

**Bylaws of the
Turkish American Cultural Society
of Rhode Island**

**Approved
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TACSRI General Assmbly**

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Article I - Mission Statement

The name of the Society is “The Turkish American Cultural Society of Rhode Island, Inc.” The date the Society was founded is October 29, 2001. The Turkish American Cultural Society of Rhode Island, hereafter referred to as “the Society”, shall not engage in any political or religious activity prohibited by law. The Society shall not discriminate against anyone because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, or national origin. The Society is a non-profit organization in the state of Rhode Island.

The mission of the Society is to educate the community about Turkish and American cultures and heritage. The Society brings people of Turkish heritage and friends of Turkey together for continuing education and awareness about Turkish history, culture, and related issues. The Society assists in a charitable spirit and manner to permanent residents, visitors and students arriving from Turkey, as well as the members of the community at large, and engages in educational and cultural activities to foster cultural diversity, interaction, and understanding.

Article II - Membership

SECTION 1. Membership Requirements

- a) Application for membership is open to anyone 18 years or older who is willing to abide by the mission of the Society. Acceptance to membership requires the approval of the board of directors. There are three membership categories: (a) Full, (b) Honorary, and (c) Associate. Only full members are eligible to vote and hold office and privileges thereof.
- b) Full members in good standing shall have the right to attend and participate in General Assembly meetings, to run for office, and to vote on matters that are brought to the General Assembly including the elections. Full membership includes Family, Individual, and Full-Time Student membership.
- c) Honorary members are those who have made outstanding contributions to the Society. Upon recommendation of the board of directors, honorary members shall be

so designated by two-thirds affirmative vote of the General Assembly. Honorary members do not pay dues.

- d) Associate members are those who would like to participate in the special events of the Society, and receive newsletters. Associate member fee structure is half of the full membership dues.
- e) Those members violating the bylaws of the Society may be expelled from membership by a decision of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.

SECTION 2. Membership Dues

Membership is for one calendar year, January 1- December 31, and is renewable every January.

- a) Annual membership dues are set each year by the board of directors. Annual membership fees are due by the end of the month of January for the current membership year. Mailed dues must be postmarked by January 31.
- b) Members who have financial difficulties may appeal to postpone or restructure their payments until their difficulties are alleviated. Appeals must be made to the board of directors before January 31 of the given year. The board of directors has the right to transfer the case to the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.
- c) Those who become a member after the end of January may pay their dues as they are accepted to the membership. However, their full member privileges will start sixty days after paying the dues and becoming a member, and will be valid for the remaining part of the calendar year.

Article III - Officers

SECTION 1. Election

- a) **The election of officers** shall be held on the third Saturday of April. The president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and three directors will be elected for a term of two (2) years and will take office immediately following the order of business, prior to the adjournment of the meeting at which they are elected.

SECTION 2. Duties

- a) **The President** shall function as the principal executive officer of the Society and shall preside at all meetings of the Society, except the Audit Committee and the Elections and Nominating Committee meetings. The president shall be chair of the board of directors with the right to vote. The president shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Elections and Nominating Committee, the Discipline & Ethics Committee, and the Audit Committee. In any correspondence with the members, if the issue is related to the bylaws, the president shall specify the related section of the bylaws.
- b) **The Vice President** shall be a member of the board of directors and all committees, except the Audit Committee, with the right to vote. The vice president shall preside at the meetings in the absence of the president and shall succeed to the presidency in the event that such office becomes vacant before the expiration of the term. Under extraordinary circumstances, the board of directors may authorize the vice president to sign checks made in payment of the Society's obligations, as a substitute for the treasurer.
- c) **The Treasurer** shall be in charge of handling all funds of the Society and shall deposit them in a bank account in the name of the Society; pay all bills by check as authorized; to the extent possible, maintain a sufficient balance in the account to avoid a bank surcharge; keep an accurate record of receipts and disbursement; present a detailed financial report to the board of directors at each meeting; and upon the request of the president at other times; submit an annual written financial report to the Society; submit the records for audit at the close of the fiscal year on December 31; pay bills only upon receipt of proof of expense by the person incurring the bills; and shall furnish surety bonds if deemed necessary by the board of directors. The treasurer shall chair the Budget Committee. The treasurer shall send out membership renewal notices, collect dues, and send out membership cards.
- d) **The Secretary** shall have both recording and corresponding duties. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the board of directors, and will present at the next board meeting for acceptance. These minutes must be passed to the next elected secretary at the end of the two-year term. The secretary and the president shall both have access to

the Society P.O. Box. The secretary shall inform the Webmaster of all necessary changes in information. The secretary shall also perform such other duties as may be requested by the president or the board of directors. The secretary shall send out all meeting notices. The secretary shall follow the instructions as specified in Article VII, Election, Section 3.d. The secretary should consult with the president in order to specify and or remind the members about the related section of the Society By-Laws.

- e) **The Immediate Past President** shall be a member ex-officio of the board of directors for the two (2) years following the expiration of his or her term of office with no right to vote.

Article IV – Board of directors

SECTION 1. Duties & Powers of the Board of Directors

The board of directors shall have the duties and powers as ordinarily delegated to the governing body of a corporation as follows:

- a) **To adopt rules** and regulations from time to time, if deemed necessary for the governing of the Society within the framework of the bylaws.
- b) **To confirm** the acceptance of all members and to designate Honorary and Affiliate Members.
- c) **To establish the membership fees** and annual dues for all categories of membership except for honorary members, who shall not be required to pay dues.
- d) **To create and appoint** all standing committees and direct their activities except the Audit Committee and the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.
- e) **To adopt a budget.**
- f) **To arrange meetings** of the Society and such other meetings as may be required and manage all other Society affairs not otherwise provided for.
- g) **To report to the Society** its work and activities, including a full financial statement prepared by a public accountant if deemed necessary by the Society and such interim reports as are necessary and advisable. A review of the books by an outside party may take the place of a full audit.
- h) **Major decisions** shall be made in consultation with and approval of the board of directors. In case of urgent matters, the president may be allowed to call for a phone

vote followed with a letter to all board of directors members and signed by all board of directors members, confirming their vote.

