

# **Mississippi Recreation and Park Association Constitution**

## **ARTICLE I - NAME AND AFFILIATION**

The name of the organization shall be the "Mississippi Recreation and Park Association, Inc." and it shall be affiliated with the National Recreation and Park Association.

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The purposes are to unite into one organization all parks, recreation and related professions. To encourage research and provide education in parks, recreation and related professions and to operate in such a manner as to enhance those interests in Mississippi.

## **ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Members of this Association shall be classified into membership categories and must have fulfilled all financial requirements for membership.

Section 2. Membership in this Association is open to all persons regardless of race, creed, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

Section 3. The qualifications for membership in this Association shall be set forth and controlled by the By-laws and amendments thereto.

## **ARTICLE IV - PERIOD OF EXISTENCE**

The period of existence of this Association is continuing and unlimited. In the event of dissolution of this Association, any assets then remaining shall be distributed by the Board of Directors. However, such assets must be used for the purposes of advancing parks, recreation and related professions in Mississippi.

## **Mississippi Recreation and Park Association By-Laws**

### **ARTICLE I - OFFICE**

The location of the principal office of the Mississippi Recreation and Park Association shall be designated by the Board of Directors.

### **ARTICLE II - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of this Association are:

Section 1. To unite into one organization all parks, recreation and related professions and interested citizens within the State of Mississippi.

Section 2. To promote benefits and values associated with parks, recreation and related profession participation and to encourage and stimulate the improvement of opportunities offered by local, state, regional, public-serving, private organizations and federal entities.

Section 3. To stimulate protection, preservation, and acquisition of recreational resources, to promote the proper planning, development, operation, and maintenance of these recreational areas, and facilities, to secure more effective use of public and private land or water areas.

Section 4. To encourage research, discussion, and evaluation of matters affecting parks, recreation and related professions and to provide a medium through which members of this Association may present, discuss, solve, or otherwise assist in the solution of problems of mutual concern which exist among members, occur within other groups, or emerge from related movements.

Section 5. To sponsor and conduct parks, recreation and related professional conferences, activities, institutes, clinics, meetings, and other in-service training programs for members and non-members of this Association.

Section 6. To promote and encourage sound and more effective recreational programs, activities and treatments for the citizens of Mississippi.

Section 7. To disseminate information, to improve public understanding and acceptance, and to promote greater financial support for individuals and agencies employed in parks, recreation and related professions.

### **ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Members of this Association shall consist of persons engaged in parks, recreation and related professions who have paid membership dues.

Section 2. The Mississippi Recreation and Park Association strongly encourages each member to join the National Recreation and Park Association.

Section 3. Membership in the Association shall be designated as Professional, Associate, Affiliate, Agency, Student, Provisional-Professional or Allied Organization.

Section 4. The regulations concerning eligibility for membership shall be as follows:

**PROFESSIONAL:** Individuals employed full-time in leadership, supervisory, or administrative capacities in the delivery of parks, recreation and related services or the management of related resources who possess the education, experience and training commensurate with the requirements of the position.

**ASSOCIATE:** Individuals employed full or part-time in non-management or non-administrative capacities in the delivery of parks, recreation and related services or the management of related resources who possess the education, experience and training commensurate with the requirements of the position.

**AFFILIATE:** Individuals or commercial businesses that support the purpose, aims and objectives of this Association who do not meet the requirements of other membership categories.

**AGENCY:** Parks, recreation and related public and private agencies, departments, bureaus, commissions, districts, authorities, institutions or other organizations.

**STUDENT:** Persons enrolled full-time in a college or university program in parks, recreation, or related studies.

**PROVISIONAL PROFESSIONAL:** A one-year non-renewable membership open to past student members for the first year following their graduation.

**ALLIED ORGANIZATION:** Special interest groups, clubs or other groups that promote, participate, encourage, and facilitate parks, recreation and related programs, services or treatments.

Section 5. The annual membership dues and membership benefits shall be established by the Board of Directors. All membership dues shall be paid on the anniversary date. Memberships are for one calendar year and must be renewed accordingly.

Section 6: Any member who fails to pay dues on or before the anniversary date shall be automatically removed from membership in the Association, but may be restored to full membership upon payment of dues for the current year. During the period of suspension persons shall forfeit all rights and privileges of membership.

Section 7. All applications for membership or membership renewal and dues shall be submitted to the MPRA Executive Director or the Board appointed designee who shall then approve membership as stated in the By-laws.

Section 8. Only individuals in good standing who hold Professional, Associate, or Agency membership classification shall have the right for one vote except that student and provisional-professional members shall be counted as a block of five (5) votes determined by popular vote among the student and provisional-professional members.

## ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall be President, President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer Past-President, District Representatives, one NRPA Southern Regional Council Representative, the duly elected President of the Mississippi Therapeutic Recreation Alliance and the Student Representative. The Student Representative is a non-voting officer. This shall constitute the Board of Directors.

