

CONSTITUTION

OF

THE MARACAS VALLEY ACTION COMMITTEE

ARTICLE 1:

The name of the Association shall be The Maracas Valley Action Committee (hereinafter called "the Association").

ARTICLE 2:

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Association is a non profit, non political organization committed to:

- a) Emphasising community responsibility for the Maracas Valley community,
- b) Promoting maintenance, restoration and enhancement of the natural and man-made environment of Maracas Valley,
- c) Insisting on transparency and the value of public participation in the decision making process of the relevant authorities or bodies concerned with the development of the Maracas Valley community, and all activities incidental thereto.

ARTICLE 3:

OBJECTIVES:

The Association shall seek to:

- a) Create awareness of environmental and related issues generally and in the Maracas Valley particularly;
- b) Establish and maintain a register of resource personnel involved in the Association and related areas;
- c) Establish and maintain an updated information base of available resources;
- d) Network with all related associations locally, regionally and internationally;
- e) Provide a forum for open discussion on all matters of interest, relevant to Maracas Valley;
- f) Encourage self improvement through the hosting of seminars, lectures and workshops;
- g) Carry out fundraising activities;
- h) Do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objectives and any other objectives as may be determined by the association from time to time.

ARTICLE 4:

(A) MEMBERSHIP:

- a) The Association shall have an unlimited number of members.
- b) There shall be two (2) classes of membership:
 - i. Single
 - ii. Family

- c) Application for membership shall be made on the prescribed form.
- d) Membership fees for each class shall be determined annually by the Association at the Annual General Meeting.

(B) DETAILS OF MEMBERSHIP:

1. SINGLE MEMBERS:

- a) Shall be persons over the age of 18 years;
- b) Shall have full voting rights and can be elected to office;
- c) Shall be required to pay full membership dues.

3. FAMILY MEMBERS:

- a) Shall consist of parent(s) & child(ren)(children here may be under 18 years);
- b) Parents and children over 18 years of age shall have full individual voting rights and can be individually elected to office;
- c) Children under the age of 18 shall not have full voting rights and cannot ;be elected to office;
- d) Couples shall pay 75% of the full membership fee;

(C) MEMBERSHIP TERMINATION:

The privileges of membership shall not be transferable and a member shall cease to be a member:

- a) If by notice in writing to the Secretary, he/she resigns his/her membership. Such notice shall not prejudice a member's liability to pay the association any other subscription or other sum owed by him/her at the date of his/her resignation. No member who resigns shall have the right to claim the repayment of the unexpired portion of any subscription or other sum paid by him/her to the Association.
- b) If such a member has not paid his/her membership dues for one year.

ARTICLE 5:

FEES:

- a) Shall be due at the beginning of each calendar year, that is, on or before the 31January of each calendar year;
- b) Shall be determined annually by the Association at the Annual General Meeting;

- c) Members in arrears of subscription for three (3) months after the annual membership fee is due shall be deemed non-financial, that is, shall not have the right to vote. If such member does not pay his/ her membership fee for that calendar year, he/she shall cease to be a member (**see ARTICLE 4(C) b**). To resume membership for that year such member shall have to pay his/ her arrears. To resume membership for the following calendar year, such member shall pay the membership fee for the following year.
- d) The Executive may reduce or remit the whole or any part of subscription of any member, where there are special reasons to do so.

**ARTICLE 6:
OFFICERS AND OFFICES OF THE ASSOCIATION:**

(A) ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

- a) Officers must be financial to be available for election;
- b) The Officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting;
- c) The President, Vice-President and Treasurer shall be elected annually and persons so elected shall be eligible for re-election and shall take office immediately after the Annual General Meeting. The Secretary shall be elected for a period of three (3) years and shall be eligible for re-election. Ordinary Committee members shall be elected for a period of three (3) years, but at the conclusion of each year at least two elected members shall retire from the Committee by rotation. Committee members so retiring may be re-elected for a further period of three (3) years. After six continuous years of office an elected Committee member must retire and shall not be eligible for re-election for the period of one year;
- d) Any casual vacancy in the Committee may be filled by the Committee and any person appointed to fill such a casual vacancy shall hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for election at that meeting;
- e) No nominee for Executive Office shall be actively involved in the executive of any political party nor make the Association politically affiliated;
- f) Officers must be financial members

(B) OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION:

The Executive Committee shall consist of the following officers:

- a) President;
- b) Vice President;
- c) Secretary;

- d) Treasurer;
 - e) Assistant Secretary/Treasurer;
- In addition to:
- f) Three (3) Standing Committees Members.

