

VIDYARANYA KANNADA KUTA*
CONSTITUTION
&
BYLAWS

Amended April 2015 – Final Version

(Incorporates all amendments approved by
VKK Special General Body Meeting held on April 4, 2015)

* VIDYARANYA KANNADA KUTA is herein referred to as “Kuta” in this
Constitution & Bylaws.

CONSTITUTION OF VIDYARANYA KANNADA KUT

ARTICLE I NAME & OFFICES

- Section 1** The name of the organization shall be “**VIDYARANYA KANNADA¹ KUTA**. It shall be a not-for-profit organization registered under the laws of the State of Illinois.
- Section 2** The principal place of the organization shall be a physical address in the State of Illinois. This address shall not be changed without prior approval by the General Body.

ARTICLE II OBJECTIVES

- Section 1** To organize meetings for the Kannadiga² population of Illinois at least three to four times a year.
- Section 2** To promote cultural activities related to the Kannadiga population.
- Section 3** To provide an educational forum through which children can participate in cultural and social activities representative of Karnataka's regional traditions.
- Section 4** To support humanitarian causes through the Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta Charitable Fund.
- Section 5** In the execution of objectives in Sections 2 through 4 above, if needed, collaborate with other not-for-profit organizations with objectives similar to that of Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Membership Eligibility

Membership shall be open to anyone who supports the objectives of the organization. Knowledge of the Kannada language, and, being born in Karnataka, are not prerequisites. Any person who is 21 years or older, has paid the annual membership dues and agrees to abide by the objectives of the Kuta, is eligible to become a member.

Section 2 Type of Membership

There are three types of membership: Family, Student and Individual. Family Membership: Member with a Spouse, dependent children below 22 years of age as well as parents of the member and spouse. Student Membership: For students aged 21 years or above and who are full-time students. Individual members: All others are considered as individual members. All such members together constitute the "**General Body**" of the organization.

Section 3 Application for Membership and Approval

A prospective member shall fill out an application and pay the membership dues. The Executive Committee shall have the right to review and approve all membership applications. Once approved, he/ she/ family shall become member/members of the Kuta.

¹ *Kannada is a regional language spoken by the people of Karnataka State in India*

² *Kannadigas are defined as persons hailing from the Karnataka State or those whose ancestors hailed from Karnataka State.*

Section 4 Membership Dues

The annual membership dues for each calendar year shall be determined by the Executive Committee of that year and it shall be within the guidelines approved by the Annual General Body immediately preceding the beginning of the calendar year.

The membership dues may be revised from time to time to keep up the costs of running the organization but such revision may be made only once in each calendar year. Each year at the Annual General Body Meeting, the membership dues shall be reassessed as part of the Treasurer's Report and also based on request by the member elected to assume the Office of the President at the beginning of succeeding calendar year. Guests are welcome to participate in all functions of the Kuta. There shall be an entrance fee for guests for each function, which shall be previously determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 5 Membership Period

Annual membership shall begin on January 1st of each year. Membership dues shall be paid on or before the Yugadi Function of each year. The membership shall be valid for the calendar year. However, the membership shall remain valid until Yugadi function of the following year in situations including signing petitions to call special General Body meetings, exercising voting power in special General Body meetings, and admission to special functions, which may be held before the Yugadi function.

A person may also become a member of the Kuta after Yugadi function. The membership shall expire on December 31st of the same year irrespective of when during the calendar year they become members for the year. Such a person shall still have all other rights stated above,

Section 6 Membership Privileges

A person holding a family membership shall be eligible to bring that member's spouse, parents (of both spouse and member) and children of member and spouse below 22 years to the four "family get-together" activities without paying additional fees. Individual and student members shall be eligible to attend themselves only to the four "family get-together" activities without paying additional fees.. These four activities shall be Yugadi/New Year's day, Annual Picnic, Ganesha Festival, and Rajyotsava celebration. All others who wish to participate in any function of the Kuta shall be considered as guests and shall be required to pay guest charges. (Article III, Section 4).

Membership dues must have been paid by October 1st of a given year for exercising voting franchise in the same year and to contest for the position of President/President-Elect or to be selected as members of the Executive Committee in that year.

Section 7 Member in Good Standing

To be considered as "a member in good standing" for a given year, a member shall have had at least one full year of the Kuta membership status in the year immediately preceding the given year. Members in good standing shall be eligible to be elected as members of the Advisory Board, Standing Committees of the Kuta or as President or President Elect of the Kuta.

Section 8 Disqualification of Membership Rights and Reinstatement

- a) Nonpayment of the annual dues shall automatically disqualify a member of his or her rights to membership privileges. Any member disqualified due to nonpayment of annual dues shall be eligible for reinstatement after paying the membership dues.
- b) The Executive Committee shall have the right to suspend a member from all membership rights if that member demonstrates activities against the purposes, objectives, and goals of the organization. Suspension of membership rights will require two-thirds majority votes in the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall refer such a case to the urgent attention of the General Body.
- c) The General Body shall evaluate the situation and decide for or against reinstatement. Such decisions will require two-thirds majority of the General Body quorum voting in favor of the suspension or reinstatement.

ARTICLE IV VOTING RIGHTS

Family membership for a given year (with dues paid by October 1st of the year) shall entitle two members of the family to have voting franchise in the given year. Likewise, an Individual member and a Student member shall be eligible for one vote.