Section 2. All officers, except the Southern Regional Council Representative, shall be elected by the membership as provided for in the By-laws. The Southern Regional Council Representative shall be elected by Mississippi NRPA members. If a vacancy occurs, the line of succession to the President shall be the President-Elect and then the Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 3. In order to become a candidate for the office of President a candidate must have served MRPA for a period of not less than two years as an elected or appointed director, officer or on an active committee.

Section 4. The duties of the officers shall be those common to the respective office held and are as follows:

**PRESIDENT:** Shall act as presiding officer at all board meetings and any meetings of this Association. He or she shall prepare for the office by learning all operational procedures specified or authorized in the By-laws. Unless otherwise stated in the bylaws, the president shall be responsible for appointing all committee chairs.

**PRESIDENT-ELECT:** Shall act as an administrative assistant to the Chair and shall preside in the absence of the President. He or she shall serve as the Association's parliamentarian. He or she shall serve as the committee chair of the Educational/Professional Development Committee.

**SECRETARY/TREASURER:** Shall ensure that true and accurate records of all proceedings of this Association, including District and Committee meetings are maintained. Shall be the custodian of all Association funds and shall disburse these funds. He or she shall ensure that true and accurate records of all receipts and reimbursements are maintained and shall submit an annual report of these records.

1. All financial matters shall be coordinated through the elected Secretary/Treasurer as outlined in federal and state regulations pertaining to non-profit status.

2. A designee approved by the Board of Directors may coordinate all financial matters through the elected Secretary/Treasurer. This includes all financial documents, reports, and expenditure of Association funds.

**DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE:** Shall represent the interests of his or her district, the interests of this Association, and the interests of all parks, recreation and related professions. District Representatives shall attend all scheduled and called board meetings, work with the Educational/Professional Development Committee to develop educational opportunities for their district, submit one article each month for publication in the Association's newsletter, assists in budget development, and serve on the Association's Nominations/Election Committee. District Representatives shall be responsible for providing the Association's Secretary/Treasurer with written minutes of all District meetings. District Representatives shall conduct district elections and **shall** appoint a District Vice-Representative, Secretary, **Athletic Committee Representative, Awards Committee Representative, Educational/Professional Development Committee Representative**, and other officers or chairs as deemed necessary. District Representatives may also be asked by the Association's President to perform other duties from time to time.

## **ARTICLE V - NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Section 1. Each approved Association District shall be charged with the responsibility of electing its District Representative in accordance with MRPA By-laws.

Section 2. Annual District Representative elections shall be held no less than 30 days prior to the Annual Membership Meeting. Failure of a District to hold proper and timely elections will result in the appointment of a District Representative by the President.

Section 3. Professional and Associate members of this Association shall have one vote in all District elections.

Section 4. Verification of current membership status is required before casting a ballot. Only qualified MRPA members who work in a District may vote in that District's elections. Student and provisional-professional members shall be counted as a block of one (1) vote determined by popular vote among a district's student members.

Section 5. District officers shall be Professional or Associate members of this Association and work in the District in which they serve. Appointed District officers shall be MRPA members.

Section 6. District Representatives shall appoint a District Nominations and Elections Committee for the purpose of nominating a District Representative and conducting all District elections.

Section 7. Election of the President, President-Elect and Secretary/Treasurer shall occur at the Annual Membership Meeting.

Section 8. All Association officers shall be Professional or Associate members of the Association in good standing.

Section 9. The persons receiving the greatest number of votes for each office shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie vote, the Association's Board of Directors shall cast one vote to break the tie.

Section 10. The election of the Southern Regional Council Representative must occur during the Annual Convention and Trade Show and before the first annual meeting of the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE VI - BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Section 1. It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to set all Association policies and act upon all Association business in accordance with the Constitution and By-laws.

Section 2. The Board of Directors may delegate such duties, as it may see advisable, to the various committee chairs with power to act.

Section 3. All members of the Board of Directors shall have full voting privileges and this Board shall have full power to interpret the Constitution and By-laws.

Section 4. The President, President-Elect shall serve a **two (2)** year term. The Secretary/Treasurer shall serve a two (2) year term. District Representatives shall serve a **two (2)** year term. All board officers may be elected for an unlimited number of terms.

Section 5. The student representative shall serve a one (1) year term. The student representative may be elected for an unlimited number of terms.

Section 6. The Board of Directors is required to remove a board member from the Board of Directors if that member misses three called board meetings within his/her term of office.

## **ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS**

Section 1. The Annual Membership Meeting of this Association shall be set by the Board of Directors being announced sufficiently in advance. This meeting shall be held for the purpose of reports from the Board of Directors, Committee Chairs and District Representatives.

Section 2. Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held each quarter.

Section 3. Regular meetings of the District shall be held each quarter not to conflict with scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Regular Board and District meeting dates, times and places shall be communicated to all MRPA members at least two weeks in advance of the meetings.

