

**BY-LAWS**  
of  
**THE HINDU SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, INC.**

***PREAMBLE***

*We, the Hindus of Greater Orlando and surrounding counties of Central Florida, originating from various parts of the world, speaking different languages, raised in regional cultures and following diverse religious practices, are inspired by our common, great and a most ancient Sanatana Dharma and by the Grace of God have formed the Hindu Society of Central Florida to promote religious, spiritual, cultural, educational, charitable and Social needs of our membership and the community at large by consecrating a Multi Deity Hindu Temple, constructing a Community Center and by offering programs and activities which promote these goals.*

*We hereby pledge our profound respect and appreciation for the diversity in the practice of Sanatana Dharma as enunciated in the Vedas, Puranas, Shāstras and our Scriptures fully cognizant that our great Sanatana Dharma and its traditions accord us the freedom to practice in varied and diverse ways verily inherent in the practice of Hinduism .*

*We further express our commitment to the Hindu Society of Central Florida - unifying Hindus from various parts of the world by sustaining and strengthening our common heritage of Hinduism for this generation and for generations to come.*

*Therefore we, the members of the Hindu Society of Central Florida with a desire for added awareness and greater understanding of the diversity of our membership do hereby establish these By-laws for a smooth and harmonious management and administration of the Hindu Society of Central Florida.*

***VISION***

*The Hindu Society of Central Florida vision is to inculcate, propagate and perpetuate Hindu heritage and rich Vedanta philosophy for the betterment of lives and living.*

## **MISSION**

*The Hindu Society of Central Florida mission is to provide an environment for Hindus of central Florida, hailing from various parts of the world to worship and participate in religious services in a Multi Deity Temple and to congregate to meet their needs for cultural immersion, continuing educational opportunities, social interaction and spiritual advancement while fully recognizing the diversity its membership represents and with respect for all.*

## **VALUES**

- 1. We strive to be an exemplary community living in harmony with the larger community around us.*
- 2. We are united in our diversity.*
- 3. Not only do we acknowledge diversity of Society Membership; we respect it and seek a better understanding of ethos of fellow members.*
- 4. We hold volunteers and others who serve Society with highest respect and reverence.*
- 5. While offering constructive criticism for continued improvement of the Society, we aim for empathy and generosity and recognize volunteers doing their best to serve.*
- 6. Creating a lasting legacy of Sanatana Dharma and our rich cultural heritage for our younger generation guides our programs and actions.*
- 7. As custodian of Membership's largesse and charity; we act with honesty and integrity without any compromise.*
- 8. We seek opportunities to collaborate and synergize with other Religious and Cultural Organizations; especially those emanating from Sanatana Dharma and Indian ancestry.*
- 9. Recognizing that difference of opinions in the Society membership is common, we reconcile our differences with mutual respect, uncommon resolve and diligence.*

## **ARTICLE I**

### **Multi Deity Temple**

**Section 1:** The following deities were approved for installation at the Society Temple. Installation of additional deities shall require an amendment to these By-laws to add to the following list of installed deities:

1. Sri Ganesha
2. Sri Venkateshwara/Sri Devi/Bhu Devi
3. Sri Rama & His Durbar
4. Sri Krishna and Radha
5. Sri Durga/Devi Mata
6. Siva Lingam
7. Navagraha

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Membership, Dues and Assessments**

**Section 1:** The membership shall consist of the members of Hindu Society of Central Florida, hereafter referred to as the Society, who are 18 years or older, and are permanent residents of Citrus, Flagler, Hernando, Hillsborough, Indian River, Levy, Marion, Orange, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia, Osceola, Lake or Brevard counties of Florida and have paid their membership dues in accordance with Section 3 of this Article. These members shall be considered as members in good standing and shall constitute the General Body of the Society.

**Section 2:** There shall be four categories of members – Patron, Trustee, Life, and General member.

**Section 3:** Dues and assessments for these membership categories shall be as follows:

- a) For a Patron member, a donation of a minimum of \$100,000 paid without any time limit
- b) For a Trustee member, a donation of a minimum of \$10,000 paid over no more than four consecutive years
- c) For a Life member, a donation of a minimum of \$1500 paid over no more than three consecutive years
- d) For a General member, a one-time payment of \$500 paid exclusively for membership dues for one year

**Section 4:** A member shall belong to a specific membership category upon payment of dues in full as applicable to that category in accordance with Section 3 of this Article.

**Section 5:** Both spouses shall be considered as a single membership for the purposes of the dues and shall be entitled to one vote each. Upon the demise of a spouse, the surviving spouse shall retain all the membership rights and privileges with a right to one vote. A single person shall be entitled to one vote. Resignation or termination of membership by a member shall, unless specifically stated otherwise, include both husband and wife.

**Section 6:** For a General member, the membership year is from January 1 thru December 31 of the same year. A General member who fails to renew his/her membership by February 28/29 shall be

removed from the Society's membership list for that year. Upon payment of the dues any time after February 28/29, his/her membership will be restored for the rest of the year. However, he/she will lose the right to vote that year. In order to maintain the right to vote, a General member shall renew the membership no later than February 28/29.

**Section 7:** The four consecutive year period for the Trustee membership dues and the three consecutive year period for the Life membership dues shall begin on the date these amendments are approved by the General Body.

**Section 8:** Donations given towards the Society sponsored religious/non-religious fund raising event or cause by check/credit card or cash with receipt shall be counted towards the dues for Patron, Trustee or Life membership categories. However, payments for the following shall be excluded from being counted towards membership dues:

1. Food and Canteen services
2. Music classes
3. Dance classes
4. Education services such as SAT and Yoga classes
5. The Society Facility rentals
6. Special event tickets
7. Personal religious services

**Section 9:** The Chairman of the Membership Committee shall upgrade the membership category of a member and advise him/her when his/her total donation amount reaches the respective membership dues criteria in conformance with Section 3 of this Article. No refunds will be allowed in this process of changing membership. The membership into the new category will become effective immediately after the acceptance of such change by the Chairman of the Membership Committee.

**Section 10:** Money contributed by the members to the Society up to December 31, 2012 shall be credited towards the membership category upgrade.

**Section 11:** Membership of the Society shall not be gifted or inherited.

### **ARTICLE III Member Rights and Privileges**

**Section 1:** Patron and Trustee members shall be eligible to vote the day after they meet the membership requirements of Article II, Section 3.

Life and General members shall be eligible to vote after a waiting period of ninety days from the day they meet the membership requirements of Article II, Section 3 provided the waiting period ends no later than May 31. Life and General Members whose waiting period ends after May 31 shall not be eligible to vote that year.

**Section 2:** Members who have met the voting eligibility criteria of Section 1 of this Article shall be considered as the Voting General Body (VGB).

**Section 3:** A General member shall not serve on the Governing Council hereafter referred to as GC, Standing Committees of the GC or the Advisory Council hereafter referred to as AC and its Committees.

**Section 4:** Patron and Trustee members shall be eligible to be nominated to the GC as soon as they satisfy the requirements of their respective membership categories in accordance with Article II, Section 3. Life members however, shall be eligible to be nominated to the GC after a waiting period of two years from the effective date of their membership.

**Section 5:** Only Patron and Trustee members shall be eligible to be nominated and elected to the following positions on the GC:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

**Section 6:** The additional eight positions on the GC shall be filled by Patron, Trustee or Life members.

**Section 7:** The Patron Member Representative position on the GC shall be filled exclusively by a Patron member of the Society.

**Section 8:** Past Chairmen of the Society's Boards of Trustees, past Presidents of the Society's Executive Committees and past Presidents of the GCs are eligible to serve as the members of the AC. This group of members shall be hereafter referred to as the AC Member Pool (ACMP).