Votes shall not be transferable to other family members. Proxy votes shall not be allowed.

While youth below 22 years shall be considered under family membership for admittance to events, such youth shall not have any voting rights. However, if they choose to become independent members (over 21 years of age) with payment of membership dues as a single member or as a student member, they shall be eligible for voting rights.

ARTICLE V COMMUNICATIONS WITH MEMBERS

The official medium of communication to and between members of the organization shall be electronic. Courtesy arrangement should be made to send hard form of communication to those members that request on an annual basis.

Since a website plays an important part in making the electronic form of communication, the Executive Committee shall not permit the existing official website of Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta to be changed, other than minor corrections of errors or inconsistencies, without the prior permission of the General Body.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1 All the activities of Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta except the Advisory Board (Bylaw VIII) and the three Standing Committees (Bylaw VII) shall be under the direction and control of a number of office bearers who shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2 Every year during the Annual Meeting, the General Body shall elect one President-Elect by simple majority vote. The President-Elect shall automatically assume the office of the President for the calendar year following the coming calendar year.

In the event that no President-Elect was elected during the previous General Body Meeting, or the President-Elect who was elected during the previous Annual General Body meeting resigns before the current annual General Body meeting, the General Body shall elect two Presidents Elect. One to take over the office of President for the next calendar year and the second one to take over the Office of President for the second calendar year following the election.

The President Elect, prior to taking over as the President, shall be a non-voting Ex-Officio member of the Executive Committee.

Section 3 Approximately a month prior to the Annual General Body meeting immediately preceding to the calendar year he/she will take office of President, the President-Elect shall appoint the Executive Committee for the following year as follows:

- a) Officers: The other Officers of the organization shall be Vice-President, Secretary, Joint-Secretary, Treasurer and Joint-Treasurer.
- b) Term of Office: No Kuta Member shall hold the same office for more than one year.
- c) The President shall also appoint no more than five additional members to the Executive Committee.
- d) No more than one family member of a given family shall serve on the Executive Committee in the same year.
- e) Juniors below the age of 21 years are not eligible to serve on the Executive Committee but may be appointed to the Youth Committee, which shall meet under the auspices of the Executive Committee. Youth Committee members shall not have the right to vote on committee proposals or policies.

The President-Elect shall announce at the General Body meeting the names of the Officers and Members of the Executive Committee who will be his/her Executive Team the following Calendar Year.

ARTICLE VII DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 Duties of the General Body

The General Body shall elect the President(s)-Elect (Article IX, Section 1), the prescribed three Standing Committees (Bylaw VII, Section 1), and for any vacant/potentially vacant positions in Advisory Board at the Annual General Body Meeting each year.

Section 2 Duties of the Executive Committee

- a) The Executive Committee shall be the operating body to carry out all normal activities of the Kuta.
- b) The Executive Committee shall carry out the resolutions passed by the General Body.
- c) The Executive Committee shall meet at least once in each quarter of the year.
- d) The Executive Committee shall arrange to call for the General Body meeting at least once every year.
- e) Any decisions by the Executive Committee shall have the approval of more than 50% of the voting members of the Committee. Exception is made to a membership suspension case, where two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee is required. The President shall not vote on any motions except to split a tie vote.
- f) The Executive Committee may decide to carry out cultural/social/educational activities such as Sankranti celebration, Dasa day, and Bhakti-Sangama day. Special committees appointed by the Executive Committee shall carry out these activities. These activities should be self-supporting and no more than 10% of the expense of these activities shall come from the operational budget of the Kuta. The Executive Committee shall not be mandated to carry out these activities.
- g) The Executive Committee is encouraged to include two lead members of the Youth Committee as non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

Section 3 Duties of Office Bearers

a) Duties of President:

- i) Shall run the day-to-day administrative matters for the Kuta.
- ii) Shall ensure smooth transitioning of all documents and holdings to the newly elected Kuta President for the following year by January 30 of the following year.
- iii) Shall file any registration statements as required by the State of Illinois; shall renew and shall submit documents related to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and shall report updates on the status at the Annual General Body meeting.
- iv) Shall open the session when the assembly (General Body) meets by taking the chair and calling the members to order.
- v) Shall announce the business before each assembly in the order in which it is to be acted upon.
- vi) Shall recognize members entitled to the floor.
- vii) Shall state and put to vote all those questions that are regularly moved or necessarily arise in the course of the proceedings and to announce the results of the vote.
- viii) Shall assist in the expediting of business in every way compatible with the rights of the members.
- ix) Shall restrain the members when engaged in debate, within the rules of the order.
- x) Shall authenticate by his or her signature when necessary all acts, orders and proceedings of the assembly declaring its will and in all things obeying its command.

b) Duties of Vice-President:

- i) In the event of the absence or other inability of the President, the Vice-President shall perform all of the duties and exercise all of the powers of the President.
- ii) The Vice-President shall have such further powers and duties, as may be prescribed by

the General Body from time to time.

c) Duties of the Secretary:

