

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE KERALA SAMAJAM OF
GREATER NEW YORK, INC.

Proposed amendment by the Constitution Committee for submission at General Body
Meeting of November 2018

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ARTICLE 1

THE CORPORATION

- 1.1 The Corporation shall be designated:
“THE KERALA SAMAJAM OF GREATER NEW YORK, INC.” hereinafter called ‘the Samajam’
- 1.2. The office of the Samajam shall be located at the address of the president of the Samajam or as designated by the resolution of the Executive committee
- 1.3 The language of discussions at the meetings of the Samajam shall be Malayalam or English; but all records shall be kept in English
- 1.4 The Samajam shall be a non-political, not-for-profit organization, with its officers offering their services on a voluntary basis

ARTICLE 2

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the Samajam Shall be to:

- 2.1 promote cultural, educational and social activities of Keralites
- 2.2 provide platform for revitalizing the traditional arts and crafts of Kerala
- 2.3 promote and maintain contacts and understanding between Keralites residing in the Greater New York Area, United States of America, India and other parts of the world
- 2.4 develop and foster friendship and cultural relationship between keralites and other ethnic communities in the United States
- 2.5 render all possible assistance and comfort to Keralites when needed
- 2.6 affiliate with umbrella organizations that pursue goals consistent with those of the Samjam

ARTICLE 3

MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Eligibility

The member shall:

- 3.1.1. be a Keralite 18 Years or older, or the spouse of a Keralite
- 3.1.2. be a resident of the Greater New York area for at least six months at the time of application

3.1.3. subscribe to and promote the aims and objectives of the Samajam

3.1.4. have the application accepted by the Executive Committee

3.2. Categories of Members

There shall be ~~four~~ *three* categories of members:

CHANGE

3.2.1. Life Members: Those who pay a membership fee of \$200.00.

They shall have the right to attend, participate, discuss and vote in the General Body meetings, and hold any office in the Samajam, provided they satisfy all the other eligibility requirements. The life member and spouse shall have one vote each.

~~3.2.2. Annual Members: Those who pay annual membership fee of \$50.00 (member and spouse) or \$25.00 (individual member) (Amended on January 30, 2009)~~

~~They shall have the right to attend, participate, discuss and vote in the General Body meetings, hold offices except those on the Board of Trustees. In the Board of Trustees. In the case of the \$25.00 membership, the member and spouse shall have one vote each.~~

3.2.2 Deleted

3.2.3. Junior Members: Children below 18, whose parents, are life members of the Samajam.

They may participate in discussions, but are not eligible to vote

3.2.4. Honorary Members: Those who are conferred such membership by the Board of Trustees by the two-thirds majority vote, acting on their own or upon recommendation by the Executive Committee or the General Body.

They may attend and participate in the meetings of the General body, or committee meetings, when invited, but shall have no vote.

3.3. Suspension and/or Termination of Membership

3.3.1. Suspension of Membership

Membership may be suspended by the Board of Trustees, if the Board is convinced that the activities of the member has been detrimental to the interests of the Samajam. The Board shall present the matter to the next General body meeting for the final disposal of the matter.

3.3.2 Membership shall terminate upon resignation by the member or expulsion by the General Body, acting on its own or upon recommendation by the Board of Trustees, on account of serious violations of the code of conduct or actions detrimental to the interests of the Samajam

ARTICLE 4
OFFICIAL YEAR

The official year of the Samajam shall begin on First day of January and ends on last day of December.

ARTICLE 5 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The affairs and activities of the Samajam shall be transacted and conducted by the ~~four~~ *three* bodies, as listed below:

CHANGE

- 5.1. The General Body comprising of all members.
- 5.2. The Board of Trustees elected by the General Body for a five-year term
- 5.3. The Executive Committee members elected by the General Body for a one-year term.
- 5.4. ~~The Standing Committees, whose chairpersons shall be elected at the Annual General Body Meeting for a one-year term.~~

DELETE

ARTICLE 6 THE GENERAL BODY

6.1. Members

All members eligible as in Article 3 shall constitute the General Body of the Samajam

6.2. Responsibilities

The General Body shall:

- 6.2.1. be the supreme policy making body of the Samajam.
- 6.2.2. meet at least once during the calendar year or when summoned for a meeting by the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees, or 30 members of the Samajam, ~~(who shall include at least is 15 Life Members)~~

DELETE

- 6.2.3. receive, discuss, vote and adopt the reports of the President and/or the Secretary, the audited financial statement of the Treasurer ~~and the report of the chairpersons of the Standing Committees—~~

DELETE

- 6.2.4. elect member or members for existing vacancies on the Board of Trustees
- 6.2.5. elect the members of the Executive Committee comprising of the President, Vice-president, Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer and Seven committee members.

