



# **SANATAN TEMPLE and CULTURAL CENTER of South Carolina**

## **CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS**

### **Article I FORMATION**

The name of this religious organization is "Sanatan Temple and Cultural Center of South Carolina" (STCC). The STCC is incorporated under the laws of the state of South Carolina, and it is registered as a tax-exempt, non-profit, charitable corporation in the state of South Carolina and conforming to Internal Revenue Service code section 501 (C) (3).

### **Article II LOCATION**

The principal place of worship is located at 1740 Jervey Avenue, Charleston, SC 29407.

### **Article III OBJECTIVES**

(A) To provide facilities for religious, spiritual and cultural activities to understand and enhance the knowledge of Sanatan Dharma philosophy and scriptures consistent with the traditional, ethical and moral standards of a place of worship.

(B) To strengthen the moral, physical and cultural well-being of the community.

(C) To promote friendship and goodwill among all people through spiritual and cultural understanding based on Truth, Peace, Love, Justice and Harmony.

(D) To promote charitable, educational, religious and humanitarian activities.

(E) To organize Sunday school, summer camps, seminars and other activities for enhancement of the spiritual, cultural and moral understanding of the members



of the community and especially for the children.

## **Article IV MEMBERSHIP**

### Section (i)

- A. STCC has Annual membership and Life membership for families and individuals. Members and their spouses have the same membership rights as enumerated in Section (iii) below. Any person irrespective of caste, creed, color, race and national origin may become a member of STCC by fulfilling the following requirements:
- B. A member shall be at least 18 years old.
- C. A member shall agree to abide by and respect the Constitution and Bylaws of the STCC.
- D. Submit a duly filled application and pay membership dues as decided by Board of Trustees, also referred to as the Board or BOT.

### Section (ii)

A person under 18 years of age whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a member of the STCC shall automatically become a member without voting rights. At 18 years old, he/she may become a member as defined in Section (i) (C).

### Section (iii)

Membership privileges include voting rights and eligibility to serve on the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees as defined in Article **VI**



## **Article V INTERIM BOARD**

### Section (i)

The STCC shall have an Interim Board consisting of an odd number of members, at least seven.

### Section (ii)

The term of office:

Once the BOT is established, the Interim Board will cease to exist.  
In view of established BOT in Jan 2015 the interim board ceased to exist.

### Section (iii)

Composition and Responsibilities:

Until the Board of Trustees is formed, the Interim Board will have the same exact responsibilities as the BOT as outlined in the following Article VI. All members of the Interim Board shall have the same length of term.

The Board shall elect Interim Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary and may appoint additional Committees as necessary for proper function of the STCC.

## **Article VI BOARD of TRUSTEES (Board or BOT)**

### Section (i)

In general, the STCC shall have a Board of Trustees consisting of nine (9) trustees. Any life member of the STCC in good standing for at least two years from the date of life membership shall be eligible to become a Trustee.

President of the Executive Committee shall be a non-voting Trustee of the Board during the tenure of his/her office.

### Section (ii)



The Board shall consist of members of linguistic groups from Northern India, Southern India and Gujarat to reflect the diversity of the Indian diaspora in the Charleston area and STCC membership. Representation from any one such group shall not be more than a third of the BOT membership.

BOT may allow a slight deviation from this principle, not to exceed one member. The reason / justification for such exception must be properly recorded in the BOT minutes.

The same principle shall be followed in the formation of Executive Committee of STCC.

#### Section (iii)

The term of office:

A duly appointed Nomination Committee shall recommend to the Board of Trustees a slate of candidates to be elected for a new term.

A. Members of the first Board will serve varying portions of their six-year term since one third of the Trustees from each community will rotate every two years.

B. There will be allowance to account for the odd number of Trustees in case of an exception made as per Section (ii).

C. The members of the community shall present to the Board the nominations for filling the vacant positions on the Board. The Board will elect new members to fill the interim vacancies by a simple majority vote. The Board will formally present these election results to the General Body.

D. The Board shall elect their own Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary when one third of the Trustees rotate off the Board. The officers shall rotate every two years.

#### Section (iv)

A member of the Board may be removed from the Board with a two-thirds vote of the Board for not complying with the spirit of the Constitution and Bylaws and/or harmonious operations of the STCC.

#### Section (v)

In the event of any disagreement regarding any matter of policy or procedure, the Board will be the final authority, except for the decisions made by the General Body consisting of all voting members of the STCC.



Section (vi)

The Board shall meet at least four times a year to review the growth and the activities of the STCC. A simple majority of the Board shall constitute quorum.

Section (vii)

The Board shall:

- A. Set aside an endowment fund to meet long term goals of the STCC.
- B. Be responsible for major policy decisions for the long-term objectives, activities for current and future programs.
- C. Hold the title to the real estate, funds and capital alternations and improvements.
- D. Provide guidance and assistance in fund raising.
- E. Have power to seek explanation for and veto the budget prepared by the Executive Committee.
- F. Take over the affairs of the STCC in case of the resignation or incapacitation of the Executive Committee members and call a General Body meeting for a new election.
- G. Act in the supervisory capacity to the Executive Committee as necessary.
- H. Have the authority to invest the liquid assets, as they deem fit, consistent with preservation of capital for future needs.
- I. Hire Priest(s) or any other employees, set their remuneration, benefits and increments in consultation with Executive Committee.

