

# **HINDU SOCIETY OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA**

## **BYLAWS**

HSNEF – Effective from Sep 10, 2023  
4968 GREENLAND RD, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32258

# **HINDU SOCIETY OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA, INC.**

## **BY-LAWS**

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# **HINDU SOCIETY OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA, INC.**

(A Florida non-profit Corporation)

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### ***MEMBERSHIP***

##### **Section 1: Qualifications:**

Membership in the HINDU SOCIETY OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA, INC. (“HSNEF”) is open to any individual of Hindu heritage or anyone having an interest in and believing in the Hindu religion, tradition and philosophy. To be eligible for membership the individual must be 18 years or older. An individual can become a member by submitting the HSNEF membership form that is filled in with full name, mailing address, email, telephone number and any other contact information as determined by the Executive Board. Married couples may apply for single membership. Other than spouse, no two members of the family are eligible for a single membership. All members shall adhere to the Constitution of HSNEF, to these By-laws, to the rules and regulations of HSNEF hereafter lawfully adopted and remains current in the payment of dues.

##### **Section 2: Official Language:**

The official language of the HSNEF is English.

##### **Section 3: Types of Membership:**

The types of membership include Members and Life members. Members are individuals who have paid their dues. First time members are those who were not members in the preceding year. Life members are those who have made donations at a level as determined by the Board. For participation in any membership restricted activity, dues must be current. The membership status will be as per HSNEF record unless the congregant submits additional proof to support his/her claim within 10 days. In case of a dispute the matter will be referred to the Nominating Committee or in its absence the Advisory Committee which will make the final determination within 7 days and this decision will be final.

##### **Section 4: Voting:**

Membership entitles married couples to one (1) vote for each spouse. Unmarried members will have only one vote. In order to participate in the election-process a member must pay his/her dues by April 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year.

##### **Section 5: Use of the Temple:**

The use of the Temple will be open to any individual of Hindu heritage or anyone having interest and believing in the Hindu tradition without regard to membership status. Non-members may attend Temple functions, but otherwise have no rights or privileges available to Members. At the Executive Board’s (Board) discretion non-members may be assessed a fee to attend non-worship

HSNEF activities. The Board may restrict Non-Member's non-worship related activities. Non-members will be assessed a higher fee than members for worship and other temple services/activities.

### **Section 6: Overriding the Executive Board:**

Any decision made by the Executive Board ("Board") may be overridden by the vote of a simple majority of Members attending a duly called general body meeting in which a quorum of 40% of the membership is established; provided, however, that the Board may reinstitute its action if 75% of the total Board vote in favor of such; but provided, further, that any action so reinstituted may itself be overridden by the simple majority vote of Members attending a general body meeting in which a quorum of 50% of the membership is established, and if so overridden will then become final and binding upon HSNEF. Where these minimum requirements for a quorum are not established, no vote will be taken and the Board's decision will stand. The quorum for voting in regards to the constitution and/or by-laws is described in Article XI Section 5.

### **Section 7: Calling a General Body Meeting:**

Ten (10%) of the membership may petition the Board for a general body meeting with a specific agenda. Once petitioned, the Board must call a general body meeting within 4 weeks.

### **Section 8: Membership Privileges:**

HSNEF may at times decide to give the membership certain benefits. These benefits may include but not limited to reduced charges for rituals, rent to use the temple facility and others as determined by the Board. Qualified members can vote, grant proxy, contest elections and petition the board as stated in these by-laws. Any member may attend an open Board meeting provided that he/she shall not participate in the proceedings unless specifically permitted by the meeting Chairperson. Rights and privileges of membership may be suspended or revoked by the Board for any reason as determined by the Board. A vote in favor of termination or suspension of membership rights and privileges must be made by at least a 75% majority of the Board's total members. The Board may review the revoked member's status after 12 months. A vote to reinstate a member must be made by 75% of the Board's total members.

### **Section 9: Member's duty:**

Members agree to abide by this constitution and by-laws, and make reasonable effort to participate in the governance of HSNEF. They will keep contact information like e mail addresses, postal addresses and phone numbers current, participate in election process and keep decorum in worship room.

### **Section 10: Membership Information Release/Privacy Protection:**

A) Only a membership list and addresses may be provided to members for relevant requests, as determined by the Directors of the Board, in order to satisfy the rights and duties of members under these by-laws. HSNEF Secretary will control access to email groups for circulation of information without making email addresses public.

B) A third party (non-member) may also request membership or other information as allowed by

law governing Non-Profit Corporations. Such requests will need to be in writing and specify details about the requesting entity, the purpose for requesting the information and a signed assurance that the information is only for the use of the requesting entity and will only be used for the purpose stated. The Directors of the Board will assess the relevance of these requests and approve its release if deemed appropriate. HSNEF may impose a fee for compiling this information.

C) Member details will not be shared with or sold to any entity for any commercial or marketing purposes.

### **Section 11: Membership renewal**

HSNEF shall send a notification to the congregation between December 15th and January 31st each year to the last mailing or email address on record as a reminder for membership renewal and to update appropriate demographic and contact information.

## **ARTICLE II**

### ***DUES***

**Section 1:** Membership dues will be in an amount to be determined by the Board from time to time. All Members must pay annual dues except the Life Members as discussed Article III. HSNEF fiscal year will be from January 1 through December 31. Dues for the current year are due and payable by April 30th of that year. If dues remain unpaid, the rights and privileges of Membership will be suspended or terminated. There will be no prorated membership dues. All membership dues are non-refundable, non-transferable and the membership is non-transferable.

**Section 2:** Dues paid on or after October 1<sup>st</sup> shall be eligible to be applied to the following year's membership dues.

## **ARTICLE III**

### ***DONATIONS***

**Section 1: Levels of Donations:** Various levels of donations will be recognized as follows:

A. Grand Founder: Donations of \$10,000.00 and above received by Jan 1, 1995.

B. Founder: Donations of \$5,000.00 to \$9,999.99 received by January 1, 1995.

C. Copper Benefactor: \$5,000 to \$9,999.99.

D. Bronze Benefactor: \$10,000 to 24,999.99

E Silver Benefactor: \$25,000 to \$49,999.99

F. Gold Benefactor: \$50,000 to \$99,999.99

G. Diamond Benefactor: \$100,000 to \$249,999.99

H. Platinum Benefactor: \$250,000.00 and above.

The Board may propose changes in the level of donations for established categories of Membership, including Life Members categories as a change to the by-laws, but such changes will not take effect until after approval. The Board may establish additional donor categories and/or payment schedule for donation and/or Life Membership without a lag period provided, however, that the status of members in existing categories should not be changed.

## **Section 2: Donations Refundable/Non-Refundable:**

All donations, once made, become the property of HSNEF and are non-refundable and/or non-returnable. HSNEF may auction, sell, utilize or manage any donated items or property as it deems fit, at its sole discretion.

The Board at its sole discretion may initiate project specific donations. If the specific project is not initiated in three years the Board must notify the donor of this decision and the donor may receive a refund of the prorated portion of the unspent amount, if he/she so chooses . If any funds remain after the completion of the specific project, those funds will be utilized by the board at its discretion.

## **Section 3: Life Members:**

1)Life Membership threshold shall be \$7000 starting Jan 1, 2024, increasing by \$1000 on each successive January 1<sup>st</sup> until \$10,000. Effective Jan 1, 2027, the contributors listed in Article III, Section 1, D through H shall be “Life Members.”

2)Life Members will be appropriately recognized (upon donor approval) under each category to be posted in HSNEF facilities. The Board may further determine the manner in which various categories will be recognized.

3)Life Members are eligible to serve on the Board as provided in the Bylaws herein. Life Members will be granted life membership in HSNEF and will not be required to pay annual membership dues.

4)Consistent with the Board’s discretion to set contribution levels, the definition of Life Members may be altered by the Board as a change in the by-laws; provided, however, that no such alteration will remove an existing Donor from his/her original category or alter the status of any sitting Director.

5)Life Member contributions are non-refundable.

6)Any change in membership status from general membership to Life Membership will take effect immediately with the following exception: In terms of the elections any member nominated for a



Board seat will have his/her membership status for the election determined by its status as of July 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

#### **Section 4: Categorizing Contributions**

- A) The Board shall set clear policy of what contributions from members will be applied toward General Donation to be counted toward Life Membership and various categories within Life Membership, particularly if the contributor has received something in return for the contribution. The policy will be publicized via the email, uploaded on the website & reviewed and updated as necessary annually by July 1st of each year.
- B) Donors shall be given the option to treat their donation to be anonymous or not anonymous. Donor's wish shall be duly recorded and processes instituted to ensure compliance.

#### **Section 5: Donor Acknowledgement**

To prevent fragmentation, and for streamlining, aesthetic & other reasons multiple donor acknowledgement boards shall not be allowed in the Temple. All donors shall be acknowledged in the central area assigned for this purpose per donor categories defined in the bylaws, based upon cumulative level of donation. Donors may be acknowledged by letter/e-mail from the Chair &/or Treasurer, in HSNEF newsletter, at the annual gala, with a personal phone call from an EB member or by other means as appropriate, as determined by the Executive Board.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### ***OFFICE AND STAFFING***

- 1) HSNEF will maintain its offices at the Temple located at 4968 Greenland Road; Jacksonville, Florida 32258. In case of a change, the Board will notify the membership.
- 2) The HSNEF Board will arrange staffing of the office as necessary to carry out its functions, the expenses for which will be borne by HSNEF.
- 3) HSNEF shall not engage in any activity attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise, or directly or indirectly participate in, or intervene in any political campaign for public office, or in favor of or in opposition to any political party or ideology.

## ARTICLE V

### *ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE*

#### **Section 1: HSNEF Executive Board:**

Except under circumstances as otherwise noted herein, the HSNEF Executive Board (“Board”) shall consist of twelve (12) Directors, each of whom is entitled to one (1) vote within Board meetings. The Board may consist of less than twelve (12) Directors yet still perform the functions of the Board.

#### **Section 2: Duties of the Board:**

1. The Board is ultimately responsible to determine HSNEF strategic vision and ensure that its fiduciary responsibilities to the Membership are carried out. The Board is also responsible for oversight of the day-to-day operations of HSNEF through its Directors. The Board will carry out the following specific duties, together with such other duties as may be inferred from or specified in the Constitution of the Society, these By-laws, or applicable law.

2)The Board will assure that all of its members and working committee members are familiar with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Hindu Society of Northeast Florida.

3)These duties below are not intended to be all-inclusive.

a. Manage Financial, Real and Personal Property Matters:

b. The real and personal property of the Society may be conveyed or encumbered only in writing signed by the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson of the Board, where at least 75% of the Board members must vote in favor of the decision.

c.The Board will be in charge of financial planning and control for HSNEF and will act as a “watchdog” to see that the resources of HSNEF are spent in accordance with the approved budget.

d. Financial report will be part of every Board Meeting agenda, except any specially called meeting for non-financial related matter. The submitted report will be discussed at every meeting.

e. Approved reports will be signed in person or electronically by at least three Board members present and should become part of the minutes.

f. The Board may authorize any of its Directors or agents of HSNEF, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of or on behalf of HSNEF, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Any contract exceeding \$5,000.00 per occurrence or in totality per fiscal year, or such other limit as may from time to time be imposed by the Board, must be approved by the majority of the Board. Any contract exceeding \$10,000 must be approved by 75% of the total Board .

g. No project over \$5,000 can be approved without written report from the finance committee, showing availability of funds for the said project. All projects should be budgeted and funds for the projects should be earmarked. All ongoing projects must be reauthorized by the incoming board by its second meeting.

h. All dakshina & bonuses on behalf of HSNEF to worship or administrative staff should be approved by the Executive Board in advance.