ADD

6.2.6. elect two Auditors.

6.2.7. transact any other business with the approval of the President. ~~or Chairperson of the meeting~~

DELETE

ARTICLE 7
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

7.1. Structure

There shall be five Trustees on the Board at any given time, elected at the General Body, one of whom shall be the chairperson of the Board a period of one year based on seniority

7.2. Eligibility of the Trustees

A Trustee shall:

7.2.1. at least 35 years old at the time of election.

CHANGE

7.2.2. be a Life Member of the Samajam for at least ~~one~~ three years.

CHANGE

7.2.3. have served the Samajam in the capacity of President, ~~Vice President~~, Secretary or Treasurer.

DELETE

7.2.4. be a resident of the Greater New York Area at the time of election and during the term of office

7.2.5. not be a member of the Executive Committee or general committee ~~Chairperson of a Standing Committee~~ during the term of office.

CHANGE

7.2.6. not hold office in any organization(s) pursuing similar goals and objectives as those of the Samajam

7.3. Term of Office

7.3.1. A Trustee's term of office shall be five years; once his/her term ends after five years or prior to that for any reason, he/she shall not be eligible for re-election as a Trustee for the next two years

7.3.2. If a vacancy arises on the Board of Trustees during the year, such vacancy shall be filled for the rest of the year by the majority vote of the Board of Trustees on nominations submitted by the Executive Committee

7.4. Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees shall:

7.4.1. preserve and protect the letter and spirit of the Constitution of the Samajam ~~Standing~~ Committees.

DELETE

7.4.2. promote and oversee the activities of the Executive and

- 7.4.3. attend the first meeting of the Executive Committee to help plan and facilitate the smooth functioning of the activities of the year
- 7.4.4. mediate and/or arbitrate in the event of disagreements among segments of the Samajam which the Trustees feel are adversely affecting the smooth functioning of the Samajam
- 7.4.5. counsel, discipline, suspend or remove from office any or all members of the Executive Committee and those of the ~~standing~~ Committees whose:

DELETE

- (a) conduct or actions are deemed detrimental to the objectives of the Samajam and/or
- (b) performance in carrying out his/her duties is found unsatisfactory

- 7.4.6. Such decisions shall be made by the two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Trustees. Any such decision shall be communicated by the chairperson, in writing, to the member(s) concerned
- 7.4.7. fill any vacancy created on the Executive Committee by any situation
- 7.4.8. meet at least twice a year
- 7.4.9. make decisions by the majority vote, which may include the casting vote by the chairperson in case of a tie, and/reasons

7.5. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall:

- 7.5.1. assume the position on the basis of his/her seniority on the Board
- 7.5.2. hold office for a period of one year
- 7.5.3. conduct the meetings of the Board and keep the minutes of the meetings, unless designated otherwise by the Board
- 7.5.4. be the Returning Officer at election meetings of the General Body, with the other members of the Board acting as polling officers.
- 7.5.5. keep all the permanent records, accounts including tax related records of Samajam.
- 7.6. In the absence or disability of the chairperson, the member next in seniority on the Board shall assume responsibilities of the Chairperson

7.7 **Proxy Vote Procedure**

A member of the Board of Trustees may request a Proxy vote in the event of inability to attend the Meeting due to unavoidable circumstances, provided such a request is given in writing to the Chairperson before the meeting; in case of an emergency on the date of the meeting, the message shall be communicated to the chairperson before or at the time of the meeting.

7.8. **Absence at the Board meeting**

If a member has been absent from two consecutive meetings without valid reasons, he/she may be deemed to have forfeited the office. The vacancy shall be filled following the procedures set forth in the constitution for each office

ARTICLE 8

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8.1 Structure

The Executive Committee shall:

- 8.1.1. comprise of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Joint secretary, Treasurer and seven committee members.

