

# *NORTH AMERICAN SEARCH DOG NETWORK*

## CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS



ADOPTED AT GENERAL MEETING, APRIL 20, 1989  
AMENDED AT GENERAL MEETING, MAY 19, 2002  
AMENDED AT GENERAL MEETING, APRIL 8, 2006  
AMENDED AT GENERAL MEETING, APRIL 28, 2007

# CONSTITUTION

## Article I

### Name and Objectives

The name of this organization shall be:

The NORTH AMERICAN SEARCH DOG NETWORK.

2. The objectives of this organization shall be:

- a.) The advancement, promotion and training of all breeds of search dogs in Law enforcement, search and rescue, and disaster work, throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.
- b.) To make available to law enforcement agencies and search and rescue operations throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico, handlers and dogs capable of assisting in all areas encompassing the various breeds of search dogs.
- c.) To establish a computerized network of data provided by members regarding their experience and area(s) of expertise, to enable the network to provide such expertise as required.
- d.) To serve and educate both law enforcement agencies and the general public to the many uses and benefits of utilizing K-9 assistance in all areas of law enforcement, search and rescue, and disaster work.
- e.) To serve and assist the members through the “networking” process.

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# NORTH AMERICAN SEARCH DOG NETWORK

## BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I

#### MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 Types of Membership: Membership shall be open to all legal residents of Canada, Mexico or the United States of America, eighteen years of age or older, who subscribe to the purposes of NASDN and meet the requirements contained in these bylaws. All full members shall be entitled to one vote.
- 1.2 Identification and Patches: Membership cards, renewable each year, shall be furnished to all members upon acceptance of membership. All members shall also receive a copy of the Constitution and by-laws. An official NASDN patch shall be provided only to members of probationary or full status, who shall be the only individuals authorized to wear it. Membership cards and patches shall remain the property of NASDN.
- 1.3 Termination of Membership: Members may be terminated by:
  - A. Resignation: Any member in good standing may resign by giving written notice of resignation to the Secretary. Members who resign when in debt to NASDN must satisfy such debt at the time of the resignation. Resignations shall be effective upon receipt by the Secretary.
  - B. Lapsing: A membership shall be considered lapsed and automatically terminated if a member's dues are not paid in full and received by the Treasurer by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
  - C. Termination: A member may be terminated from NASDN membership as provided by section 1.4 of these by-laws.
- 1.4 Discipline:
  - A. Notice: Upon presentation to the Officers and Board of sufficient probable cause warranting an investigation or inquiry into the conduct of any member deemed to be prejudicial to the best interests of the organization or the breed of working dog, for conduct unbecoming a member, or for dereliction of official duties as determined by the Officers and Board of Directors, said member shall immediately be notified, in writing, by either the President or his or her designee, of the allegations. This notification will include a request for:
    - I. Denial, or

2. Detailed explanation, or
3. Request for a hearing before the Officers and Board of Directors at either the next Board of Directors' meeting, or the next annual meeting, whichever comes first, or if the allegations are of a sufficiently serious nature, as determined by the Officers and Board of Directors, that a delay in action would imminently unduly harm or otherwise hinder the normal operations of the organization, the Officers and Board of Directors may, at their discretion, on a date other than the next Board or Annual meeting, conduct said hearing by conference call as provided by Article IV, Section 4.5 (C) of these by-laws.

This notification will be sent to the concerned member by registered mail and postmarks will determine the timeliness of all correspondence pertaining to action taken under this Article.

The aforementioned member shall respond, in writing, within ten (10) days of receipt of notification and the absence of a written response within ten (10) days, to the author, may be deemed a tacit concession to the allegations.

In any case, the Officers and Board of Directors will be notified of the results of the correspondence and provided with copies thereof. The Officers and Board of Directors will then vote for:

- (1) a dismissal of charges, or
- (2) set a location, date and time of hearing, or date and time of conference call hearing when the severity of the allegations require expediency for the good of the organization, as determined by the Officers and Board of Directors under 1.4 (3) above, and cause written notification to the member at least 30 days prior to the date of such hearing.

B. Hearing: Presiding over the hearing shall be the Officers and Board of Directors.

Upon termination of presentation of facts of the allegations and rebuttal, the Officers and Board Members will vote secretly for one of the following and the majority vote will prevail:

- (1) dismissal of allegations.
- (2) letter of censure.
- (3) suspension of membership for a period not to exceed six (6) months from the date of the decision.

