

Houston Durga Bari Society



Inaugurated 2000

<http://durgabari.org/>

সকল সশ্রীতি সংস্কৃতি সংহতি

Constitutional Amendments

Sunday March 27, 2022



Changes in Fund Authorization limits

Rational for change:

Constitution was created almost 20 years ago. The expense limit that was set in the original constitution was never revisited. With the inflation and present economic situation, we need to revisit the expense limits. Project expenses now routinely cross **\$10K** and it is an operational burden to go to CT and GB for approvals. The constitutional amendments are proposing a raise in the approval limits



Section 7.10 - Authority for HDBS Operation and Responsibilities

- **Current Constitution:**

7.10.3 As part of the duties stated above The Board shall be responsible for employing individuals and organizations, as necessary, to operate HDBS activities, and provide maintenance of the complex in general. This shall include the Temple Priest/Priests/Associates and other personal as needed. Any such contract that is less than \$10,000 in cumulative (undiscounted) value will be approved by the Executive board with a majority approval. Any contract that is greater than \$10,000 in cumulative (undiscounted) value must have at least seventy-five per cent (75%) approval of the Executive Board, followed by the Council of Trustees majority approval. The Board President and Vice President or Treasurer followed by the Chairperson of the Council of Trustees shall sign the contract

- **Proposed amendments (highlighted):**

7.10.3 As part of the duties stated above The Board shall be responsible for employing individuals and organizations, as necessary, to operate HDBS activities, and provide maintenance of the complex in general. This shall include the Temple Priest/Priests/Associates and other personal as needed. Any such contract that is less than \$15,000 in cumulative (undiscounted) value will be approved by the Executive board with a majority approval. Any contract that is greater than \$15,000 in cumulative (undiscounted) value must have at least seventy-five per cent (75%) approval of the Executive Board, followed by the Council of Trustees majority approval. The Board President and Vice President or Treasurer followed by the Chairperson of the Council of Trustees shall sign the contract



Section 11.5 Fund Authorization Limits

- **Current Constitution**

11.5.1 For Expenses Included in the Approved Budget: The President of the Executive Board with either the Secretary or Treasurer may authorize and approve discretionary expenses up to \$1,000. The Board may authorize and approve expenses up to \$25,000 by a simple majority, provided the President, Secretary and Treasurer are in agreement. If the latter requirement is not met, then approval of the expenditure will require a 75% mandate from the Board. For expenditures between \$25,001 and \$100,000, a 75% mandate will be required from both the Board and the Council of Trustees. For expenses beyond \$100,000, approvals by 75% votes from the Board, Council and General Body will be required.

11.5.2 For Expenses not Included in the Approved Budget: The Board may authorize and approve expenses up to \$10,000 by a 75% majority of the Board, provided the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer are in agreement. For expenditures between \$10,001 and \$25,000, in addition to an agreement among the President, Secretary and Treasurer, a 75% mandate will be required from both the Board and the Council. Any discretionary expenditure beyond \$25,000 shall be subject to a budget process.

- **Proposed amendments:**

11.5.1 For Expenses Included in the Approved Budget: The President of the Executive Board with either the Secretary or Treasurer may authorize and approve discretionary expenses up to \$1,000. The Board may authorize and approve expenses up to **\$35,000** by a simple majority, provided the President, Secretary and Treasurer are in agreement. If the latter requirement is not met, then approval of the expenditure will require a 75% mandate from the Board. For expenditures between **\$35,001 and \$125,000**, a 75% mandate will be required from both the Board and the Council of Trustees. For expenses beyond **\$125,000**, approvals by 75% votes from the Board, Council and General Body will be required.

11.5.2 For Expenses not Included in the Approved Budget: The Board may authorize and approve expenses up to **\$15,000** by a 75% majority of the Board, provided the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer are in agreement. For expenditures between **\$15,001 and \$35,000**, in addition to an agreement among the President, Secretary and Treasurer, a 75% mandate will be required from both the Board and the Council. Any discretionary expenditure beyond **\$35,000** shall be subject to a budget process



Voting Rights in General Body Meetings

Rational for change for next set of changes: Clearing ambiguity from existing clause.

- **Current Constitution**

4.5.1 All General Body members (individual, and both husband and wife for family membership category) shall have the same privileges, duties, and obligations including eligibility to nominate candidates and vote in an election or on resolutions. They shall have the right to hold office on the Board. However, for family membership, the eligibility to run for an elected office within the Board or Council (if qualified) will be limited to either husband or wife.