Section 5. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called at the discretion of the President at any time **it** is determined to be necessary or beneficial. The entire membership shall be notified at least two weeks prior to a special meeting. The purpose of the special meeting shall be specified in the announcement of the meeting.

Section 6. All parliamentary authority not covered by the Bylaws of this Association shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order as amended.

## **ARTICLE VIII- AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. This Constitution and By-laws may be amended as follows:

- A. At the Annual Membership Meeting where a two—thirds (2/3) majority vote of those casting ballots being sufficient for passage of the measure.
- B. All registered voting members attending the Annual Membership Meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of Association business.
- C. By mailed ballot to all eligible, voting members where a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all returned ballots being sufficient for passage of the measure.

## **ARTICLE IX - COMMITTEES**

Section 1. The Association shall maintain a minimum of four (4) Standing Committees.

Section 2. Standing Committees are as follows:

### **Athletic Committee**

**The athletic committee will be responsible for helping expand recreational athletic activities throughout Mississippi.**

### **Awards Committee**

**The awards committee will be responsible for developing and implementing a statewide awards program to recognize individuals, MRPA Districts, and related agencies throughout Mississippi. The committee shall conduct an annual awards banquet that will be part of the MRPA Conference.**

### **Educational/Professional Development Committee**

**The educational/professional development committee will be responsible for developing an annual education plan at the district and state level. The committee will be responsible for the annual MRPA Conference to include the education sessions and all other aspects of the conference. The Chair and one other member of the State Certification Board shall serve as Educational/Professional Development Committee members.**

### **Nominations and Elections Committee**

**The nominations and election committee will be responsible for nominating the officers of this Association.**

**Each committee will be responsible for developing policy and procedures that must be approved by the MRPA Board of Directors.**

**Section 3. The President shall appoint one person to serve on each of the committees. Each District Representative shall appoint one person from his or her district to serve on each of the committees.**

**Section 4. The President -Elect shall serve as chair of the Educational/Professional Development Committee. All appointees of this committee shall serve a two year term. District 1 and 3 members will be appointed in odd years. District 2 and 4 members will be appointed in even years.**

**Section 5. Committee Chairs shall be appointed by the President from the committee members. Committee Chairs shall be appointed immediately following the Annual Membership Meeting.**

Section 6. The Association shall maintain for any time period any Special or Adhoc Committee deemed appropriate and necessary for the purposes, aims, and objectives of the Association. Such committees may be designated by the President by means of simple announcement. The President shall appoint committee members for any special committee. The President shall also, by simple announcement, dissolve any existing special committee.

Section 7. The Executive Committee of this Association shall consist of the President, President-Elect and Secretary/Treasurer. The Executive Committee may conduct emergency Association business as deemed necessary. A full accounting of Executive Committee actions must be submitted and approved by the Board of Directors at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

## **ARTICLE X - INTEREST AREAS**

Section 1. The purpose of a MRPA Interest Area is to facilitate greater involvement in the Association.

Section 2. An Interest Area consists of individuals who share common goals.

Section 3. No Interest Area shall act independently of the Association or enter into any contractual agreement or make any financial obligation without prior approval of the MRPA Board of Directors.

Section 4. Interest Areas shall abide by the Articles of Incorporation and the Constitution and By-laws of the Association.

## **ARTICLE XI - DISTRICTS**

Section 1. The purpose of a MRPA District is to facilitate greater involvement of the Association membership by appealing to interests and proximity.

Section 2. The Board of Directors shall have the power to establish and abolish districts according to the needs of this Association. The Board of Directors shall determine the boundaries for each district.

Section 3. Each District shall have one voting District Representative on the MRPA Board of Directors.

Section 4. No District shall act independently of the Association or enter into any contractual agreement or make any financial obligation without prior approval of the MRPA Board of Directors.

Section 5. Districts shall abide by the Articles of Incorporation and the Constitution and By-laws of the Association.

Section 6. Districts shall conduct business meetings, programs, workshops and similar activities to stimulate and increase membership, participation, education and professional development.

Section 7. Vacancies in elected District offices shall be filled by a special District election which shall occur within 30 days of notification of the vacancy.

## **ARTICLE XI - SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

Section 1. The purpose of Southern Regional Council Representatives is to represent the interests and desires of the Association's membership in all policy decisions relating to the National Recreation and Park Association's Southern Region.

Section 2. The NRPA Southern Region has the power to increase or decrease the number of Association representatives, and determine qualifications based on established formulas and policies.

Section 3. No Southern Regional Council Representative shall act independently of the Association or enter into any contractual agreement or make any financial obligation without prior approval of the MRPA Board of Directors.

Section 5. Southern Regional Council Representatives shall abide by the Articles of Incorporation and the Constitution and By-laws of the Association.

Section 6. Association Southern Regional Council Representatives shall be Association members in good standing.

Section 7. The election of the Association's Southern Regional Council Representatives shall occur at the Annual Membership Meeting.

Section 8. The persons receiving the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie vote, the Association's Board of Directors shall cast one vote to break the tie.