

BY-LAWS of the
OURS OTTAWA BEARS

Adopted on April 20, 2008

As amended on February 22, 2015

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ARTICLE I - Name and Founding

Section 1. Organization name.

- The name of the Group is Ours Ottawa Bears
- The Ours Ottawa Bears shall hereafter be referred to as the “Group.”

Section 2. Date of founding.

The Ottawa Bears was founded in September of 1996.

ARTICLE II - Object

The objects of this Group are to promote the value of diversity of body image within the broader LGBTQ community, and to provide a social venue for Bears and Bear admirers. The Group achieves its objects by:

- Remaining a local, independent, not-for-profit organization;
- Welcoming members who speak either English or French, reflecting that the Group is located in the National Capital Region of Canada;
- Providing a safe, positive, and mutually supportive venue for Bears and Bear admirers to affirm their diverse identities;
- Maintaining visibility of the Bear community within the National Capital Region, within Canada, and internationally, and,
- Co-operating with other elements of the LGBTQ community to foster a positive image of the Bear community within the larger LGBTQ community.

ARTICLE III - Membership

Section 1. Member types.

Membership of the Group, with voice and vote, shall be the Executive Board and Active Members.

Section 2. Qualifications.

Active Membership is open to all adult men who consider themselves Bears or Bear admirers, who endorse and support the Objects and Goals of the Group, and who pay the respective fees. An Active Member in good standing will have his dues paid up-to-date. An application for Active Membership shall be sent to the Secretary who will keep an up-to-date roster of Active Members.

Section 3. Membership fees.

Annual fees for Active Members shall be \$20 payable in advance on or before the Annual General Meeting. The Treasurer shall notify members one (1) month in arrears, and those whose fees are not paid within three (3) month thereafter shall be automatically dropped from Active membership. The year's membership fees shall be payable immediately following each Annual General Meeting.

ARTICLE IV - Officers

Section 1. Officers and Duties.

The officers of the Group shall be a President, a Vice-president, a Treasurer, a Secretary, an MOB Coordinator, and an Events Coordinator. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Group.

Section 2. Nomination and Election Procedure.

- a) Elections for the officers shall be held at the Annual General Meeting in February. All Active Members in good standing are eligible to run for office, nominate, second and vote in these elections. The chair of the Annual General Meeting shall appoint an Election Officer to preside over the elections. The appointed Election Officer may accept nominations from the floor, which must be seconded, up to the time of the casting of the ballots.
- b) Every year where a President is to be elected, voters are asked to return five names on their ballots. A slate of five officers is filled by those nominees with the largest number of votes. The members in casting their ballots shall rank their selections in order of preference. A second ballot is held to elect the President from among the new officers elected in the first ballot. Any new officer may withdraw his candidacy for the position of the President. A nominee for President must have previously served the Group in some capacity, on the Executive Board, or in a committee. In the event that no newly elected officer stands for the position of President, the second ballot is declared null and void, and the Election Officer shall accept nominations from the floor for President according to the procedure outlined above.
- c) The elected officers shall decide among themselves which of them shall hold which Executive Board position for the period of their mandate.

Section 3. Ballot election, Term of Office.

The elected officers shall be elected by ballot. Their term of office shall begin at the close of the Annual General Meeting at which they are elected. The terms of office are for one year, or until their respective successors are elected.

Section 4. Vacancies of Officers.

Any vacancy amongst the elected members of the Executive Board may be filled by an appointment by the remaining Board Members. The term of the appointee will end at the next General meeting, where he may be nominated to be elected into that position. Nothing herein shall be construed as preventing the remaining members of the Executive Board from acting notwithstanding a vacancy in their midst.

Section 5. Office Holding Limitations.

No member shall hold more than one office at a time, and no member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 6. Den Daddy.

An honorary officer called the Den Daddy may be appointed in an *ex officio* capacity by the Executive Board for a term to be determined by the Executive Board.

Section 7. Mr. Ottawa Bear.

