

CENTRAL OHIO MALAYALEE ASSOCIATION, INC

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Article I. (NAME)

The name of the association shall be **Central Ohio Malayalee Association**, hereafter referred to as **COMA**.

Article II. (ADDRESS)

The principal place of business of the association shall be in the state of Ohio, and the principal address shall be c/o address of the **Agent** of the association.

Article III. (PREAMBLE)

COMA is the epitome of a long cherished aspiration of the Malayalees at large in Central Ohio, to promote the social, cultural, educational, literary, and artistic heritage of our venerable state of Kerala, India. Malayalees in Central Ohio have a history of over 40 years.

Article IV. (PURPOSE)

Section 1. This Association shall be a non-profitable, nonpolitical, secular, and cultural organization. The Association is organized exclusively for social, cultural, charitable, educational, and scientific purposes including making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 2. No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons except that the Association shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clauses above. No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the Association shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document the Association shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code

Section 3. Non-Discrimination Clause: The Association shall not engage in any activity that would discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, or religion.

Section 4. Specific purposes for which the organization is formed are:

- a) Provide a forum to promote and preserve social and cultural integration of Malayalees in Central Ohio.
- b) Promote friendship and cultural exchange with similar organizations in USA.
- c) Promote the enrichment of life and social welfare of local community in general and Malayalees in particular.
- d) Represent and preserve the interests of Malayalees.

Article V. (AFFILIATION)

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to affiliate COMA with other Malayalee / Keralite / Kerala associations, and other Indian cultural associations within the United States and internationally.

Article VI. (BOUNDARIES)

A. The boundaries of COMA jurisdiction shall be the State of Ohio, or portions thereof, as determined by the Board of Trustees.

- B. The boundaries may be changed with the agreement of COMA and any other state association involved in the boundary adjustment.
- C. COMA jurisdiction includes the counties of Adams, Athens, Auglaize, Brown, Butler, Champaign, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Darke, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Gallia, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Meigs, Mercer, Miami, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Preble, Ross, Scioto, Shelby, Union, Vinton, Warren, and Washington

Article VII. (DEFINITIONS)

- A. **Association:** Central Ohio Malayalee Association Inc, also referred to as COMA
- B. **Malayalee(s) (also referred to as ‘Keralites’):** Natives of, or the descendants of natives of, or persons whose heritage is rooted in the State of Kerala, India.
- C. Persons who have origin in or have affiliations in the State of Kerala, India.
- D. **Member Types:**
 - a. **Regular Members:** Single or Family enrolled as members by paying an annual membership fee.
 - b. **Honorary Members:** non-voting members who are invited (usually on ad hoc basis) to participate in association activities. They do not pay any membership fees.
- E. **Membership Levels:**
 - a. **Annual Membership**
 - i. Single
 - ii. Family (2 Adults and dependent children under 18)
- F. **General Body:** Regular members of the association who have met all their obligations pursuant to the constitution and internal regulations of COMA
- G. **Board of Trustees:** The Board of Trustees is the association’s governing body and is responsible for all affairs of the association.
- H. **Executive Committee:** The body of persons elected by the general body for carrying on day-to-day administration of the association’s activities.
- I. **Agent::** Person appointed as “Agent” to function as main liaison for any official contact with the State of Ohio
- J. **President:** Member who is elected as President of the Association and serves for a specified term.
- K. **Vice-President:** Member who is elected as Vice-President of the Association and serves for a specified term.
- L. **Secretary:** Member who is elected as Secretary of the association and serves for a specified term.
- M. **Joint-Secretary:** Member who is elected as Joint-Secretary of the Association and serves for a specified term.
- N. **Treasurer:** Member who is elected as Treasurer of the Association and serves for a specified term. Maintains association's books of accounts.
- O. **Auditor:** Person(s) appointed by the Board of Trustees to audit the books of accounts and certified account statements for the association. The association may have both internal and external auditors.
- P. **Bylaw Review Committee (BRC):** a committee appointed by the Board of Trustees to review proposals for revision/amendment of the association’s constitution
- Q. **General Body Meeting:** A general body meeting of the association.
- R. **Fiscal Year:** The fiscal year of the association shall be January 1st to December 31st
- S. **Good standing:** A member is in good standing if all membership and other dues have been paid and is not party to any disciplinary action by the Executive Committee

Article VIII. (MEMBERSHIP)

- A. Membership is open to Malayalees (as defined above), their spouses and children.