- i) Shall be the custodian of the official records.
- ii) Shall keep accurate records of the minutes of the meetings and present the Minutes in writing for approval at the next meeting.
- iii) Shall maintain the list of names, telephone numbers and addresses of active members and send notices for membership dues and meetings.
- iv) Shall communicate with active members the activities of the Kuta.
- v) Shall assist the President in filing any registration statements as required by the Secretary of State of Illinois; shall assist in renewing & submitting documents related to IRS, and shall assist in reporting on the updates status at the Annual General Body meeting.
- vi) In the absence of the Vice-President, the Secretary shall assume his/her duties.
- vii) Shall assist the President in the smooth transition of all documents and holdings to the new Secretary of the following year within 30 days after the year is completed.

d) Duties of the Joint Secretary:

- i) Shall assist the Secretary in performing the duties.
- ii) In the absence of the Secretary, the Joint Secretary shall function as the Secretary.

e) Duties of the Treasurer:

- i) Shall receive dues and deposit in an account approved by the Executive Committee.
- ii) Shall keep accurate accounts of receipts and expenses and maintain appropriate books.
- iii) Shall submit a financial status report of the organization every quarter to the Executive Committee and annually to the General Body. The report to the Annual General Body meeting shall include a recommendation for the amount of Membership Dues that should be assessed to the members for the following calendar year.
- iv) A preliminary statement of financial condition of Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta should be made available to the Members prior to the start of the Annual General Body meeting.
- v) A final statement of the financial condition of Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta statement should be published in the Yugadi Issue of Sangama magazine of the succeeding year.
- vi) All checks issued shall have signatures of at least one of the following officers: President, Secretary, or Treasurer. Check disbursements up to \$ 500 shall be signed by the Treasurer with the approval of the President; checks in the amounts of over \$500 shall be approved by the Executive Committee. Any payments made to third parties in excess of the amount of \$3,000 shall be brought to the attention of the General Body. All approvals shall be documented in the Executive Committee meeting minutes and in the General Body meeting minutes. *The Charitable Fund Committee has its own guidelines for fund disbursal. (Bylaw VII, Section 5, j)*
- vii) Shall cooperate with and provide all necessary records for review by the Internal Audit Committee.
- viii) Shall assist the President in the filing of any required Income Tax returns for Federal and State within the calendar year due, without incurring any penalties for late filing or improper filing.
- ix) Shall pay reasonable premiums and maintain adequate liability insurance to protect the Kuta Office Bearers, Committee members and VKK members performing assigned or voluntary activities for all the events in the Kuta from any monetary claims or losses

attributable to normal activities of the Kuta, unless the loss or the liability was incurred as a result of gross and deliberate negligent acts by the person concerned. The treasurer shall have the Certificate of Insurance available for the members' viewing at the Annual Yugadi function.

- x) Shall assist the President in the smooth transition of all documents and holdings to the new Treasurer of the following year within 30 days after the year is completed.
- f) Duties of the Joint-Treasurer:
 - i) Shall assist the Treasurer in the performance of his/her duties.
 - ii) In the absence of the Treasurer, the Joint Treasurer shall serve as the Treasurer.

ARTICLE VIII REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT PROCEDURES

- Section 1** Should a member of the Executive Committee misuse the office or is proven of misconduct to the detriment of the objectives and interests of Kuta, the General Body shall, either on recommendation of the Executive Committee or at the request of ten percent of the total membership, meet, discuss, and decide on the matter by two-thirds majority.
- Section 2** Failure to attend meetings of the Executive Committee for a continuous period of six months shall automatically constitute grounds for removal from the office.
- Section 3** The President shall have the authority to replace the members of the Executive Committee as and when the need arises. If there is a vacancy in any Standing Committee, it is the responsibility of the individual committee chairperson to fill the vacancy for the same term.

ARTICLE IX GENERAL BODY MEETINGS

Section 1 Annual Meetings

An Annual General Body Meeting shall be held in the last quarter of each year concurrent to the Rajyotsava program of the organization or as a stand-alone meeting at least one week prior to Rajyotsava program. Elections for the position of the President(s)-Elect, the Standing Committees for the following year and for any vacant/potentially vacant positions in the Advisory Board shall be held at this meeting. The annual budget, accounts, and audit report shall be presented at this meeting along with any other matter that the Executive Committee wishes to apprise the General Body.

If the Executive Committee chooses to conduct the Annual General Body meeting as a stand-alone meeting prior to the Rajyotsava program, and if the scheduled elections to various positions could not be conducted due to lack of quorum, the Annual GB meeting shall be automatically rescheduled to be conducted concurrent with Rajyotsava function. The Executive Committee shall notify the Membership of the Kuta of this reschedule within two calendar days after the original GB meeting was adjourned due to lack of quorum. The notice to the members in this case need only be posted on the official website of the Kuta.

Section 2 Special Meetings

Special General Body meeting may be petitioned with signatures of 10% or more of the total members. The President or his/her designee in the Executive Committee shall call special meetings within forty-five (45) days of the receipt of such request. The members shall receive notice at least twenty days before the meeting.

Section 3 Notice of Meetings

Notice stating the place, day and time of any meeting of members, in the case of a special meeting, the purpose of the meeting and the proposals to be presented for which the meeting has been called, shall be delivered using the approved method of communication such as electronic medium, to each member not less than twenty (20) days prior to the date of such meeting by the President or Secretary of the Organization.

Section 4 Quorum

The quorum constitutes one third (1/3) of the membership registered in person for that particular General Body meeting. Proxy votes shall not be allowed.