ADD

- 8.1.2. be elected at the Annual General Body Meeting

- 8.1.3. have as members, without voting rights, the two Auditors and the immediate past President as ex-officio(unless elected to another office in the Executive Committee)

8.2. **Eligibility of the officers of the Executive Committee**

The officers of the Executive Committee shall:

- 8.2.1. be 21 years or older

- 8.2.2. be Life-members ~~or Annual members~~ of the Samajam for at least one year at the time of election.

DELETE

- 8.2.3 be a committee member of the Samajam for at least one year at the time of election.

ADD

- 8.2.3. be residents of Greater New York area at the time of election and during the term of office

- ~~8.2.4. have reasonable command of Malayalam~~

DELETE

- 8.2.5. not hold any office in any other organization pursuing goals and objectives similar to those of the Samajam, in order to avoid conflict of interests.

8.3. **Term of office**

The officers of the Executive Committee shall:

- 8.3.1. serve for one year or until the new Executive Committee takes office

- 8.3.2. Be eligible run to the same office to the succeeding one more year.

8.4. **Responsibilities**

The Executive Committee shall:

- 8.4.1. take office on first of January and carry out the activities of the Samajam during the year or until the new Executive Committee takes office

- 8.4.2. meet at least four times a year to discuss implement ~~ways and means to carry out~~ the activities of the Samajam

CHANGE

- 8.4.3. make decisions by the majority vote, which may include the casting vote by the President or the Chairperson of meeting in case of a tie, and/or proxy vote by any member, who is absent with valid reasons

8.4.4. submit nominations to the Board of Trustees for any ~~vacant membership~~ vacancies on the Board of Trustees

CHANGE

8.4.5. appoint ~~Chairpersons of standing Committees~~ members with ~~designated responsibilities~~, if vacancies arise.

CHANGE

8.4.6. hand over the records and all movable properties to the in-coming Executive Committee in the presence of the Board of Trustees ~~on or before January 1~~

DELETE

8.4.7. establish policies regarding the financial transactions of the Samajam

8.5. Responsibilities of the officers of the Executive Committee

8.5.1. The President shall:

8.5.1.1. be the chief executive officer of the Samajam with the responsibility of the management of the affairs of the Samajam, as decided upon by the General Body and/or the Board of Trustees

8.5.1.2. preside over the meetings of the Executive Committee and the General Body meetings (except for the Elections at which the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall chair the meeting)

8.5.2 The Vice-President Shall:

8.5.2.1 have all the powers and responsibilities of the president during the absence or disability of the President.

8.5.2.2. have the custody of all movable properties of the Samajam, such as P.A. system, Musical Instruments, Banners etc. and see to the proper maintenance of all such movable properties

8.5.2.3. carry on the duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer, in the event of disability or resignation of the Treasurer, but shall not hold the two offices of Acting President and Treasurer at the same time

8.5.3. The Secretary shall:

8.5.3.1. record and keep the minutes of the Executive Committee, General Body meetings, and prepare reports on all activities of the Samajam

8.5.3.2. serve notices of meetings of the Executive Committee and of the General Body meetings

8.5.3.3. send copies of the minutes and/or reports of meetings and/or activities to the Board of Trustees within two weeks of the event

8.5.3.4. have custody of all books and records of the Samajam

8.5.3.5. have custody of the seal of the Samajam and affix and attest the same to documents duly authorized by the Executive Committee

8.5.3.6. present at the annual General Body meeting an annual report on the activities of the Samajam, with the prior approval of the Executive Committee

8.5.4. The Joint Secretary shall:

8.5.4.1. provide all assistances to the Secretary in carrying out his/her duties

8.5.4.2. assume the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary, during the absence or disability of the secretary

8.5.4.3. be responsible for membership drive including new enrollments and renewals.