- B. The association's membership shall be open to the above individuals sharing the objectives of the association as evidenced by the payment of membership fee and who abide by the Constitution and Internal Regulations of the association.
- C. The application for membership shall be made in the prescribed form provided by the association and be submitted to the Secretary.
- D. The membership if approved by the Executive Committee shall be valid from the date of approving such application to the end of the running fiscal year or such other dates as decided by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall have the right to refuse any membership application.
- E. Family Membership: Families consisting of husband, wife, unmarried children living with parents, and dependent parents. The voting rights shall be restricted to two adult members 18 years or above.
- F. Single Membership: Any Keralite at the age of eighteen shall be eligible for single membership. The individual holding the single membership shall be eligible for one vote.
- G. Honorary Membership: The General Body of the COMA may confer honorary membership to persons who have rendered valuable, outstanding, and long service to the community. Honorary members shall be exempted from membership fee and shall have no voting rights in any matters of the association.
- H. **TO BE FINALIZED**: Life Membership: Life membership shall be granted to any eligible member upon payment of lifetime membership fees and shall be exempted from any further payment of annual membership fees only. Life Members shall NOT be exempt from payment of any other dues (for activities, social events etc) and shall have all privileges of a Regular member including voting and holding office.
- I. Membership Period: The membership period shall be the calendar year, beginning on January 1st and ending on December 31 each year. Membership renewal for the following year is due by December 31. A grace period of 30(thirty) days (expiring January 30 of the following year) may be allowed for renewal.
- J. Membership Fee: The General Body shall determine the membership fees at various levels and reserves the right to periodically review/revise the fee structure. Membership Levels are:
 - a) Single
 - b) Family Membership
 - c) Life Membership (**to be finalized**)
- K. Register of Members: A register of members shall be maintained by the Secretary and shall include:
 - a) Name, address, telephone number and occupation (if available)
 - b) Email address and other contact information
 - c) Date of acceptance of membership
 - d) Date of termination of membership.

Article IX. (MEMBER'S RIGHTS)

Members (in good standing)of the association shall have the following rights:

- A. **Regular members** (over the age of 18)
 - a) Attend annual general body meetings, participate, discuss, and vote on items included on the agenda.
 - b) Obtain a copy of the constitution and internal regulations.
 - c) Benefit from the facilities provided by the association for its members.
 - d) Obtain the associations circulars and publications.
 - e) Run for and hold office in the association
 - f) Have access to review the records, documents, and correspondence of the association at the times determined by the Executive Committee in the presence of the person(s) responsible.
- B. **Honorary Members**
 - a) Honorary members are entitled to participate and discuss in the meetings of general body and other functions of the association.
 - b) Honorary Members shall have no voting rights and shall not hold any elective office in the association

Article X. (TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP)

Section 1. Termination of membership

- A. Membership shall cease by death, resignation, expulsion, or dissolution of the association.
- B. Any member who intends to discontinue his/her membership temporarily or to resign from the corporation shall communicate his/her intention in writing to the Secretary

Section 2. Expulsion of Members

The Executive Committee shall have the authority to take disciplinary action against members whose actions are detrimental to the interest of the association. The Executive Committee through the following process can expel a member from the association, for valid reasons.

- a) The Executive committee provides a show cause notice, to the member if any such activities by the member are detrimental to the interest of the association.
- b) The member may respond to the notice within fifteen days. The member has the right to appeal the notice either in person or in writing.
- c) The Executive Committee will consider the explanation provided by the member and evaluate the situation.
- d) If the explanation is not satisfactory, the committee shall decide to terminate the membership of the individual, which should be approved by two-third majority in the Executive Committee.