## **ARTICLE IV General Body Meetings**

**Section 1:** An Annual General Body Meeting (AGBM) shall be held on Sunday immediately prior to the Thanksgiving Day. Quorum requirements for this meeting shall be in accordance with Section 6 of this Article. The business of this meeting shall be to receive reports of the GC and office bearers of the Society, to elect officers of the next GC and AC and to transact other business as may properly come before the meeting. The President of the GC shall preside over this meeting except during the time elections are being conducted. An Election Commissioner will preside during the election portion of the meeting.

**Section 2:** In addition to the AGBM, The General Body shall meet with the GC at least once in the month of June. Quorum requirements for this meeting shall be in accordance with Section 6 of this Article. The President of the GC shall preside over this meeting and shall brief the General Body on the state of the Society. The Chairmen of the Standing Committees shall provide highlights of their committee activities.

**Section 3:** Special meetings of the General Body may be called to discuss and vote on specific issues. These meetings may be called by the GC resolutions, or by a petition signed by one-third of the VGB.

The Secretary of the GC shall call a special meeting within forty five days after the receipt of the signed petition.

**Section 4:** The Secretary of the GC shall send the notice of the AGBM or any Special meeting to the General Body by e-Mail and US Mail and post it on the Web site and the Temple bulletin board by not less than twenty one days prior to the date of such a meeting. This notice shall state the date, time, place and agenda for the meeting. It is the responsibility of all members to provide to the Chairman of the Membership Committee their e-Mail addresses, the postal mailing addresses and also to notify any change of addresses.

**Section 5:** For the purposes of satisfying quorum requirements for all General Body meetings, members shall use General Body Meeting Attendance (GBMA) Proxy if they are unable to attend the meeting. "Sample General Body Meeting Attendance Proxy Form" is attached as Exhibit A.

This proxy shall be considered valid only if all of the following requirements are met:

1. The Proxy conforms to the format in Exhibit A
2. The Proxy is signed by the Proxy giving member
3. The Proxy is mailed to the Society office, Attention: The Secretary, GC or deposited in-person in a sealed box located in the Society office until the day prior to the General Body meeting

**Section 6:** The quorum requirements for various General Body meetings shall be as follows:

1. AGBM..... 15% of the General Body consisting of members present and valid GBMA proxies
2. Removal from Office..... 33% of the General Body consisting of members present and valid GBMA proxies
3. Removal from Membership..... 33% of the General Body consisting of members present and valid GBMA proxies
4. By-Laws Amendments..... 33% of the General Body consisting of members present and valid GBMA proxies
5. Reverse GC Resolution..... 50% of the General Body consisting of members present and valid GBMA proxies
6. All other Meetings..... 15% of the General Body consisting of members present and valid GBMA proxies

**Section 7:** If the quorum for a General Body meeting is not achieved within one hour of the time of the meeting, members present may fix a time at a later date, not earlier than ten days from that date, to which the meeting shall stand adjourned. The Secretary of the GC shall send a notice of such adjournment to the General Body by using US Mail and e-Mail and post it on the Web site and the Temple bulletin board within five days from the day of adjournment. Quorum requirements shall not apply to an adjourned General Body meeting.

**Section 8:** All business that may properly come before a General Body meeting shall be decided as follows:

- a) Two-third majority of all votes cast by the VGB for approval of Suspension or Removal of a member from a position on the GC
- b) Two-third majority of all votes cast by the VGB for approval of Suspension or Removal of a member from the Society membership
- c) Two-third majority of all votes cast by the VGB for approval of Amendments to these By-laws
- d) 75% of all votes cast by the VGB for approval of Reversal of a GC Adopted Resolution
- e) Majority of all votes cast by the VGB for approval of all other business

**Section 9:** In points of procedure, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern at all meetings, unless otherwise stated in the bylaws. A member may submit written request to the Secretary of the GC at least 10 days prior to the General Body Meeting and suggest agenda for any new business for consideration at the General Body Meeting. All such requests shall be reviewed by the GC prior to the General Body meeting and GC shall finalize the agenda.

## **ARTICLE V The Governing Council**

**Section 1:** The Governing Council shall be the supreme governing body of the Society and shall oversee the activities of the Society. It shall consist of fourteen members organized as follows:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Eight Members for Standing Committee Chairmanships
- Patron Member Representative
- Past President of the GC

**Section 2:** The President of the GC shall serve as the Chairman of all GC meetings, and shall report at a General Body Meeting of the Society's condition and general status. He/she shall be responsible to the General Body and execute the policies and plans of the GC. In addition, he/she shall serve as the Chairman of the Long Term Planning Committee.

**Section 3:** The Vice President of the GC shall, in the absence of the President, be called upon to carry out the duties of the President. In addition, he/she will carry out those functions, which are delegated to him/her by the President. He/she shall serve as the Chairman of the Internal Audit, By-laws and Rules & Regulations Committee.

**Section 4:** The Treasurer shall receive all monies of the Society, be responsible for the deposit of all monies in the bank at least once every month and for the disbursement of such monies against invoices. He/she shall maintain the books of the Society, supervise the billing and collection of dues and at each regularly scheduled GC meeting present a Profit and Loss statement and the Balance Sheet of the Society. He/she shall serve as the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

**Section 5:** The Secretary of the GC shall record and be the custodian of the minutes of the GC and the General Body meetings. He/she shall maintain permanent record of these minutes in good order for reference at any time. A ratified copy of the minutes of the meetings shall be maintained at the Society office. In addition, he/she will carry out those functions, which are delegated to him/her by the President. He/she shall serve as the Chairman of the Membership Committee.

**Section 6:** The GC shall form thirteen Standing Committees as follows:

1. Long Term Planning Committee - Chaired by the President
2. Internal Audit, By-Laws and Rules & Regulations Committee - Chaired by the Vice President
3. Finance Committee – Chaired by the Treasurer
4. Membership Committee – Chaired by the Secretary
5. Communications Committee – Chaired by a GC member
6. Education Committee – Chaired by a GC member
7. Fixed Assets Committee – Chaired by a GC member
8. Food Committee – Chaired by a GC member
9. Fund Raising Committee – Chaired by a GC member
10. Programs Committee – Chaired by a GC member
11. Religious Committee – Chaired by a GC member
12. Repairs & Maintenance Committee – Chaired by a GC member
13. Social Services Committee – Chaired by a GC member

**Section 7:** Appendix I entitled “Scope and Guidelines for the Standing Committees” is provided for the guidance in the formation and functioning of each Standing Committee.

**Section 8:** The GC shall elect all Standing Committee chairmen no later than January 10 and the chairmen of the Standing Committees shall form their respective committees no later than January 31 by enlisting members from the Patron, Trustee and Life membership categories to join the committees.

**Section 9:** Expenditures by these Committees must be approved in advance by the GC as part of the annual budget.

**Section 10:** The immediate Past President of the GC shall be the Chairman of the AC and shall not chair or serve on a Standing Committee or any AC committees.

**Section 11:** The term of office of a member of the GC shall be two years. No member of the GC shall be nominated for more than two terms either consecutive or non-consecutive.



**Section 12:** The GC shall fill all vacancies in the following manner:

- a) If the position of the President becomes vacant, the Vice President shall fill the vacancy immediately as the President of the GC for the remainder of the President's term of office and within thirty days, the GC shall nominate a member from the Patron and Trustee membership categories to serve as the Vice President for the remainder of the Vice President's term.
- b) If the position of the Vice President, the Treasurer or the Secretary becomes vacant, the GC, within thirty days, shall nominate a member from the Patron and Trustee membership categories to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.
- c) If a position of any of the other eight members (excluding the Patron Member Representative) becomes vacant, the GC, within 30 days, shall nominate a member from the Patron, Trustee, and Life membership categories to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the calendar year.
- d) If the position of the Patron Member Representative on GC becomes vacant, the GC shall request the Patron members of the Society to designate within thirty days a Patron Member Representative to serve the remainder of his/her term.