Section 5 Proposals

Approval of any proposal shall be with a simple majority of the members present with the exception of a constitutional amendment, which requires two-thirds majority, as per Article XII.

Section 6 Committees

At each Annual General Body Meeting, the General Body shall elect three Standing Committees for the following year.

- a) Three members in good standing shall be elected to the Internal Audit Committee to audit the income and expenditures (or finances) of the Kuta as well as the Kuta Charitable Fund.
- b) Three members in good standing shall be elected to the Election Committee to organize and oversee the election process.
- c) Seven members in good standing shall be elected to the Charitable Fund Committee to organize fund-raising events, identify and prioritize eligible organizations for receiving charitable funds.
- d) The President shall serve as an Ex-Officio on all committees (with no voting rights) except on the Internal Audit Committee and the Election Committee which will directly answer to the General Body.
- e) The President shall appoint other ad-hoc committees consisting of members in good standing as needed for specific purposes. (Refer to Bylaws for details on committee functions.)

ARTICLE X ELECTIONS

Section 1

The President(s)-Elect shall be elected at the Annual General Body Meeting scheduled as per Article VI, Section 2.

Section 2

Eligibility for the President's Office

- a) Any member of the Kuta in good standing (Article III, Section 7)
- b) Shall have a residential address in the State of Illinois.
- c) Shall not have been the President of the Organization for two years in the preceding ten years.

Section 3

Election Committee

- a) At the Annual General Body Meeting each year, an Election Committee consisting of three members of the Kuta in good standing shall be elected for organizing and conducting the following year's election.
- b) When there are more than three contestants, the three members of the Kuta in good standing receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected to the committee.
- c) Contestants who receive the fourth fifth and sixth highest number of votes shall be named alternates. Alternates will be called upon to serve in succession on the committee in the event that one or more of the elected three members resign from the committee.

Section 4

Duties of the Election Committee

The Election Committee is chartered by the General Body to plan, prepare, execute and certify the results of any action that requires an election or a ballot in a meeting of General Body during the calendar Year. The following positions are required to be filled annually through election process:

- President(s)-Elect
- Available position(s) on Advisory Board
- Members of Election Committee (three positions)
- Members of Internal Audit Committee (three positions)
- Members of Charitable Fund Committee (seven positions)

The Election Committee is responsible to document and taking of Oath of Office of all members elected by the General Body for various positions and of the members of the Executive Committee.

Section 5

Election Procedure

a) Nomination Invitation

- i. Approximately two months prior to Annual General Body Meeting, Election Committee shall invite nominations via online notifications from Kuta members to various positions that require elected officials/committee members.
- ii. Election Committee shall make the nomination form available online at the time of inviting nominations.
- iii. Election Committee shall specify the deadline for receiving nominations, which will be approximately fifteen calendar days before the Annual General Body meeting.
- iv. Interested Kuta members shall submit completed nomination forms electronically to the Election Committee (duly proposed and seconded and with consent signature of the nominee) on or before the announced deadline. The abilities and past contributions or accomplishments of the nominee shall be documented on the form.
- v. Election committee shall review and validate nominations received and confirm the consent of the nominee via electronic means. Nominations without the nominee's consent shall be deemed invalid. No exceptions shall be allowed in this regard.
- vi. Election Committee shall publish online the list of valid nominations received within 3 days from the deadline for submission of nominations.

b) Withdrawal of nominations:

- i. Election committee shall announce online the deadline for withdrawing the nominations within two days after publishing the nominees list.
- ii. Nominees wishing to withdraw shall submit the withdrawal electronically in writing to the Election Committee on or before the announced deadline.
- iii. Within 3 days from the deadline for withdrawal of nominations, Election Committee shall confirm valid withdrawals and announce online:
 - a) positions that are filled uncontested and,
 - b) positions that are contested requiring elections.

c) Call for Special Elections for unfilled positions:

- i. Approximately three days before the Annual General Body meeting, Election Committee shall communicate to the membership stating how many positions in each category shall be filled through floor nominations and elections (if needed) on the day of the General Body meeting.

d) Election Day (Annual General Body meeting):

- i. Election Committee Chairperson shall formally declare which of the positions are uncontested and who are declared winners for those uncontested positions.
- ii. The Election Committee shall conduct the election for those positions that were declared as open as follows:
 - a) Invite floor nominations.
 - b) Validate the proposed and seconded nominations on the spot using the most current VKK Membership database.
 - c) After nominations for required number of positions in a category are received, allow two more minutes before closing nominations.
 - d) Allow one minute time for any withdrawal from nominees. If the withdrawal results in one or more openings in any category, continue inviting nominations for 5 more minutes or a reasonable time on the same day.

- e) Declare any positions filled uncontested through floor nominations.
- f) Conduct elections, for positions remaining as contested from the first deadline and those remaining as contested through floor nominations.
- g) Count ballots and declare winners of contested positions.

e) Voting Process

The election committee shall reserve the option to hold the elections either by paper ballots or electronically and the decision of the election committee shall prevail.

In either case, the voting shall take place on the Election Day using the process described below. No early voting or proxy voting is permitted.