- (4) termination of membership.
- (5) removal from position of responsibility and all official organizational duties.

1.5 Membership Applications:

- A. Applicants for membership must meet the following criteria:
  - (1) all formal prerequisites for membership have been completed.
  - (2) based upon available information, the background, character and dedication of the applicant indicate that he/she will be an asset to the organization.
  - (3) the applicant has demonstrated an intent to further the purposes of NASDN through the professional and ethical utilization of all search dogs in the public interest.
- B. Each applicant must supply the information required by the Officers and Board of Directors over his or her signature. Annual dues must accompany the Application for Membership and will be returned if the application is disapproved. In cases of persons unknown to the general membership, those individuals will be requested to provide some background information on their experience, breed(s) of dog(s) used, successes, etc.
- C. Any member found to falsify any information provided on the application for Membership, the Registration Form, or any other document, shall be expelled from the membership as provided herein.

1.6 Acceptance to Membership:

- A. No person's application shall be considered for probationary membership until all of the required application materials are submitted.
- B. Once the membership application is approved, the applicant shall be a probationary member for one (1) year or less from the date of such approval until full membership is approved or denied by the Officers and Board of Directors. An additional thirty (30) days probationary period may be imposed if deemed necessary by the Officers and Board.
- C. A probationary member has no voting rights. In addition, a probationary member has no vested interest or rights of full membership and can be terminated and denied full membership upon majority vote of the Board of Directors and Officers. There will be no right to a hearing for such termination or denial.

- D. The Board of Directors and Officers have a right to refuse any membership, including probationary status, if they believe it will not benefit NASDN.

1.7 Associate Membership

- A. Associate members shall be individuals who, or businesses which subscribe to the purposes and goals of NASDN.
- B. These members do not serve in any advisory capacity, they are not eligible for office and do not have a right to vote.
- C. Entitlements are that they shall receive with each paid annual membership an associate membership card, such other benefits as determined by the Board of Directors and an opportunity for annual membership.

1.8 Honorary Membership

- A. Honorary members are distinguished persons of long standing and devotion to the objectives of this organization who are elected to Honorary Membership in the organization by the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting.
- B. Nominations must be submitted to the Officers and Board of Directors in writing 45 days in advance of the annual meeting. These members shall not pay dues and shall retain membership for life.

ARTICLE II

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

- 2.1 Annual Dues: Annual individual membership dues shall be determined by the Board of Directors. Dues shall be paid annually in U. S. funds to the Treasurer, no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year. Memberships run from January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The Treasurer shall cause a notice of impending renewal of membership with appropriate renewal form being mailed to all current members.

- 2.2 New Members: Upon approval of a new individual Membership Application, at any time prior to October 1 of any calendar year, said applicant shall be required to remit to the organization the full amount of the annual dues required by Section 2.1 above. Dues received on or after October 1<sup>st</sup> shall Satisfy the requirement through December 31 of the following year.

- 2.3 Delinquencies: Any individual member whose dues are delinquent after March 1<sup>st</sup> of the new calendar year shall be dropped from the membership roll and mailing list. In all cases of untimely correspondence, U. S. Post Office postmarks shall prevail.

- 2.4 Change of Address: It is the sole responsibility of each member to notify the Secretary of address and phone number changes.

ARTICLE III  
OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TERMS OF OFFICE

3.1 Officers:

- A. The Officers of NASDN shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Legal Advisor to the Board and Public Relations Chairperson.
- B. All officers shall initially be appointed by the founding members of the organization.
- C. Terms of offices shall be determined at the first Annual Meeting, at which time Officers and members shall establish the length of time to be served by each. All terms should be staggered so that there is not a full change of Officers in one year.
- D. All Officers shall be eligible for election/re-election to succeed themselves.
- E. Should the President not seek re-election or fails to be re-elected by the membership, he/she shall automatically become a member of the Board of Directors for one (1) year.
- F. Vacancies in the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Legal Advisor to the Board and Public Relations Chairperson may be filled by the Board of Directors. Appointments shall be for the unexpired terms of office.
- G. The Officers shall consist of seven (6) members and a majority shall be active law enforcement agents and/or members of recognized search and rescue groups which may consist of private volunteers.