There may be an officer, at the Executive Board's discretion, called Mr. Ottawa Bear who will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Executive Board, with voting rights in the event of a tie vote among the remaining board members. The Mr. Ottawa Bear shall be chosen at the Mr. Ottawa Bear contest to be held once annually as circumstances permit, and at the Executive Board's discretion. The term of office of Mr. Ottawa Bear shall be from his appointment at a Mr. Ottawa Bear contest, until his successor is selected at the next competition, or until the next year's Annual General Meeting, whichever comes first. Any Active or Associate Member residing within the National Capital Region of Canada may present his candidacy for the title of Mr. Ottawa Bear.

ARTICLE V - Duties of Officers

Section 1. Duties of the President.

The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Group and the Chair of the Executive Board. His general duties include:

- Acting as Group liaison to other Bear Groups;
- Setting the agenda for and chairing meetings of the Executive Board and membership; providing all notices required by the Rules and Regulations of the Group; preparing written and verbal President's messages for each General Meeting;
- Working with the Executive Board to fulfil joint responsibilities; attending all meetings of the Executive Board; and,
- Such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Group.

Section 2. Duties of the Vice-president

The Vice-president is second in command in the club's executive and may

perform duties as acting president when the president is unavailable. The vice-president should aid the president in their duties and the position should be filled by a past club member who has demonstrated commitment and interest in the club's activities (i.e. at least 6 months as an active member). The Vice-president is also responsible for fundraising activities for the club. His general duties include:

- Assisting the President and acting in his place when he is unable to perform his duties
- Devising methods and activities for fundraising in the club
- Organizing a team of volunteers for fundraising activities
- Assisting the Events Co-ordinator and his team with the preparation, funding and completion of club events.
- Attending all meetings of the Executive Board except if excused; and,
- Such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Group.

Section 3. Duties of the Secretary.

The Secretary is the Corporate Secretary of the Group and the recording secretary of the Executive Board. His general duties include:

- Recording minutes and maintaining permanent files of all meetings of the Executive Board and of the general Group membership;
- Providing minutes of the Board meetings to the Executive Board and any other member as directed by the Executive Board;
- Maintaining permanent archives of the Group correspondence, minutes and agendas;
- Working with the Executive Board to fulfil joint responsibilities;
- Handling of all correspondence of the Executive Board;
- Ensuring that Group roster is current and that membership information is collected from new members;
- Attending all meetings of the Executive Board except if excused; and,
- Such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Group.

Section 4. Duties of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer is the Chief Financial Officer of the Group and is responsible for the collection, accounting and the distribution of all Group monies, preparation of an annual Group budget, and development of long-range fiscal planning. His general duties include:

- Working with the Executive Board to develop an annual budget for submission to the Executive Board for consideration during budget deliberations;
- Approving and tracking all Group expenditures and ensures that they are in conformance with the budget;
- Presenting financial reports to the Executive Board and to the general membership;
- Working with the Executive Board to fulfil joint responsibilities;
- Collecting dues and fees from Active Members and helping new Members with forms, etc.;
- Attending all meetings of the Executive Board except if excused; and
- Such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Group.

Section 5. Duties of the MOB Coordinator.

The MOB Coordinator is responsible for planning the annual Mr Ottawa Bear contest, leading a team/committee of volunteers working to organize that event and attending/hosting the monthly Bear Brunches. His general duties include:

- Planning for the annual Mr. Ottawa Bear (MOB) event;
- Chairing the Mr. Ottawa Bear (MOB) Committee as described in Article VIII, Section 2.
- Making regular progress reports to the Executive Board;
- Attending all meetings of the Executive Board except if excused; and,
- Such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Group.

Section 6. Duties of the Events Coordinator.

The Events Coordinator is responsible for co-ordinating all social activities of the Group, which are undertaken to promote the supportive environment, and general camaraderie necessary to the well-being of the Group, and to welcome new members. His general duties include:

- Planning and co-ordinating all Group events as assigned;
- Obtaining necessary permissions/bookings for social events, including brunches, once locations have been determined;
- Preparing and maintaining a current list of volunteers including their areas of expertise;
- Developing a yearly schedule of social activities and co-ordinating it with the overall Group calendar;
- Obtaining and editing all written and visual materials for publication in the Groups' newsletter;
- Attending all meetings of the Executive Board except if excused; and,
- Such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Group.

Section 7. Duties of the Den Daddy.