I. All checks, drafts or other orders of payment of monies, notes, or evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of HSNEF, will be signed by the Treasurer and/or such officers or agents of HSNEF and in such manner as maybe from time to time determined by the Board. Any disbursements of \$5,000.00 or more will be countersigned by the Treasurer and the Chairperson, or in the absence of the Chairperson, by the Vice-Chair of the Board.

j. Shall establish & approve policy & document for rental of HENEF facilities, to be modified and updated, as necessary. The Secretary shall be responsible to coordinate the rental and use of the Temple facilities. (Article VI, Sec 4, C 12)

4)The Board will follow provisions related to minutes specified under Article X, Section 1-E

5)Decisions of the Board will be reached by a simple majority vote of the Directors, except where a larger majority is required by these By-laws.

6) The Secretary or the Secretary's designee is responsible for keeping documented minutes of Board meetings as described in Article X Section 1- E

7) The incoming Board shall,

a. Appoint Chairs of all Standing Committees (Article VII) prior to the Transitional Meeting no later than December 15<sup>th</sup> of the year (Article X, Section 3)

b Latest by its second meeting of its term:

i. Review and approve annual budget for HSNEF submitted by the Finance and Audit Committee (Article VII, d).

ii. Review and reauthorize, if appropriate, all ongoing projects of the Society. (Article V, Section 3 A).

8). The Board will ensure that all local, state and federal statutes are followed including building and fire marshal codes, labor laws and assignment of fair market value for securities or goods provided and issuing of donation receipts as stipulated by the internal revenue service.

### **Section 3: Term And Tenure**

a) Term of Annual Membership, each Executive Board, Advisory Council and Standing Committees shall be 1 (one) year, beginning from Makar Sankranti day to the following Makar Sankranti day.

b) The tenure of the members of the Executive Board and Advisory Council shall be 3 (three) years as defined elsewhere in these bylaws. (Article VI, Sec 1, # 2; Article VIII. Sec 5; Article X, Sec 1 E, F)

**Section 4: Organizational Chart:** Refer to Appendix 7.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### ***OFFICERS OF THE BOARD***

#### **Section 1: OFFICERS:**

1)The officers of the Board Shall consist of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer which will be elected by the continuing and incoming Board members.

2)These positions are not sequential and the Executive Board will elect the member best suited for each of these positions from among the Executive Board members each year. The vote shall be by secret ballot in case of contested positions.

3)The Board may appoint additional Officer(s) for the current year with a 75% affirmative vote by the directors.

4)The decisions of the Officers of the Board will be reached by majority vote; each officer being entitled to one (1) vote.

5)The Chairperson of any/all meetings may cast an additional vote to break a tie.

#### **Section 2: RELIEVING AN OFFICER OR COMMITTEE CHAIR FROM THEIR POSITION**

1)The Board may relieve any officer or committee chair of his/her duty with an affirmative vote of 75% Board members.

2)The officer or Committee Chair in question may remain as a board member or may be removed (Article IX, section 5, A).

#### **Section 3: ELECTION/SELECTION OF OFFICERS:** (Please refer to Article IX Section 4)

## **Section 4: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS:**

### **A. The Chairperson shall:**

- 1) Serve as the Chief Executive officer of HSNEF, shall be responsible for general and active management of the affairs of HSNEF subject to the directions from the Board. He/she shall perform all duties incident to the office of the Chairperson and such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.
- 2) Preside at all meetings of the members of HSNEF and of the officers of the board and ensure that all of the directors are current with membership dues.
- 3) With the input and approval of the incoming Board, the incoming Board Chair will appoint Chairs of Standing & Ad Hoc Committees, and members to serve on these committees. The individual Committee Chairs may add additional members to serve on their respective committees, provided these additions are approved by the incoming Board Chair & the Board is kept informed. The Board may rescind any such appointment at any time.
- 4) Make such appointments as required or authorized by the Bylaws and by the Board.
- 5) Have an option to be a member of all or any committees.
- 6) Ensure that those that are engaged in fiscal transactions are bonded. This must include but is not limited to the Treasurer.
- 7) Subject to limitations contained in Article V Section 2 A, sign and bind HSNEF to contracts or other instruments except in cases where the signing and execution thereof is expressly herein delegated by the Board to some other agent or HSNEF.
- 8) Define and coordinate the responsibilities of all officers and employees of HSNEF, except as otherwise defined in these Bylaws.
- 9) Ensure that every incoming Board member signs a document during the transition period that he/she has read the Constitution and Bylaws and HSNEF relevant operational manual(s). No board member shall serve in an official capacity until he/she has signed this document, and agrees to abide by these documents as intended. (Refer to Appendix 8)
- 10) In case of lack of consensus within the Officers of the Board, the Chair of the Board will have the ultimate authority whether to approve all communications on behalf of the HSNEF, whether to an individual, other groups or the congregation that impact HSNEF goodwill and policy.

### **B. The Vice-Chairperson shall:**

- 1) Have the express responsibility to serve as an ombudsman to ensure that the Board follows the

stipulated bylaws in all its work, transactions and dealings. Any concern and non-compliance must be brought-up at the immediate next board meeting, discussed and the discussion should be duly noted in the minutes.

2) Assist the Chairperson in the executive functions as assigned by the Chairperson of the Board, and fulfill his or her duties in the Chairperson's absence, or as needed.

3) Serve as the Chair of the Communications Committee of HSNEF, and serve on the Human Resources Committee, and Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

4) Manage day to day operations of the administrative staff, including Temple Manager.

### **C. The Secretary of HSNEF shall:**

1) Issue an agenda which must be approved by the Chairperson of the Board.

2) Keep attendance record, and minutes of all regular and special meetings of the members, of the Officers of the Board, and the Board.

3) Submit the minutes to those entities and within such time frame as stipulated elsewhere in these bylaws.

4) Have the custody and keep up to date all insurance and vendor contracts of HSNEF and fidelity and performance bonds as required by the Board or these bylaws.

5) Keep a copy of all official correspondence from and to HSNEF, including newsletters and program brochures for the activities of the Society and reports submitted by the Committees' Chairpersons.

6) Notify Committee Members of their appointment and their assigned duties.

7) Have the custody of and maintain all records of HSNEF except financial records and ensure that all books, reports, statements, certificates, contracts and other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.

8) Perform such duties as may be assigned by the Chairperson or the Board.

9) Keep the originals of important documents such as the constitution and by-laws of the society and the operational manual as approved by the Board in a fire proof safe on the premises. The key will be kept by the Secretary and the Chairperson of the society. Electronic copies of these documents will also be kept. The Secretary will be responsible for making the appropriate approved changes to these documents when and if they occur.

10) Required to keep soft copies of approved minutes on the society's website and in the society's office for members' perusal and for permanent storage.

- 11) Transfer all records of the Society at the end of a term to the incoming Secretary.
- 12) Coordinate the rental and use of the Temple.
- 13) Maintain roster of current members, both Life Members & Regular annual dues paying members, with information as specified in article 1, Section 1.
- 14) Serve as HSNEF Archivist (Historian) by collecting and keeping record of milestone events.

#### **D. The Treasurer**

Unless otherwise directed by the Board, the Treasurer will be the primary fiscal officer of HSNEF. The Treasurer shall:

- 1) Be responsible for issuing notices and for the collection of all dues.
- 2) Be responsible for all deposits for HSNEF in such banks or trust companies as the Board may designate, and shall be in charge of all accounts of HSNEF.
- 3) Maintain an updated list of all dues paid Members of HSNEF and shall provide for identification of members who are eligible to vote in elections.
- 4) Have custody of and shall maintain all HSNEF financial records, including but not limited to all bank and investment accounts, receipts and disbursements, all of which will be open at all reasonable times to inspection by the members of the Board and the Finance committee
- 5) Submit an annual financial report to the Members at the annual meeting and reports at regularly scheduled Board meetings as specified in Article V Section 2A.
- 6) Be bonded with such surety and in such amount as the Board may designate.
- 7) Perform such other duties and exercise such other powers and duties incident to the office of Treasurer and as may be assigned by the Chairperson or as required by law.
- 8) Transfer to the next Treasurer, within fifteen (15) days of the assumption of office by the latter, all accounts of HSNEF. Until the transfer of accounts takes place, the previous year's treasurer will continue to serve in his/her role as appropriate for the functioning of HSNEF.
- 9) File all tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service for the year in which the offices were held. File the required state and county papers in regards to nonprofit status and carry out other statutory fiscal responsibilities as required.
- 10) Chair the finance and audit committee.

11) In the first meeting of the year, the treasurer shall verify and report, whether all EB members are paid members for the current year.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### ***STANDING COMMITTEES***

#### **List of Standing Committees:**

1)The Board will appoint Standing Committees latest by its second meeting to address critical issues or matters facing the HSNEF, including but not limited to: a) Constitution and By-Laws Committee; b) Worship Committee; c) Building and Maintenance Committee; d) Finance and Audit Committee; e) Special Events Committee; f) Nominations Committee; g)Children and Youth Committee; h) Senior Welfare Committee ; i) Communications Committee; j) Safety and Security Committee; k) Human Resources Committee; l) Membership and Donor Relations Committee; and m) Community Emergency and Hardship Assistance Fund Management Committee.

2)The Board will appoint the chairperson of each committee, of which the worship, communications and finance/audit committees will be chaired by a Board member. The other standing committees may be chaired by non-Board members.

3)The Chair of such committee will appoint the remaining committee members to be representative of the diversity of the community to the extent possible and this shall be approved by the Board.

4)Each standing committee will contain at least one Board member unless otherwise specified.

5)A list of all members of the Standing Committees will be forwarded to the Advisory Council.

6)Standing committees shall be charged with certain tasks or responsibilities by the Board and may be provided with a timeline by which to complete committee business.

7)At all times, the Board has the discretion to accept in whole or in part, reject in whole or in part, or modify in whole or in part any recommendations made to the Board by a standing committee, with the exception of the recommendations of the nominating committee.

8)The Chairs of all standing and ad-hoc Committees of HSNEF will keep minutes of their meetings and copies will be sent to the Secretary of the Board as well as Coordinator of the Advisory Council within two weeks of the meeting.

9)The Chair of each standing committee will create, maintain and update a copy of an operational



manual which will be transferred to the new chair during the transition.