3.2 Board of Directors:

- A. The NASDN Board of Directors shall consist of thirteen (13) members, with one (1) elected by the Board to serve as the Chairperson. It shall be composed of the following members:
  - 1. Eight (8) members residing in the United States; and
  - 2. Three (3) members residing in Canada; and
  - 3. Two (2) members residing in Mexico.A majority of these to be active law enforcement agents and/or members of recognized search and rescue groups.

- B All Board members shall initially be appointed by the founding members of NASDN. The founding members shall be the original Officers of NASDN.
- C. Terms of offices shall be determined at the first Annual Meeting, at which time Officers and members shall establish the length of time to be served by each. All terms should be staggered so that there is not a full change of Board Members in one (1) year.
- D. All Board Members shall be eligible for election/re-election to succeed themselves. There is no limit to the number of terms a Board Member can serve.
- E. Vacancies on the Board of Directors may be filled by the Board of Directors. Appointments shall be for the unexpired terms of office.
- F. The President may appoint two (2) alternate members to the Board of Directors to serve for one (1) year. Alternates will be invited to attend all meetings and shall have the power to vote only if they fill a vacancy.

3.3 Personal Liability: Officers and Members of the Board of Directors shall hold no personal liability for actions taken in their capacity as Officers and Members of the Board of Directors of the North American Search Dog Network.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- 4.1 President: The President shall preside at all meetings of the organization and shall have the authority to call for special meetings whenever deemed necessary.
- 4.2 Vice President: The Vice President shall, in the absence of the President, or upon his/her request, perform all of the duties of the President. In the event of death, disability, or resignation of the President, the Vice President shall succeed him/her for the unexpired term.
- 4.3 Secretary: The Secretary shall give notice and keep minutes of all general membership and NASDN Board meetings. He/she shall keep a record of all the names, addresses, phone numbers and affiliations of all members, and shall maintain a file of all materials and data submitted by each member.  
  
The Secretary shall receive and retain copies of all official correspondence, as well as all other records deemed necessary and beneficial to the organization.
- 4.4 Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all NASDN funds. He/she shall be responsible for the collection of monies due to NASDN and shall pay all NASDN bills. Bills over one hundred dollars (\$100.00) shall be paid only after said bills are approved by the President, Vice President or Chairperson

of the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall make an annual financial report to NASDN members at the Annual Business Meeting and the President, Vice President or Chairperson of the Board of Directors at their discretion.

The Treasurer shall be bonded shortly after taking office. NASDN shall pay for all bonding costs and a copy of the bonding shall be provided to any Officer or Board Member upon request.

He/she shall maintain all financial and business records deemed necessary and beneficial to NASDN

#### 4.5

##### The Board of Directors:

- A. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for governing NASDN and shall conduct the affairs of NASDN giving primary consideration to NASDN's objectives. It shall be the Board's responsibility to be involved in some manner or give input into the teaching and training sessions/seminars that are supported by or sponsored in whole or in part by NASDN. It shall also plan to make available, through the cooperation of the members, trained search dogs and handlers for actual case work; assist in the locating and placing of search dog stock; and be involved in the usage of various breeds of search dogs. The Board of Directors shall also promote the use of search dogs through education and the dissemination of information to law enforcement and the general public.
- B. The Board of Directors shall have the responsibility of bringing about an annual audit of all of the NASDN's monies and property on hand through July 31<sup>st</sup>. This shall be completed by September 1<sup>st</sup>, and a report made available for the Secretary to prepare and send to all members prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
- C. The Board of Directors shall meet annually, with additional meetings as deemed necessary. Correspondence and conference calls between members of the Board and Officers may be done in lieu of organizing additional meetings. At all formal meetings, the order of business shall be as follows, and in accordance to Robert's Rule of Orders:
- Roll call
  - Reading of minutes of last meeting.
  - Report of the President
  - Report of the Secretary
  - Report of the Treasurer
  - Unfinished business
  - New business
  - Adjournment

All questions of order not provided for herein shall be determined by parliamentary procedure, as found in Robert's Rules of Order.

D. Members shall receive an agenda prior to the Annual Business Meeting and any other official meeting at which they have the right to vote. Provisions shall be made for voting by proxy or by ballot for those unable to attend such official meetings. A quorum shall consist of those members present.