Article XI. (MEMBER DISPUTES-LITIGATION PROHIBITION)

- A. As a condition of membership in COMA, members, or their agents, agree to utilize the procedure for handling and resolving of grievances, disputes, problems and/or appeals as established by COMA and that the final decision reached within the established appeals process (at the final level as authorized and utilized shall be binding and final on all parties to the grievance, dispute, problem or action.
- B. As a condition of membership in COMA, members, or their agents, agree not to use any court of the land and/or institute legal proceeding of any type to pursue any grievances, disputes, or problems against COMA. In lieu of the ability to institute legal action of any type and/or not use any court of the land, all members have the right to use the internal process established to settle grievances, disputes, or problems within the procedure established by COMA.

Article XII. (MANAGEMENT)

- A. Direction of the association and control of its property shall be vested in a **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**.
- B. The day-to-day operations of the association shall be carried out by the **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**, which shall have full power to execute the goals of the association, and to raise and spend money subject to limits imposed by the general body.

Article XIII. (BOARD OF TRUSTEES and AGENT)

- A. The Board of Trustees shall consist of FIVE members elected from the general body.
- B. The term of office of the Board of Trustees members shall be **THREE** years.
- C. The Board of Trustees shall elect one of its members as the Chairperson at its first meeting.
- D. Three members of the Board of Trustees shall retire every **TWO** years and replaced with a like number
- E. No Board of Trustees member may serve more than two consecutive terms.
- F. Duties of the Board of Trustees:
 - a) The Board of Trustees shall settle disputes that arise among and between Executive Committee members and the General Body.
 - b) The Board of Trustees shall be custodians of property and assets of the association.
 - c) The Board of Trustees shall appoint members of the Election Committee.
- G. The association shall have an Agent who shall be the main liaison for any official contact with the State of Ohio.

Article XIV. (THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)

The Executive Committee shall be the executive authority in the association. It shall implement the policies drawn up by the General Body meeting and the resolutions adopted thereby for the realization of the association's legitimate objectives.

Section 1. Members

The Executive Committee shall consist of the following SEVEN (7) members:

- A. Five (5) officers elected by the general body
 - a) President
 - b) Vice-President
 - c) Secretary
 - d) Joint-Secretary
 - e) Treasurer
- B. Immediate past-President
- C. One individual nominated from amongst the Board of Trustees members. *Note: during the **first year** TWO members shall be nominated from the Board of Trustees as three will be no Past -President*

Section 2. Tenure

The Executive Committee officers of the association shall be elected for ONE year (except as noted below), coinciding with the fiscal year of the association, at the Annual General Body meeting (AGBM). *Note: The first term of the Executive Committee shall be for TWO years (2007-2009) to give the Committee members sufficient time to bring stability to the association and set up processes.*

Section 3. Executive Committee

- A. **THE PRESIDENT** shall preside over the General Body and Executive Committee meetings, regulate the order of business at such meetings, receive, and put lawful motions to the floor. The President shall, along with the Secretary, sign all the papers and documents requiring signatures on behalf of COMA, unless the General Body designates someone else.
- B. **THE VICE-PRESIDENT** shall assume the responsibilities of the President in the absence of the President, and shall assist the President in performing his/her duties.
- C. **THE SECRETARY** shall be responsible for the general control and management of all business affairs of the association. He/She shall be the public relation/spoke person of the association. He/She shall, with the President, sign and, when necessary, seal with the seal of the association of which He/She shall have custody, all papers and document requiring signature or execution on its behalf. He/She shall maintain an accurate record of the proceedings of the association and the Executive Committee meetings. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to present a general report of the activities of the year at the Annual General Body meeting. He / She shall maintain the Register of Members.
- D. **JOINT-SECRETARY** shall maintain the correspondence and conduct the business of the association in the absence of the Secretary, and shall assist the Secretary in his/her duties. He/She shall be directly responsible to the Secretary for all matters concerning the association's membership.
- E. **THE TREASURER** shall have charge of all funds of COMA and shall deposit, or cause to be deposited the same in a local reputed financial institution selected by the Executive Committee in the name of the association. Out of such funds, he/she shall pay the amounts approved by the COMA and submit an audited statement at the general Body meeting, and at any other time required by the Executive Committee. He/She shall, along with the President or the Secretary signs all the notes, drafts, and checks.
- F. **IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT** shall be a de facto officer of the Executive Committee. If the immediate past President is unavailable to be an Executive Committee member, the outgoing Executive Committee can nominate someone else who was a member of that committee.
- G. **BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOMINEE** shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee

Section 4. Rights and Duties of Executive Committee

The Executive Committee members shall have the following rights and duties. This list may be reviewed and revised by the Board of Trustees from time to time.