8.5.5. The Treasurer shall:

- 8.5.5.1. have the care and custody of the funds of the Samajam and shall deposit such funds in the name of the Samajam in such bank accounts as the Executive Committee may from time to time decide
- 8.5.5.2. sign and execute all contracts in the name of the Samajam, when duly authorized by the Executive Committee and counter-signed by the President
- 8.5.5.3. sign checks, drafts, notes and make payment of money, which shall have been duly authorized by the Executive Committee and counter-signed by the President
- 8.5.5.4. present a tentative financial report at the Executive Committee meeting immediately after each major fundraising activity
- 8.5.5.5. submit a tentative mid-year financial statement to the Auditors
- 8.5.5.6. submit the annual financial statement to the Auditors at least two weeks in advance of the date of the Annual General Body meeting and present the statement, along with the Auditor’s, Report, at the Annual General Body meeting

8.5.5.7. Limit on the Use of Funds.

Unless authorized by the Executive Committee, the maximum amount of money that can be withdrawn at any given time by the Treasurer Countersigned by the President, shall be \$500.00

~~8.5.5.7. issue membership cards to members, counter signed by the President~~

DELETE

8.6 Committee members shall:

- 8.6.1 consist of seven members elected by the general body.
- 8.6.2 assist the executive committee in formulating policies and implementing programs.
- 8.6.3 be a member of the Samajam for at least one year at the time of election.

ADD

8.7 Proxy Vote Procedure

A member of the Executive committee may request a Proxy vote in the event of inability to attend the meeting due to unavoidable circumstances, provided such a request is given in writing to the Chairperson before the meeting; in case of an emergency on the date of the meeting, the message shall be communicated to the chairperson before or at the time of the meeting.

8.8 Absence at the Committee meeting

If a member has been absent from two consecutive meetings without valid reasons, he/she may be deemed to have forfeited the office. The vacancy shall be filled following the procedures set forth in the constitution for each office

~~8.9. Mailing Register—
Website and Email~~

~~A Mailing Register, containing dates and topics of incoming and outgoing mail and important Telephone messages, shall be maintained by President, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chairperson of the Board and the~~

~~Standing Committees.~~

A website and email address/account of Kerala Samajam of Greater New York (KSGNY) shall be maintained by the president and secretary.

Change

ARTICLE 9 BUILDING COMMITTEE

9.1 The purpose of the committee is to acquire, manage and maintain a building for Kerala Samajam.

9.2 The objective of building is

- a) to provide meeting place
- b) provide a place for social events
- c) conduct classes to promote Malayalam and Indian cultural programs.
- d) initiate various recreational activities
- e) coordinate outreach activities beyond our community.
- f) Establish and maintain a Library.

9.3 The building committee is a self-financed wing of the Kerala Samajam and its operations are exclusively controlled and managed by the Board of Directors.

9.4 The following categories of membership are available.

1. Patrons.

Must contribute a minimum of \$25,000.

Be a member of Kerala Samajam

2. Executive Member:

Must contribute a minimum of \$10,000

Be a member of Kerala Samajam

3. Regular Member:

Must Contribute a minimum of \$5,000

Be a member of Kerala Samajam

9.6.1 **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The management and maintenance of the building shall be carried by the Board of Directors.

9.6.2. The board of directors shall consist of Four Members from Executive Members and Three (3) members from Regular Members besides Patrons.

9.6.3. The elected Seven (7) Directors shall serve for a term of Five years or until resignation, disqualification or removal from office.

9.6.4. The Patrons are permanent directors with voting rights.

9.6.5 Board of Directors, in its first meeting will elect Managing Director and Managing Secretary and Managing Treasurer to manage the activities and affairs of the building committee.

9.6.6. Any vacancy arising in the Board of Directors due to death, retirement, disqualification or removal from office shall be filled by the majority vote of the remaining directors for the remainder of the term.

9.6.7. Any director may be removed from his/her position as director with a valid cause. The removal requires two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the entire Board of directors. The meeting intended for such removal shall be informed to directors at least fifteen days prior to the meeting.

Director Board Meetings

9.7 The Board of directors shall meet at a place designated by the Managing Director at least once in three months and the written notice or electronic mail shall be made to all Directors at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

9.7.1. Special Meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the Managing Director in emergency situations by giving advance notice by electronic mail to the Directors.

9.7.2. The attendance of minimum Sixty percent of Directors are needed to satisfy the Quorum in the meetings. In the event the required quorum is not available to conduct the meeting, it will be adjourned to future date not beyond fifteen calendar days. A new notice should be given by electronic mail five days prior to the adjourned meeting.

9.7.3. A member of the Board of Director may request a Proxy vote in the event of inability to attend the Meeting due to unavoidable circumstances, provided such a request is given in writing to the Chairperson before the meeting; in case of an emergency on the date of the meeting, the message shall be communicated to the chairperson before or at the time of the meeting.