**Section 13:** If the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Secretary and any chairman of the Standing Committee resign their positions, they shall be terminated from their membership on the GC.

**Section 14:** The GC shall have at least twelve regularly scheduled meetings per calendar year not including the AGBM and other meetings as may be called by the President of the GC. Schedule for the twelve regular meetings shall be set at the first meeting of the GC. The Secretary of the GC shall notify each GC member about the meeting, starting time, date, place and agenda.

**Section 15:** For the purposes of GC meetings, 9 members of the GC shall constitute a quorum, and business shall be conducted by a minimum of 7 votes of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present. A meeting may be adjourned to a later date by a majority of members present, if a quorum is not achieved within one hour of the time of the meeting.

**Section 16:** The President, and in his/her absence the Vice President of the GC, shall preside over all meetings of the GC. The presiding officer shall have no vote except to break a tie.

The Secretary of the GC shall record minutes of all meetings of the GC and keep a ratified copy at the Society office.

The President at his/her discretion may table or postpone an agenda item to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the GC. The President shall not postpone voting on the motion/item for more than two consecutive scheduled meetings of the GC.

**Section 17:** To reverse any action or decision of the GC a petition signed by 25% of the General Body is necessary. If the GC agrees to reverse the action or the decision, no further action is required.

In case the GC does not agree with the petition, a notice for a special meeting of the VGB shall be sent to the VGB within thirty days of receipt of such a petition or resolution. Any action of the GC shall be reversed if a petition is approved by at least 75% of the total votes cast by the VGB. The quorum for this meeting shall be at least 50% of the VGB present and valid GBMA proxies.

**Section 18:** If a member of the GC introduces a motion to reverse a resolution passed by the GC in a GC meeting, at least eight votes of the GC members shall be required to pass the motion and at least ten votes to adopt an alternate resolution.

**Section 19:** By August 31 of each year, the GC shall appoint an Election Commissioner and two additional members to form a 3-member Election Commission hereafter referred to as EC to conduct the GC and AC elections. The GC and the AC members and the members of their committees shall not serve on the EC. The term of EC will expire on December 31 of each year. Appendix II entitled “Scope of The Election Commission” provides a broad scope of responsibilities of the EC.

**Section 20:** By July 1, the GC shall compile an up-to-date list of all eligible voting members of the General Body. The Chairman of the Membership Committee shall post this list on the Society Website.

**Section 21:** A Chairman of a GC Standing Committee shall not serve on any GC Standing Committee other than his/her own, the AC and its Committees or the EC.

**Section 22:** A member of a GC Standing Committee shall not simultaneously serve on more than two Standing Committees, the AC and its Committees or the EC.

**Section 23:** All the members of the GC and its Standing Committees shall serve the Society without Bond and on a voluntary basis without any monetary compensation. The Society shall indemnify them for any loss sustained unless such loss was occasioned by gross negligence of the said member. The member in question shall reimburse the Society for any loss sustained due to his/her gross negligence.

**Section 24:** The GC and the Standing Committee members shall abide by the Sample Conflict of Interest Policy guidelines recommended in Appendix A of the IRS document, Instructions for Form 1023 (June 2006). Refer to Appendix III entitled “Conflict of Interest” for more details.

**Section 25:** If any elected member of the GC is absent consecutively for three regularly scheduled meetings without prior notification to the President, he or she shall be automatically removed from the GC. The GC may reinstate the member by a formal majority vote of the remaining members of the GC for good cause shown and documented in the minutes of the GC meeting. Otherwise, the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Section 12 of this Article.

**Section 26:** The members of the GC and its Standing Committees shall abide by these By-laws of the Society.

**Section 27:** The GC shall develop selection and appointment criteria for priest(s) and description of their duties and responsibilities and seek recommendations on religious matters from the Society Temple priests.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**Nomination and Election of the Governing Council**

**Section 1:** Candidates to fill the positions of the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer and the Secretary shall be nominated from the Patron and Trustee membership categories only and elected by the VGB.

**Section 2:** Candidates for the eight additional members of the GC shall be nominated from the Patron, Trustee and Life membership categories and elected by the VGB.

**Section 3:** Candidate for the Patron Member Representative on the GC shall be nominated from the Patron membership category and elected by the Patron members.

**Section 4:** The election of the members of the GC shall be staggered. The President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and two additional members of the GC shall be elected one year and the remaining six members of the GC shall be elected the following year.

**Section 6:** The Patron Member Representative shall be elected once every two years.

**Section 7:** The election of the members of the GC shall be conducted on the Sunday immediately prior to the Thanksgiving Day. For a list of specific dates, refer to the Appendix IV entitled "Important Dates".

**Section 8:** All members who have met their voting requirements in accordance with Article III Section 1 shall be eligible to vote.

**Section 9: GC Nominations Process**

The NC shall conduct the nominations process of the GC in the following manner:

- a) By July 1, the GC shall advise the NC of the type and the number of open positions to be filled on the GC and provide NC with the most up-to-date Membership List.
- b) By July 15, the NC shall send out a notice to the VGB using US Mail, e-Mail and the Website requesting nominations for open positions.
- c) This notice shall contain the following information:
  - Date, Time and Place of the election
  - August 15 as the last date for filing nominations
  - List of positions open and eligibility for nomination
  - Details of filing and withdrawal processes
  - Instructions to mail the forms to the Chairman, NC

- Instructions to download the forms from the website
  - Signed consent of the nominee to accept the nomination
- d) By September 10, all nominations and withdrawal forms will be opened in the presence of at least three NC members who will validate the eligibility of each nominee using a membership list dated July 1.
  - e) NC will finalize a Slate of Nominees using Appendix V entitled “Job Description and Criteria for A Governing Council Member” covering broad scope of duties, responsibilities and criteria for qualifying the potential nominees.
  - f) By September 15, the NC will request all nominees to provide a maximum of one page of their Bio data/Introduction/Plans if Elected and will publish them to the VGB via e-Mail and the Society Website.
  - g) By September 30, the NC Chairman will present the Slate of Nominees to the GC along with other eligible nominees for election.
  - h) By October 15, the GC shall adopt the Slate and publish the list of nominees to the VGB via e-Mail, US Mail, the Website and the Temple notice board.
  - i) If NC fails to identify a Slate of Nominees, the Chairman of the AC, with the help of the President of the GC, will complete the Nominations process.
  - j) Emergencies such as withdrawal by a nominee from an adopted slate will be handled by the NC to find a replacement on a best effort basis.

### **Section 10: GC Election Process**

The EC shall conduct the election of the GC in the following manner:

- a) By October 15 EC shall mail the bar-coded Ballots and the GBMA Proxies to all the VGB with instructions for casting their votes. Refer to Exhibit B for a “Sample Voting Ballot”.
- b) Those who are members but are not eligible to vote shall receive the GBMA Proxy forms only.
- c) Those VGB members who do not receive their ballots by mail may receive them in person from the Society office after providing proof of identification.
- d) The members may mail the GBMA Proxies to the Society office to the attention of: The Secretary, GC or may deposit them in-person in a sealed box located in the Society office until the day prior to the Election Day.

- e) The Secretary or his designate shall deposit the Proxies received by mail in the sealed box unopened.
- f) The members shall not send the Voting ballots using US Mail or e-Mail. They shall be cast in one of the following two ways:
  - Early voting
  - Election Day voting

### **Early Voting**

- a) Early voting shall begin on November 1.
- b) A sealed ballot box will be located in the Society office. It shall at all times be under the supervision and control of the EC.
- c) A member who wishes to vote early shall do so in person at the Society office, by presenting ID to a member of the EC or an EC deputed designate and upon validation, depositing the ballot in the sealed ballot box.
- d) A member shall be allowed to deposit ballots for the spouse and the couple's children who meet the membership criteria.
- e) The Early Voting shall end at 8 PM Saturday immediately prior to the election Sunday.