- a) The Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the association under the direction and guidance of the Board of Trustees.
- b) The Executive Committee shall have the power to set up committees for the realization of the goals of the association as and when necessary.
- c) The Executive Committee shall take action on membership applications at the next meeting, not more than 30 days of receiving them.
- d) The Executive Committee shall have the authority to take disciplinary action against members whose actions are detrimental to the interests of the association.
- e) The Executive Committee shall have the right to determine the annual membership fee.
- f) The Executive Committee shall have the right and responsibility to arrange cultural and social activities to promote and encourage its members. These activities include seminars, entertainment, concerts, lectures, cultural or sports competitions, and demonstrations or any other activities that are consistent with the objectives of the association and acts that would implement the goals of the association.
- g) The Executive Committee shall have the right to determine rates of admission to performances/functions conducted or sponsored by the association.
- h) The Executive Committee shall present an annual report along with an audited and certified statement of accounts before the annual general body meeting.
- i) The Executive Committee shall suggest and/or act upon amendments, additions, or cancellations of bylaws of the association for consideration by the general body.
- j) The Executive Committee shall have the right to perform all other acts connected with the administration of the association and for the transaction of its business and protection of its properties.

Section 5. Resignation or Removal of Executive Committee Members

- A. Any member of the Executive Committee may resign at any time.
- B. Any or all members of the Executive Committee may be removed at any time with justifiable cause by a majority vote of the general body. The cause could include but is not limited to the following:
 - a) Abstains from three (3) meetings continuously without sufficient cause
 - b) Perceived to have a conflict of interest
 - c) Found misusing his/her authority, or association's funds
 - d) Consistently working against the interests and objectives of the association
- C. A two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee shall determine the status of the Committee member and recommend expulsion of said member(s) to the Board of Trustees.
- D. The Board of Trustees shall make the final decision on expulsion based on the recommendations of the Executive Committee.

Section 6. Filling Vacancies

- A. In the event that the office of the President or Secretary becomes vacant, the Vice-President and the Joint-Secretary shall assume their offices respectively.
- B. In the event that the post of treasurer becomes vacant, the President shall take over those duties until the next general body meeting.
- C. Any other vacancy occurring in the Executive Committee shall be filled from the active general members by the affirmative vote of two third (2/3) of the Executive Committee by appointment and such appointment shall be held valid until the unexpired term of the Executive Committee.
- D. The Executive Committee shall fill committee member vacancies, except for office bearers, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Section 7. Dissolving the Executive Committee

- A. The Executive Committee shall cease to exist if more than half of the Executive Committee members shall resign at one time or if the number of committee members is reduced to less than one half (1/2) for any reason whatsoever
- B. The remaining committee members shall authorize one among them to call and conduct an Extra Ordinary General Body meeting.

Article XV. (OTHER OFFICIALS)

The Executive Committee shall periodically and at their discretion, select/nominate various officials to oversee various activities of the association. These officials shall be in-office for a period determined by the Executive Committee, but NOT TO EXCEED one year. These officials shall not have any Executive privileges. Some *examples* are:

- A. **YOUTH ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR** to represent the youths of the association and oversee all youth activities of the association.
- B. **SPORTS AND GAMES COORDINATOR** to oversee all sports and games activities.
- C. **ARTS AND CULTURAL COORDINATOR** to oversee Art, Cultural and Literary activities
- D. **LADY REPRESENTATIVE** to oversee ladies wing activities of the association
- E. **ANY OTHER** position as needed in the future, as decided by the Executive Committee.