9.7.4 The board of trustee chairman and president will have the right to attend the meetings.

9.7.5. The Managing Secretary shall record the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors. The minutes must be submitted to the Board for its approval in the next meeting and once it is approved, it will be the permanent record of the Board of Directors.

9.8 The Board Directors shall have the Authority to enact and/or amend the rules and regulations of the Building Committee from time to time in furtherance of its mission and purposes. A Two Third majority of votes of the Total Directors are needed to enact and/or amend new rules and regulations.

~~STANDING COMMITTEES~~

~~9.1. STRUCTURE~~

~~9.1.1. THERE SHALL BE SEVEN STANDING COMMITTEES FOR THE SAMAJAM, EACH HEADED BY A CHAIRPERSON, ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING.~~

~~9.1.2. EACH OF THESE SEVEN STANDING COMMITTEES SHALL HAVE UP TO FOUR MEMBERS, INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON~~

~~9.1.3. THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY, AND TREASURER OF THE SAMAJAM SHALL BE THE EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF EACH OF THESE SEVEN STANDING COMMITTEES.~~

~~9.1.4. The Executive Committee shall have the power to dismiss AND REPLACE THE CHAIRPERSON OR ANY MEMBER OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE, IF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IS CONVINCED THAT HIS/HER SERVICE IS DEFICIENT IN SUCCESSFULLY CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE~~

~~9.2. TERM OF OFFICE~~

~~THE MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES SHALL SERVE FOR ONE YEAR OR UNTIL A NEW STANDING COMMITTEE TAKES OFFICE~~

~~9.3. ACTIVITIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES:~~

~~9.3.1. THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE~~

~~9.3.1.1. THIS COMMITTEE SHALL ESTABLISH THE KERALA INSTITUTE, HEADED BY A DIRECTOR AND ASSISTED BY PROGRAM COORDINATORS IN THE RESPECTIVE FIELDS~~

~~9.3.1.2. THE PRIME CONCERN OF THE INSTITUTE SHALL BE TEACHING MALAYALAM LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE~~

~~9.3.1.3. THE INSTITUTE MAY ORGANIZE AND PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES IN SUCH AREAS AS INDIAN HISTORY, CULTURE ETC., WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON KERALA~~

~~9.3.1.4. THE INSTITUTE MAY ALSO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO NEW IMMIGRANTS IN SPEAKING AMERICAN ENGLISH AND/OR ADJUSTING TO THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE~~

~~9.3.2. CULTURAL AFFAIRS~~

~~COMMITTEE THIS COMMITTEE SHALL:~~

~~PROMOTE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF KERALA, SUCH AS MUSIC, DANCE, DRAMA, KATHAKALI, AND OTHER TRADITIONAL ART FORM~~

~~9.3.3. Public Relations and Publication Committee This~~

~~COMMITTEE SHALL:~~

~~PUBLISH "KERALA SANDESAM" AND ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES TO HELP ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FORTH IN ARTICLE 2 OF THE CONSTITUTION~~

~~9.3.4. YOUTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE~~

~~THIS COMMITTEE SHALL:~~

~~ORGANIZE PROGRAMS CATERING TO THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE YOUNG MEMBERS OF THE SAMAJAM, WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT WHENEVER NEEDED~~

~~9.3.5. SPORTS AND PICNICS COMMITTEE~~

~~THIS COMMITTEE SHALL:~~

~~ORGANIZE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO GAMES, SPORTS, PICNICS FOOD ETC...~~

~~9.3.6. EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE~~

~~THIS COMMITTEE SHALL:~~

~~9.3.6.1. PROVIDE ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE TO NEW IMMIGRANTS IN EMPLOYMENT RELATED ASPECTS AND TO THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY EMPLOYED~~

~~9.3.6.2. GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE INTERESTS OF THOSE IN THE NURSING PROFESSION~~

~~9.3.7. KERALA CENTER AND FUND RAISING COMMITTEE THIS~~

~~COMMITTEE SHALL:~~

~~make every possible effort to establish a Kerala center for~~

~~CENTRALIZING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SAMAJAM. A FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN MAY BE IMPLEMENTED FOR THIS PURPOSE~~

