII. 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 of the Association shall serve without remuneration.

Section 3. Individuals receiving remuneration from the Association or any Member Club, directly or indirectly, are not eligible for election to office.

Section 4. Officer positions may be held by one or two people. At no time may anyone hold more than one officer position.

Section 5. Candidates for office must have served as a Delegate of the Association or an officer of a Member Club.

Section 6. Candidates for President must have served as an officer of the Association.

Section 7. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of officers to the Executive Committee at least eight weeks prior to the spring Delegates meeting.

Section 8. The Executive Committee shall present the slate, along with its recommendations, to the Delegates at least four weeks prior to the spring Delegates meeting.

Section 9. Election of officers shall take place at the spring Delegates meeting. Any nominations from the floor must have the prior consent of the candidates.

Section 10. The vote shall be by secret ballot whenever a contest occurs.

Section 11. The term of office shall be from June 1 to May 31.

Section 12. In general, no person shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. Additional terms are permitted with the approval of the Delegates.

Section 13. If two people hold the office of President and one is not able to perform the duties of the office, the other person 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 term.

Section 14. 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 15. Any elected officer may be removed for cause on the recommendation of a majority of the Executive Committee and a two-thirds vote of the Delegates present and voting.

ARTICLE VIII. 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; schedule 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 contracting with callers, cuers, and halls for Association events unless specified otherwise in this document or by the Executive Committee. The 1st Vice President shall assume all duties of the President if the President is absent from any scheduled function.

Section 3. The 2nd Vice President shall be responsible for serving as liaison with Member Clubs that have beginner classes, organizing the Mid-Term Student Dance (including the callers, but not the hall), presenting information packets and diplomas to students, and handling all other matters 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.

Section 4. The 3rd Vice President shall be responsible for all publicity, the Poster/Flyer Contest, the Association scrapbooks and other historical documents, and new Member Clubs. The 3rd Vice President shall represent 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 5. The Recording Secretary shall take and distribute minutes of every Delegates and Executive Committee meeting. The Recording Secretary shall keep an up-to-date master list of all Member Clubs' regular dance schedules. The Recording Secretary shall approve or deny clearance for special dances and events that include square dancing requested by the Association or a Member Club.

Section 6. The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for all official correspondence from the Executive Committee to its members, the Delegates, and Member Club presidents. The Corresponding Secretary shall assume all duties of the Recording Secretary if the Recording Secretary is absent from any scheduled function.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of the Association's income, expenditures, and moneys on hand. The Treasurer shall present the Association's financial status at every Delegates and Executive Committee meeting. The President shall authorize all expenditures and may delegate to the Treasurer authorization to pay routine invoices including fees for callers and cuers, hall rental, ad placement, insurance premiums, and operating expenses. The Treasurer and all other members of the Executive Committee shall be bonded by the NNJSDA insurance policy.

Section 8. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer at all Association dances and other events. The Assistant Treasurer shall send invoices to Member Clubs for annual dues and assessments (*Grand Square*, insurance, and other assessments). The Assistant Treasurer shall assume all duties of the Treasurer if the Treasurer is absent from any scheduled function.

Section 9. Other duties may be assigned to any officer by the Bylaws or by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX. Executive Committee

Section 1. The officers and immediate Past President shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall formulate policies and programs to carry out the activities of the Association.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall establish fees for Association dances and other events.

Section 4. The President shall schedule at a minimum one Executive Committee meeting at least four weeks prior to each Delegates meeting and one changeover meeting prior to June 15. The outgoing

President shall preside over the changeover meeting until all outgoing officers have presented their reports, and then turn the leadership over to the incoming officers.

Section 5. Two-thirds of the offices present at a scheduled meeting shall constitute a quorum. If an office is held by more than one individual, the presence of either one shall constitute attendance by that office. At the changeover meeting, two-thirds of both the outgoing and incoming offices shall constitute a quorum.

Section 6. Items of business requiring a vote shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee present and voting. Each individual has one vote.

Section 7. Trustee/advisors, *Grand Square* editors, liaisons, committee chairs, and others may be invited to participate in Executive Committee meetings without vote. Collectively, such a group shall be known as the Executive Board.