**A) Constitution and By-laws Committee:**

- 1)The Board will appoint a Constitution and By-laws Committee of at least five (5) Members, as long as the total number of members is an odd number, and will appoint a Chairperson.
- 2)This committee should be constituted by members with an express interest in this subject matter, with both senior & younger members recruited from members-at-large. The Chair of this committee should be experienced & knowledgeable about the bylaws, and best suited for the task.
- 3)The Vice Chairman of the Executive Board will serve on this committee and the Advisory Council will appoint one of its current members.
- 4)Reasonable rotations on & off this committee are important, but in general, the Chair & Committee members need not change from year to year to ensure continuity of purpose & function. A term on this committee, in general, should not exceed three years. A member may be reappointed after sitting out for one year .
- 5) The Committee will make recommendations to the Board for changes to the Constitution and By-laws as per article XI.
- 6)The Chair of the By-laws Committee or designee shall give an appropriate orientation of the constitution & bylaws of HSNEF to the incoming Executive Board Members at the transition meeting. (Article X, Sec 3: Transitional Meeting)

**B) Worship Committee:**

- 1)The Board will appoint at least 3 members to the Worship Committee.
- 2)The Advisory Council will appoint one of its current members to serve on this committee.
- 3)This Committee will be chaired by a Board member and will be responsible for organizing and conducting all worship related activities. The committee will also be responsible for supervision of the priest(s).
- 4)The Chair of the worship committee will be the custodian of all worship related property of the society and shall keep an inventory of this property in June and December of each year in coordination with Finance and Audit Committee unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Board.
- 5)This committee will create and maintain a Worship Manual for HSNEF that shall be approved by the Executive Board. Any changes made thereafter shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Board before they can be adopted for implementation.

### **C) Facilities Maintenance Committee:**

The Board will appoint a Facilities and Maintenance Committee of at least three (3) Members. The Committee will be responsible for all aspects of service, maintenance and repair of HSNEF buildings and grounds, including but not limited to custodial, yard, retention pool, fountain, pest control, tree-trimming services; HVAC, security-alarm systems including cameras; roofing & gutters, plumbing etc.

### **D) Finance and Audit Committee:**

1)The Board will appoint a Finance Committee of at least five (5) Members, two (2) of which are the Chairperson and Treasurer of the Society. The Advisory Council will appoint one of its current members to serve on this committee. The Treasurer will serve as the Chairperson of this committee. At least two (2) members of the committee shall be non-Board members.

2)The committee will oversee and keep audit of all income, expenses, bank accounts, deposits, withdrawals, Hundi, property deeds, inventory of temple assets and society insurance policies.

3)This committee is responsible for creating an annual budget for HSNEF to be submitted to the Board by March 1<sup>st</sup> of current year.

4)The committee is to review all financial matters with appropriate recommendations to the Board.

5)The Finance and Audit committee will also keep account of the ornaments of HSNEF on a semi-annual basis in June and December of each year unless specifically authorized by the board.

6)This committee will create and maintain a Finance and Audit Manual for HSNEF that shall be approved by the Executive Board. Any changes made thereafter shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Board before they can be adopted for implementation

### **E) Special Event Committee:**

This committee will be composed of at least three members. The special events committee will be responsible for organizing and conducting events other than those related to worship. The committee would be responsible for scheduling classes, discourses and other educational activities in the classrooms.

### **F) The Nominations Committee:**

1)This committee will be composed of one member from the Advisory Council who will be the Chairperson of this committee; the outgoing members of the Board who are completing their full or designated terms at the end of the current year; and two (2) to four (4) members-at-large taking into account the diversity of the community to the extent feasible. The Chairperson may cast the tie-breaking vote.

2)The Nominations Committee is charged with the responsibility of scouting, interviewing and identifying candidates for open positions on the Board, and candidates for the Executive officers.

3)The Committee should be sensitive to and attempt adequate gender & geographic representation of our broad-based congregation, to the best extent possible.

4)The Nominations Committee will also conduct the election process as specified in Article IX . The Nominations Committee must obtain written confirmation from the identified candidates who agree to run for the open positions. Any member may place his or her own name in nomination by written notice to the Nominating Committee as well.

5)The nominations committee will ensure that the nominee is familiar with the responsibilities of the position and bylaws.

6)Any member running for an elected position cannot sit on the nominations committee.

7)This Committee will also conduct the election process for Officers of the Board as specified in Article IX, Section 4.

#### **G) Children, Youth and Young Adult Committee:**

The Board will appoint a member to chair the committee. The committee chairperson may appoint additional members as appropriate. The responsibility of the committee will be to improve involvement in society's activities and connectivity to the Hindu culture, philosophy and traditions of children, youth and young adults. This will be done by coordinating educational, social and service-related activities as appropriate for the age groups.

#### **H) Senior Welfare Committee:**

The Board will appoint a member to chair the senior committee. The chairperson will form the committee with other members and carry out its senior related activities while informing the board of its functions.

#### **I) Communications Committee:**

1)Will be constituted by at least three members. The Vice-Chairperson of the Board will chair the communications committee.

2) a. This committee will be responsible for all of the aspects of general communications on behalf of the society. It will be responsible for communication via the internet, print and other means. This committee will be responsible for HSNEF website. This committee will also be responsible for any public relations related activities.

b. In case of lack of consensus within the Officers of the Board, the Chair of the Board will have the ultimate authority whether to approve all communications on behalf of the HSNEF, whether to an individual, other groups or the congregation that impact HSNEF goodwill and policy.

3)The Communications Committee will recommend a spokesperson to be approved by the Board at the first meeting, who will speak on behalf of the HSNEF. The spokesperson should be able to articulate, stay calm, give politically correct answers to the media and knowledgeable about

HSNEF operations. All HSNEF media requests must be referred to the spokesperson, who may call upon board members.

4) There is no term limit for this position but the incoming Board has to make a new or re-appoint the current spokesperson every year.

#### **J) Safety and Security Committee:**

The Committee will be composed of at least three members, two (2) of which shall be the Vice Chair of the Executive Board and the Chair of Facilities Maintenance Committee. The Advisory Council shall appoint one of its current members to serve on this Committee which will be responsible to formulate and institute appropriate policies and plans of safety and security measures for HSNEF facilities and for the congregants, get new measures approved by the Board, facilitate implementation, review the policies/plan periodically but not less than once a year, update as necessary, submit a report to the Board not later than July 31st of each year, enhance education and awareness among the congregants, conduct drills as necessary, liaison with local, State and Federal law enforcement bodies and facilitate interaction with the media in case of an adverse event.

#### **K) Human Resources Committee:**

1) This committee will be composed of at least six members including the Executive Board's Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and the Worship Chair.

2) The Advisory Council will appoint one of its current members to serve on this committee.

3) This committee will create and maintain an Employee Manual for HSNEF that shall be approved by the Executive Board. Any changes made thereafter shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Board before they can be adopted for implementation.

4) The HR committee will be responsible for hiring and termination of all HSNEF paid positions subject to Board approval. It will develop/modify job descriptions as well as work schedules for all paid positions, including Temple manager, administrative staff, priests, whether full time or part time.

5) The committee will assist in the Personnel Conflict resolution and would serve as the Grievance Committee for the HSNEF staff.

6) This committee shall be responsible for completing annual evaluations of the temple staff and recommending raises and bonus to the Board. It will also annually review all other benefits including but not limited to insurance, paid leave, cell phone reimbursement etc.

7) The committee shall also be responsible for maintenance and update of personnel files.

#### **L) Membership, Volunteers and Donor Relations Committee:**

1) This committee will be composed of at least 5 members. The Committee will have at least one Board member. The Board will appoint a member to chair the Committee.

2) This committee will be responsible for the development, implementation and follow up of a comprehensive annual plan for maintaining and boosting the HSNEF membership roll and Donor Roster.

3) It will be responsible for donor relations and interactions and to institute programs to cultivate new donors as well as to retain and facilitate higher categories of donations from past donors.

4) This committee shall be responsible to cultivate and engage volunteers, and maintain a ready volunteer roster to be activated, as and when necessary, for specific assistance.

#### **M) Community Emergency and Hardship Assistance Committee (CEHAC):**

1) The Committee will be composed of five members comprised by representation from the Advisory Council, Executive Board & the membership at large. Effort should be made to retain at least two members each year for an additional year to allow for continuity.

2) The committee will manage the administration and disbursements of the emergency funds. It will be responsible to evolve operational guidelines as necessary, which will become final upon approval by the Executive Board.

3) It will be the responsibility of this Committee to solicit funds for this purpose as well as make decisions of whether or not to approve applications as presented to it and how much to approve. Additional details are included in the Article XVIII.

4) This fund must be kept in separate account and fiduciary responsibility is same as any other temple funds.

#### **N) Ad Hoc Committee(s):**

The Board may appoint Ad Hoc committees from time to time as necessary, e.g., **Building and Architecture Committee** to consider, make recommendations and coordinate all matters related to new construction and major renovations, and assist the Board on matters relating to the acquisition, encumbrance, modification or disposition of HSNEF real property.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### ***ADVISORY COUNCIL***

#### **Section 1: Purpose:**

1) An Advisory Council (Council) shall independently serve the Board and the members by providing advice, counsel, feedback, suggestions and recommendations to the Board in order to ensure that HSNEF fiduciary responsibilities and obligations are being met, the constitution and by-laws are being followed and to serve as a watchdog on various HSNEF matters, and to assist on any other matters as called upon by the Board, or the general body.

2)A representative of the Advisory Council members may attend any board meetings, including closed meetings with the full privileges of the Executive Board without the right to vote.

3)Member/s of Advisory Council, filling vacancies in the Board, as per Article V, Section 1 B, will have all the rights as a Board member, including voting.

4)Advisory Council shall schedule & coordinate Transitional Meeting, as detailed in Article X, Section 3.

5)The incoming Advisory Council coordinator shall ensure that access to HSNEF facility keys, security codes, camera views and access to digital documents, per stipulations in effect, are complied with at or within two weeks of the Transition Meeting.

## **Section 2: Non-Binding:**

1)Any such recommendations, advice, counsel, feedback or suggestions developed or reached by the Advisory Council shall not be binding upon the Board (with the exception of otherwise noted in Article XI Interpretation of the constitution and by-laws), which at all times has the final authority except as otherwise noted herein, but the Board shall duly review and strongly consider any such Advisory Council recommendations.

2)The Board's action on the Advisory Council's recommendations in whole or in part, shall be communicated to the members via e-mail or temple's secure website. In the case of rejecting the Advisory Council's recommendations, a statement of rationale supporting the Board's decision will be made.

## **Section 3: Minutes:**

1)A Coordinator or an appointee will keep minutes of all the meeting of The Advisory Council which will reflect deliberations on all topics discussed. These minutes will be made available to all the members of The Advisory Council within two weeks of the meeting. Electronically approved minutes shall be considered provisional. Official minutes of meetings will be considered approved only when three members who attended the subject meeting sign and date the minutes in person.

2)The Minutes of meetings of the Advisory Council may be deemed privileged minutes upon majority vote. Non privileged minutes will be communicated to The Board within two weeks of provisional approval. All privileged minutes of the preceding year will be reviewed by the members of The Advisory Council during the first meeting of the year to determine the eligibility for making it public.

## **Section 4: Staffing:**

1)The Advisory Council must be staffed from a pool consisting of Founders, Benefactors, past elected Executive Committee members, and past Board or Executive Board members who are current members of HSNEF and have been so for five of the preceding eight years.

2)The Advisory Council will be composed of 6 members from the pool of qualified individuals

and they will select their own “Coordinator.”

3)At any time, two members of the Advisory Council may ask that a meeting take place.

4)A Board member shall not serve on the Advisory Council until at least 2 years after last serving on the Board unless he/she was filling the vacancy on the Board for less than one year.

5)No current member of the Board shall have a seat on the Advisory Council

### **Section 5: Term:**

Advisory Council members will serve for a term of three (3) consecutive years. The term of office for the 6 members of the council are staggered such that two members will retire each year and two new members will be appointed to replace them.

After completing a three-year term on the Advisory Council, a member cannot serve on the Council again for a period of one year. If the member has not completed the term of three years, his/her sit out period shall begin at the end of the original term of the vacating member. The member who is filling the vacancy in the mid-term will not have a sit out period if the vacancy is for less than one year.