~~9.4. ELIGIBILITY OF CHAIRPERSONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES~~

~~THE CHAIRPERSON OF EACH COMMITTEE SHALL BE:~~

~~9.4.1. ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING, BASED ON HIS/HER EXPERTISE IN THE RESPECTIVE FIELD~~

~~9.4.2. A MEMBER OF THE SAMAJAM FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS AT THE TIME OF HIS/HER ELECTION.~~

~~9.4.3. AT LEAST 21 YEARS OLD EXCEPT FOR THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE WHO MAY BE 16 YEARS OR OLDER~~

~~9.5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAIRPERSONS~~

~~THE CHAIRPERSON SHALL:~~

~~9.5.1. NOMINATE UP TO FOUR MEMBERS TO ASSIST IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ACTIVITIES CONCERNED~~

~~9.5.2. ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WHEN THE COMMITTEE DECIDES TO DISCUSS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PARTICULAR STANDING COMMITTEE.~~

~~9.5.3. HAVE ONE VOTE IN THE DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WHEN DECISIONS ON THAT STANDING COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES ARE MADE.~~

~~THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE :~~

~~9.6.1. SHALL ASSIST THE CHAIRPERSONS IN ORGANIZING AND CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE~~

~~9.6.2. MAY ATTEND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS WHEN DISCUSSIONS/DECISIONS OF THE ACTIVITIES CONCERNING THE STANDING COMMITTEE THEY BELONG TO ARE BEING MADE~~

~~9.6.3. SHALL HAVE NO VOTE IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS~~

Added to 8.6 (note: standing committee replaced as committee and added to 8.6.)

ARTICLE 10

FINANCE

10.1. Life Membership Fee

10.1.1. The total accumulated Life Membership fee shall be deposited in interest bearing fixed accounts with well-established financial institutions

10.1.2. Only the General Body shall have the authority to make decisions concerning the use of such funds exclusively be used for the purchase / maintenance of Samajam buildings; such decisions will be valid only if approved by the two-thirds majority of General Body, with ~~at least 25 Life Members~~ voting in favor of the resolution.

CHANGE

10.2. The interest amounts accruing from the fixed deposit shall be credited to the fixed deposit account

10.3. Donations in the form of cash or proceeds from property donated, shall initially be deposited with the fixed deposit account of the Life Members Fee, unless otherwise specified by the donor. The General Body, upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees, shall decide on how to dispose of the donation.

10.4. ~~The annual membership fees~~ the funds collected from activities shall be used for the day to day running of the Samajam.

DELETE

- 10.5. The Membership Fees may be increased from time to time by ~~a resolution of the Executive Committee, with the approval of the Board of Trustees~~ the general body

CHANGE

ARTICLE 11

AUDITORS

- 11.1 The Annual General Body shall elect two Auditors, who may attend the meetings of the Executive Committee, but without voting rights
- 11.2 The term of office of the Auditors shall be one year or until new Auditors take office.
- 11.3 The Board of Trustees may appoint an external auditor, if and when the financial statement is not approved by the General Body or if the Board feels that such an action is necessary in the interests of the Samajam

ARTICLE 12

THE QUORUM

- 12.1. The quorum at the General Body Meetings shall be one- third of the membership or 50, whichever is less
- 12.2. When there is a quorum, the majority of members present shall constitute a decision (except for amendment to the Constitution and disposal of Life Membership fee deposit)
- 12.3. If there is no quorum at any such meetings for half an hour after the scheduled time, the president or Chairperson shall adjourn the meeting to another date no later than 15 days and inform the members present accordingly
- 12.4. A notice of such a meeting shall be sent to the members at least 7 days in advance
- 12.5. At such an adjourned meeting, only the business on the agenda of the original meeting shall be transacted, whether there is quorum or not, provided two-thirds of the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Committee members are present
- 12.6. The quorum for the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee ~~or any Standing Committee Meetings~~ shall be 50% plus one.