Voting by Paper Ballots

- i. If Election Committee decides to conduct election by paper ballots then, the paper ballots shall be printed in advance leaving adequate spaces for candidates from floor nominations
- ii. Ballot papers shall be distributed to all Kuta members who have registered for the meeting and eligible to vote until 15 minutes before the commencement of the elections. The Election Committee Chairperson shall announce the commencement of the election process to the General Body.
- iii. Each Kuta member who is eligible to vote and attending the meeting shall have only one vote.
- iv. Election Committee shall appoint volunteers, one for each ballot box to assist the voters in casting the votes and monitoring the ballot boxes.
- v. Opening of the ballot boxes and counting the votes shall be performed in the presence of one observer chosen by each of the contestants other than the members of the Election Committee.

Electronic Voting

- i. The election shall be held electronically via a thoroughly-tested and reliable Electronic Voting System (EVS) pre-approved by the Advisory Board.
- ii. Prior to the start of the voting, Election Committee shall create/update electronic ballot on the voting system incorporating all nominations including floor nominations.
- iii. Confidentiality of the vote and the voter should be ensured by the EVS.
- iv. Election Committee shall verify the identity and eligibility of the voter prior to casting the vote electronically.
- v. Election Committee shall appoint volunteers, preferably non-Kuta members to assist those who request assistance in casting the vote electronically.
- vi. Closing of the Electronic Voting System and computing the votes shall be performed in the presence of two observers other than the members of the Election Committee.

f) Election Results

- i. The Election Committee Chairperson shall announce the name of the winning candidate for President(s)-Elect and the names of the elected candidates for the three Standing Committees and for available positions in Advisory Board after counting of the ballots have been completed.
- ii. Contestants who receive the fourth, fifth and sixth highest number of votes for the Internal Audit Committee shall be named alternates for the Internal Audit Committee. Alternates will be called upon to serve in succession on the committee in the event that one or more of the elected three members resign from the given committee.
- iii. Contestants who receive the eighth through the fourteenth highest number of votes for the Charitable Fund Committee shall be named alternates to the Committee. Alternates will be called upon to serve in succession on the committee in the event

that one or more of the elected seven members resign from the given committee.

- iv. The Election Committee shall submit a written confirmation of the results of the ballot and confirmation as to which candidate/s are declared as “elected” to the Secretary of the Executive Committee.

The Election Committee for a given year is automatically dissolved at the end of the calendar year after submitting the election proceedings of the General Body in writing to the President and after documenting and supervising the Oath of Office for the newly elected Election Committee members.

The Election Committee members of a given year shall be ineligible to contest for election to the office of the President(s)-Elect during the calendar year succeeding the year they were members of the Election Committee and/or to be appointed to the Executive Committee by the president(s)-elect for whose election process they presided as election committee members.

ARTICLE XI INDEMNIFICATION

The organization shall indemnify any and of all its current or prior Officers and Executive Committee members, against the expenses actually or necessarily incurred by them in connection with the defense or settlement by any action, suit or proceeding in which they, or any of them, are made parties or a party, by reason of having been a member or office-bearer of the Kuta, unless there is willful misconduct in the performance of duty, and to such matters as shall be settled by agreement predicated on the existence of such liability.

ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1 The constitution may be amended, modified or repealed at the duly held General Body meeting pursuant to the procedure listed below.

- a) Any member can propose an amendment to the constitution provided it is supported by ten percent (10%) of the members with voting rights. Such proposal shall be submitted to the Secretary at least thirty days before the General Body meeting. Amendments to the constitution proposed for a special meeting shall be called for as per Article IX, Section 2.
- b) The proposals for the constitutional amendments must be circulated to the members at least 7 days before the General Body meeting.

Section 2 The duly proposed and seconded amendments to the Constitution shall be placed and discussed before the General Body meetings. Approval of two thirds (2/3) majority of the ballots cast is required for passing any proposed amendment.

ARTICLE XIII ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Except as otherwise herein expressly provided, all matters of procedure shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, as the same shall, from time to time, be revised and amended.

ARTICLE XIV RELATIONSHIP WITH EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

During the year, if there is a need for VKK to deal or associate with an external organization, for any activity or project, initiated and scheduled to be completed during the term of that President, the President, in consultation with the Executive Committee, can use his/her discretion and best judgment to take the proper course of action. Any such relationships should not subject VKK to any financial or otherwise commitment and/or obligations without express authorization by the Executive Committee. The President shall report the details of any such relationships to the General Body during the annual General Body Meeting. The president's action should be in alignment with goals and missions of VKK.

BYLAWS OF VIDYARANYA KANNADA KUTA

BYLAW I ORDER

Latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority on all questions of procedure not specifically stated by this Constitution and Bylaws.

BYLAW II PURPOSE

Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta is organized primarily for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

BYLAW III INUREMENT OF INCOME

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

BYLAW IV LEGISLATIVE OR POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the organization shall not participate in or intervene (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

BYLAW V OPERATIONAL LIMITATIONS

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on

- a) by an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or
- b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding portion of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

BYLAW VI DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

Upon the dissolution of the organization, the organization shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the organization, dispose of all the assets of the organization exclusively for the purposes of the Association in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for such charitable or educational purpose as shall be at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding portion of any future United States Internal revenue Law), as the Executive Committee shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed off shall be disposed off by Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for which purposes or to such organization(s), as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

BYLAW VII COMMITTEES

There shall be three different types of committees. These shall include:

- a) Standing Committees
- b) Ad-hoc Committees, and
- c) Sub-Committees of the Executive Committee.