### **Election Day Voting**

- a) A member must cast his/her ballot in person in a sealed ballot box on the Election Day.
- b) A member of the EC shall validate the member ID before a member can cast his/her vote.
- c) A member may deposit the Voting Ballots for the spouse and the couple's children who meet the membership criteria.
- d) The voting deadline is 11:00 am on the Election Day.
- e) There shall be no provision for casting a vote either by mailing the ballot or by proxy.
- f) Nominations shall not be accepted from the floor on the Election Day.
- g) After the voting, the Election Commissioner shall open the sealed ballot boxes including those used for Early Voting and start the process of counting the votes.

- h) Any candidate or one designated representative of the candidate will be allowed to witness the counting process on a non-interference basis.
- i) Once the counting is completed and the results are tabulated, the Election Commissioner shall announce the results on the election floor at the AGBM. Successful candidates will be listed in the order of descending numbers of votes cast in their favor until the number of vacant positions is filled.
- j) If the number of nominations is same as the number of open positions on the GC, the Election Commissioner shall declare the election as unopposed.
- k) The decision of the Election Commissioner after the vote count is final.
- l) The Election commissioner shall prepare a signed statement of the election results. This document shall be posted on the Society website and the original shall be part of the Society archives.

**Section 11:** By November 1 of every other year, the Election Commissioner shall request and facilitate the nomination of one member from the Patron member category to serve on the GC as the Patron Member Representative.

**Section 12:** In the event the decision of the Election Commissioner is appealed, it will be subject to a review by the GC. All appeals shall be submitted to the GC in writing within one week from the announcement of the election results.

**Section 13:** If all positions on the GC are not filled by the election, the GC shall fill the positions by January 31.

**Section 14:** All the ballots cast and paperwork submitted by the members in connection with the nomination, the election process and the AGBM shall become the property of the Society and cannot be returned to anyone.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **The Advisory Council**

**Section 1:** There shall be an Advisory Council comprising of a total of eleven members, ten of them nominated from and elected by the members of the ACMP and the immediate Past President of the GC who shall serve as the Chairman of the AC.

**Section 2:** The NC shall conduct the nominations process of the AC in the following manner:

- a) By September 15, the AC Chairman shall provide to the NC Chairman the number of vacancies to be filled on the AC.

- b) By September 22, the NC shall send out notices via e-Mail and US Mail to all the members of the ACMP requesting them to indicate if they wish to serve on the AC.
- c) October 6 shall be the last date for the ACMP members to respond to the email or US Mail indicating their intentions. No response from a member by that date shall mean that the member has no intention to be considered to serve on the AC.
- d) By October 15, the NC shall prepare a list of nominees and provide it to the GC which in turn shall provide it to the EC for conducting the election to fill the open positions on the AC.

**Section 3:** The EC shall conduct the election of the members of the AC in the following manner:

- a) By October 30, if the number of nominations is greater than the number of positions to be filled on the AC, the EC shall mail/email a voting ballot to all the members of the ACMP with the names of the nominees and instructions for casting their votes.
- b) November 15 shall be the last date for the members of the ACMP to cast their votes in person, by mail or by email addressed to The Election Commissioner.
- c) The EC will collect the ballots, count them and the Election Commissioner will announce the results on the Election Day. Successful candidates will be listed in the order of descending numbers of votes cast in their favor until the number of vacant positions is filled.
- d) If the number of nominations is the same as the number of open positions on the AC, the Election Commissioner shall declare the election as unopposed.
- e) The decision of the Election Commissioner after the vote count is final
- f) The Election Commissioner shall prepare a signed statement of the election results. This document shall be posted on the Society Website and the original shall be part of the Society archives.

**Section 4:** The purpose of the AC is to provide guidance and advice to the GC whenever called upon by the GC to do so. The AC shall have no authority to conduct business on behalf of the Society without the express approval of the GC. The AC is encouraged to interact with the GC and provide written recommendations from these meetings for the GC's consideration and action. The GC should provide a response to the AC on its recommendations.

**Section 5:** The term of office for the AC members shall be two years. A member may be nominated and elected for a second consecutive term. There is no limit to the number of terms served on the AC provided a member does not serve more than two consecutive terms. Any vacancy on the AC arising out of resignation by a member or his/her inability to serve his/her full term shall be filled by the AC by appointing a member of the ACMP to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

**Section 6:** By January 31, the AC shall hold its first meeting and elect the following positions:

1. Secretary of the AC
2. Nominations Committee (NC) Chairman and two members
3. Ombudsman Committee (OC) Chairman and two members
4. Long Term Planning Assistance Committee (LTPAC) with 3 members

Sections 16 of this Article describes each of the above committees in more detail

**Section 7:** Subsequent meetings of the AC shall be convened at least once every quarter. The AC shall also meet with the GC at least twice a year, once in the first quarter and once in the third quarter.

**Section 8:** Expenditures by these Committees if any shall be approved in advance by the GC as part of the annual budget.

**Section 9:** The Chairman, and in his/her absence the Secretary of the AC, shall preside over all meetings of the AC. The presiding officer shall have no vote except to break a tie.

The Secretary of the AC shall record minutes of all meetings of the AC and keep a ratified copy at the Society office.

**Section 10:** The Chairman and the Secretary of the AC shall not serve on any committees of the AC

**Section 11:** The members of the AC and its committees shall serve the Society without Bond. They shall serve the Society on a voluntary basis without any monetary compensation. The Society shall indemnify them for any loss sustained unless such loss was occasioned by gross negligence of the said member. The member in question shall reimburse the Society for any loss sustained due to his/her gross negligence.

**Section 12:** To ensure that the Society operates in a manner consistent with the not-for-profit purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize the tax-exempt status, the AC and its Committee members shall abide by the Sample Conflict of Interest Policy guidelines recommended in Appendix A of the IRS document, Instructions for Form 1023 (June 2006). Refer to Appendix III entitled "Conflict of Interest" for more details.

**Section 13:** If any elected member of the AC is absent consecutively for two regularly scheduled meetings without prior notification to the Chairman of the AC, he or she shall be automatically removed from the AC. The AC may reinstate the member by a majority vote of the remaining members of the AC for good cause shown and documented in the minutes of the AC meeting. Otherwise, the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Section 5 of this Article.

**Section 14:** The members of the AC and its Committees agree to abide by the By-laws of the Society and to assist the GC in developing the Society for use by all Hindus in conformance with its Vision, Mission and Values as stated in these By-laws.

**Section 15:** Appendix VI entitled "Scope and Guidelines for the Advisory Council Committees" should be used for guidance in the formation and functioning of each AC Committee. Expenditures by these Committees must be approved in advance by the GC as part of the annual budget.

## **Section 16: The AC Committees**



### **1) Nominations Committee**

- a) By March 31, the NC shall form the full five-member Nominations Committee to include two additional members from the Patron, Trustee and Life membership categories.
- b) The term of office for the NC member is two years. A member of the NC shall not serve on any other AC committees, on the EC or on the GC and its committees.
- c) The purpose of the NC is to recommend a slate of nominations to fill open positions on the GC and the AC. Article VI, Section 9 describes the nomination process for the GC and Section 2 of this Article describes the nomination process for the AC.

