

## **Opportunities and Privileges of Membership**

The objective of the Newcomers Club of New Bern is to help newcomers integrate into their new community by providing opportunities to meet other newcomers, to learn about local and regional resources and history; and to identify ways of contributing to its life, vitality and organizations, both charitable and civic. The Club provides these opportunities in a variety of ways identified below.

Monthly General Meetings provide an opportunity to meet many others who are also recent arrivals in the area. The meetings are a mix of socializing, listening to guest speakers, learning about upcoming events, and signing up for activities.

**New Directions**, our monthly newsletter, is mailed to each member and provides information about the Club, its activities, and special seasonal events.

Our **Annual Directory of Members** lists members who have paid dues by the October meeting. A copy is available for each dues-paid household. They are distributed as soon as available, usually in January and updates are printed periodically and distributed at meetings or with the newsletter.

**Activity Groups** provide the primary opportunity to meet and get to know fellow newcomers. The groups are co-ed and open to all, unless otherwise noted. Groups are always open to new participants; however, a few have limited capacity (for example some restaurants and day trips). Open to new opportunities, we welcome new Activity Groups — all it takes is a suggestion to the Activity Chair and willingness to become (or recruit) an Activity Leader to coordinate that group.

## **Responsibilities of Membership**

With opportunities come responsibilities. One primary responsibility is to remember that we are a member-run club. Having lots of activities, making the newest newcomers feel welcome, even having refreshments at meetings — these and other important tasks only happen when people pitch in. Please don't hesitate to help out, or to volunteer for a leadership or a supportive role.

Secondly, it is important that we protect our member's privacy. Our Membership Directory is strictly for the personal use of our members, and not for commercial use. Our bylaws prohibit promotional presentations or distribution of literature by commercial interests except our sponsors (See Article 12.)

**Activity Guidelines.** Although specifics vary, Activities have some shared guidelines:

1. When an activity can only accommodate a fixed number, please sign up only if you are sure you will attend. If you must cancel, notify the Activity Leader as soon as possible.
2. When activities are held in a member's home, it is your responsibility to inform the hosts of any change in plans, again as soon as possible.
3. Activities are self-supporting — participants share any costs and these must be paid at the time specified by the Activity Leader. Some may involve a monetary contract, in which case the fee may not be refunded if you do not attend.

### **Life After Newcomers**

Club membership is open to all newcomers within their first year in the community and is limited to three fiscal years. However, the fun does not end then! After completing 3 years as a member of Newcomers Club, members are eligible to join the Alumni Group of Newcomers; membership in the Alumni Group is also open to newcomers who did not join Newcomers Club during their first year of residence.

## **BYLAWS OF THE NEWCOMERS CLUB OF NEW BERN**

### **ARTICLE 1: NAME**

The name of the club will be NEWCOMERS CLUB OF NEW BERN, referred to as the Club.

### **ARTICLE 2: OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the Club is to help newcomers integrate into our community by providing opportunities to meet other newcomers, to learn about local and regional resources and history; and to identify ways of contributing to its life, vitality and organizations, both charitable and civic.

### **ARTICLE 3: MEETINGS**

Regular meeting of the Club shall be held on the second Wednesday of each month from September through May, with the exception of December, unless the Board orders otherwise and issues notice to the membership one month in advance. The Annual Meeting of the Club shall be held on the second Wednesday in April for the purpose of electing Officers and Directors. The regular April meeting will directly follow the election.

## **ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP**

A. **Eligibility.** Any adult shall be eligible for membership for up to one year after moving into the New Bern area and shall become a member upon completion of the Club's application form and payment of annual dues. There shall be no discrimination against prospective or current members because of race, color, or creed.

B. **Dues.** The Board shall set annual dues at the first Board meeting of each fiscal year. Any change in dues during the fiscal year shall be approved by a majority vote of the Board and shall be published in the newsletter at least 2 months prior to the effective date. New members who pay dues after April 1 shall be considered paid members for the next fiscal year.

C. **Renewal and forfeiture.** Membership may be renewed twice, thus limiting membership to three full fiscal years. Membership dues are payable after July 1 and by the October meeting. Notice of the dues deadline shall be published in the September and October newsletters. Delinquent members shall forfeit membership on October 31 if their dues remain unpaid, and they may not participate in Club activities and will not receive the newsletter or directory of members.