The President of a given year shall be an Ex-Officio member of all committees of the Kuta with no voting rights except the Kuta's Election Committee and the Kuta's Internal Audit Committee.

Section 1 STANDING COMMITTEES

The General Body each year shall elect three Standing Committees for the following year. These shall include:

- a) The Charitable Fund Committee
- b) The Election Committee (Covered under Article X Section 4 and 5), and
- c) The Internal Audit Committee.

Each year, the General Body shall elect three members in good standing to the Election Committee, three members in good standing to the Internal Audit Committee and seven members in good standing to the Charitable Fund Committee. Each committee shall elect its own Chairperson.

All the three Standing Committees are directly answerable to the General Body.

Section 2 ADHOC COMMITTEES

The General Body and the Executive Committee may appoint Ad-hoc Committees. When the Executive Committee chooses to appoint an Ad-hoc Committee for any express purpose, the Executive Committee shall disseminate such information to the General Body at the next meeting of the Kuta or through the Kuta mailings. The Executive Committee or the General Body, whoever appoints such a committee, should exactly define the duration of the Ad-hoc Committee and its scope. Such committees are dissolved once the function of the committees is completed.

Section 3 SUB-COMMITTEES

The Executive Committee shall have full privileges to form any Sub-Committees including Bhakti Sangama Committee, Cultural Committee, Dasa Day Committee, Editorial (Sangama) Committee and Youth Committee. Each of these sub-committees must report to the Executive Committee through the President

Section 4 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH STANDING COMMITTEE

- a) The membership of each committee and selection of the Chairperson shall be constituted as stated under Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta Bylaws VII, Section 1.
- b) All committee members must be members of the Kuta in Good Standing as defined in Article III, Section 7.
- c) The fiscal year of each Committee will be the same as that of the Kuta's Treasury for that year.
- d) All Chairpersons of Committees shall submit their respective budgets to the Executive Committee through the President at least 6 weeks before the Annual General Body Meeting of each year held at the Rajyotsava function of that year.
- e) All committees are required to maintain accurate records of their income and expenses and submit a written report every month/every quarter to the Executive Committee through the President.
- f) All expenses in excess of \$100 will require prior approval of the President and Treasurer and all expenses in excess of \$500 will require the approval of the majority of the Executive Committee even if already approved in the Budget by the Executive Committee. ***This restriction does not apply to the Kuta's Charitable Fund Committee.***
- g) No individual member shall enter into any contracts, agreements or other instruments whether written or oral, with any other individual or organization at any time with the exception of the President by virtue of such authority conferred on him/her per Article VI, Section 3) of the Constitution. The President is granted this authority with the knowledge that he/she will seek full approval of the Executive Committee on such matters at the earliest convenient time.

Section 5A INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEES AND FUNCTIONS

A.STANDING COMMITTEES

The Charitable Fund Committee:

The Charitable Fund Committee (CFC) shall consist of seven members of the Kuta in good standing. The charge of the committee shall be to raise and maintain funds for charitable causes, identify and prioritize the organizations who are deserving to receive such funds, and finally to disburse the raised funds. The President shall serve as an Ex-Officio with no voting rights.

The CFC members shall:

- a) Elect the Chair for their committee for a one-year term of office.
- b) Identify date(s) and venue(s) for event(s) along with the Executive Committee in order to ensure early hall booking for the events.
- c) Distribute forms to Kuta members early in the year through the President for eliciting names of deserving organizations to receive charitable funds.
- d) The chairperson shall lead the fund-raising activities of the committee, shall help formulate the theme for the year in the selection of beneficiary organizations to receive such funds and shall ensure adequate fund-raising towards humanitarian causes.
- e) The CFC shall outline a list of all organizations suggested by the Kuta members for that year and reveal the names of the organizations prioritized at the Kuta's Ganesha Festival get-together.
- f) Each year, a minimum of three and a maximum of five organizations shall be selected for receiving the funds.
- g) To qualify as a Charitable Fund recipient, the recipient organization shall meet the following minimum criterion:
 - i) Shall be not-for-profit, non-sectarian, non-religious, non-political, non-quasi political organizations, solely dedicated to healthcare / to job creating training for economically deprived backward tribal or minority populations and / to those supporting the causes of socially and/or physically and/or mentally handicapped children or adults.
 - ii) Organizations managed and funded by Governmental arm or Family or Private trusts shall not qualify.
 - iii) Institutions dedicated to furthering Literature, Fine Arts and Culture to primarily general and able-bodied students or public shall not qualify.
 - iv) With the conceptual principle of "EMPOWERING THE DISDAVANTAGED TO BECOME SELFRELIANT", the contributions shall preferably be made for encouraging self-sustenance programs.
- h) Application forms for the Kuta's Charitable Funds shall require the following:
 - i) Type of Organization & Board Members
 - ii) Mission of the organization
 - iii) Statement of audited finances for two preceding years if available
 - iv) List of recent activities and fund-raising efforts
 - v) Proposed utilization of funds received
 - vi) Name of the Kuta member recommending the funding and disclosure of any direct beneficial relationship or membership in the recommended beneficiary organization