### **Section 6: Advisory Council’s Role in Filling Executive Board Vacancy:**

In less than 10 calendar days the Executive Board will notify the Advisory Council of the vacancy. The Advisory Council will act as an ad hoc nominating committee, and oversee the election process. The Advisory Council will invite members to nominate candidates to fill the vacancy from the same category. Within 2 weeks the slate of candidates will be forwarded to the Board. The Board will elect by majority vote by way of secret ballot a member to fill the vacancy. Seventy-Five (75%) percent of the remaining Board members are required to vote in order for the election to be valid. The term of the replacing board member will be the duration of the remaining term of the vacating officer.

### **Section 7: Advisory Council Vacancy**

The Advisory Council will elect its own members by majority vote, by way of secret ballot to fill the vacant positions, and will notify the board after the selection. The Coordinator of the Advisory Council may cast an additional vote to break the tie. All the remaining members of the Advisory Council are required to vote in order for the election to be valid. No self-nominations will be invited.

### **Section 8: Removal:**

Any member of The Advisory Council, who has three consecutive non-communicated absences to council meetings will be automatically removed unless, reinstated by a majority of members of The Advisory Council, as long as his/her seat is still vacant. If a Council member communicates his/her three consecutive absences the Council may still have the option of removing the individual by a 2/3 majority secret ballot vote in which all of the remaining Council members vote.

## **Section 9: Communication:**

All communication between the Advisory Council and Board should be in writing and organized by the Coordinator of the Advisory Council.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### ***ELECTION, SELECTION, REMOVAL AND SURVEY***

#### **Section 1: Election Process:**

- A)** 1. Membership entitles married couples to one (1) vote for each spouse. Unmarried members will have only one vote.
2. In order to participate in the election process a member must pay his/her dues by April 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year.
3. The Secretary of the HSNEF shall keep a roster of members eligible to vote at HSNEF office and email this list to all the members by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
4. If the member feels he/she is excluded from this roster he/she should petition the secretary with proof of membership by July 15<sup>th</sup>. The final roster shall be finalized and posted on HSNEF website by August 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.
- B)** Any change in membership status from general membership to Life Membership will take effect immediately with the following exception: In terms of the elections any member nominated for a Board seat will have his/her membership status for the election determined by the status as of July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- C)** 1. There will be open nominations from the members as well as the Nominations Committee from August 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>.
2. Names of candidates meeting the eligibility requirements will be uploaded on HSNEF website within 48 hours of their nomination being confirmed.
3. A member serving on the Nominations Committee shall solicit a HSNEF member to be a candidate for a position to be filled only after establishing a consensus from the Nominations Committee.
4. The Committee will ensure that every candidate signs a Candidate Profile Form and a document that he/she has read HSNEF Constitution and Bylaws and agrees to abide by



these guiding documents as intended and is willing to give the necessary time and effort to fulfill the stated responsibilities and authority if elected. The application for nomination shall be deemed incomplete without these signed documents.

5. On October 20<sup>th</sup> after appropriate confirmation, the final slate of candidates will be announced on HSNEF web site and emailed to the members.

6. If there are more nominated candidates than open slots on the Executive Board, voting will take place in the temple facility on the second Saturday and Sunday of November.

7. The timings for voting will be determined and announced by the Nominations Committee along with the final slate of candidates, except that the voting will conclude at 12 noon on the second Sunday of November. The votes will be counted between 12 noon and 1:00 pm and announced at the Annual General Body meeting to be held the same day starting 1:00 pm.

8. A candidate may be present at the counting of the ballots or designate one representative to do so on his/her behalf. In the event of a tie vote a coin toss will decide the winner.

9. Life members on the Executive Board will be elected by Life Members, in the event that the number of Life Member candidates exceeds the number of seats to be filled. The Nominations Committee will ensure that life members and general members have separate ballots and ballot boxes.

10. The member must provide a government issued identification in order to vote.

11. Members may grant proxy as defined in Article X, Section 2 E or vote in absentia as explained in Section 2, below.

12. The Nomination Form and Candidate Profile Form will be available on the HSNEF website on or before August 1<sup>st</sup>. The Proxy Form, Procedures to Vote in Person, Procedures to Vote by using a Proxy and the election Ballot will be uploaded on the HSNEF website by October 20<sup>th</sup>.

**D) 1.** To be eligible for a Directorship on the Board, a candidate must have been a Member for three (3) of the preceding five (5) years, excluding the year of the election.

2.If no available candidate meets the requirement in any given year the Board may, by a 75% majority of the total Board, waive the requirement for that year only.

**E)** 1.An elected Director must serve a staggered term of 3 consecutive years (“Board term”).

2.If a situation arises in which a position is prematurely vacated, the Board must seek the Advisory Council’s input regarding suggestions for replacement candidate(s).

3.At no time shall there be less than 10 Board members for six months at a time. If this should occur, the Advisory Council will assign one of its members to fill the vacancies on an interim basis until the seats can be filled by the appropriate procedure as outlined in Article VIII, Section 6-A with full rights and privileges of a board member.

**F)** 1.After completing a three-year term on the executive board, a member cannot serve on the board again for a period of one year.

2.If the board member has not completed the term of three years, his/her sit out period shall begin at the end of the original term of the vacating board member.

3.The board member who is filling the vacancy for less than one year will not have a sit out period to be elected for the subsequent full term in the Executive Board or to serve as member of The Advisory Council (Article VIII, Section 3)

**G)** If a Director is terminated from the Board or Council, then he/she will not be eligible to serve on the Board of Directors or Advisory Council for the next 5 years.

**H)** Each year, at least four (4) Directors must be elected.

**I)** 1.Each year the Nominations Committee will nominate 4 new members, of which at least 2 will be Life Members, provided however that every attempt be made to have at least six (6) of the Directors from Life Members.

2.The number of nominations invited from Life member category will be adjusted to help achieve this intent each year, as required. However, if this cannot be achieved with reasonable effort, the seat(s) will be open to all members.

**J)** 1.Only one spouse from each family can serve on the Board at any given time.

2.Spouse of the sitting board member or Advisory Council cannot serve on the Executive Board and vice versa.

**K)** The membership category of a Director is to be defined by that in which he/she came onto the Board irrespective of any change in his/her membership during the tenure. However, the

Director must be current in his/her membership dues.

## **Section 2: Process of Absentee Ballot**

- A) Any eligible member wishing to cast an absentee ballot shall download/obtain a copy of the slate, either for Life members or for General Members, for which the member is eligible to vote.
- B) The member will fill out the ballot per the guidelines stated on the ballot form.
- C) The member will fold the ballot and seal it in an envelope with BALLOT written on top of it. No personal identifier shall be written on the ballot or envelope.
- D) The member will make a legible copy of his/her current government issued photo ID and sign and date it.
- E) The member will take the Ballot envelope (step C above) and the photo ID (step D above) and put them in another envelope and seal it
- F) The envelope must be received by the HSNEF office before 12:00 noon on the annual election day/general body meeting.
- G) The staff person at the HSNEF office shall take and log the envelope received and deposit it in a designated safe box without opening it. The nominating committee will verify membership and separate the envelopes according to membership category such as general and life membership. The ballot boxes will be secured in a safe on the HSNEF premises with access limited to the Nominating Committee Chair or its designee until the ballots are counted.
- H) 1. These envelopes will be opened by at least 3 members of the Nominations Committee in the presence of the representatives of the candidates running for the election, if they so wish, on the day of the general body meeting when votes will be counted.  
  
2. The Nominations Committee members will inspect each envelope to ensure that it has not been tampered with and make a mark on the envelope to indicate life member or general member and drop it in the appropriate box as per the membership category.  
  
3. The outer envelope will then be discarded and the authenticity of the absentee voter verified from the copy of the government issued photo ID.  
  
4. The outer envelope will be separated from the sealed ballot envelope within to guard the privacy of the voter. The ballot envelopes will then be opened and votes tallied.
- I) Any vote from a general member for a seat reserved for a life member will be discarded.

### **Section 3: Voting by Proxy**

- 1.A member may elect to give proxy to another member to vote in HSNEF elections and other general body meetings.
- 2.The member desiring to appoint such a proxy should complete the form available from the Society, either on the web site or in the office, and should attach his/her valid Government issued identification showing clear name, signature and photo.
- 3.The election officer will verify the form, proof of identification and the identification of the member granting proxy. If the proxy form is not accompanied by valid identification of the member granting proxy or the member appointed as proxy does not have his/her identification at the time of voting the member will not be able to vote.
- 4.Any member can act as a proxy for a maximum of two votes.

### **Section 4: Election/Selection of Officers.**

- 1)Immediately after the *annual* general body meeting the Nominations Committee will invite nominations from the incoming Board for the positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer over the next 7 days.
- 2)The Nominations Committee will continue the nomination process and announce the slate of candidates *within 14 days* of the annual general body meeting.
- 3)The Chairperson of the Nominations Committee or designee will call a meeting of the continuing and incoming board members for the purpose of elections for any contested positions *no later than 14 days* after the annual general body meeting.
- 4)The elections for contested positions shall be held by secret ballot and presided by the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee or his/her designee.
- 5)In case of a mid-term vacancy in an Officer's position, the Nominating Committee will invite nominations over the next 3 days and if the position is contested, present the slate immediately after the announced deadline to submit nominations and hold an election of the Board by secret ballot within the following 5 days.
- 5) A Board member may hold only one position of officer at a time.
- 6)The term of each officer will be limited to one year unless re-elected.
- 7) No officer shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

### **Section 5: Removal:**

Any Executive Board Director may be removed as follows:

A. By an affirmative secret ballot vote of 75% of all Directors of the Board, for any reason. Removal ballots must be verified by the Coordinator of the Advisory Council. General membership vote is not required where removal is made by the Board on its own motion.

B. Removal may also be initiated for any reason by a petition for removal which includes the name, address, phone number and affixed by signature by at least ten percent (10%) of the membership for the year at issue. Any such petition must be verified by the Coordinator of the Advisory Council. If verified as meeting the ten (10) percent requirement, HSNEF must notice and hold a meeting of all members, whereby at least thirty (30) percent of the members must be present for a quorum to exist to vote on the petition for removal. Votes for petition for removal must be reviewed and approved by the Coordinator of the Advisory Council.

C. Any board member who has three consecutive non-communicated absences to board meetings will be automatically removed unless reinstated by a majority of board members as long as his/her seat is still vacant. If a board member communicates his/her three consecutive absences the Board may still have the option of removing the individual by a 2/3 majority secret ballot vote in which all of the remaining board members vote.

### **Section 6: Surveys**

Every even year a survey will be conducted of the membership (only) to seek feedback on the Executive Board, Advisory Council, priest(s), office staff and the general functioning of the HSNEF. The results will be kept in the HSNEF office and be available to any member upon request

### **Section 7: Election Forms**

Standard operating procedures for voting in person, forms for voting by proxy and voting absentee can be found in the appendices at the end of the by-laws.

## **ARTICLE X**

### ***MEETINGS***

#### **Section 1: Board and Committee meetings**

A) 1. After the annual election of new Board Directors, the newly elected full Board must meet no later than 15th of December.

2. Thereafter, the Board must meet at least on a monthly basis to conduct its business and such meetings will be noticed via reasonable communication methods with as much advance notice as practical under the circumstances.