### **2) Ombudsman Committee**

- a) If needed the OC will enlist two additional members from the Patron, Trustee and Life membership categories to join the committee.
- b) The term of office for the OC member is two years. A member of the OC shall not serve on any other AC committees, on the EC or on the GC and its committees.
- c) The Ombudsman's Name, Telephone number and e-Mail address shall be prominently displayed in the Temple Office, at the Entrance of the Community Hall and shall be communicated to the membership using e-Mail and Website.
- d) Two Suggestion Boxes, one in the Temple and one in the Community Hall shall be provided for the members to submit their written suggestions and/or grievances.
- e) Ombudsman's role will be to receive grievances and/or suggestions from the Society members and channel them into actionable items whenever possible while maintaining absolute confidentiality of the identity of the complainant.
- f) Efforts shall be made to resolve grievances related to the Society's affairs at the level of its origin in a democratic and professional manner. The guiding principle for conflict resolution shall be the interests of the Society.
- g) In general, a grievance shall be investigated by the OC in collaboration with the appropriate Standing Committee(s) to arrive at a remedy for the grievance. If that fails to satisfy either of the parties, the case will be forwarded, with comments, to the GC. The GC will have the ultimate authority to decide on issues that are not resolved by the OC. The OC shall act in consultation with the AC and the GC.
- h) The OC shall report progress on all issues it is working on to the AC as well as to the GC.

### **3) Long Term Planning Assistance Committee**

- a) The LTPAC shall assist the President of the GC in long term planning and strategy to grow the Society and its membership.
- b) The President of the GC shall chair this committee and may nominate additional members from the membership at large as he sees fit.
- c) The goals of this committee are Envisioning, Reviewing, and Recommending projects with a time horizon beyond three years. These may include projects currently being envisioned and reviewed but not undertaken.
- d) The request for planning may come from the GC or LTPAC's own initiative.
- e) Some of the examples of LTPAC type of tasks would be: Housing project for members, Endowment for the Society, Expansion of temple locations, and Collaboration with other synergistic Organizations.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Finances**

**Section 1:** The Treasurer or the President may sign checks up to amount of \$2000 for any one single activity and/or for any single beneficiary. The Treasurer can be authorized to sign checks in excess of this amount with prior written approval of the GC. Examples of such approval would cover the monthly mortgage payments, other periodic or construction payments. All checks above the amount of \$2000 for any single activity and/or for any single beneficiary shall be duly approved for expenditure by the President of the GC and should bear the signatures of the President and the Treasurer. In the absence of the President or the Treasurer the Vice President of the GC shall sign the check. Any such transaction must be presented for approval at the next GC meeting.

**Section 2:** The GC shall establish criteria for setting up and maintaining only two accounts with well established financial institutions - an operating account and a Trust fund. Any single donation of \$1,000 or more and funds collected at any major event totaling \$5,000 or more shall be deposited in the Trust fund and transferred as necessary to the operating account. The President of the GC shall operate the Trust fund while the operating account shall be maintained and operated by the Treasurer of the GC within the guidelines set by the GC. The GC, at the recommendations of the Treasurer and the Finance Committee can authorize funds to be placed in Certificates of Deposit or Money Market accounts. All funds donated to the Society can only be deposited in accounts authorized by the GC.

**Section 3:** The Society's accounts shall be maintained on a calendar year basis from January 1 through December 31. The accounts shall be compiled by the Treasurer and must follow US Generally Accepted Accounting Standards. The previous year's accounts, after submission to the GC by the end of February, shall be submitted for review by March 31<sup>st</sup> to the Society's Certified Public Accountant, who shall be appointed annually by the GC by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the previous year.

**Section 4:** The Finance Committee in consultation with all Standing Committees, the AC Committees and the GC shall prepare a budget for the period March 1 through February 28/29 of the following year. The Treasurer shall present this budget to the GC for its approval at the February GC meeting.

**Section 5:** The Internal Audit Committee shall conduct a quarterly review of the Society accounts. The scope of the review will be at the discretion of the Internal Audit Committee which will suggest improvements if required and ensure compliance with best business practices.

**Section 6:** No expenditure in any account shall exceed the budgeted amount for such an account by more than 10% without approval of the Finance Committee. Funds in excess of \$1,500 may be expended for a non budgeted item upon approval by the GC. The budget, as approved, shall be published in Amrut Vani and posted on the Society website by March 31<sup>st</sup>, and in substantially the same form as the previous year's accounts and budget.

**Section 7:** The Treasurer shall submit to the GC at its scheduled meetings the Society's Profit and Loss statement and the Balance Sheet along with a comparison to the current budget and the previous year's financial data. Once approved by the GC, this financial report shall be published in Amrut Vani and posted on the Society Website.

The treasurer shall present a compiled statement of accounts approved by the GC for the ten month period ending on October 31<sup>st</sup> at the AGBM.

**Section 8:** The annual financial statement for the year ending on December 31<sup>st</sup> as prepared by the Treasurer in substantially the same form as the previous year's financial statement shall be reviewed and approved by the GC and shall be published in Amrut Vani, posted on the Temple bulletin board and on the Society website by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

In order to assist the Treasurer in compiling the annual financial statements, the Chairman of each Standing Committee shall file an inventory of all equipment under his/her jurisdiction with the Treasurer no later than December 15<sup>th</sup> of that year.

**Section 9:** The GC with the help of the Fixed Assets Committee shall administer, manage, and hold titles in the name of the Society to real estate, securities, trust funds and other financial instruments. The GC may take, receive and hold, in trust, such property, real or personal, as may be given, devised to or otherwise vested in the Society, in trust, for such purposes as are consistent with the charitable and/or religious purposes of the Society. The GC may take, receive and hold such other property, real or personal, as may be given, devised to or otherwise vested in the Society, outright, as part of the general assets of the Society and committed to the charitable and/or religious purposes.

**Section 10:** The GC, the Standing Committees, the AC and its Committees or any member of the General Body shall not solicit loans from any institution or individual and encumber the Society for repayment of such loans. Furthermore, they shall not obligate the Society to purchase new real estate or other assets of value in excess of \$250,000 without an approval by the VGB. This approval shall be obtained in a Special meeting of the VGB by a majority of the total number of votes cast by the VGB.

**Section 11:** The President and the Treasurer may sign and enter into contracts on behalf of the Society when approved by the GC.

**Section 12:** The GC must ensure compliance with the local, state and federal laws including but not limited to filing tax returns and annual report with the Secretary of State.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Amendment of By-laws**

**Section 1:** The Society shall be governed by these By-laws until amended in accordance with this Article. The Internal Audit, By-laws and Rules & Regulations Committee may recommend to the GC amendments to these By-laws.

**Section 2:** The GC shall formally approve the amendments and the Secretary of the GC shall e-Mail the copy of the amendments to the VGB with a notice of a Special Meeting where the VGB will vote on the amendments. This notice shall be sent forty five days prior to the Special Meeting.

**Section 3:** The VGB may send comments on the amendments to the Secretary of the GC by e-Mail or US Mail no later than thirty days prior to the Special Meeting.

**Section 4:** A two-thirds majority of the total number of votes cast by the VGB is required to amend these By-laws. For purposes of this Special Meeting one-third of the VGB including all valid GBMA Proxies shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 5:** In case the GC does not agree with the amendment(s) approved by two-thirds vote of the VGB, such amendment(s) will be adopted if it receives at least 75% percent of the total number of votes cast by the VGB at the next AGBM.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Removal from Office**

**Section 1:** Any member of the GC elected by the VGB may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority of the total number of votes cast by the VGB at a special meeting of the VGB called for this purpose by the GC. This special meeting shall be convened within forty five days from the GC's recommendation to remove the member from the office. For purposes of this section one-third of the VGB present and valid GBMA proxies shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 2:** The Patron Member Representative may be removed from office by the GC at a Special Meeting of the GC convened for this purpose. The quorum requirement for this meeting shall be 13 members excluding the Patron Member Representative. At least 10 members of the GC excluding the President must vote in favor the removal.