Article XVI. (ACTIVITY COMMITTEES)

- A. The Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint “ad hoc” committees for special purpose and these committees shall report to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall chair all activity committees.
- B. The Executive Committee shall appoint individuals as **Conveners** for each committee to manage the activities of the activity committee.
- C. The tenure of each Convener is determined by the Executive Committee and shall vary from one activity committee to another due to the ad-hoc nature of such committees. However, under no circumstance shall the Convener be appointed for a period of more than one fiscal year as defined in this constitution.
- D. The President and Secretary of the association shall be ex-officio members of all activity committees formed by the association.
- E. All decisions taken by any of the committees shall be subject to final approval of the Executive Committee.
- F. Proper minutes shall be kept for committee meetings by the convener of each committee and shall submit them to the Executive Committee along with their proposals for activities.
- G. The following are *examples* of committees that MAY be created at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
 - 1. Education, youth affair and sports and games Committee
 - 2. Membership Committee
 - 3. Public relation Committee
 - 4. Arts and cultural Committee

Article XVII. (MEETINGS)

Section 1. Annual General Body Meeting

- A. A properly called Annual General Body meeting is the supreme authority of the COMA. .
- B. The Annual General Body Meeting shall consist of all the eligible members who have performed their obligations pursuant to the constitution and internal regulations.
- C. The Executive Committee shall call the Annual General Body meeting before November 30 each year.
- D. A meeting notice shall be sent at least fifteen days (15) in advance to all members in good standing,

- E. The notice shall include location, stating time, date, month of the meeting, the business to be transacted, financial statements for current fiscal year and proposed amendments to constitution and/or internal regulations if any.
- F. Accidental omission or non-receipt of meeting notice by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.
- G. The Secretary shall present an updated list of eligible members at the General Body meeting.
- H. The agenda for the annual General Body meeting shall include the following:
 - a) Annual report of the activities of COMA.
 - b) Audited financial statement for the preceding year.
 - c) Discussion of any proposed resolutions or changes to the constitution or bylaws.
 - d) Any other relevant matters as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee or Board of Trustees.
 - e) Elect an auditor for next fiscal year.
 - f) Elect members of the Executive Committee for next fiscal year.
- I. No remuneration or allowance of any kind shall be paid to any member for attending meetings of the association.
- J. Quorum for General Body Meeting
 - a) The quorum of the general body meeting shall be one third of its members or 25 members whichever is less.
 - b) In the absence of a quorum, the President or the presiding officer shall, with the consent of those present, adjourn the meeting to a later day and hour. A meeting shall not be adjourned for more than 45 (forty five) days. If no quorum is present at the adjourned meeting, further adjournments may continue as directed by the presiding officer until a quorum is obtained. Any meeting held at any adjourned date at which a quorum is present shall have the same effect as if held on the date originally set.
 - c) A majority of the Executive Committee shall be the quorum of the Executive Committee meeting. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the committee members present may adjourn the meeting until a quorum is present.

Section 2. Board of Trustees Meetings

- A. The Board of Trustees shall meet as required on a frequency determined by the Board of Trustees
- B. The quorum for the Board of Trustees shall be 3 (three). The Board of Trustees shall reach its decisions by a majority of votes cast, the chairman having a tie-breaking vote.
- C. Accidental omission or non-receipt of meeting notice by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

Section 3. Extra Ordinary General Body Meeting

- A. The Executive Committee may call an Extra Ordinary General Body Meeting if requested by two third (2/3) of the Executive Committee members or as recommended by the Board of Trustees under extenuating circumstances.
- B. Fifty members (50) or one third of the eligible members in good standing may request in writing to the Executive Committee to convene an extra ordinary General Body meeting, giving specific reasons for such a request. The Executive Committee shall call the extra ordinary General Body meeting within fifteen days (15) of such a request.
- C. Notice of at least ten days (10) shall be given for such meetings.
- D. The notice shall include stating time, date, month of the meeting, and the business to be transacted.
- E. Accidental omission or non-receipt of meeting notice by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.
- F. Only matters for which the extra ordinary General Body meeting was called will be discussed at such meetings.

- G. Quorum for such meetings shall be fifty members (50) in good standing or fifteen percent (15%) of the membership whichever is less.