- **Proposed amendments:**

4.5.1 All General Body members (individual, and both husband and wife for family membership category) shall have the same privileges, duties, and obligations including eligibility to nominate candidates and vote in an election or on resolutions. **However, general members must renew their membership before they can exercise their privileges for a given year, and latest by March 31st of the given year to be eligible to vote in an election, to nominate a candidate for the election, or vote on resolutions.** They shall have the right to hold office on the Board. However, for family membership, the eligibility to run for an elected office within the Board or Council (if qualified) will be limited to either husband or wife.



Conflict of Interest

- **Current Constitution**

- Section 6.7 Conflict of Interest

- In order to eliminate certain conflicts of interests, Trustees, who are related to any current Executive Board Officers either through blood or marriage or a business partnership, cannot stand in the Council of Trustee officer's election or hold the Council of Trustee Officers position.

- **Proposed amendments:**

- Section 6.7 Conflict of Interest

- In order to eliminate certain conflicts of interests, Trustees, who are related to any current Executive Board **Members** either through blood or marriage or a business partnership, cannot stand in the Council of Trustee officer's election or hold the Council of Trustee Officers position. **Members, who are related to any current Council of Trustee Officers through blood or marriage or a business partnership, cannot hold the Executive Board position, if the overlap of such instance is more than 3 months.**



Membership Dues

- **Current Constitution**

Section 4.13 Membership Renewal

General members must renew their membership every year by March 31, by paying their annual dues. After this date the membership status will become inactive and discontinuous. Inactive members can reinstate their membership by paying their annual dues. Reinstatement shall be effective on the date the membership fee is received by HDBS. Reinstatement shall be effective retroactively to the date the membership was inactive if the annual membership fee is paid within the same calendar year with a late fee as defined in the EP.

Section 4.14 Upgrading of Status

A member who has contributed to HDBS the necessary donation to qualify for upgrading his/her membership category, shall be transferred to the respective upgraded membership category with an immediate effect.

- **Proposed amendments**

Section 4.13 Membership Renewal

General members must renew their membership every year by March 31, by paying their annual dues. After this date the membership status will become inactive and discontinuous. Inactive members can reinstate their membership by paying their annual dues. Reinstatement shall be effective on the date the membership fee is received by HDBS. Reinstatement shall be effective retroactively to the date the membership was inactive if the annual membership fee is paid within the same calendar year with a late fee as defined in the EP. **Individual Membership dues shall be paid by the individual taking the membership or by either of the spouses in case of Family Membership. In case, anyone else paying on behalf of the Individual or family taking the membership, should submit a written and signed consent letter to the board from the Individual or Family taking membership. The member on whose behalf the payment is made should inform EB within 30 days if they disapprove.**

Section 4.14 Upgrading of Status

A member who has contributed to HDBS the necessary donation to qualify for upgrading his/her membership category, shall be transferred to the respective upgraded membership category with an immediate effect. **Donations must be paid by the individual or either of the spouses getting the donation benefits. In case, anyone else paying the donation on behalf of a member who will get the donation benefits should submit a written and signed consent letter from that Individual or Family to the board. The person on whose behalf the payment is made should inform EB within 30 days if they disapprove.**



Responsibilities of Core Committees

- **Current Constitution**

Section 8.1 Core Committees

The Executive Board will appoint, within thirty days of assuming office after the election, a set of core Working Committees to accomplish its tasks. The composition of working committees including the names of Chairpersons should be announced and published in the Executive Publication and/or on the HDBS website.

- **Proposed Amendment:**

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The Executive Board will appoint, within thirty days of assuming office after the election, a set of core Working Committees to accomplish its tasks. The composition of working committees including the names of Chairpersons should be announced and published in the Executive Publication and/or on the HDBS website. **Each contract pertaining to any HDBS activities shall be signed by one of the Executive Board Signatories.**



Responsibilities of Core Committees

- **Current Constitution**

Section 8.9 HDBS Puja Committee

It shall be responsible for organizing and conducting the annual Durga Puja, Kali Puja and Saraswati Puja at the HDBS complex in coordination with the Religious Activity Committee, Rental Committee and Cultural Committee. Activities of this committee include informing all community members about Puja schedules, recommending the subscription amounts to the Board and public, developing Puja magazine, collecting advertisements for Puja magazine, arranging food services, collecting and keeping a record of subscriptions, issuing identification tags, arranging for cleaning the complex, coordinating cultural programs jointly with the Cultural Committee, maintaining a list of attendees, and submitting an expense record to the HDBS Treasurer.

- **Proposed Amendment:**

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