Section (viii)

Board of Trustees may authorize any reasonable amount for emergency repairs deemed necessary by the EC.

Section (ix)



The BOT shall appoint the Audit and Nomination/Election Committees, each consisting of three members who are not current members of the Executive Committee or the Board.

A. The Audit committee shall audit the accounts of the STCC annually and present a report at the annual General Body meeting. The Board and the Executive Committee shall from time to time furnish all accounts and explanation to the Audit Committee.

B. The Nomination / Election Committee (NC) shall be responsible for selecting and recommending the candidates for the Board and the Executive Committee and conduct elections, if necessary.

## **Article VII FINANCE**

### Section (i)

No parts of assets or earnings of STCC shall be inure to the personal benefit or distribution to the Trustees or Executive Committee members, except that the Board of Trustees shall have the authority to pay reasonable compensations for services and make payments in furtherance of the objectives set forth in Article III.

### Section (ii)

Control of the assets and business of STCC are vested in the Board. Any member working on behalf of the STCC shall not be held personally liable in the event of any accidental damage, unless a culpable or contributory negligence is established.

### Section (iii)

A. The fiscal year of the STCC shall be from January 1 to December 31.

B. All records, keys, equipment and registers of the STCC shall be brought up-to-date a week before the changeover and kept ready to be handed over to the new Executive Committee at the time of change over. In case of any discrepancies, proper and acceptable written explanation must be provided at the same time or the loss made up instantly by the member(s) of the outgoing committee responsible for the respective area(s).



C. The outgoing Executive Committee (EC) and Board of Trustee must orient the incoming members of EC as soon as possible after their installation at the Annual General Body meeting.

## **Article VIII COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

### Section (i)

The STCC shall be served by a Coordinating Committee. This Coordinating Committee shall meet once a month and shall have full authority to act on behalf of the STCC on all day-to-day activities.

### Section (ii)

The term of office:

Once the Executive Committee is established (soon), the Coordinating Committee will cease to exist.

In view of established BOT in Jan 2015 the interim board ceased to exist.

### Section (iii)

Responsibilities:

Until the Executive Committee is formed, the Coordinating Committee will have the same exact responsibilities as the Executive Committee (as outlined in the following Article IX).

## **Article IX EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)**

### Section (i)

The STCC shall be served by an Executive Committee (EC). The EC shall consist of nine (9) members who will elect / select four officers: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Members of EC may head ad hoc committees.

The EC shall consist of members of linguistic groups from Northern India, Southern India and Gujarat to reflect the diversity of the Indian diaspora in the Charleston area and STCC membership.

Representation from any one such group shall not be more than a third of the EC membership.



BOT may allow a slight deviation from this principle, not to exceed one member. The reason / justification for such exception must be properly recorded in the minutes. The EC shall meet monthly and have full authority to act on behalf of the STCC on all day-to-day activities.

The EC shall review new applications for membership to approve them, in consultation with BOT as needed, and duly include the list in their minutes.

#### Section (ii)

Duties and responsibilities of EC officers:

President shall:

1. Be responsible for the day-to-day management of activities.
2. With the approval of EC develop plans for the coming year and present them to the BOT.
3. Preside over all formal meetings of Executive Committee.
4. Attend all BOT meetings and execute decisions made by BOT.
5. Designate members of the EC to supervise and help in all temple events.

Vice President shall:

1. Help and support the President in performing his/her duties.
2. Execute the duties and responsibilities of the President during his/her absence.

Secretary shall:

1. Schedule and prepare agenda for the meetings of Executive Committee and General Body.
2. Keep minutes of all the formal meetings and share them with the EC and BOT Secretary.
3. Maintain and update the membership list; send reminders for membership renewal.
4. Keep the membership and community informed about the temple activities and events.

Treasurer shall:

1. Keep an account of HUNDI collections.





2. Maintain a record and issue receipts for puja(s) performed in and out of the temple premises.
3. Help the president prepare and present the Annual Report to the General Body.
4. Process all receipts and disbursements.
5. Maintain accounts of STCC.
6. Provide periodic and ad hoc financial reports to EC and BOT Secretary.

Section (iii)

A simple majority of the Executive Committee shall constitute quorum. An affirmative vote of the majority of the members present shall be required to pass a motion.

Section (iv)

The elective term of the Executive Committee shall be for two years. The newly elected Executive Committee shall be presented at the annual General Body meeting.

Section (v)

Should there be any vacancy on the EC at any time during the term, BOT will appoint a replacement after seeking input from STCC membership.

Section (vi)

The EC shall have the administrative duties of the STCC, including routine maintenance and repairs of the property. Any expenditures above the amount budgeted for repairs should be pre-authorized by the Board.