3. Duly called meetings should not be cancelled without a valid reason that has been communicated to the entire Board.

4. Committees may meet as necessary to conduct business.

B) 1. The Board meetings may also be called by a minimum of four (4) Directors, or two members of the Advisory Council, or upon the written request of at least 5% of the members. In such cases, notification of the meeting must be given within one week and the meeting will be conducted no later than three weeks after receiving the request.

2. Notice of Board meetings must be documented, containing the starting time, place, agenda, and should be provided via reasonable communication methods to the Directors and members with as much advance notice as practical. The Advisory Council coordinator will be courtesy copied on all Board meeting notices/agenda.

C) Committee meetings may be called by the Chair or Co-chair of the committee with at least one week notice.

D) Emergency meetings of the Board or committees may be called with reasonable communication methods with as much advance notice as practical under the circumstances.

E) 1. The Secretary or the Secretary's designee is responsible for keeping minutes of all the Board meetings. Minutes will reflect deliberations on all topics discussed.

2. The Secretary will have the minutes ready for Board review within 2 weeks of the meeting. Electronically approved minutes shall be considered provisionally approved. Approved minutes of the board meeting, as defined under G below, must be communicated to the membership within 2 weeks of approval.

3. By 75% approval, the Board may designate parts of the Board minutes classified, not to be disclosed to the general body immediately. All classified minutes of the preceding calendar year shall be made available to the members coinciding with the annual general body meeting upon written request by the members.

4. The Coordinator of the Advisory Council must receive all minutes, including provisional, approved and classified, within two weeks of each Board meeting.

5. The Board shall review the minutes of the meeting of the officers of the Board and of all working committees

F) 1. At least fifty percent (50%) presence of the Board or committee members will constitute a quorum for any meeting.

2. Unless otherwise specifically set forth herein, the majority vote of the Directors or committee members present at a meeting in which a quorum is present will be the decision of the Board or committee.

3. A meeting may be adjourned to a later time if a quorum is not achieved within thirty (30)

minutes of the scheduled start of the meeting.

4. While voting on resolutions, in the event of a tie, the Chairperson will cast the additional vote to break the tie.

5. In-person is the preferred meeting modality. The Board may permit any or all Directors of the Board to participate in any meeting of the Board through the use of any means of communication by which all Directors participating may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A Director participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

6. Though the Board of Directors may communicate via e-mail, casting of votes via email is not allowed and shall be deemed not valid, unless however the vote relates to a matter that was discussed at a duly called Board meeting attended by all Directors, the matter to be voted upon via email was specified and agreed to by all Board of Directors and recorded in the minutes to constitute Unanimous Written Consent.

7. In case the requirements of Unanimous Consent are not met, the Board may informally poll its Directors using email and then approve or ratify the decision at its immediate next meeting.

8. The Officers of the Board may make an interim urgent decision which shall be presented to the Board at its immediate next meeting for approval or modification.

G) Official minutes of meetings of the Board, officers of the Board, General Body, Constitution and By-laws, Finance, Building and Architecture, and Nominating Committees will be considered approved only when three members who attended the subject meeting sign and date the minutes in person. If a committee has less than three members, the minutes signed and dated by the Chair of the meeting will be considered as approved.

H) The results of the election for open positions on the Board will be announced at the Annual General Body meeting of HSNEF.

## **Section 2: Advisory Council Meetings**

The Advisory Council shall meet as frequently as it deems necessary to discharge its responsibilities, but at least every two months.

## **Section 3: Members' Meetings**

A) The Annual General Body meeting of HSNEF members will be held on the second Sunday of November at 1pm in the temple premises or such other date, place and time as the Board may announce by written notice given to all members by October 20<sup>th</sup> of each year. In case of extreme circumstances, the Board with 75% affirmative vote of all Board members may postpone the annual general body meeting, provided that it is held no later than the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of November of that year.

B) The notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Membership will be communicated by the Secretary to all members at least fourteen (14) days prior to such meeting to the last address or email address known to HSNEF.

C) Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairperson of the Board, or by ten percent (10%) of the Members.

D) There are no quorum requirements at a meeting of members, except as specifically otherwise provided in the Constitution or these By Laws.

F) The annual and special meetings of HSNEF members are open only to members. The Board may invite non-members as ex-officio to the meeting. The invited guests will be introduced by meeting Chair as provided under Section H below.

G) Conduct and Procedure of Meetings. Meetings of the Board, the Members, and committees will be in accordance with the Robert's Rules of Order, unless such rules conflict with the Constitution or the By Laws of HSNEF. Where Robert's Rules of Order are in conflict with the Constitution or the By Laws of HSNEF, the latter will prevail.

H) Order of Business. The Order of Business in a meeting of the membership will be:

- i). Call to order.
- ii). Introduction of new members.
- iii). Introduction of guests.
- iv). Reading of minutes from previous meeting.
- v). Report from the Board and other committees.
- vi). Report from the Advisory Council
- vii). Correspondence
- viii). Unfinished business.
- ix). New business.
- x). Adjourn.

#### **Section 4: Transition Meeting**

Advisory Council shall schedule & coordinate the Transitional Meeting to be attended by the incoming and outgoing members of the Board, Chairs of Standing and ad hoc Committees, Advisory Council, and invited guests, and will be held on the first Sunday of January, and if this falls on the New Year Day, no later than the immediately following Sunday. This meeting will follow an order of business as follows:

1. Prayer and call to order
2. Introduction of new members of the Executive Board and the Advisory Council, the incoming Officers of the Board, Chairs of Standing and ad hoc Committees, and guests.
3. HSNEF Mission Statement and brief history.
4. Highlights of the Constitution & bylaws, including responsibilities of the Executive Board, Officers of the Board and Advisory Council.



5. Review and transfer of maintenance manual and log, and HSNEF archival documents/ record.
6. The Officers & Committee Chairs of Standing Committees shall create a check-list of items in their purview and review these with the member taking up the corresponding position or responsibility.
7. Scheduling review of financial books and transfer of financial responsibility, bank signature cards, alarm and key codes and inventory of Temple inventory.
8. Scheduling first calendar year meeting of the incoming Executive Board & Advisory Council.
9. New business
10. Adjourn

### **Section 5: Re-introduction of an issue.**

The same subject matter may not be brought to the Board, AC and any of HSNEF meetings of the same body for the subsequent 12 months, provided however that 75% of the members vote in favor of including the matter on the agenda.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### ***AMENDMENTS/INTERPRETATION OF THE BY-LAWS***

**Section 1:** The Constitution and By-laws Committee will review the bylaws or constitution periodically. The Committee will also review or recommend any proposed amendments thereto.

**Section 2:** The Board, the Constitution and By-laws Committee, or 5% of the membership can propose amendments to the bylaws. Any such proposed amendments or revisions shall be forwarded to the bylaws committee, except when the proposals are from the bylaws committee, when in the latter case, they will be forwarded to the Board.

**Section 3:** The Constitution and By-laws Committee will be charged with issuing its recommendations and analysis to the Board and advisory council within 45 days of receipt of the proposal. The Board may consult with the Constitution and By-laws Committee for clarification as necessary. The Board will then be responsible for notification of such recommendations to the entire membership in form of a posted notice in the temple premises, and by U.S. Mail or email within 45 days. The purpose of this distribution is for the review and response of the proposals by the general membership. The general membership will have 15 days from the post-marked date of notification to respond in writing to the Board Chairperson with comments regarding the proposed amendments or give input at the general body meeting called for this purpose. The Board will then forward the communication to the Constitution and By-laws Committee who must give its final recommendation to the board within 30 days of receiving the comments.

**Section 4:** The Board must vote on the final recommendations from the constitution and by-laws committee in its entirety within 45 days. To adopt any amendments to the By-laws, at least 75% of

the Board must vote in favor. Any approved [or decisions on] amendments, if not overridden, would become effective immediately.

**Section 5:** The membership can override the Board's decision regarding amendments by a two-thirds vote of the membership attending a duly called meeting, where at least 50% of members are present for any decisions regarding amendments to the By-laws. Where these minimum requirements for a quorum are not established, no vote will be taken and the Board's decision will stand.

**Section 6:** The Chairperson or designee of the Board and the Chair of the Constitution and By-laws Committee shall separately execute copies of the approved amendments. The Secretary shall retain the originals and copies.

**Section 7 Interpretation:** In case there is a dispute in interpretation of this constitution and by-laws, the matter will be referred to the Advisory Council which may seek additional input and give its opinion within 2 weeks to the Executive Board and this decision will be final.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### ***LIABILITY AND BOND***

**Section 1:** No Member of HSNEF will be personally or otherwise liable for the debts of HSNEF. For any liability or indebtedness, all creditors will look solely to the assets of HSNEF.

**Section 2:** The Chairperson and the Treasurer of the Board will serve with the bond. The Board may bond additional officers, employee or volunteers at its discretion. HSNEF indemnifies and holds harmless and agrees to defend each Director and executive officer from any and all losses, damages, fees, costs, claims, causes of action or other legal, equitable or administrative actions or allegations that arise out of or relate to a Director or officer's work on behalf of HSNEF, unless such loss is occasioned by the fraud or gross negligence of a Director or officer. HSNEF will provide insurance for personal liability to the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### ***CONFLICT RESOLUTION***

**Section 1:** In case of a dispute with regard to the interpretation of the By-laws the Advisory Council will render a final decision after consultation with the Executive Board, Constitution and By-laws Committee and the drafters of the By-laws in question, as necessary. The minutes related to such decision will be declared along with the decision.

**Section 2:**

- 1) Ten (10%) percent of the members can at any time petition the Board in writing that a ballot be sent out to HSNEF current membership on any issue.
- 2) The Board must meet with the petitioners within 30 days of the request and also inform the Advisory Council of this development.
- 3) There will be a stay placed on any action which is the subject of the petition in that the Board will ensure that the condition which prevailed prior to receiving the petition and which is the subject of the petition is maintained until the process of Conflict Resolution as described herein is completed.
- 4) After the meeting with the petitioners, the Board must issue a formal written response to the petitioning group within two weeks with a copy to the Advisory Council.
- 5) If the petitioners remain unsatisfied, they may still request that a ballot be sent out on this issue as long as they still have 15% of the members in favor. The Petitioners must request this in writing to the Board no later than 30 days after the Board's response.
- 5) The ballot must then be sent out no later than 15 days of receiving communication from the petitioners. The last date of receiving the ballots shall not be less than two weeks or more than three weeks following the date the ballots are mailed.
- 6) The Petitioners will be responsible for the wording on the ballot. The petitioners must review the ballot with the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council may add an addendum to the ballot but the wording as per the petitioners must not be changed. The Advisory Council will be responsible for coordinating the mailing and counting of the ballots.
- 7) If the Petitioners do not respond to the Board's response within four weeks, the issue cannot be raised again during the same calendar year.
- 8) If the Board cannot place a stay on the issue in question as provided herein it shall explain the reason in its written response to the petitioners.
- 9) The Petitioners or the Advisory Council may ask to convene a General Body meeting to discuss the issue. This will be convened no later than three weeks of receiving this request.

## ARTICLE XIV

### *CONFLICT OF INTEREST*

#### **Section 1: Executive Board:**

While HSNEF does not want to deprive Board members and Officers (hereinafter together referred to as “Volunteers”) of the opportunity to volunteer services to the community at large, certain guidelines concerning conflicts of interest must be set forth.