SECTION 2. Composition and Definitions

- a) **The number of Directors** shall be seven (7), consisting of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and three (3) elected board members.
- b) **Three alternate Board Members** shall also be elected. In addition, the immediate past president, past vice president and past secretary shall serve ex-officio as members of the board of directors with no voting rights.
- c) **The president**, vice president, treasurer and secretary will serve a two (2) year term. The remaining Board Members will serve a two (2) year term and take office immediately following the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- d) **In the event of the president's resignation**, the vice president shall fill the position. In the event of a resignation of any officer, or vacancy in office, the remaining board of directors shall appoint, by a majority vote, an interim officer or director until regular elections are held.

SECTION 3. Meetings

- a) **In addition to regular meetings**, not fewer than eight (8) per year, special meetings of the board of directors may be called at any time by the president or upon the written request of three (3) members of the board of directors.
- b) **Not less than fifteen (15) days notice** of the time and place of any regular or special meeting shall be given by telephone, mail, e-mail, addressed to each board of directors member at their address of record on the books of the Society. It is the secretary's duty to send out the call to meeting. Absence of a member from three (3) consecutive meetings of the board of directors without adequate excuse submitted in writing or by call to the president or secretary, shall be considered as an automatic resignation.

SECTION 4. Quorum

- a) **Four members of the Board of Directors** present in person shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business or of any specified item of business.

Article V – Committees

SECTION 1. Independent Committees

The following are the independent committees of the Society with no representation on the Board of Directors. The independent committees of the society shall have members elected as shown below:

- a) The Disciplinary and Ethics Committee shall have three members elected at the general elections for two years.
- b) The Audit Committee shall have three members elected at the general elections for two years.
- c) The Nominating and Election Committee shall have three members elected at the general elections for one year.

SECTION 2. Standing Committees

The Board of Directors shall appoint the necessary number of members to the following standing committees.

- a) Heritage Harbor Museum Executive Committee (HHMEC) The primary responsibility of this committee is to keep TACSRI participation in the museum on track, developing and implementing the fundraising plan, engaging in research that will provide information to be used in the Heritage Harbor Museum (HHM), and establishing the curatorial guidelines for the items to be used in the HHM. This committee is the primary liaison between the TACSRI and HHM and reports to the board of directors at its regular meetings. The HHMEC meets as necessary but no less than once per month. The membership of this committee is as follows: Chair; Fundraising; Communication and HHM Liaison; Curatorial Activities and Research.
- b) Membership and Publicity Committee (MPC) is responsible for developing plans to increase and maintain the membership at TACSRI. It also addresses the issues raised by the members and brings them to the board of directors for discussion and resolution. The membership of this committee must include at least one student member in charge of outreach to college populations. The membership of this committee is as follows: Chair; three members.

- c) Special Events Committee (SEC) is responsible for maintaining an events calendar for TACSRI, organizing events as approved by the board of directors, publicizing such events, arranging space, and seeking attendance. The membership of this committee is as follows: Chair; three members.

Article VI - Society Meetings

SECTION 1. Meetings

- a) **There shall be one regular general membership meeting a year**, which shall be held on the 3rd Saturday of April. The date of the annual meeting may be changed to another date if a request is made to the board of directors by the membership. In order to convene the annual meeting, a quorum of the membership must be present. A quorum shall consist of fifty percent of the regular members with the full voting rights in the Society.

If the quorum is not established at the annual meeting, a second meeting will be called within two weeks at which the attending members will constitute a quorum.

Unless otherwise noted in this document, all business will be conducted with simple majority.

- b) **Special meetings** may be called at any time by the president with the approval of the board of directors, and shall be called upon the request of at least ten (10) members of the Society.

SECTION 2. Meeting Notice

- a) **Notice of Society Meetings** shall be sent by the secretary to members at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the meeting.

Article VII - Elections and Nominations

SECTION 1. Regular Elections

- a) General elections will be held on the 3rd Saturday in April. If circumstances require elections at another point in the year, the board of directors will select a date and inform the general membership.
- b) The Nominating and Election Committee, one chair and two members, will be elected at the regular elections for the following year.

- c) Membership dues are normally paid in the month of January. In order to be eligible to vote in the elections, membership dues must be paid in full, sixty days prior to the elections.

SECTION 2. Officer Eligibility

- a) Members must have full member status for sixty days before they are eligible to run for office.
- b) Only full members who are residents of RI may run for an elected office (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer). Other full members may be elected for, or appointed to committee positions.

SECTION 3. Electing Officers

- a) Names of nominees must be submitted to the Nominating and Election Committee sixty days prior to the election.
- b) If there are no nominees submitted for a position, names of nominees can be accepted from the floor on the day of the election. Names will only be accepted in this way if there have been no prior names submitted for a position.
- c) Nominees will run and be elected for a specific position.
- d) Absentee ballots will be sent out one month prior to election day, and must be returned no later than election day to be counted with the other ballots.

Article VIII - Amendment to Bylaws

These bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by the General Assembly by two-thirds of the votes at a special meeting. This meeting must be announced two weeks prior to the meeting time. The quorum for this meeting is fifty percent of the full members at the time of the meeting. If a quorum cannot be established at this meeting, a second meeting may be scheduled with two-week advanced notice. This meeting will be held with any number of members attending.

The required vote for any amendments to the bylaws shall be two-third of those in attendance.