Section 4. Executive Committee Meeting

- A. The Executive Committee shall hold its first meeting within one month after being appointed and confirm office bearers of the Executive Committee during its first meeting.
- B. The Executive Committee shall meet at least **ONCE EVERY TWO** months. At least a seven days' notice shall be given for such meetings.
- C. Five (5) members of the Executive Committee shall constitute quorum of the Executive Committee meeting.
- D. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the committee members present may adjourn the meeting until a quorum is present.
- E. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President or by two members of the Executive Committee. If the meeting is called by the Executive Committee members and not the President, permission to hold such meetings shall be obtained from the trustee Board. Notice of a special meeting should state the purpose for which the meeting is called. Notice of any adjourned meeting need not be given, other than by announcement at the adjourned meeting.

Article XVIII. (ELECTIONS)

Note: Being the very first elections for COMA, the elections held in 2007 may not strictly follow some of the prescribed timelines.

Section 1. Election Committee

- A. The Board of Trustees shall appoint a three-member Election Committee at least three months prior to elections.
- B. This committee shall consist of a chief election officer and two election officers, selected from the membership of the association or from the Board of Trustees or from the Executive Committee.
- C. The Election Committee shall cease to exist once the newly elected Executive Committee assumes office.
- D. Election Committee members shall not serve for more than two consecutive Executive Committee elections

Section 2. Eligibility of Candidates

- A. A candidate running for office shall be an active member of the association for two consecutive years prior to the date of publication of voters list. Active membership begins from the date of submission of application, provided, the application was accepted and approved by the Executive Committee. Renewal of membership before the date on which voters list is published will be considered as continuous membership. The date of publication of voters list shall be communicated to members at least 30 days in advance.
- B. A candidate shall not bear an official position of any other competing organization(s) and/or those that have conflict of interest with the association. However, the candidate shall forfeit his/her existing position in any such organization to become eligible for candidacy in this association.

Section 3. Elections

- A. The election committee shall determine the date of election and communicate the information to all members of the association.
- B. Election shall be by secret ballot.
- C. Eligibility to vote in all elections shall be restricted to members in good standing who have paid all membership and other dues.

- D. At any meeting of the association, eligible members present shall be entitled to one vote and in the event of a tie; the President shall break the tie.
- E. A copy of the register of membership shall be kept at the entrance of the meeting hall.
- F. No person other than a “regular member” shall be entitled to vote.
- G. No member shall nominate any other person to vote by proxy.
- H. A family is entitled to only one vote. The head of the family can delegate any other immediate family member above 18 years of age to vote on his/her behalf.

Section 4. Nominations

- A. Nominations shall be submitted in the prescribed form duly signed by the nominee.
- B. Each nomination should contain one active member as the nominator and other active member as seconded.
- C. A member can nominate or second only one candidate at a time.

Section 5. Election Deadlines

- A. The election of the Executive Committee, other officials and Board of Trustee members (when required) shall be held at the Annual General Body Meeting.
- B. The election committee shall decide the date of the election and formally communicate the information to members at least two months prior to elections.
- C. The notification shall consist of:
 - a) Date and schedule for election
 - b) Date of publication of voters list
 - c) Deadlines for filing – Fifteen (15) calendar days before the actual day of election, not counting the day of election
 - d) Deadlines for withdrawing nominations - Five (5) calendar days before the actual day of election, not counting the day of election
 - e) Date of scrutiny of nominations
 - f) Venue, date and time of voting

Section 6. Counting of votes

- A. Votes shall be counted on the same day of election and results shall be published immediately thereafter.
- B. The decision of the election committee shall be final.
- C. **To be finalized:** The top five (5) candidates with the most number of votes will be declared as elected to the Executive Committee.
- D. **To be finalized:** In the event of a tie for the 5th position, either those candidates can reach a consensus as to who among them would be in the Executive Committee or seek a run off election to break the tie.

Section 7. Election of The Board of Trustees

The election to the **vacant** positions on Board of Trustees will be conducted at the general elections along with the election to the Executive Committee, and the process of election shall be the same as that of the other officials.

Article XIX. (DOCUMENTATION)

Meeting Minutes

- A. Proper minutes shall be kept by the Secretary for all meetings of the association
- B. For activity committee meetings, the Convener of each activity committee shall submit minutes of committee meetings to the Executive Committee within five days of such meetings.