Section (vii)

The Executive Committee members shall attend at least 75% of the meetings and actively participate in majority of activities and celebrations to the best of their abilities. Failure to fulfill these obligations, may lead to removal of the member by the BOT upon request from the EC.

Section (viii)



The EC shall prepare the annual budget and present it to the BOT, by December 31, for review and approval.

Section (ix)

The Executive Committee forms ad hoc committee(s) of STCC members as necessary except for the Audit and Nomination / Election Committees, which are appointed by the BOT.

Section (x)

All fund-raising activities for projects approved by the EC or the BOT shall be performed in collaboration with the BOT.

## **Article X NOMINATION AND ELECTION**

Section (i)

The Nomination / Election Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for the nine (9) members of the EC and three (3) Trustees to replace the outgoing Trustees. The principle of proportional representation as described in Section (ii) under Article (VI) applies in the selection of the slate of candidates.

Section (ii)

A person nominated for the Executive Committee must be a member in good standing for at least two consecutive calendar years. Exception can be made upon approval of the BOT.

Section (iii)

All nominees must provide written consent on the nomination form. The slate of candidates must be submitted to the Secretary of the Board by the Nomination Committee at least a fortnight prior to the date of the election.

Section (iv)

Nomination / Election Committee shall conduct the election, if necessary, and set the date for the Election, by last week of November, to allow results to be presented at the Annual General



Body meeting. A majority of the votes cast shall decide the results of the election.

## **Article XI BYLAWS**

### Section (i)

The Board is authorized to prepare or modify existing Constitution and Bylaws to regulate all affairs of STCC by two-thirds majority.

### Section (ii)

Any changes approved by the BOT should be presented to a duly called General Body meeting for approval. The changes will be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at the General Body meeting.

The Bylaws will not be in contradiction to the constitutional provisions.

### Section (iii)

A. Annual membership contribution for each family will be determined by the Board of Trustees and must be paid in a single installment at any time during the calendar year.

B. Life membership for a family, as determined by the Board of Trustees, should be paid within one calendar year and may be paid in up to three installments clearly designated as life membership dues.

C. These categories may be modified by a two thirds majority vote of the Board of Trustees.

### Section (iv)

A. All voting members in good standing for at least one calendar year shall have the right to vote.

B. All general matters, unless otherwise specified, shall be adopted by a majority vote of the members in good standing present to vote during General Body meetings.



#### Section (v)

- A. The Board shall have the right to call an emergency meeting of the General Body.
  
- B. The Executive Committee shall notify the members at least two weeks in advance of the annual General Body meeting.

#### Section (vi)

- A. The Executive Committee shall decide matters pertaining to the use of facilities by members.
  
- B. The safety and cleanliness of the temple facilities during and immediately after the use of the facilities shall be the responsibility of the person or the group in charge of the activity. Any property damage caused shall be corrected or the appropriate costs paid by the responsible person or group.
  
- C. All requests for the use of the facility should be directed to the Executive Committee in writing and the facilities will be available on first-come first-serve basis.
  
- D. The charges for the facility and Priest services will be recommended by the EC and reviewed by the Board annually or as needed.
  
- E. Facilities shall not be used for anti-social or anti-religious activity including meetings or discussions.

#### Section (vii)

##### Meetings

All meetings of the STCC will be conducted in accordance with the Robert's Rules of Order or similar rules.

- A. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly, BOT shall meet at least quarterly, and the General Body shall meet annually.



B. The order of all business meetings shall be as follows:

- a. Call to order
- b. Prayer
- c. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting
- d. Report of the Treasurer
- e. Unfinished/Old business
- f. New business
- g. Motion to adjourn meeting

Section (viii)

Restrictions regarding Food and Drinks:

No member or other persons shall carry or possess on the Temple premises any food or drink that is not considered suitable for Prasad.

Section (ix)

Any activity that is offensive to the general body and the Executive Committee shall not be permitted on the Temple premises.

## **Article XII AMENDMENTS**

Section (i)

Amendments or modifications to or changes to this Constitution and Bylaws may be proposed by the Executive Committee, or by a petition signed by at least 51% of the STCC members and submitted to the Board for consideration at least 15 days prior to the Board meeting.

Section (ii)

The amendment shall become effective upon ratification by a two-thirds majority of the members present at a General Body Meeting.

## **Article XIII EXPULSION**

Section (i)



Any member, including the Trustees and Executive Committee members can be expelled for purposeful violation of the Constitution or Bylaws of the STCC.

Section (ii)

Any conduct not found to be harmonious to the working of the STCC, or any member who by act or omission publicly refuses to abide by the Constitution or Bylaws shall be subject to expulsion from STCC. Such a person shall be notified of the charges against him/her in writing and may appeal to the BOT for review of his case. The decision of the Board shall be final.

## **Article XIV DISSOLUTION**

In the case of dissolution of the STCC or in the event it shall cease to carry out the objectives set forth in this Constitution and Bylaws, BOT may distribute all assets of STCC to an entity with a similar mission and exempt status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Constitution and Bylaws were approved by the General Body in the Annual General Body meeting held on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017

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