## **ARTICLE 5: FISCAL YEAR AND AUDIT**

The fiscal year of the Club commences on July 1 and closes on June 30. An annual internal audit of the Club's financial records will be performed by two members appointed by the Executive Board, and shall be completed not later than 30 days after the end of the fiscal year with written report to the board at the September Board meeting.

## **ARTICLE 6: OFFICERS**

The officers of the Club shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers shall comprise the Executive Board, and are elected for one-year terms. An officer may serve for one additional year, if elected, not to exceed the three-year membership limit.

## **ARTICLE 7: BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors (Board) shall consist of the Officers and four Directors. Activity Leaders shall be ex-officio members of the Board with voting privileges, and they shall not be counted in determining whether a quorum is present. The Board has authority over all affairs of the Club except as noted in these bylaws. The Board will meet monthly with the exception of July and December.

## **ARTICLE 8: COMMITTEES**

- A. **Standing Committees.** There shall be four Standing Committees: Activities, Membership, Newsletter, and Social. A Director shall chair each Standing Committee.
- B. Special Committees. The Board may authorize such special committees, as it deems necessary.

## **ARTICLE 9: NOMINATION AND ELECTION**

- A. Officers and Directors. The President shall appoint a Chair and two members of a Nominating Committee who will solicit and prepare a list of candidates for President, Vice- President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the four Directors. The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall submit the list of candidates to the Board at its March meeting and, with Board approval, shall publish the list in the Club newsletter. At the Annual Meeting in April, the Chair of the Nominating Committee shall submit the slate of nominees, at which time the President shall entertain nominations from the floor and the general membership shall vote on the candidates. The candidates receiving a majority of votes of the members present shall be declared elected. New officers are installed at the regular Club meeting in May.
- B. Vacancy. In the event of a vacancy in an elected position (with the exception of the President, which is automatically filled by the Vice-President), the Nominating Committee shall nominate and the board shall appoint a member to serve until the end of the fiscal year.

## **ARTICLE 10: DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

- A. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board and of the Club. The President, as chief executive officer of the Club, shall sign all contracts and other written instruments to which the Club is a party, including the Club's checks when necessary, and which have been approved by the Board and/or the Club, and shall perform all other duties usually incident to the office. The President shall serve ex officio on any standing committee except the Nominating Committee.
- B. The Vice-President shall preside in the absence of the President. Should the office of the President become vacant, the Vice-President shall automatically fill the office for the remainder of the term. The Vice-President shall also be Program Chair and in that capacity shall arrange all the programs for the monthly general meetings.

C. The Secretary shall take minutes at Board and Annual meetings, read or distribute minutes for correction and approval, and shall handle Club correspondence, including "Sunshine" cards or letters.

D. The Treasurer shall collect all dues, maintain the Club's bank account, keep accurate records of the Club's finances, disburse funds on the order of the Board of Directors and obtain receipts for same. The Treasurer shall make all records available for the yearly audit.

#### **ARTICLE 11: ADVISORS**

Neighbors of New Bern Hostess/Host or Assistants shall be advisors to the Board of Directors. These advisors do not vote, pay dues, nor have any of the obligations of membership and they cannot become members of the Club. An Advisor shall attend all meetings of the Board of Directors.

#### **ARTICLE 12: SPONSOR PARTICIPATION**

With the exception of representatives of civic, social, and non-profit organizations, only Neighbors of New Bern sponsors may address a Club meeting or take part in Club programs. Sponsors shall not be solicited for donations, door prizes or gifts of any kind; however, no sponsor desiring to do so shall be prevented from voluntarily making such donations.

#### **ARTICLE 13: QUORUM**

A majority of those members present at any Club meeting shall constitute a quorum. A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for Board meetings.

#### **ARTICLE 14: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, In Brief (published 2004) shall govern the organization in all cases where they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Club may adopt.

#### **ARTICLE 15: AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Club by a two-thirds majority provided that previous notice of the amendment was given to all members at least eight days in advance. When extensive changes are required, the President shall appoint a Bylaws Revision Committee. Adoption of revised bylaws requires a majority vote of the Board, at which the proposed revision may be amended or referred back to the Committee. Upon approval, the revised bylaws shall be submitted to the Club provided that previous notice of the

revision was given to all members at least eight days in advance. Adoption of revised bylaws will be by a majority of the members present.

Revised: July 2006

Approved by the Board: November 2, 2006

Adopted by the Club: November 8, 2006

Certified by: Patti H. Fleming, Secretary