**Section 3:** Any member of the Society may be removed for cause other than non-payment of dues from membership of the Society by a majority vote of the total votes cast by the VGB at a special meeting of the VGB called for this purpose by the GC. The GC shall notify the member at least 60 days prior to the date of the VGB meeting to be heard by the GC. For purposes of this section one-third of the VGB present and valid GBMA proxies shall constitute a quorum.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**Access to and Storage of Records**

**Section 1:** Society members shall have the right to examine, in person, for a reasonable purpose and upon prior written request to the Secretary of the GC, the membership record, the record of accounts and of inventory, and ratified minutes and/or records of the proceedings of all meetings of the GC, the Standing Committees, the AC and its Committees or the General Body and make extracts from them. All costs/expenses for such examination and review shall be borne by the requester. The Secretary of the GC in consultation with the President of the GC shall respond in writing to the written request within thirty days from the date of receipt of the request.

**Section 2:** The Archives, including all past records and data not deemed necessary to the current year's operation of the Society shall be kept together and located in a designated place at the Society's office.

**ARTICLE XII**  
**Prohibited Activities**

**Section 1:** Consumption of liquor or alcoholic beverages (as defined by the State Laws) or any other intoxicants on the Society property is hereby strictly prohibited.

**Section 2:** Cooking and/or consumption of non-vegetarian food items including meat, fish, poultry and eggs on the Society property is hereby strictly prohibited.

**Section 3:** Smoking Cigarettes or any other intoxicants on the Society property is hereby strictly prohibited.

**Section 4:** Gambling on the Society premises is hereby strictly prohibited.

**ARTICLE XIII**  
**Abbreviations**

- AC..... Advisory Council
- ACMP..... Advisory Council Member Pool
- AGBM..... Annual General Body Meeting
- EC..... Election Commission
- GBMA..... General Body Meeting Attendance
- GC..... Governing Council
- LTPAC.....Long Term Planning assistance Committee

NC.....Nominations Committee

OC.....Ombudsman Committee

SOCIETY.....Hindu Society of Central Florida

VGB.....Voting General Body

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**Transition Plan**

**Section 1:** After approval of these By-laws in a Special Meeting of the VGB held in 2012, these By-laws shall be effective on the date they are approved by the VGB and shall be subject to the Transition Plan in Attachment I of these By-laws.

**EXHIBIT A**

**GENERAL BODY MEETING ATTENDANCE PROXY**

KNOWN ALL BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, \_\_\_\_\_,  
the undersigned, being the member in good standing having paid my membership dues of Hindu  
Society of Central Florida, Inc.(the Society) in full, for this calendar year, whose address is  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City of \_\_\_\_\_, FL \_\_\_\_\_,  
do hereby constitute and appoint

**The Secretary of the Governing Council of the Society**

as my true and lawful Attorney-in-fact, for and in my name, place and stead, to act as a proxy of  
attendance for me at the General Body Meeting to be held on

\_\_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_ (time)

or such other day and time as the meeting may be thereafter held by adjournment or otherwise.

This limited Proxy is only to effectuate my presence at the above referenced meeting for quorum  
purposes only and shall not be used for any other purpose whatsoever.

This Proxy is to continue in full force until \_\_\_\_\_ (date) after which it shall be deemed  
invalid

I have hereto set my hand and seal this Day of ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ /20 \_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: (Proxy giver) \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT B**  
**SAMPLE VOTING BALLOT**

Date of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Early Voting  Election Day Voting

Barcode: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	TREASURER	SECRETARY
<input type="checkbox"/> (S)	<input type="checkbox"/> (S)	<input type="checkbox"/> (S)	<input type="checkbox"/> (S)
<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)	<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)	<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)	<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)
<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)	<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)	<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)	<input type="checkbox"/> (EC)

**List of Nominees/Other Candidates for GC Election**

- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (EC)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (EC)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (EC)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (EC)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (EC)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (EC)

**NOTES:**

- \*All names followed by (S) are part of the Slate recommended by Nominations Committee for GC.
- \*All names followed by (EC) are other Eligible Candidates for open GC positions.
- \*Mark  against the name of the person you are voting for.
- \*For President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer positions; please  against only one each.
- \*For other GC positions; you can only vote for a total of .....persons.
- \*Early Voting Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ \* Early Voting last Date \_\_\_\_\_
- \*Election Date \_\_\_\_\_ (Sunday immediately prior to Thanksgiving Day)



## APPENDIX I

### **SCOPE and GUIDELINES for the STANDING COMMITTEES**

All Standing Committees of the GC should meet the following general guidelines:

1. Formation of the full committee by the elected Chairman of the committee.
2. Reflect the diversity the Society seeks to serve.
3. Record and maintain minutes of meetings.
4. Submit reports at the monthly GC meeting and brief GC members on the deliberations.
5. Observe Roberts Rules for the conduct of the meetings.
6. Designate a member of the committee to act as Secretary of the committee.
7. Abide by the frequency of meetings recommended for each committee as a minimum.

#### **Long Term Planning Committee**

##### **Organization:**

- Chairman: President of the GC
- Three AC members elected by the AC.
- May enlist 2 additional members from the Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every quarter.

##### **Highlights:**

1. Develop long range vision and project plans for the Society with a time horizon beyond 3 years. These may include projects currently being envisioned and reviewed but not undertaken.
2. Develop strategic plans for continued growth of the Society in infrastructure and services.

#### **Internal Audit, By-laws and Rules & Regulations Committee**

##### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Vice President of the GC
- Enlist 2 to 4 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every 2 months.

##### **Highlights:**

1. Conduct quarterly and annual audits of accounting records.
2. Make recommendations for improvement in accounting.
3. Submit audit reports to the GC.
4. Ensure all proceedings are in accordance with the Society By-laws and report any violations.
5. Propose amendments to By-laws and Rules and Regulations.
6. Maintain and update Policies and Procedures Manual.

#### **Membership Committee**

##### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Secretary of the GC
- Enlist 2 to 4 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every 2 months.

##### **Highlights:**

1. Launch campaigns to expand membership in all categories.
2. Report to the GC on membership in monthly meetings.

3. Periodically, mail appeals for new membership and for upgrading membership to the next level.
4. Maintain accurate computer records of all categories of membership on a timely basis.
5. Provide up to date membership list to the GC, NC and the EC when requested.
6. Prepare the budget for the Membership committee and submit it to GC for approval.

### **Financial Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Treasurer of the GC
- Enlist 2 to 4 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every 2 months.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Maintain accurate and timely records of all accounting transactions.
2. Ensure that all bank deposits are made on a timely basis.
3. Ensure all accounts payable are handled on a timely basis.
4. Present monthly financial statements to the GC.
5. Reconcile bank accounts.
6. Collect budgets from all the committees and prepare annual budgets of revenue and expenses for approval by GC.
7. Assist the internal audit team with quarterly and annual audits.
8. Assist in the preparation and filing of the annual tax returns.

### **Religious Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 6 to 8 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every month.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Organize religious activities including daily deity services at the Society Temple.
2. Observe major religious dates with appropriate religious services.
3. Procure supplies for religious activities by following an established bidding process.
4. Maintain in good condition all articles used for religious activities.
5. Establish rate list for Temple Pooja, Samagri, Home and Private Pooja with GC approval.
6. Publish a Religious Calendar for the Year.
7. Manage all priest activities including daily schedules, vacation, home and private Pooja services.
8. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for the Religious Committee.

### **Food Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 6 to 8 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet twice per quarter.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Provide fresh vegetarian food to the Temple devotees and visitors at a reasonable price.

