

Constitution of The Northeast Livebearer Association rev. 3/10/12

Article I. Name

The Name of this organization shall be the Northeast Livebearer Association, herein known NELA.

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of NELA shall be to further the study of all forms of livebearing fish, to promote interest, exchange ideas, distribute information concerning them, and to encourage the breeding and display of livebearing fish. As such, any activity that makes fish keeping easier is encouraged.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Eligibility of Membership

Any person interested in the objectives of NELA may become a member at the time of paying the prescribed dues. No person shall be denied membership because of age, race, creed, religious or political affiliation, national origin, or gender.

Section 2. Types of Membership

- a) Full membership. Persons who are eighteen (18) or over on January 1 of each year.
- b) Student Membership. Persons who are taking graduate or undergraduate courses in Ichthyology on January 1 of each year.
- c) Junior Membership. Persons who are less than

eighteen (18) years of age on January 1 of each year.

- d) Honorary membership. May be bestowed on those persons who have made outstanding contributions to NELA over a period of time and who have been designated as honorary members by the following procedure:
- i. A member of good standing shall submit a written request for consideration to the Board of Directors.
 - ii. The application must be approved by a majority of the Board of Directors.
 - iii. The Board of Directors shall notify the members of the proposal through newsletter, e-mail, website, or other written means before the meeting at which the proposal will be acted upon.
 - iv. The acceptance of the application for Honorary membership must be sustained at least by 2/3 favorable vote by the voting members present. In the event of an electronic or mail-in election, a 2/3 majority of those voting can so approve.

Section 3. New Membership

Paragraph 1: Individuals interested in becoming a member of NELA shall make application on the association's official application form available on the NELA website or at all meetings.

Paragraph 2: Members shall pay yearly dues as set forth in Article III, Section 6

Section 4. Rights and Privileges of Membership

Paragraph 1: All members in good standing shall be entitled to the following:

- a) A membership card. This card shall be a receipt for payment of dues.
- b) Membership is not transferable
- c) A copy of the by-laws.
- d) A copy of all changes to the by-laws adopted after the member's initial day of membership.
- e) The right to participate in all the general activities of the association.
- f) The right to voluntarily withdraw at any time.

Paragraph 2: Full and Student members in good standing shall be entitled to the following:

- a) Eligibility for appointment as a member of any committee of the association.
- b) The right to nominate and vote on the election of the officers of NELA and such issues as are put to vote.
- c) The right to nomination for and election to any office of the association.

Paragraph 3: Honorary membership

Honorary members have the same rights as Full and Student members of the association but are exempt from the payment of dues.

Section 5. Code of Conduct

Paragraph 1: Members shall promote and bring credit to the association. Members shall not use their position in the association for personal gain. Members shall respect the opinions of other members, other hobbyists outside the association, and any businesses with whom the association

has a relationship.

Paragraph 2: Any member who willfully brings injury or discredit to the association, or disrupts general meetings or meetings of the Board of Directors, or engages in conduct deemed detrimental to the association, will be considered to be in violation of the Code of Conduct and will be subject to expulsion from the association. A hearing will be held by the Board of Directors to consider the expulsion. The member in question will be notified and has the right and will be encouraged to attend the hearing to present their position. The Board of Directors' recommendation for expulsion must be unanimous.

Section 6. Membership Dues

Paragraph 1: The members of NELA will be subject to the following annual dues; payable on January 1 of each calendar year:

- a) Full member: \$10.00
- b) Student member: \$5.00
- c) Junior member: \$ 5.00

Paragraph 2: Failure to pay the yearly membership dues by the last day of March will result in cancellation of membership in the association.

Paragraph 3: Dues will be pro-rated after July 1 for new members. Previous year members are not considered new members after July 1, so are not entitled to proration unless granted so by the board. Past members are to be classed as "new" members after one-year absence.

Proration chart (July-December):

- a) Full member: \$5.00
- b) Student member: \$2.50

c) Junior member: \$2.50

Paragraph 4: No refunds will be made once dues are accepted by the Association.

Article IV. Meetings

Section 1. Membership Meetings

General meetings of the association will take place at least quarterly at a place, date and time set by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Board of Directors Meetings

Paragraph 1: The Board of Directors (BOD) will meet no less often than annually at the call of the President or by the request of the majority of board members for the conduct of the business affairs of the association.

Paragraph 2: A majority of the board members shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of the business of the Board. If a meeting of the BOD fails to obtain a quorum of its members, it may adjourn until a quorum is present. The fact of the adjournment and its reason shall be noted in the minutes of the BOD.

Paragraph 3: All board meetings shall be announced at least 24 hours in advance to the general membership via e-mail or other forms of communication if time allows. All members in good standing may attend and are encouraged to give input.

Paragraph 4: The majority vote of those board members present shall be required in order to approve or disapprove any business.

Article V. Officers and Directors

Paragraph 1: Association business will be managed by a Board of Directors (BOD) consisting of four (4) Officers, and one Board Member. The four officers and one board member will be elected by the members at its summer meeting. This election may also be conducted by email or post, provided all members are notified at least 14 days in advance of the vote deadline.

Paragraph 2: Any person on the Board may be removed by a majority vote by the Board. Officers and Board members will receive no monetary pay.

Paragraph 3: The four positions of Board Officers shall be President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. These four positions will serve a term of one (1) year. Any officer can hold only one officer position per term. Board member will also serve a term of one (1) year.

Article VI. Duties of the Officers

a) The Duties of the President are:

- i. To preside at all meetings, and supervise the affairs of the association.
- ii. To create committees, as necessary, to assist in accomplishing the purposes of the association, and to appoint committee chairperson(s) as needed, such chairperson will appoint a committee as necessary, and will make quarterly progress reports to the Board.
- iii. To ensure regular communication to the membership in a timely manner either by website update, e-mail and/or newsletter by

- iv. appointing respective chairperson (s).
To appoint custodians of the property of the organization, such as books, kitchen equipment, auction goods.

b) The Duties of the Vice President are:

- i. To assume the duties of the president in the event of absence, withdrawal, inability, or refusal to act by the president.
- ii. To perform the duties, as from time to time, may be delegated by the president.
- iii. To be ex officio member of all committees.

c) The Duties of the Treasurer are:

- i. To pay pre-determined accounts, as may be authorized by the membership, and pay the bills presented. All expenditures must be approved by the Board.
- ii. To prepare and submit written, itemized report of receipts and expenditures for the past calendar year, and at any other time when directed by the president.
- iii. To prepare and submit all reports by any government agency.
- iv. To perform other duties, as from time to time, may be assigned by the president.

d) The Duties of the Secretary are:

- i. To cause notices to be served, as required by the bylaws.
- ii. To keep minutes of all regular meetings and board meetings of the Association.

- iii. To perform other duties, as from time to time, may be assigned by the president.

Article VII. Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of the Association, all assets shall be sold at auction and all monies from the sale and the balance of the treasury, after payment of any outstanding obligations, shall be distributed to one or more charitable organizations or funds, such as the Vern Parish Fund or James J. White conservation fund. Consideration of recipients and amounts of disbursement shall be decided by the existing BOD by majority vote.

Article VIII. Amendments

This constitution may be amended by approval of a 2/3 majority of the voting members present. The proposed amendment or change must be introduced at one general meeting, published in the newsletter/web site prior to the reading, and read and voted upon at the next general meeting. At its discretion, a majority of the Board may ask for a vote by ballot, conducted by email or post, provided all members are notified at least 14 days in advance of the vote deadline.