- i) While the Charitable Fund Committee shall utilize, encourage and consider information, leads and recommendations from the Kuta General members as to potential recipients to be considered, it shall not entertain any form of donations solely as a medium to be transferred to a recipient of donor's choice. All donations to be received for Charitable Fund shall be unconditional donations to be disbursed per decisions of the Committee.
- j) Challenge grants or matching donations shall be encouraged as long as the funds received are without any conditions as to the ultimate receiver of donations from the Charitable Fund.
- k) In any given fiscal year, the net disburseable funds (total funds collected less total funds expended in fund-raising) shall be distributed as follows:
 - i) 10% shall be kept in the bank as an emergency reserve account for emergency disbursements by the Charitable Fund Committee (Disaster Relief Fund).
 - ii) 20% shall be disbursed to qualifying organizations in the US (qualifying as stated under g). All recipient organizations in the US shall receive equal amounts of contributions with no maximum or minimum limit. Qualifying organizations in US is not solely meant to be an organization registered in the US, it is meant to be understood that the organization is registered in US as well as that the beneficiaries of its charitable acts are residents of US.
 - iii) 70 % shall be disbursed to qualifying organizations in the State of Karnataka, India (qualifying as stated under g).
 - iv) The amount of funds to be disbursed shall be equally distributed to the recipient organizations in that state and each recipient organization selected shall receive a minimum of \$1,000. There is no maximum limit, but, all recipient beneficiaries shall receive equal disbursements.
 - v) Any emergency disbursements to recipient organizations qualifying for Disaster Relief shall be discussed with the Executive Committee; simple majority approval by the Executive Committee and by the Charitable Fund Committee shall be required for emergency disbursements. The General Body shall be duly notified of any emergency disbursements at the next convened meeting of the Kuta.
 - vi) Emergency disbursements shall be made from within the specified Disaster Relief Fund only. The CFC shall require approval from the Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta General Body in order to transfer the funds apportioned for other US and Karnataka organizations to the Disaster Relief Fund.
 - vii) No recipient organization shall stand to receive contributions more than once in three years from the Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta.
 - viii) Each recipient organization shall be notified that funds are to be used only for implementing or executing direct benefit of the ultimate intended beneficiaries and not towards the organization's administrative or capital expenditure.
 - ix) Each recipient organization shall be asked to complete a form to denote how the funds were actually utilized. The CFC granting the disbursement of the fund to the recipient organization shall forward this information to the Treasurer and to the Internal Audit Committee upon receipt.
 - x) For any major deviations from the above set guidelines for disbursement of funds, the CFC shall procure prior permission from a duly convened General Body meeting of the Kuta
- l) All plans, evaluations, prioritizations, selections and disbursements shall be approved by a simple majority of the seven-member Charitable Fund Committee.
- m) The Chairperson shall submit written progress reports as well as minutes of the committee's meetings to the Executive Committee and to the Internal Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

- n) The Chairperson shall submit all necessary documents related to budget and expenses, summary statements on funds raised as well as expenses, the recipient organization prioritization list and minutes of meetings to the Internal Audit Committee and to the Treasurer for the Annual General Body meeting and for inclusion in the following year's Sangama Publication (Yugadi edition).
- o) The CFC shall maintain and operate a separate bank account for deposits and disbursements related to the Charitable Funds raised by the Kuta.
- p) Shall work closely with the President and the Executive Committee for negotiating contracts for services, food and supplies, and facility rentals, and other relevant purchases for the benefit of activities organized for fund-raising. The Treasurer of the Kuta shall assign a fair share of such expenses to each fund-raising activity and shall appropriately arrange for any fund transfers between the two separate funds
- q) The Charitable Fund Committee shall comply with all US Federal and Illinois State guidelines regarding charitable contributions

The Internal Audit Committee:

The Internal Audit Committee shall consist of three members of the Kuta in good standing who are endowed with intuitive analytical skills and who are preferably familiar with the auditing and accounting process. The Treasurer and the Joint Treasurer in a given year shall not be eligible to serve as members on this committee. The committee's functions include:

- a) Shall audit the corporation accounts for the main Kuta account and for the Charitable Fund Account at least twice a year.
- b) Shall review accounting procedures, receipts and disbursements, disbursement authorization procedures, and provide duly signed written reports of all findings and recommendations to the Executive Committee through the President on a semi-annual basis.
- c) Shall review documents to assure that all required Governmental filings to State Departments and Revenue (Income Tax) departments were filed without incurring any late filing penalties
- d) Shall submit all audited information and papers required by all External Auditors as required on the Kuta Main Account as well as on the Charitable Fund Account.
- e) Shall submit Annual Report to the General Body at the Annual General Body Meeting through the Treasurer based on the preliminary accounts closings with projected year end estimates. The Report shall cover the findings and conclusions for activities of the Executive Committee as well as all standing committees. The Report should cover compliance of financial accounts as well as compliance with principles and rules specified in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- f) Shall submit an updated Final report on items on section e) above by March 31 after the close of the year of reporting.
- g) The committee should assure that both the Preliminary Report and the Final Report are disseminated to the Members electronically.