2. In consultation with the cooks, determine the quality and the annual quantity requirements for groceries, spices and other supplies which will be procured using established bidding practices. Donations of supplies should be actively pursued.
3. Maintain quality and health standards of the food and the canteen while meeting all codes and safe practices.
4. Set the menu and prices in consultation with the GC.
5. Promote and manage outside catering services to private parties and religious functions.
6. Manage the canteen volunteers and staff.
7. Maintain the Kitchen equipment and canteen furniture.
8. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for the Food Committee.

### **Fund Raising Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 4 to 6 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every 2 months.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Identify Fund Raising targets and develop plans to attain them.
2. Develop campaigns to raise funds for special projects approved by the GC.
3. Follow up on pledges made by members but not fulfilled in their entirety.
4. Meet with targeted potential donors.
5. Use the annual banquet and other special events/programs to raise funds.
6. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for the Fund Raising Committee.
7. Enlist the help of Priest(s) in fund raising.

### **Repairs and Maintenance Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 3 to 5 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet twice per quarter.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Obtain bids from maintenance contractors, analyze them and recommend to the GC for approval.
2. Develop and maintain an effective maintenance program for all buildings, equipment and grounds at the Society.
3. Manage and schedule the maintenance staff.
4. Manage and promote rentals of the Temple facilities.
5. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for Repair, Maintenance and Purchase.
6. Recommend an Emergency Reserve Fund requirement.
7. Establish a fund for replacement and/or repairs to major equipment.

### **Fixed Assets Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 3 to 5 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every quarter.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Responsible for land, buildings and capital improvements above \$10,000.
2. Plan and implement construction projects approved by the GC.
3. Obtain bids from building contractors, analyze them and present them to the GC for a decision.
4. Maintain up-to-date inventory and evaluation of all Temple property including the deity ornaments and clothes, IT equipment, furniture, etc.
5. Maintain all documents evidencing ownership of all such fixed assets including: plans/drawings, surveys, deeds, sales & transfer documents, mortgage papers.
6. Recommend to GC about disposal/sales of any assets.

### **Social Services Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 2 to 4 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every 2 months.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Collaborate with Youth, Ladies and New Age groups to organize their programs.
2. Act as a liaison between the Society and the community at large including non members of the Society to further the Society mission.
3. Reach out to members of the Society undergoing any crisis and offer help.
4. Identify and sponsor fund raising drives for charitable causes in the community at large.
5. Solicit cooperation and coordination with sister Hindu organizations in greater Orlando.
6. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for the Social Services Committee.

### **Communications Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 4 to 6 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every 2 months.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Inform and maintain regular communication with the Society membership using electronic and print media.
2. Publish the monthly newsletter Amrut Vani.
3. Maintain the Society website and keep it current with all pertinent information.
4. Promote image of the Temple and the Temple sponsored religious, cultural and community activities.
5. Document all major activities within and related to Society using photography and video.
6. Provide and maintain all audio video capability for Society events.
7. Utilize local media to project a positive image of the Society to further the Society mission.
8. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for the Communications Committee.

### **Education Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 2 to 4 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet once every 2 months.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Arrange programs and events with a view to enhance awareness and understanding of Sanatana Dharma, the diversity and varied religious practices.
2. Organize visits by distinguished scholars on Sanatana Dharma.
3. Enable and assist with activities such as Yoga classes, New Age Group, SAT classes, Music classes and Indian Classical Dance classes.
4. Maintain a library of religious and philosophy books and other media.
5. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for the Communications Committee.

### **Program Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: Elected from 8 elected GC members and one Patron Member Representative.
- Enlist 2 to 4 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members.
- Meet twice per quarter.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Plan, collaborate and/or organize big festivals and events such as Ganesh Chaturthi, Annakoot, Navaratri, Shivaratri, Janmashtami and India Fest.
2. Plan, collaborate and/or organize fund raising events such as Music and Dance programs.
3. Plan, collaborate and/or organize the Society Annual Banquet.
4. Prepare and submit to the Treasurer annual budget for the Program Committee.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **SCOPE of THE ELECTION COMMISSION**

1. Every year, the GC will appoint an Election Commissioner and two additional members to form a 3-member EC to conduct election of the members of the GC and the AC.
2. The Election Commissioner will oversee the EC. The term of the EC will last until December 31 of each year.
3. The EC will be responsible for all the ballot boxes provided for the Early Voting and located in the Society office. These boxes should be under the EC control at all times.
4. The ballot boxes on the Election Day should be manned and controlled by the members of the EC and its authorized designates.
5. The Election commissioner shall conduct the election on the Election Day, count and tabulate all the votes cast including the ones cast in Early Voting and announce the election results on the Election Day.
6. If the Patron Member election is necessary, the Election Commissioner shall request the Patron members to elect their representative to the GC and announce the name of the successful candidate on the Election Day.
7. If the AC election is necessary, the EC shall mail out a ballot to the ACMP members. The EC will count and tabulate the votes and announce the election results on the Election Day.

8. If none of the elections are necessary meaning the number of Nominations for the GC and the AC are is the same as the number of open positions for each body, the election Commissioner shall declare the election of the candidates as unopposed.
9. The Election Commissioner shall prepare a signed statement of the election results. This document shall be posted on the Society website and the original shall be part of the Society archives.

## **APPENDIX III**

### **CONFLICT of INTEREST**

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Conflict of Interest policy is to protect the Hindu Society of Central Florida's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a member of the GC, the AC and their committees herein referred to as an interested person or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

#### **PROCEDURES**

- 1) Duty to Disclose: In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the GC, the AC and members of their committees considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- 2) Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists: After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the GC, the AC or the committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining council or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists and will report it to the GC for further action.
- 3) Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest:
  - a. An interested person may make a presentation at the GC meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
  - b. The President of the GC shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
  - c. After exercising due diligence, the GC shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest
  - d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the GC shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested members whether the transaction or arrangement is in Hindu Society of Central

Florida's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4) Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy:

a. If the GC has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the GC determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

**Records of Proceedings**

The minutes of the GC shall contain:

a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the GC's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

**APPENDIX IV**

**IMPORTANT DATES**

- Jan 10** GC elects all Standing Committee Chairmen
- Jan 31** Last day for paying dues for General Membership
- Jan 31** The Standing Committee Chairmen form their committees
- Jan 31** GC fills positions on GC not filled by annual election
- Jan 31** Last day for GC to hold its first meeting
- Jan 31** AC elects Secretary and Chairs & members of NC & OC and members of LTPAC
- Feb 28** GC to complete its Annual Budget
- Mar 31** NC/OC to have formed Committees and met with GC
- Mar 31** Finance Committee to submit past year's accounts to the CPA
- Mar 31** Publish Annual Budget in Amrut Vani
- May 31** Membership effective after this date ineligible to vote or to contest election
- Jul 01** GC advises NC of open positions to be filled
- Jul 01** GC submits an up-to-date VGB list
- Jul 01** GC finalizes membership list of eligible voters and posts it on the Website and the Bulletin Board
- Jul 15** NC sends out notice requesting nominations

- Aug 15** Last date for filing nominations
- Aug 31** GC nominates EC
- Sep 10** NC opens and validates nominations and withdrawals
- Sep 15** AC Chairman provides NC Chairman number of positions to fill on AC
- Sep 22** NC sends out to ACMP members a request for Intention to Serve on AC
- Sep 30** NC presents the Slate to GC for adoption
- Oct 01** GC adopts the Slate and publishes it with other valid nominations
- Oct 06** Last date for ACMP members to advise NC of their Intention to Serve on AC
- Oct 15** GC advises General Body of nominees for election to GC
- Oct 15** NC publishes and hands over to EC a list of ACMP members wishing to serve on AC
- Oct 15** EC mails Ballots, AGBM Notice & GBMA Proxies
- Oct 31** Requests Patron members to elect a Patron Member to the GC
- Nov 01** Early Voting begins
- Nov 15** Finance Committee submits accounts to GC
- Nov 15** Last date for ACMP members to cast their votes for the AC
- Sunday before Thanksgiving** AGBM, GC Election, and AC Election results