ARTICLE X. Trustee/Advisors, *Grand Square* Editors, Liaisons

Section 1. The President shall appoint a minimum of three and a maximum of six trustee/advisors to render general advice and assistance to the Executive Committee and to fulfill the Association's legal requirement, as an incorporated entity in the state of New Jersey, to have trustees.

Section 2. The President shall appoint the editor(s) of *Grand Square*.

Section 3. The President shall appoint liaisons with other organizations sharing an interest in the square dance activity.

Section 4. The terms of trustee/advisors, *Grand Square* editors, and liaisons shall be from June 1 to May 31.

ARTICLE XI. Committees

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

- a. Fall Delegates meeting – Nominating Committee: to recommend a slate of officers for the following year. The Nominating Committee shall consist of a chairperson couple or individual and up to five additional members, for a total of no more than six members. At least one of the committee members shall be a former officer of the Association.
- b. Spring Delegates meeting – Audit Committee: to audit the books annually and at each change of Treasurer. The Audit Committee shall consist of at least two members.

Section 2. The President may appoint special committees as necessary to review the Constitution and Bylaws; to coordinate education sessions at Delegates meetings; to plan the annual Mini-Festival; to plan The Gathering; and to handle other Association matters as required.

ARTICLE XII. Suspension

Section 1. A club may be suspended from membership in the Association for failure to comply with or for acting contrary to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2. The Executive Committee may suspend a club temporarily by a two-thirds vote until action is taken at the next Delegates meeting. A temporarily suspended club shall not participate in any activities and benefits of the Association, except insurance coverage, until the Delegates vote upon the case.

Section 3. Suspension of a club shall require a two-thirds vote of the Delegates present and voting at a scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE XIII. Amendments

Section 1. Proposed amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws may be submitted by any Member Club.

A vote shall be taken by the Delegates following the schedule below.

- a. The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Association President at least four weeks prior to the next scheduled Executive Committee meeting.
- b. The President shall notify all members of the Executive Committee of the proposed amendment at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- c. The Executive Committee shall discuss the amendment and make a recommendation to the Delegates at least four weeks prior to the next scheduled Delegates meeting. The Delegates shall discuss the amendment and the Executive Committee's recommendation at the Delegates meeting.
- d. The President shall transmit the original and revised amendment, if any, and the Executive Committee's final recommendation to the Delegates at least four weeks prior to the following scheduled Delegates meeting, at which time a vote on the proposed amendment shall be taken.

Section 2. Ratification of an amendment to the Constitution or Bylaws shall require a two-thirds vote of the Delegates present and voting at a scheduled meeting, with at least two-thirds of the Member Clubs represented at the meeting.

ARTICLE XIV. General

Robert's Rules of Order or *Cannon's Concise Guide to 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

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, membership list, elected officers, dance program, dance schedule, and dance location.
- b. The 3rd Vice President shall visit the club prior to review of the application by the Executive Committee.
- c. An officer of the club shall come to the next scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee to answer any questions regarding the application.
- d. At least four weeks prior to the next scheduled Delegates meeting, the Executive Committee shall recommend to the Delegates acceptance, rejection, or postponement of a decision on the applicant club.
- e. The Delegates shall vote upon the application.

2. Qualifications for New Member Clubs and Associate Clubs

- a. New Member Clubs shall have a reasonably stable membership of at least one square over a period of at least one year.
- b. New Member Clubs shall be devoted to Western style square dancing, have a regular dance location, and be governed by elected officers.
- c. New Member Clubs shall not dance on the same day as another Member Club within 15 miles (defined as a reasonable driving distance between the two clubs' regular dance locations), unless the Member Club gives approval in writing.
- d. Associate Member Clubs shall have all the rights and responsibilities of Member Clubs other than voting privileges. They may have non-voting Delegates with the right of discussion.
 - i. Caller-run clubs with a reasonably stable membership of at least one square over a period of at least one year may become Associate Members.
 - ii. Clubs that restrict their membership to teens and have a reasonably stable membership of at least one square over a period of at least one year may become Associate Members.
- e. Although bylaws are required only for clubs that incorporate, they are strongly recommended for all clubs.

3. Continued Membership of Clubs

- a. To continue membership, a club must be represented at a majority of Delegates meetings each year, conduct regular dances, and maintain all the qualifications defined in Bylaws 2.
- b. When unusual circumstances arise in regard to the qualifications defined in Bylaws 2, a Member Club may obtain permission in writing from all conflicting clubs and request consideration as specified in Bylaws 10. The decision shall be binding on all.