**ARTICLE 7:
DUTIES OF OFFICERS:**

(A) THE PRESIDENT:

The President shall serve as administrative head and chairperson of the Executive and the Association. The President is responsible to the Executive and the Association for the efficient and effective delivery of the Association's mission.

The President shall always have a casting vote and shall be ex-officio member of all committee. The President shall be one of the signatories for cheques. Issued by the Association;

(B) THE VICE-PRESIDENT:

The Vice-President shall assist the President in the day-to-day administration of the Association. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall preside at meetings and shall assume the authorities and responsibilities of the President.

(C) THE SECRETARY:

- i. Shall keep an accurate record of all business contracted at meetings;
- ii. With the assistance of the Assistant Secretary and members of a co-opted Secretariat, the Secretary shall keep the minutes of proceedings of the Executive Committee and of the Annual General Meeting and all meetings that may be convened by these bodies from time to time.
- iii. Shall keep the files and shall deal with correspondence of the Association;
- iv. Shall be responsible for all administrative reports except financial statements of the Association;
- v. Shall be one of the signatories to cheques issued by the Association.

(D) THE TREASURER:

- i. Shall keep an up-to-date register of the financial members of the Association;
- ii. Shall deposit all monies received in a bank account in the name of the Association within two (2) working days;
- iii. Shall be responsible for the preparation and presentation of financial reports that may be required from time to time, but at least once each year;

- iv. Shall be responsible for the preparation and presentation of the Annual Report and budget of the Association at the Annual General Meeting;
- v. Shall prepare the annual budget of the Association and shall submit same at the Annual General Meeting for approval;
- vi. Shall be one of the signatories to cheques issued by the Association;
- vii. Shall be an ex-officio member of the Fund Raising Committee.

(E) THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY/TREASURER

- i. Shall be responsible for all the duties of the Secretary and Treasurer in their absence.
- ii. Shall perform such duties as delegated by the Secretary and/or Treasurer

(F) COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Shall form an integral part of the Executive and shall assist Officers in the day-to-day decision making and administration of the Association. The Committee may be assigned such other responsibilities as the Executive may determine.

The members of the Executive Committee must at all times uphold the Constitution of the Association.

ARTICLE 8:

STANDING COMMITTEES:

At the Annual General Meeting the following Standing Committees shall be appointed:

- a) Public Relations;
- b) Projects/programmes;
- c) Fund Raising.

Three (3) to five (5) persons shall be appointed to each committee and the Chairman of each Standing Committee shall have the power to co-opt other members.

ARTICLE 9:

MEETINGS:

- i. An **Annual General Meeting** shall be held at such place and time as designated by the Executive. Members who wish to have matters placed on the Agenda shall submit such in writing not later than 30 days before the meeting. The business of such meeting shall be:
 - a. The election of Officers and Committee Members, including members of Standing Committees;
 - b. The passing of reports and accounts;
 - c. The appointment of Auditors;

- ii. A **General Meeting** shall be held at least once every four (4) months.
- iii. Notice of such meetings shall be dispatched by the Secretary by regular or electronic mail to all members not less than 14 days before the date of the meeting.
- iv. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once every two (2) months. However, it may at anytime call any number of meetings during its tenure.
- v. The Executive shall, with good reason, defer the dates of the Annual General Meeting, but for no later than one (1) month after its due date.