Section 5B B. COMMITTEES ENCOURAGED, BUT NOT MANDATED

The Bhakti Sangama Committee:

The Bhakti Sangama Committee shall consist of at least three members in good standing who are familiar with the literary and music compositions reflecting such devotional music. They should be skilled in organizing this event coordinating any of the performing arts related to celebration of such a day. Their functions include:

- a) Shall identify date and venue for event along with the Executive Committee.
- b) Shall report progress of the Committee's function on a quarterly basis to the Executive Committee.
- c) Shall discuss the necessary budget including revenues and expenses with the Executive Committee.
- d) Shall organize and ensure high quality program that will help maintain tradition.

The Dasa Day Committee:

The Dasa Day Committee shall consist of at least three members in good standing who are familiar with the literary and music compositions reflecting such devotional music. They should be skilled in organizing this event coordinating any of the performing arts related to celebration of such a day. Their functions include:

- a) Shall identify date and venue for event along with the Executive Committee.
- b) Shall report progress of the Committee's function on a quarterly basis to the Executive Committee.
- c) Shall discuss the necessary budget including revenues and expenses with the Executive Committee.
- d) Shall organize and ensure high quality program that will help maintain tradition.

The Sangama Committee:

This committee:

- a) Shall produce the Sangama journal / newsmagazine for the year.
- b) Shall assist the Executive Committee of the Kuta in distributing the same to the members.
- c) Shall ensure that costs are defrayed through advertisement collections to the extent possible.
- d) Shall discuss the necessary budget including revenues and expenses with the Executive Committee.

Youth Committee:

- a) This committee shall comprise of youth members who are interested in organizing youth events for the Kuta.
- b) The Youth Committee members must conform to the objectives mentioned in Article II of the Kuta's Constitution.
- c) The Youth Committee shall discuss Revenue and Expenses of activities sponsored with the Executive Committee and seek approval for execution.

BYLAW VIII THE ADVISORY BOARD

- Section 1** The Advisory Board of the Kuta shall be responsible for long term planning and vision of the Kuta, smooth transition of the Kuta's operations from year-to-year, and a source of advice and counsel to the Presidents and Executive Committees.
- Section 2** The Advisory Board shall consist of three members elected directly by the General Body for a term of three years with the Advisors having staggered term appointments as described in Section 6 of this Article. Additionally the President of the Kuta shall be an ex-officio member of the Board.
- Section 3** Eligibility for the members of the Advisory Board:
- a) Member of the Kuta in good standing (see Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution)
 - b) An additional two years of membership either in the Kuta or any other Kannada Kuta in North America, and
 - c) Familiarity with the operations of the Kuta.
- Section 4** The Advisory Board shall remain as an independent body and shall report directly to the General Body of the Kuta
- Section 5** The Advisors shall elect a Chairperson (other than the President of the Organization) from among themselves to serve for a term of two years. The Chairperson shall act as the spokesperson of the Board.

Section 6 Administration of the staggered term of appointments:

- a) During the first year of creation of the Advisory Board, one Advisor shall be elected for a term of one year, one Advisor shall be elected for a term of two years and one Advisor shall be elected for a term of three years.
- b) During each of the subsequent years, one Advisor shall be elected for a term of three years to take the place of the Advisor retiring from the Board at the end of his/her term in office. Also elected shall be any Advisors needed to fill the remaining term of any Advisor that caused a vacancy during the year for reasons other than for end of term retirement.

BYLAW IX DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

Section 1 The Advisory Board

- a) Shall develop a long-term vision for the next five to ten years for Kuta for the guidance of successive Executive Committees (and the Presidents) and recommend actions and programs that contribute to the fulfillment of that vision.
- b) Shall prepare plans for investing the general reserve fund and for the use of such funds in the future and make recommendations for generating additional reserve funds (other than the normal funds raised for the purpose of conducting annual activities) through events such as conventions, special donations by Members or non-members for long term goals.
- c) Shall provide advice or take actions, if appropriate, to maintain the continuity of existence of the Kuta in an orderly fashion including those actions that are needed to meet the statutory requirements imposed by various governmental organizations upon the legal entity of Vidyaranya Kannada Kuta
- d) Shall provide a safeguard to the Kuta by assuring smooth transition of responsibilities between outgoing and incoming Officers and elected Committees each year. This involves making arrangements for archiving of necessary documentation of the Kuta and ascertaining procedures are in place and that such procedures are implemented to safeguard physical, monetary and electronic / intellectual assets of the organization.
- e) Shall intervene, if necessary, to convene and preside over an annual or special General Body meeting of the Members at times of emergency such as when the President and the Executive committee abdicates its responsibilities for whatever reason.
- f) Shall act as a permanent Awards Committee of the Kuta and recommend from time-to-time names of the members for recognizing their meritorious services to the Kuta
- g) Shall provide an annual report of the operation of the Board to the GB.

Section 2 In the event of a vacancy caused by resignation or other causes including such as an Advisor's repeated failure to attend meetings or actions deemed detrimental to the interest of the Organization, the Advisors shall select a replacement, who will serve as Interim Advisor until the meeting of the next General Body. At the next meeting of the General Body, the Election Committee shall conduct an election for an Advisor to fill the remaining term of office of the Advisor whose position caused the vacancy.

Section 3 The Advisory Board shall meet at least 3 times a year. A majority of the Advisors shall constitute the quorum. The business of the Board may be conducted either in person or through conference calls.

THE END