4. Club Information

- a. The Association shall maintain records of each Member Club, including the names and addresses of its members, officers, and delegates, dance program, regular dance location, and schedule of dances.
- b. Any change in officers, delegates, or dance program shall be reported to the Recording Secretary.
- c. Any contemplated change in regular dance location or schedule shall be submitted to the Recording Secretary for clearance.
- d. In the event a club finds it necessary to disband and will no longer hold square dances, the Recording Secretary shall be notified of 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 from the date of disbandment. After six months, another club may apply to the Recording Secretary for the day, time, or location.

5. Grand Square

- a. The official publication shall be known as *Grand Square*. It shall be made available to all Member Clubs, the Mainstream classes of Member Clubs, and other interested persons.
- b. Advertisements or announcements shall not be accepted for any Association or Member Club dance, workshop, or other activity that is in conflict, as defined in Bylaws 8, with the Association's or a Member Club's previously scheduled dance or event that includes square dancing.
- c. Advertisements from non-Association dance organizations as well as advertisements not related to square dancing may be accepted at the discretion of the editors of *Grand Square*.

6. Annual Dues and Assessments

- a. A change in the annual dues for Member Clubs and Associate Clubs shall be recommended by the Executive Committee to the Delegates at least 30 days prior to the fall Delegates meeting, at which time a vote shall be taken.
- b. Annual dues shall be payable by a date specified by the Executive Committee.
- c. Dues not paid within 30 days after the due date are in arrears and may result in disciplinary action by the Executive Committee.
- d. A change in the *Grand Square* assessment shall be recommended by the Executive Committee to the Delegates at least 30 days prior to the fall Delegates meeting, at which time a vote shall be taken.
- e. The Association shall make available liability insurance for Member Club and Associate Club dances and classes through an annual prorated assessment to each participating club, based upon the number of dances only.
- f. In cases of financial exigency, the Executive Committee shall recommend new assessments to the Delegates at least 30 days prior to the next scheduled Delegates meeting, at which time a vote shall be taken.

7. Classes

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

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

8. Priority and Clearance for Special Dances and Events that Include Square Dancing

- a. The Association shall establish and publish at least three years in advance priority dates for Association dances and other events.
- b. The Association and any Member Club planning to hold a special dance or an event that includes square dancing at a time or location outside its regular schedule shall request clearance by email or regular mail from the Recording Secretary. Dates shall be recorded in the order received.
- c. Clearance shall not be granted for a date more than three years in advance.
- d. Clearance shall not be granted for times when a Member Club's regular dances or other previously approved events are scheduled within 25 miles (defined as a reasonable driving distance between the two clubs' regular dance locations) unless the Member Club gives approval in writing.
- e. Clearance shall not be granted for times when the following Association events are scheduled, regardless of distance: dances, special events, and Delegates and Executive Board meetings.
- f. Classes, trips to dances occurring outside the Association area, demos, parades, private club events, and events that do not include square dancing shall not require clearance.
- g. If the requested event conflicts with a previously cleared event and the requester (including the NNJSDA) obtains approval from the group having prior clearance, clearance may be granted upon receipt of the approval by the Recording Secretary through email or regular mail. If the first group does not give approval, the requester may appeal to the 3rd Vice President to mediate.
- h. All clearance decisions shall be sent to the requester by email or regular mail, with copies to the NNJSDA President, Corresponding Secretary, and *Grand Square* Editor.
- i. A Member Club holding an event for which it was denied clearance shall not be allowed to advertise through the NNJSDA Delegates, website, email information list, or *Grand Square*.

9. Special Programs

The NNJSDA Executive Committee may establish special programs and determine incentives and rewards for participation in or completion of those programs. Examples of special programs are Patron, Raid, Freeloader, and One Square Is Fair.

10. Conflicts

- a. Upon request from a Member Club in conflict with one or more other Member Clubs or the Association, the 3rd Vice President shall attempt to effect a mediation satisfactory to all concerned.
- b. If unsuccessful, the President shall appoint an impartial committee consisting of at least three members from at least three different clubs (other than the affected clubs). The committee shall meet with representatives from each club to effect a mediation.
- c. If unsuccessful, the Executive Committee shall rule on the controversy.