No Volunteer for HSNEF shall use his/her position with HSNEF, or the knowledge gained therein, in such a manner that will cause conflict between the best interests of HSNEF and the Volunteer’s personal interests, business interests and direct/indirect interests.

It is also the policy of HSNEF to conduct each and every business transaction with impartiality. Therefore, all Volunteers and members of the Volunteers’ household are prohibited from:

- A) Obtaining remuneration or compensation from any vendor, service provider or supplier of the HSNEF, unless such remuneration or compensation has been first disclosed to the HSNEF Board;
- B) Accepting gifts from any vendor, service provider, or supplier for HSNEF unless such gifts are disclosed to the Board and donated to HSNEF for its use and pleasure;
- C) Directing or guiding HSNEF business to individuals or businesses that the Volunteer or members of the Volunteer’s household are financially affiliated with, or have a personal relationship with, unless such affiliation or relationship has been first disclosed to the Board;
- D) Making or holding any financial investments which are in conflict with the financial interests of HSNEF, or which create the appearance of such a conflict unless the investment is first disclosed to HSNEF Board;
- E) Any Volunteer with a personal conflict of interest shall refrain from any vote or discussion on the issue and excuse himself/herself from the meeting during these discussions; and
- F) Any Executive Board or Advisory Council member is prohibited from serving on any committee of any other religious organization within a 100-mile radius of HSNEF.

The Chairperson may give a waiver only after this conflict of interest is discussed and the waiver is approved by the Board at the immediate next Board meeting.

Volunteers or members who have questions about the application of this policy, or who are uncertain in a particular circumstance, should seek the counsel and guidance of any member of HSNEF Board of Directors.

## **Section 2: Staff members:**

A) Worship Staff: The priests employed by HSNEF will not perform priestly services for or at any of the other temples with or without remuneration. The priests are allowed to visit any temple as devotees and participate in any of the activities but cannot conduct the worship activity or give priestly advice or directions except for the below listed exception.

The priests can perform priestly services at other temples when a formal request is received by the Chairperson of HSNEF Worship Committee and is approved by a majority of the members on the HR committee. In approving this request, the HR committee will take the following into consideration.

- 1) There should not be any activity in our temple on the date requested that requires the services of the priest who has been requested to conduct services at the other temple.
- 2) The request should be for a non-routine service activity that happens infrequently.
- 3) The Priest should be available and willing to participate. HSNEF will receive usual and customary remuneration for such services from the other temples.

### **B) Office Staff:**

1) The Office Staff will not apply for, or accept employment at any of the area temples while employed with HSNEF without the express approval of the HR Committee. The HR Committee will review and decide upon each request on a case-by-case basis.

2) Under no circumstances will the office staff use any of the information available at the HSNEF office including e-mail addresses or other confidential information for personal benefit or for the benefit of any other organization. Such information is the property of HSNEF and cannot be taken or distributed even after the employment relationship ends. Violation of the above policies may result in immediate dismissal or other disciplinary action.

## **ARTICLE XV**

### ***WAIVER OF NOTICE***

Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of any law or under the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution or By-laws of HSNEF, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, will be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. A person may attend a meeting for the limited purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because, in his or her opinion, the meeting is not lawfully called for or convened.

## **ARTICLE XVII**

### ***FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES FOR DECISIONS REGARDING DEITIES & UTSAV MURTIS***

**Section 1:** Considering that it is neither possible nor practical to install innumerable Deities or Utsav Murtis to satisfy current or future wishes of various groups or individuals of our congregation, the following stipulations will be followed to make any changes related to Deities in the HSNEFL Temple or property.

**Section 2:** Currently installed Deities are: Shri Ganesh, Shri Balaji, Shri Shiva-linga, Shri Laxmi-Narayan, Shri Ram Parivar, Shri Radhe- Krishna, Shri Durga and their vahanas and additional Utsav Murthis of these Deities, and Shri Mahavir Swami. Currently installed Utsav, Abhishek and Abishek Murtis are listed in Appendix 11. Stipulations under Article XVII will not impact Deities or Utsav Murtis already installed.

**Section 3:** Any new Deity or Utsav Murti to be installed in the Temple would be one to which Hindus connect and a very broad cross-section of the HSNEF congregation devotionally relates.

**Section 4:** The Board with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote in which the ENTIRE Board votes or 20% of the eligible voters in the membership can propose additional Deities or changes related to Deities through a written request, duly signed by the requesting members with a clear date, name and address. The corresponding threshold for an Utsav Murti shall be 15%.

**Section 5:** Only those who have been members of the HSNEF for the preceding 3 consecutive years will be eligible to petition for additional Deities. The 20% and 15% eligible voters in the membership threshold stipulated in Section 4 above will be based on the total eligible voters in the membership that meet the preceding 2 consecutive years, and current year criteria and not the entire membership (i.e. if the entire membership of HSNEF is 200 memberships but only 100 eligible voters in the membership that meet the preceding 2 consecutive years and current year criteria, then only 20 members' signatures are required to meet the 20% threshold for Deity described in Section 4 above, with the corresponding threshold of 15% for an Utsav Murti.

**Section 6:** A  $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>th</sup> majority vote by the ENTIRE Board will be required to move forward with preliminary analysis of the proposal.

**Section 7:** If so approved, the Executive Board will constitute an Ad-hoc Committee with three representatives from the Executive Board, two from the Advisory Council and one each from the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, the Building and Architecture Committee, the Finance and Audit Committee and the Worship Committee to consider this request.

**Section 8:** This Committee will be charged with analyzing the request and issuing its recommendation to the Board within 45 days of its constitution.

**Section 9:** After taking into consideration the recommendations by this Ad-hoc Committee the Executive Board will vote on the proposal. If this recommendation is approved by  $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>th</sup> majority vote of the ENTIRE Board, the Board will notify such proposal to the entire membership in the form of a posted notice in the temple premise and by U.S. Mail or email within 45 days. The purpose of this distribution is for the review and response of the proposal by the general

membership. The general membership will have 30 days from the date of notification to respond in writing to the Board Chairperson with comments regarding proposed request. The Board will then forward the communications received to Deity Ad-hoc Committee who must give its final recommendation to the board within 30 days of receiving the comments regarding the proposed request.

**Section 10:** The Board must vote on the proposal after reviewing the final recommendation from the Deity Ad-hoc Committee within 45 days. To adopt any change, at least 75% of the ENTIRE Board must vote in favor.

**Section 11:** If so approved at least 60 days before the Annual General Body Meeting (AGM), the proposal shall be included in the election ballot. For the proposal to pass, a special election process will be followed as described in Appendix 5 Section D. If the request is approved with less than 60 days prior to the AGM, it will be included in the following year's AGM election ballot.

**Section 12:** A proposal related to Deity which does not meet with Executive Board approval as stated under Section 10, shall be placed on the ballot if 30% of the eligible voters in the membership submit a written request, and duly signed by the requesting members. The corresponding threshold for an Utsav Murti shall be 20%.

**Section 13:** The membership can override the Board's decision regarding Deity installation if greater than 50% of the eligible voters as described in section 5 vote in favor. The corresponding threshold for an Utsav Murti shall be 30%. Where these minimum requirements for overturning the Board decision are not met, the Board's decision will stand.

**Section 14:** Any Deity, Utsav Murti or item for worship placed in the Temple premises without following the above stipulated procedure will be considered unauthorized and shall be removed with a proper ceremony, if so required.

**Section 16:** The Board can consider installation of a new Deity or Utsav Murti only if there are enough available funds to complete the entire project without loan, notes or any avenue causing debt to HSNEF.

**Section 17:** All the Deities and Utsav Murtis will be managed and cared for by the HSNEF per rules and regulations established by HSNEF.

## **ARTICLE XVIII**

### **SAFEKEEPING OF HSNEF VITAL AND OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS**

1.To properly secure and allow ready access to HSNEF Vital Documents, including but not limited to article of incorporation, 501-3-C certificate, title insurance, termite bond, insurance

policies, including directors and officers (D & O) insurance, loan documents etc., and Operational Documents including but not limited to the Constitution, Bylaws, manuals of standing & ad hoc committees, employee handbook, facility rental agreement, approved policies, previous years' minutes etc. shall be kept on file in the HSNEF office AND on Google Drive or another digital platform as may be approved by the Executive Board.

2. The stored copy shall be the latest version of each document, duly signed and dated.

3. Any revised or new document shall be updated in both these sites within two weeks of such change.

4. All members of the Executive Board, the Advisory Council and the Temple Manager shall have access to the digitally stored documents. The Executive Board may designate additional staff member(s) digital access, at its discretion, with a duly recorded majority vote. Any HSNEF member may review hard copy of any operational document in the Temple office, upon request.

5. The Secretary of HSNEF shall be responsible to upload the documents and administer these tasks, and shall ensure that access to digital documents is updated within two weeks of the beginning of new Executive Board term each January.

## **ARTICLE XIX**

### ***MISCELLANEOUS***

**Section 1:** No policies shall contradict the content or intent of these bylaws which always shall be paramount.

#### **Section 2: Prohibition of Legislative and Political Activities**

HSNEF shall not engage in any activity to attempt to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise, or directly or indirectly participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

**Section 3:** No procession using public roads shall originate, pass-through or end on HSNEF property. However, processions may be allowed within the property, with prior approval of the HSNEF Executive Board or designated individual.

**Section 4:** Addendum Related to Policies: Appendix "P" may be added to the bylaws for policies related to subject matters not included in these bylaws for ease of location and reference. The contents in this appendix will not be integral to the bylaws and may be amended by majority vote by the Executive Board.



## Appendix 1:

### *Proxy*

KNOW ALL BY THESE PRESENTS:

That I, \_\_\_\_\_, under oath do hereby make, constitute and appoint \_\_\_\_\_ to be my true and lawful attorney-in-fact, for me and in my name, place and stead to vote as a member at the general, annual or special meeting of the General Body of the Hindu Society of Northeast Florida, a not-for-profit corporation, scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, and any other meeting of the General Body arising from the rescheduling thereof or the adjournment and reconvening thereof as permitted in the Bylaws of HSNEF, and otherwise to act as my proxy or representative, in respect to the exercise of my voting rights as a member. I understand that a forged signature is a felony.

WITNESS my hand and seal this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, Member

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2:**

**Hindu Society of North East Florida**

**Nomination Form for the position of member of the Advisory Council**

I \_\_\_\_\_ residing at \_\_\_\_\_ am a member of the Hindu Society of North East Florida in good standing for the preceding five years and wish to serve as a member of the Advisory Council of HSNEF.

I here with state that I have read the Constitution and Bylaws of the Hindu Society of North East Florida Inc. and agree to abide by these guiding documents. If elected to serve as a member of the Advisory Council, I am willing to give the necessary time and effort to fulfill the stated responsibilities and authority entrusted to this position to the best of my abilities.

Witness my hand and seal this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_(Member)

I have verified the membership records and certify that Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ is a member of HSNEF for the preceding five years and meets the requirement as per By-laws Article VIII, Section 3 Staffing.

Chairman of the Nominations Committee or designee,  
The Hindu Society of North East Florida Inc.

## **Appendix 3:**

### **Hindu Society of North East Florida**

#### **Nomination Form for the position of member of the Executive Board**

I \_\_\_\_\_ herewith state that I have read the Constitution and Bylaws of the Hindu Society of North East Florida Inc. and agree to abide by these guiding documents. If elected to serve as a Director of the Executive Board, I am willing to give the necessary time and effort to fulfill the stated responsibilities and authority entrusted to this position to the best of my abilities.