4.6 Legal Advisor: The Legal Advisor to the Board shall be a licensed attorney qualified to advise and direct NASDN in matters regarding establishment of Constitution and by-laws, protocol, testimony in court as it relates to the use of search dogs, and any other matters deemed necessary to the welfare of NASDN

The Legal Advisor to the Board may be consulted by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, or by an Officer(s) designated by the Chairperson concerning the legal affairs of NASDN. The function of the office of Legal Advisor shall not be to give legal advice to individuals members, but only to NASDN.

4.7 Public Relations Chairperson: The Public Relations Chairperson shall be involved in various media releases about NASDN and such other topics of interest and importance as they relate to the use of search dogs.

The Public Relations Chairperson shall be responsible for appointing a committee to assist in carrying out the various duties of this office, as the need arises. No expenses shall be incurred by this Chairperson without prior approval from the Treasurer and Board Chairperson, or the Executive Board.

## ARTICLE V

### ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

5.1 The Annual Business Meeting shall be held at a time and location determined by the Officers and Board of Directors each year.

5.2 A quorum shall consist of the voting members who are present.

5.3 The order of business shall be as follows whenever possible, and in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order:

- Roll call
- Reading of minutes of last meeting
- Report of the Board of Directors
- Report of the President
- Report of the Secretary
- Report of the Treasurer
- Report of the Committees
- Old business
- Election of Officers
- New business
- Adjournment

- 5.4 All questions of order not provided for herein shall be determined by the provisions contained in Robert's Rules of Order.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION AND BY-LAWS**

- 6.1 Amendments to the Articles of incorporation and By-Laws must be submitted to the Secretary and to the Board of Directors forty-five (45) days in advance of an Annual Business Meeting. They shall be printed in the minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting and shall be sent to each member prior to the Annual Business Meeting. A majority of eligible members present at any annual meeting must approve prior to its adoption. Absentee ballots from eligible voting members will be accepted and these will be counted as the member being present to vote.
- 6.2 When proposed amendments are submitted to each member, in accordance with this Article, the proposal shall include an absentee ballot for the convenience of members who are unable to attend the Annual Business Meeting and the ballot, in order to be valid, must be in the possession of the Secretary no later than ten (10) days prior to the meeting of the organization concerned with said purpose.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **USE OF NASDN NAME**

- 7.1 The use of the name and/or logo of the North American Search Dog Network in any advertising or for any commercial purpose shall be discouraged, but may be permitted by action of the Officers and Board of Directors.
- 7.2 No member shall display the name of the North American Search Dog Network in any way other than an official NASDN decal or arm patch without the express permission of the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- 8.1 Officers and Board of Directors shall be elected according to the schedule for established terms of offices, at each Annual Business Meeting of the organization.

Each voting member, as specified in Article I of the By-Laws, shall have the right to one (1) vote. Provisions for voting shall be made, upon request, for members unable to attend the Annual Business meeting.

- 8.2 Upon completion of the casting of ballots, a committee of three (3), appointed by the President, shall tabulate all ballots and make a report of such voting and election results to the Board of Directors.

The ballots shall in no way identify the voters either by name, department, or any other fashion. They shall, however, have the markings of an official ballot.

It shall take a majority of votes cast in order for an Officer to win an election. In the event that no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast (50% + 1), there will be a run-off election between the two top vote getters.

- 8.3 The President shall announce the results of such election and voting to the membership at the Annual Business Meeting or Annual Banquet, and such Officers and Directors shall take office at the close of that year's meeting.

- 8.4 The Officers and Board of Directors acting together have the authority to establish the mechanics of conducting elections as long as doing so does not conflict with other provisions of Article VIII.

- 8.5 A newly-elected Treasurer shall assume all his/her responsibilities except that he/she shall not take custody or control of NASDN's record, checking, or any other type of accounts, and all related materials, including all bills due and receipts collected from the Annual Business Meeting at which he/she was elected, until the Treasurer being replaced has completely and accurately balanced NASDN's financial situation to the satisfaction of the newly elected Treasurer. The financial status report must be reviewed and approved by the Officers and Board of Directors.

Upon balancing the books, the past Treasurer shall close the account(s) and mail a cashier's check for the total(s) in each account, along with all pertinent receipts, balance sheets, statements and any other material deemed necessary by the new Treasurer, to the new Treasurer within thirty (30) days.

Upon receipt of this material, the new Treasurer shall take responsibility of the organization's financial affairs.