Change

- 12.7. Each member shall be entitled to one vote. In case of a tie, the President or the Chairperson shall have the casting vote to decide the issue. There shall be no casting vote at meetings for conducting elections, making amendments to the Constitution, or making decision on Life Membership fee deposit

ARTICLE 13
ELECTION AND VOTING PROCEDURES

- 13.1. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall preside over the election meetings of the General Body and be the Returning officer, with the other Trustees serving as Polling officers
- 13.2. A member of good standing as of Sept. 30 shall be eligible to vote at the Annual General Body meeting
- 13.3. Elections for the Executive Committee shall be held before the end of January of the succeeding year.
- 13.4. Nominations of officers of the Executive committee and the Board of Trustees and auditors shall be post marked to the Board of Trustees Chairperson Twenty (20) calendar days prior to the election date.
- 13.5. The nomination shall be accompanied by the signatures of the Proposer, the Seconder, and the nominee
- 13.6. A candidate may send his/her own nomination, accompanied by the signature of a seconder
- 13.7. An officer may be elected in his/her absence provided he/she has fulfilled the election requirements and the reasons for absence in writing to the returning officer before elections, in case of an emergency on date of the election, the nominee shall communicate with the Returning officer before the election procedures start and give reasons for the absence, which the General Body may act on.
- 13.8. If one nomination has been received, no nomination shall be made from the floor on the date of the election. If no nomination has been received, nomination shall be made from the floor on the date of the election.
- 13.9. Voting shall be by secret ballot. No Proxy Vote shall be allowed at the General Body meeting.
- 13.10. Voting shall be counted by the Returning officer, and polling immediately after the elections are declared closed; counting of votes shall be done in the presence of the candidates or their representatives if they so wish, and the independent observers chosen by the returning officer, all of whom shall verify and sign the records of the voting count.
- 13.11. The result of the election shall be announced immediately after the votes are counted.
- 13.12. The used and unused ballot papers shall be sealed and kept in safe custody for three months by the chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
- 13.13. A voting register shall be maintained by the Returning officer containing the names and signatures of members who voted in the election.
- 13.14. The candidates standing for the election of Executive Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Jt. Secretary and Treasurer) shall pay a non-refundable nomination fee of \$100 (One Hundred dollars) payable to Kerala Samajam of Greater New York along with their nomination.
- 13.15. The candidates for the election of committee shall pay a non-refundable nomination fee of \$50 (Fifty Dollars) to Kerala Samajam of Greater New York along with their nomination.

13.16 The candidates standing for the election for Auditors shall not pay nomination fee along with their nomination.

13.17 The Candidates shall have the right to withdraw the nominations in writing and it should be post marked to Board of Trustee Chair Person Five (5) calendar days prior to the election date.

ARTICLE 14 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

14.1 Notice of amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the President of the Executive Committee with a copy to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees at least 30 Days prior to the General Body meeting.

14.2. The Secretary shall send copies of the proposed amendment to members at least 15 days prior to the meeting.

14.3. Amendments shall be approved by at least Two-thirds majority of the members present.

ARTICLE 15 PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETINGS

15.2 Proxy Vote Procedure

A member of the Board of Trustees, the Executive committee ~~or Standing Committee~~ may request a Proxy vote in the event of inability to attend the Meeting due to unavoidable circumstances, provided such a request is given in writing to the Chairperson before the meeting; in case of an emergency on the date of the meeting, the message shall be communicated to the chairperson before or at the time of the meeting.

(Moved to sections 7.7, 8.7 and 9.7.2)

15.3. Limit on the Use of Funds.

Unless authorized by the Executive Committee, the maximum amount of money that can be withdrawn at any given time by the Treasurer Countersigned by the President, shall be \$500.00

(Moved to section 8.5.5.7)

15.4. Absence at the Board or Committee meeting

If a member has been absent from two consecutive meetings without valid reasons, he/she may be deemed to have forfeited the office. The vacancy shall be filled following the procedures set forth in the constitution for each office

(Moved to 7.8 and 8.8)

~~15.5. Conflicting Activities~~

~~Officers and members shall not organize any Activity detrimental to the interests of the Samajam.~~
(Deleted)

15.6. ~~Mailing Register~~
Website and Email

~~A Mailing Register, containing dates and topics of incoming and outgoing mail and important Telephone messages, shall be maintained by President, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chairperson of the Board and the Standing Committees.~~

A website and email address/account of Kerala Samajam of Greater New York (KSGNY) shall be maintained by the president and secretary.

(Change and Moved to 8.9)

15.1. Proceedings at meetings.

Robert's Rules of order for parliamentary code of conduct shall apply in all meeting.