Witness my hand and seal this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_(Member)

I have verified the membership records and certify that Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ is a member of the HSNEF for three (3) of the preceding five (5) years and meets the requirement as per By-laws Article IX, Section 1 Election Process item D.

Chairman of the Nominations Committee or designee,  
The Hindu Society of North East Florida Inc.

## Appendix 4:

### *CANDIDATE PROFILE FORM*

Picture (Optional)

Name:

Current or previous service to Hindu Society of North East Florida:

Current or previous service to other Non-Profit organization(s): Yes    No

If yes, please indicate the name(s) of the organization, type and years of service

Have you ever voluntarily resigned, asked to resign or dismissed from any non-profit organization? Yes/No.

If yes, reason(s) for the same:

Work experience:

Your vision and goals for HSNEF? What would “you” do to try to accomplish these?

I attest that the above information is accurate and understand that misrepresentation or knowingly withholding potentially detrimental information that would ordinarily be deemed pertinent to the voters will result in disqualification of candidacy.

---

Signature

---

Date:

## Appendix 5:

### **Standard Operating Procedures for Management of Voting**

#### **A. Standard Operating Procedures for In Person Voting:**

1. HSNEF office will keep ready:
  - a) Current roster of members eligible to vote, both Life & General Members, certified by the Secretary of HSNEF.
  - b) Two well-marked ballot boxes, one for Life Members to cast their ballot and the other for General Members.
2. The Staff/volunteer will:
  - a) Verify the identity of the person by checking a government issued photo-id, and once verified,
  - b) Verify eligibility of the person to vote in the current roster of members eligible to vote.
  - c) Once both these are accomplished the staff will place a check mark against the name on the member on the list, write down type of id checked, and initial the entry.
3. Depending upon the category of the member voting, the staff/volunteer will hand out appropriate ballot, whether for Life Member or General Member.
4. The Member will be given privacy to mark his/her vote.
5. The member will then cast the ballot in the box appropriate the category of membership, in clear view of the staff/volunteer.
6. The ballot boxes shall never be left without direct supervision during the polling period.
7. At the end of the polling period ballot boxes will be secured in a lockable safe/ cupboard with only the Nominations Committee and/or his/her designee having the key or combination to the lock.

#### **B. Standard Operating Procedures for Absentee Ballot Voting:**

1. Nominating Committee will have the complete roster of members eligible to vote at the office and email to members by July 1st of each year
2. Any eligible member wishing to cast an absentee ballot shall download/obtain a copy of the slate, either for Life members or for General Members, for which the member is eligible to vote.
3. The member will fill out the ballot per the guidelines stated on the ballot form.

4. The member will fold the ballot and seal it an envelope with BALLOT written on top of it. No personal identifier shall be written on the ballot or envelope.
5. The member will make a legible copy of his/her current government issued photo ID and sign and date it.
6. The member will take the Ballot envelope (step D above) and the photo ID (step E above) and put them in another envelope and seal it
7. The envelope should be received by the HSNEF office before the annual election day/general body meeting.
8. The HSNEF staff/volunteer at the office shall log the envelope received and deposit it in a designated safe box without opening it.
9. The nominating committee member/designee will verify membership and separate the envelopes according to membership category, whether general or life membership.
10. These envelopes will be opened by at least 3 members of the election committee in the presence of the representatives of the candidates running for the election, if they so wish, on the day of the general body meeting when votes will be counted. The election committee members will inspect each envelope to ensure that it has not been tampered with and make a mark on the envelope to indicate life member or general member and drop it in the appropriate box as per the membership category. The outer envelope will then be discarded and the authenticity of the absentee voter verified from the copy of the government issued photo ID. The outer envelope will be separated from the sealed ballot envelope within to guard the privacy of the voter. The ballot envelopes will then be opened and votes tallied

Any vote from a general member for a seat reserved for a life member will be discarded.

### **C. Standard Operating Procedures for Voting using a Proxy**

The member desiring to grant a proxy should complete the form available from HSNEF, either on the web site or in the office, and must attach a copy of the members valid Government issued identification showing clear name, signature and photo.

#### **1. HSNEF staff/volunteer will:**

- a) Verify the identity of the person acting as a proxy by checking a government issued photo-id, and once verified,
- b) Verify eligibility of the person to vote in the current roster of members eligible to vote.
- c) Once both these are verified the staff will notate against the members name that he/she acted as proxy, write down type of id checked, and initial against the name.

Only members eligible to vote can serve as proxy.

2. HSNEF staff/volunteer will then:

Verify the identity and eligibility of the person granting the proxy by verifying the proxy form and copy of the government issued photo-id, and notate the name of the person acting as proxy against the name of the member who granted the proxy, and initial the entry.

If the proxy form is not accompanied by valid identification of the member granting proxy or the member appointed as proxy does not have his/her identification at the time of voting the member will not be able to vote.

Any member can act as a proxy for a maximum of two votes.

#### **D. Standard Operating Procedures for Deity Ballot Voting:**

1. Executive Board will have the complete roster of members eligible to vote (as defined in Section 5 of Article XVII) and their address verified by July 1st of each year.
2. Deity ballots will be mailed in to all the eligible members' addresses on file at least 60 days before the day the general body meeting by first class mail with envelope stamped with "Do not forward. Return to sender if undelivered, or similar wording as per USPS guidelines. The mailing package will contain
  - a. 1 or 2 ballots, depending on single or family membership, the ballots should have temple seal and signature.
  - b. 1 or 2 ballot envelopes with temple seal, written ballot
  - c. A return envelope marked with from address of the member(s) name and to address of temple with temple seal.
3. The member will fill out the ballot per the guidelines stated on the ballot form.
4. The member will fold the ballot and seal it a Ballot envelope provided in the mail by HSNEF. No personal identifier shall be written on the ballot or envelope.
5. The member will take the Ballot envelope (step 4 above) put it in the return envelope and mail it.
6.
  - a. The envelope should be received by the HSNEF office at least 30 days before the annual election day/general body meeting.
  - b. Envelopes returned as undelivered by the USPS shall be logged and secured in the safe box.
  - c. HSNEF will make the effort to contact the members whose envelopes were returned with all other contact information on file for the member, not limited to e-mail, residence or mobile numbers etc. The attempts made along with the date they were made shall be tabulated.

- d. The envelope containing the Ballot and Return Envelopes will be re-mailed out to the members whose addresses are reestablished, as soon as possible, with instructions that to be valid they must arrive at the HSNEF by a week before the Annual General Body Meeting or Election Day. The day the envelope was re-mailed shall be tabulated against the member's name.
- e. The Advisory Council shall review the procedure followed for the returned envelopes as noted in "b" above and certify that it is satisfied with the efforts made to identify the correct addresses of members. This certification will serve as a precondition to counting the ballots.
7. The HSNEF staff/volunteer at the office shall log the envelope received in the eligible voters list and deposit it in a designated safe box without opening it. Periodically, list of members voted will be updated and made available, for the members to verify any missing envelopes and for election committee to check for quorum requirements
8. On the day of the Annual General Body Meeting or Election Day, members who have not returned the ballot can: a) bring in the ballot that was mailed to them, or b) obtain a new ballot after verification of both identity and non-receipt of ballot (to ensure that duplicate vote is not being cast). Note that ballots received after the start of Annual General Body Meeting are null and void; hence it is the responsibility of the member to ensure that ballots are mailed sufficiently ahead of time and if ballot have not been received by the HSNEF office one week prior to the AGM/Election-day, then to visit the HSNEF office before the beginning of the AGM fill out a ballot. If the election is held separately than AGM, the day before the Election day the ballots should have reached the office. For any reason, if multiple ballots are cast by a member, then all ballots cast by this member will be null and void, but counted for quorum calculations.
9. The nominating committee member/designee will verify membership and no duplicate envelopes. These envelopes will be opened by at least 3 members of the election committee on the day of the general body meeting when votes will be counted. The election committee members will inspect each envelope to ensure that it has not been tampered, no more than one vote per Ballot envelope. The ballot envelopes will then be opened and votes tallied
10. For the election to be valid, greater than 50% of the eligible voters, as described in Section 5, should have voted to establish a quorum and the majority of votes will determine the outcome. The members, whose addresses could not be verified despite adequate efforts, as certified by the Advisory Council under point 6 C above, will not be included in the total number of eligible voters and 50% threshold will be established accordingly. For example, if there are 100 eligible voters and more than 50 members voted, out of the casted votes the majority decides the election (if all the 50 votes are valid, 26 or more votes wins). If there is a tie, the executive board decides with at least 75% of the ENTIRE Board voting in favor.



## Appendix 6:

# THE HINDU SOCIETY OF NE FLORIDA

## *Executive Board Election*

### Ballot for Life Members

(For 3 year-term beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> of next year)

#### Instructions:

1. Check mark inside the box against the candidate for whom you wish to vote.
2. Vote only for maximum of 2 (two) candidates. If more than two boxes checked your vote will be voided.
3. If you are granting a proxy, please read & follow the defined proxy procedure on the website, properly execute the proxy form & provide a copy of identification as specified.
4. If you voting in absentia, please read & follow the defined procedure under “absentee procedure” on the HENEF website. Only ballots received in the HSNEF office by 12 noon of the Annual General Body meeting will be eligible to be counted.

#### **Life Member Category (2 vacancies)**

Please **select two (2)** from the candidates below by marking the boxes.

☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Open Seat Category (2 vacancies)**

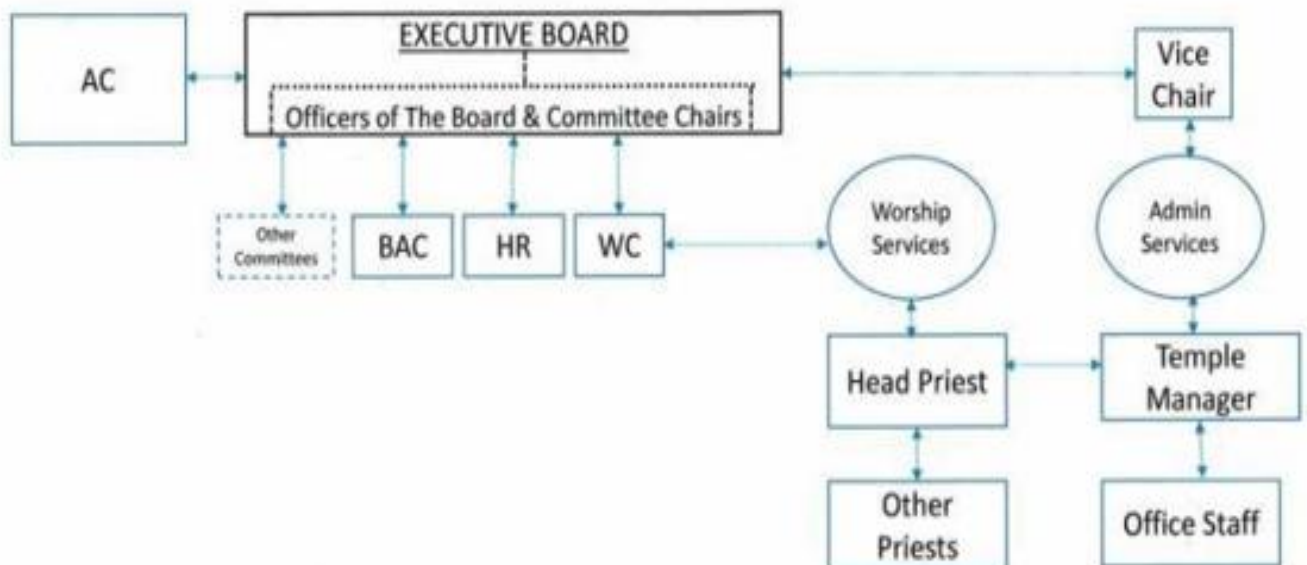
Please **select two (2)** from the candidates below by marking the boxes.

☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 7:

### ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

HSNEF – Organizational Chart



## Appendix 8

### ***Form For Incoming Board Members***

**To Be Signed During the Transition Period Per Article VI, Section 4, A-8**  
(Transition Period: From Election Day until the Transition Meeting)

#### **Article VI, Section 4 A 8**

The Chair of Board shall ensure that every incoming Board member signs a document during the transition period that he/she has read the Constitution and Bylaws and HSNEF relevant operational manual(s).

No board member shall serve in an official capacity until he/she has signed this document, and agrees to abide by these documents as intended.

\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby attest that I have read and familiarized myself with HSNEF Constitution and the Bylaws, and agree to abide by these documents. I also have read HSNEF relevant operational manual(s).

Board Member\_\_\_\_\_

Incoming Chair\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 9

### HSNEF STANDING COMMITTEES: SUMMARY OF STIPULATIONS

<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Min Mem bers</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Member Details</b>	<b>Duties</b>
Constitution & By laws	5	No specific requirement but must be experienced & knowledgeable about the bylaws.	-VC of EB shall be a member. -Members must have express interest in the subject matter. - Combination of senior & younger members. -No need to change from year to year for continuity. - Member term: 3 years. -May be reappointed after 1 year gap.	Make recommendations for changes to constitution and bylaws
Worship	3	<b>EB member</b>	AC will appoint 1 member	Worship activities, priest supervision, Chair is custodian of all worship related property, property inventory with Finance & Audit Committee in June & Dec of each year, unless otherwise specifically authorized by EB
Facilities Maintenance	3	No specific requirement		All aspects of maintenance, servicing & repair of HSNEF facilities.
Finance and Audit	5	<b>Treasurer</b>	-Chair of EB shall be a member. -1 from AC -At least 2 non-Board members	Audit of income, expenses, bank accounts, deposits, withdrawals, hundi, property deeds, inventory of temple assets, & insurance policies. Submit budget by March 1st, \$5K or greater require a 2nd signature
Special Events	3	No specific requirements		Non-worship events like Anand Bazar, Gala. Responsible for managing educational activities, class schedules & discourses.
Nominations	5	<b>Chair: AC member</b>	-Outgoing EB members, -2-4 at large members	Responsible for scouting, interviewing candidates for EB. Conduct election if necessary. Elections for EB officers, if necessary

Children, Youth and Young Adult		No specific requirements	No specific requirements.	Improve engagement of children, youth & young adults. Coordinate educational, social and service-related activities
Senior Welfare		No specific requirements	No specific requirements.	Carry out senior related activities.
Communications	3	<b>VC of EB</b>	No specific requirements.	Responsible for all aspects of HSNEF general communications: email, mailings & for FB, & Website. Shall assign spokesperson for HSNEF to be approved by EB.
Safety and Security	3	No specific requirements	1: VC of EB 1: Chair of Facilities Maintenance Committee 1: From AC	Institute appropriate safety, security & health promotion plans & measures. Liaison with police and fire. Review plans & submit a report to EB by July 31st
Human Resources	6	No specific requirement.	EB Chair, EB VC, EB Secretary, EB Treasurer, Worship Chair, 1 AC member	Create & maintain HR Manual & Employee Handbook. Staff hiring & terminations. Develop/modify job descriptions, work schedules, etc. Resolve personnel conflicts. Serve as Grievance Committee for HSNEF staff. Conduct annual evaluations of staff, recommend raises & bonus to EB for approval.
Membership, Volunteers and Donor Relations	5	No specific requirements	Shall have at least 1 EB member.	Maintain & boost membership & donor roster. Donor relations. Cultivate new donors. Cultivate & engage volunteers. Maintain volunteer roster.
Community Emergency Assistance Fund	5	No specific requirements	1 each from EB & AC, 3 at-large members	Soliciting & disbursing funds for emergency needs of community members per Operational Manual approved for this Committee
Building and Architecture		No specific requirements		Ad-hoc committee
Food/ Eat For a Good Cause ( EFGC)		No specific requirements		Ad-hoc committee

## Appendix 10

### ***SUMMARY OF STIPULATED TIMELINES & ADMINISTRATIVE SCHEDULES***

<b>Task</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Incoming EB members: verify membership, sign form	January (first) EB meeting	Treasurer & Chair
Approve all ongoing projects and Ad-hoc committees	Feb (2nd) board meeting	EB
Email/mail to members for renewal	Between Dec 15 and Jan 31	Office
Appoint standing committees	Feb (2nd) board meeting	EB
Introduce new Board to community	Shivratri Day	EB Chair
Submit Budget	Feb (2nd) board meeting	Treasurer
Membership eligibility for the year	30th April	payments made
Anand Bazar	April	EB
Medical Camp	May	
Property Inventory	June	Worship and Audit
Mail/email to members the list	1-Jul	Secretary
Finalize the members list with any changes	15-Jul	Secretary
Safety & Security Committee Report	31-Jul	Committee Chair
Final members roster published on website	1-Aug	Secretary
EB Nominations	August 1 - September 30	NC
Final list of EB candidates	20-Oct	NC
Elections (if necessary)	2nd Saturday and 2nd Sunday	AC
AGM	2nd Sunday	EB
EB Officers elections	7 to 14 days after AGM	NC
Survey of membership (may be in the summer)	Even Years	EB
Salary increases and bonuses	November	HR Committee
Gala	December	EB
Property Inventory	December	Worship and Audit
Board Transition Meeting and elections if necessary for EB officers	By December 15 <sup>th</sup>	NC and AC
Incoming EB to Appoint Standing Committee Chairs	Before Transition Meeting	Incoming EB
Member eligibility to serve on the EB	life member or an annual member for 3 of last 5 years	

## Appendix 11

### *Inventories of Utsava Murthies*

#### **Inventories of Utsava Deities in HSNEF as on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.**

Description	Year consecrated	Placement	Murthy Size.	S.No
Lord Ganesha	1999	U M Shrine	21/2 ft.	1
Rama	1999	U M Shrine	23/4 ft	2
Sita	1999	U M Shrine	21/2 ft	3
Lakshmana	1999	U M Shrine	2 ft	4
Hanuman	1999	U M Shrine	2 ft	5
Venkareshwara Utsav murthy	1999	U M Shrine	23/4 ft	6
Sri Devi	1999	U M Shrine	21/2 ft	7
Bhudevi	1999	U M Shrine	21/2 ft	8
Balakrihna laddu Gopal	1999	U M Shrine	10"	9
Subhramanya	2019	U M Shrine	2 ft.	10
Valli	2019	U M Shrine	2 ft.	11
Devasena	2019	U M shrine	2 ft	12
Umiya mata sitting on cow	2019	U M Shrine	21/2 dt	13
Aiyappa sitting	2019	U M Shrine	1 ½ ft	14
Mahalakshmi sitting posture	2021	Venkateshwara shrine	2 ft	15
Uma Maheshwar(nos2)	2022	U M Shrine	2 ½ ft	16
Small Navagraha murthis fixed	2015	U M Shrine	0.4"x 9 murthis	17
Goda Devi	2023	U M Shrine	2 ft	18
Sudharshana chakra	2023	Venkateshwara shrine	18 "	19

#### **Small abhisheka murtis less than 12"**

Ganesha	2015	Ganesha Shrine	0.6"	20
Venkateshwara,sridevi,Bhudevi,Andal, And Sudarsana (No,5)	2015	Venkateshwara shrine	0.9"	21
Lakshmi and Narayana (Nos 2))	2015	Lakshmi Narayan shrine	0.9"	22
Ram parivar (Rama, sita, Lakhman and Hanuman) (Nos 4)	2015	Ram parivar shrine	0.9"	23
Radha and Krishna(Nos 2)	2015	Radhakrishna shrine	0.9"	24
Durga	1998	Durga shrine	0.6"	25
Mahalakshmi	2015	Venkatewara shrine	0.6"	26

**Total number of Murthis including all Utsava and Abhishek murthies is 36.**

## **Appendix 12: POLICIES**

### **1)POLICIES RELATED TO HSNEF FACILITY RENTAL ARRANGEMENTS**

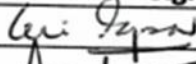
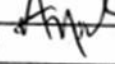
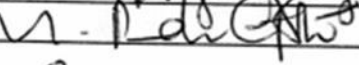

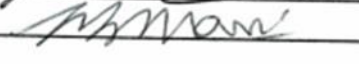

A) The Secretary of HSNEF, after consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair & Treasurer (The Officers of the Executive Board) may consider organizing programs jointly with individuals and organizations when in their estimate such programs will be of value and beneficial to a broad cross-section of the congregation in keeping with HSNEF's mission and objectives. Rental fee will be waived or modified for such jointly coordinated or co-sponsored programs. The publicity related to such events will adequately reflect the role of HSNEF.

B) There shall be no fund-raising activity conducted during the rental in HSNEF facilities, provided however that HSNEF at its sole discretion might allow any such request for non-profit, charitable, spiritual, educational or cultural causes/activities. The nature and purpose of any planned solicitation of funds, whether fees, sponsorships, donations in kind or cash must be specifically defined, added to the rental agreement and preapproved by HSNEF Secretary, after consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair & Treasurer (The Officers of the Executive Board). The Officers at their discretion may approve the requested activity, with or without modifications, on a case-by-case basis, in writing. There shall be no fund solicitation activity of any type without such prior approval.

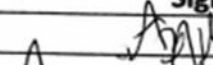





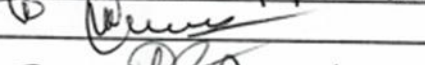
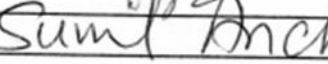



## Appendix 13: Signatures

**Adopted by the members of the NSNEF constitution and by-laws committee.**

Name	Signature	Date.
Kris Gopal (chair)		Sept 10 <sup>th</sup> 2023
Anshu Kalia		Sept 10 <sup>th</sup> 2023
Anju Garg		Sept 10 <sup>th</sup> 2023
Padma Mukund		Sept 10 <sup>th</sup> 2023
Sweta Parikh		
Prabhu Sudhir		Sept 10, 2023
Mani perumal		Sept 10, 2022

**The foregoing final amendment to the HSNEF by laws is adopted and ratified by the Members of the Executive board on the date below indicated.**

Name	Signature	Date.
Anshu Kalia (Chair)		9.10-23
Anju Garg (Vice chair)		9.10-23
Sailaja Ayyagari (Secretary)		9.10-23
Padma Sikara (Treasurer)		9/10/23
Kris Gopal		9.10-23
Anil Pathak		9.10-23
Kavita Parikh		09/10/23
Parita Warde		
Senthil Kumar Chokkanatha		9/10/2023
Vipan Kalhan		9.10-23
Srilakshmi Garikipatti		09/10/2023
Sunil Ancha		Sept 10, 2023