ARTICLE 10:

QUORUM:

- i. The quorum at a **General Meeting** shall be 20% of the membership of good standing or such other number as may be determined from time to time in **General Meetings**.
- ii. The President or Vice President and two (2) other members shall form a quorum for an **Executive Meeting**. If there is no quorum at the Executive Meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned for no more than fourteen (14) days. The number of persons present at the deferred meeting, but not less than two (2), shall constitute the quorum for the new meeting.
- iii. One third (1/3) of the membership, but on no account less that two (2) members of all standing and other committee shall constitute a quorum for the **Standing Committee Meetings**.

ARTICLE 11:

VOTING:

All questions brought before a meeting of the Association shall be determined by a simple majority of votes of the registered and financial members physically present, by a show of hands or by ballots, which ever may appear to the Chairman of the meeting to be more convenient. The Chairman of the meeting, in case of a deadlock, shall have a casting vote in addition to his deliberative vote. The casting vote shall only be used if he has already used the deliberative vote.

**ARTICLE 12:
FINANCE:**

- i. The Financial Year shall be from January 1st to December 31st of the same year. The Executive Committee shall have prepared and audited every year, a statement of receipts and expenditures, and prepare a balance sheet made up to the 31st day of December. The balance sheet shall be submitted to the Association at the next Annual General Meeting. Copies of the balance sheet shall be made available to every financial member present at the Annual General Meeting.
- ii. All committees shall prepare and submit to the Treasurer budgets at the beginning of the financial year and before the start of all projects. A statement of all projects and their activities for the year must be submitted to the Treasurer within one (1) month of January 1st of each year.
- iii. All monies received by committees shall be handed to the Treasurer who shall deposit same in the Association's bank account. All cheques issued by the Association must be signed by any two (2) of the following officers:- the President, Secretary , Treasurer. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President will sign, and in the absence of the Secretary or Treasurer, the Assistant Secretary/Treasurer will sign.
- iv. All Chairpersons of Standing Committees must submit statements of accounts to the Association's Treasurer at least twice a year and at least one (1) month prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- v. All approaches for funds or aid from external sources must be made by persons duly authorized by the Executive.
- vi. At the Annual General Meeting each year, one (1) person shall be appointed as Auditor, and shall, at least one (1) month before the next Annual General Meeting, or as requested by the Executive, examine the Treasurer's accounts and shall certify the annual statement of accounts and balance sheet.

**ARTICLE 13:
LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP/ VOTING RIGHTS:**

Any member shall lose membership with the Association in the following circumstances:

- i. Failure to pay membership fees for one (1) year. If within three (3) months after becoming due a member fails to pay the membership fee due for a particular year, such member shall become non-financial and lose his/her entitlement to vote.
- ii. Failure to pay any debts owing to the Association.
- iii. Where a member exploits the membership for political activity.
- iv. After receiving two (2) notices of infringement of the rules of the Association which are not settled by the member.
- v. Where, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, the conduct of the member is not in the best interest of the Association and as such will bring the Association into disrepute.

**ARTICLE 14:
AMENDMENTS:**

This constitution may be amended by simple majority vote by financial members present at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special Meeting called for the purpose, provided twenty-eight (28) days written notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all financial members.

**ARTICLE 15:
DOUBT:**

Any doubt arising as to the application or meaning of any article shall be decided by a vote, at a General Meeting. The result of that vote shall be final and conclusive.

**ARTICLE 16:
LIABILITY:**

No Officer of the Association shall be held personally liable for any debts incurred by the Association.

**ARTICLE 17:
DISSOLUTION:**

If at any General Meeting, a resolution for the dissolution of the Association is passed by a majority of the members present, then at a Special General Meeting convened not less than one (1) month thereafter, and at which not less than half (1/2) the members must be present, the resolution is confirmed by two-third (2/3) of the members voting thereon.

The Executive shall thereupon, at a date specified in the resolution, proceed to realise the property of the Association and after the discharge of all liabilities, donate the remaining property to a named association of charity.

ARTICLE 18:
EFFECTIVE DATE:

This constitution shall take effect from.....14th July 2005