## **APPENDIX V**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION and CRITERIA for A GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBER**

#### **Job Description:**

1. Be ready to assume chairmanship of a Standing Committee and lead the tasks delegated to the committee.
2. Should attend GC meetings regularly and contribute actively and constructively to the deliberations.
3. Should Conduct his/her committee meetings regularly and present monthly reports on the Committee activities to the GC.
4. Should accept, undertake and execute tasks assigned by the GC.
5. Should propose new programs and activities and suggest how to improve the current ones so that the Society fulfills its mission of enhancing religious, spiritual, social, cultural and educational well being of its members and the community it serves.
6. Should be an effective ambassador of the Society and the Hindu community at large.
7. Should attend as many functions as possible at the Society facilities so as to observe the structure and processes and bring his/her observations/concerns/suggestions to the GC for the betterment of the Society.
8. Should Motivate/Collect funds from devotees/friends/relatives to help the Society with fund raising and donate generously.
9. Should encourage and increase involvement of hitherto inactive/less active devotees with the Society and its activities.



## **Criteria for Qualification:**

1. Understands and subscribes to the Society vision and purpose of a multi-deity place of worship for the diverse needs of the Hindu Community.
2. Understands and commits to follow the Society By-laws.
3. Has time and resources and allocates these to the society as a priority involvement.
4. An effective communicator in English, verbal and written.
5. Diplomatic, articulate, civil, cordial, warm, positive, optimist, sense of humor and enthusiastic.
6. A person of integrity, a consensus builder, team player.
7. Respectful of others, not abrasive, argumentative or critical and maintains confidentiality.
8. Previous successful involvement in non-profit activities preferably in the Society or any of our Community organizations.
9. Socially well connected and respected within community.
10. Has Fund-Raising abilities.
11. Holds allegiance to the Society higher than his/her allegiance to any Society member or any group.
12. NC should avoid both spouses from being nominated to the GC during the same term of office.
13. NC should consider with preference members from the second generation who display leadership qualities and community service personalities.
14. NC should strive to strike a balance between “experience” and “longevity” when considering members who have served in the Society’s governance in the past.

## **APPENDIX VI**

### **SCOPE and GUIDELINES for the ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

All committees of the AC should meet the following guidelines:

1. Formation of the full committee by the elected Chairman of the committee.
2. Reflect the diversity the Society seeks to serve.
3. Record and maintain minutes of meetings.
4. Submit reports at the monthly AC meeting and brief AC members on the deliberations.
5. Observe Roberts Rules for the conduct of the meetings.
6. Designate a member of the committee to act as Secretary of the committee.
7. Abide by the frequency of meetings recommended for each committee as a minimum.

### **Nominations Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman and 2 AC members elected by the AC
- 3 member committee to enlist 2 additional members from Patron, Trustee and Life members
- Meet as and when needed to complete the Nominations process

#### **Highlights:**

1. Invite nominations from Patron, Trustee and Life members for open positions to be filled on the GC.
2. Qualify, select and recommend to the GC a slate of candidates along with the other eligible nominations for conducting the election by the EC.

3. Invite nominations from the ACMP for positions to be filled on the AC and provide them to the EC for conducting the election.

### **Ombudsman Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman and 2 AC members elected by the AC
- May nominate 2 additional members from the Patron, Trustee and Life members
- Meet as and when needed to resolve grievances and complaints

#### **Highlights:**

1. Receive grievances/complaints/suggestions from members.
2. Resolve grievances and conflicts by working with the appropriate standing committee(s).
3. Report progress to the AC and GC on all grievances and conflicts.
4. Act as a liaison between the Society and the complaining member and an agent for change in the Society's workings to prevent similar grievances from recurring.

### **Long Term Planning Assistance Committee**

#### **Organization:**

- Chairman: President of the GC
- AC members elected by the AC
- Meet once every quarter

#### **Highlights:**

1. Develop long range vision and project plans for the Society with a time horizon beyond 3 years. These may include projects currently being envisioned and reviewed but not undertaken.
2. Develop strategic plans for continued growth of the Society infrastructure and services.

## ATTACHMENT I

### TRANSITION PLAN

1. In 2012, elections **will not** be held for the Board of Trustees (BOT) members. The current 12 members serving on the BOT will be requested to continue thru 2013. Those BOT members who do not wish to continue after 2012 may retire. However, any resulting vacancy will not be filled.
2. At the end of 2013, all 10 members of the Executive Committee (EC) and 10 out of 12 members on the BOT will retire. The remaining 2 members whose term expires in 2014 will be requested to join the GC without election for a term of one year.
3. The BOT/EC organization structure will continue to operate thru 2013 and the Governing Council (GC) organization structure in accordance with the new By-laws will start on January 1, 2014.
4. The AC will come into effect on 1-1-2013 for a term of one year. The following procedure will be followed to form the AC for the year 2013 only.
  - By October 15, 2012, the BOT will appoint a Nominations Committee (NC) Chairperson and two additional members to serve on the NC and an Election Commissioner.
  - By October 22, 2012, the NC will send a notice to each ACMP member to advise the NC by October 31, 2012 if they wish to serve on the AC for a one-year term starting on 1-1-2013.
  - If the number of candidates desiring to serve on the AC is less than 10, the NC will make its best efforts to enlist a total of 10 members from the ACMP and will provide the BOT with the names of the 10 members nominated to serve on the AC. The BOT will approve the Slate of candidates and provide the names to the Election Commissioner. These 10 candidates will be declared unopposed
  - If the number of the ACMP members desiring to serve on the AC exceeds 10, the NC will provide the BOT with the list of all candidates interested in serving on the AC. The BOT will approve the list of nominations and request the Election Commissioner to conduct an Election.
  - By November 15, 2012, the Election Commissioner will conduct an election by mail and/or in person and only ACMP members can vote in this Election. Ten candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be declared as winners to fill the 10 positions on the AC.
  - At the AGBM, the Election Commissioner will announce the names of the 10 elected members of the AC and certify the election results.
  - This one year term of office for the year 2013 AC members will not be counted towards the maximum of two consecutive term limits specified in Article VII, Section 5 of these By-laws.
5. In 2013, the NC shall conduct the Nomination processes for the GC and the AC for the year 2014 in accordance with Articles VI and VII of these By-laws respectively. The outgoing Chairman of the BOT will serve as the Chairman of the AC for the year 2014.

6. In 2013, the BOT will nominate an Election Commissioner and 2 additional members to form an Election Commission (EC) to conduct the Elections of the GC and the AC for 2014. The elections will be conducted in November 2013 in accordance with these By-laws.
7. The EC will facilitate the Patron members of the Society to designate one Patron member as the Patron Member representative to the GC for a term of 2 years.
8. The NC will nominate a Slate for the GC and the EC will conduct the election of the GC members as follows:
  - President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary for a term of 2 years
  - 2 additional members for a term of 2 years each
  - 4 additional members for a term of 1 year each
9. Along with the 10 members above, the Patron Member Representative, the outgoing Chairman of the 2013 BOT and the 2 members of the BOT who will be requested to serve as the GC members for one term will together constitute a 14-member GC for 2014. If the 2 members of the BOT are interested in holding position of President, Vice President, Treasurer or Secretary, they will have to be nominated and elected by the VGB. If that happens, 6 instead of 4 additional GC members will have to be nominated and elected for a 1-year term. If the 2 BOT members are unsuccessful in the election, they will lose the privilege of serving on the GC.
10. GC elections beginning in November 2014 and every year thereafter will require election of 6 candidates to serve on the GC to replace 6 retiring candidates.