The Den Daddy is an honorary officer and is *ex officio* a member of the Executive Board. The duties of the Den Daddy shall be defined by the Executive Board from time to time but these include:

- Assisting Mr Ottawa Bear and the Executive board as required,
- Playing an active role at the annual MOB event, and
- Replacing Mr Ottawa Bear at a specific event when requested.

Section 8. Mr. Ottawa Bear.

The Mr. Ottawa Bear is the ambassador of the Ottawa Bears to the LGBTQ community in the National Capital Region, and the Bear community nationally and internationally. His general duties include:

- Attending meetings of the Ottawa Bears as an *ex officio* member of the Executive Board; (note however that Mr Ottawa Bear does have voting rights in the case of a tie vote among the board members)
- Participating in Ottawa Pride Week;
- Attending events put on by the Group;

- Attending events of other groups as Mr Ottawa Bear to promote our bear club;
- Offering to judge other competitions; and
- Performing related work as assigned by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI - Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings.

The regular meetings of the Group shall be held on a date and time determined by a majority of the Executive Board. These meetings shall be chaired by the President. In the absence of the President, the Vice-president shall preside.

Section 2. Annual General Meeting.

The regular meeting in February shall be known as the Annual General Meeting of the Group and shall be for the purpose of electing officers, receiving reports of officers and committees, and for any other business that may arise.

Section 3. Special Meetings.

Special meetings may be called by the Executive Board and shall be called within 30 days upon the written request of ten members of the Group. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least seven days' notice shall be given.

Section 4. Quorum.

The lessor of ten or 50% of the total Active Members of the Group shall constitute a quorum for a meeting of the membership. Three elected officers shall constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Executive Board.

Section 5. Notices of Meetings.

Except in exceptional circumstances, notices of meetings shall be delivered by the President (or by the Vice-president or Secretary on his behalf) to the affected members at least 7 days ahead of the planned meeting date. Meeting notices may be delivered electronically. The notice shall include the agenda, date, time and location of the meeting, as well as any by-law amendments that will come before the meeting for approval.

ARTICLE VII - The Executive Board

Section 1. Board Composition.

The officers of the Group shall constitute the Executive Board. All *ex officio* members are non-voting members of the Executive Board.

Section 2. Board's Duties and Powers.

It is the mandate of the Executive Board to initiate and oversee the organizational and operational activities necessary to carry out the Object and achieve the Goals of the Group. The Executive Board has primary responsibility for all business of the Group. The Executive Board is directly responsible to the general membership of the Group. These duties include communicating and co-operating with other Bear Groups, and communicating and co-operating with other LGBTQ organizations, particularly those in the National Capital Region.

Section 3. Removal of Board Member.

A member of the Executive Board may be removed through the following grounds:

- Missing 3 Board meetings in a row for no valid reason;
- Not upholding the Objects of the Group; or
- Relocation to an area outside the National Capital Region

Removal of a Board member requires a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting, Annual General Meeting, or Special Meeting called for the purpose of removing a Board member.

Section 4. Meetings.

Meetings of the Executive Board shall be held on a date and time as determined by the Executive Board from time to time. Such meetings are open to all Active Members in good standing of the Group.

Section 5. Contractual and Financial Commitments.

Contractual commitments and the signature of documents, including issuing of cheques and financial instruments shall be executed with the explicit authority of the Executive Board. Documents so signed or issued shall be signed by no fewer than two elected officers of the Group.

ARTICLE VIII - Committees

Section 1. Events Committee.

An Events Committee may be created for the purpose of helping the Events Coordinator put on events. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to organize and advertise the monthly Bear Brunches.

Section 2. Mr. Ottawa Bear (MOB) Committee.

A Mr. Ottawa Bear Committee shall be created and chaired by the MOB Coordinator. It shall be the duty of this committee to organize, prepare, and host the Mr. Ottawa Bear Contest. The outgoing -Mr. Ottawa Bear shall be a member of this committee.

Section 3. Other Committees; President's ex officio Committee Membership.

Such other committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the President as the Group or the Executive Board shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work of the Group. The President shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees.

ARTICLE IX - Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Group in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Group may adopt.

ARTICLE X - Amendment of Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any duly constituted meeting of the members by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted to the Executive Board at least 10 days before the meeting where voting on the amendments are to take place.