Article XX. (ACCOUNTS, FINANCES AND FUNDS)

A. Fund Raising

- a) The Executive Committee may, from time to time, raise funds by organizing cultural programs for the members and non-members of this association.
- b) The association may, from time to time, solicit donations from patrons and other well-wishers of the association

B. Funds disbursal

- A. All the expenses must be substantiated by receipts and must be approved properly by the treasurer. In addition, expense above Fifty dollars (\$50.00) for individual items must also be approved by the President, Vice-President or Secretary. Any expense above five hundred dollars (\$500.00) shall be approved by the Executive Committee.
- B. A petty cash up to one hundred dollars (\$100.00) may be maintained by the treasurer.

C. Banking

- a) Funds of the association shall be deposited in the name of the association by the treasurer in a local reputed financial institution.
- b) Separate Checking, Savings and Disbursement accounts shall be maintained.
- c) All funds shall be disbursed from the Disbursement Account
- d) At the end of each year, any balance in the checking account in excess of \$750.00 shall be transferred to the interest bearing savings account.
- e) The Executive Committee at its discretion shall open a special account specifically for charitable contributions received from members. The Executive Committee shall determine the processing of disbursements of these funds.
- f) Any withdrawal of funds shall require the signature of the treasurer and any one of the following: The President, Vice-President or the Secretary.
- g) A minimum of 75% of the principle amount collected from the life membership fees shall be maintained in a separate designated interest bearing account. A two third (2/3) affirmative vote of the membership present at the general body is required to withdraw any amount from 75% of the principal amount collected from the life membership.

D. Fiscal Year

- a) The fiscal year of the association shall be January 1t to December 31.
- b) For the purpose of filing tax returns, federal, state and local tax filing guidelines shall be strictly followed.

E. Accounting and Auditing

- a) The association's Treasurer shall maintain the books of accounts in an orderly manner
- b) The Treasurer shall reconcile the books of accounts against bank statements at the end of each fiscal quarter
- c) The Treasurer shall, at the Annual General Body Meeting, present the audited and certified accounts and reports provided by the auditor(s)
- d) A qualified accountant shall be appointed as the internal AUDITOR of the association by the Executive Committee for a specific period
- e) The Board of Trustees shall at its discretion also appoint an External Auditor if required
- f) The Auditor shall audit the accounts of the association and submit an audited and certified statement of accounts.
- g) The Auditor shall be responsible for all auditing and related activities of the association
- h) Every audited account of the association, approved by the general body, shall be conclusive except for any error discovered therein within one month after approval.

- i) The Treasurer shall file properly audited and appropriate tax returns for the association as per federal, state and local guidelines.

Article XXI. (ASSOCIATION'S PROPERTY)

- A. The Board of Trustees shall be the custodians of the association's movable and immovable properties.
- B. The maintenance of such properties shall be vested with the Board of Trustees.
- C. Members shall not use the association's properties for any purpose other than that of the association.
- D. The Board of Trustees may dispose off such properties, provided the total cost or the market value, whichever is higher, shall not exceed two hundred dollars (\$200.00). The disposal of other such properties, the cost or market value, whichever is higher, that exceed two hundred dollars (\$200.00), shall be determined by the General Body.

Article XXII. (AMENDMENTS)

- A. Amendment proposals from the Executive Committee or any member must be in the form of proper resolution, and shall be in compliance with official guidelines.
- B. Proposed amendments to the constitution shall be circulated at least 15 days before the meeting to all members of the association.
- C. A two third (2/3) affirmative vote of the membership present at the Annual General Body Meeting shall be required for adoption of any amendments of the constitution.
- D. Amendments to the internal regulations shall be adopted by a simple majority vote of the members present at the General Body meeting.

Article XXIII. (INSTRUCTION OF DISSOLUTION AND MERGER)

- A. This association shall not be dissolved without the vote of consent of three fourth (3/4) of the total membership at an Extra Ordinary General Body Meeting.
- B. Upon dissolution, the funds of COMA shall be distributed among registered educational or charitable associations.
- C. The decision regarding the merging of this association with any other type of association shall be exclusively made by the vote of consent of three fourth (3/4) of the total membership.
- D. In the event of an unresolved dispute about the distribution; the assets of the association shall be transferred to the State of Ohio for further adjudication.