

Nordöstlicher Sängerbund von Amerika

(Founded 1850 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Nordöstlicher Sängerbund, Inc.

Constitution and By-Laws

Incorporated in the State of New York,
October 20, 1930

(Adopted October 26, 1997)

Nordöstlicher Sängerbund, Inc.

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Nordöstlicher Sängerbund, Inc.

CONSTITUTION

As Revised by Committee January 18, 1997
And Adopted on October 26, 1997

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

WHEREAS, this society was founded on the 16th day of June, 1850, and incorporated on the 20th day of October, 1930, under and by virtue of Membership Corporation Law of the State of New York under the name of “Nordöstlicher Sängerbund, Inc.”; and

WHEREAS, the objects and purposes of the society are to promote the cultivation of German and other songs and music, the German language, customs and sociability among its members; to hold National Song Festivals and to transact the society’s business;

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY, DO ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITUTION IN ITS REVISED FORM.

1. Membership

- (a) Any city or county federation or society within the Northeastern States of the United States of America, serving the same purposes, may become a member of the society.
- (b) The individual society or societies must present their membership application at the annual meeting, at which time the final decision about acceptance will be rendered. The officers of Nordöstlicher Sängerbund aka: NÖSB shall give their recommendation to the membership at this meeting. A three-fourth majority of those present is required to carry such motion.
- (c) Men and women societies shall have identical rights and privileges and must assume the same obligations and duties as members.

2. Administration of the Nordöstlicher Sängerbund

- (a) The NÖSB is to be administered by:
 - 1. The elected officers
 - 2. The Board of Delegates
 - 3. The direct vote of the registered singers of the NÖSB

3. Organization of the Board of Delegates

- (a) The Board of Delegates shall consist of representatives who are elected by members of their respective societies or organizations and are entrusted to act on their behalf.
- (b) Every member society of the NÖSB shall elect 2 delegates.
- (c) Each society shall provide a written list of the elected Delegates to the Corresponding Secretary of the NÖSB not less than four months prior to the opening date of the forthcoming Song Festival.

4. Meetings of the Board of Delegates

- (a) The delegates shall be notified by the Corresponding Secretary of the NÖSB three months in advance of a meeting.
- (b) Special meetings of the Board of Delegates may be called by the President of the NÖSB if sanctioned by two-thirds of the Board.
- (c) The annual meeting of the Board of Delegates shall be held during the month of October as determined by the Officers.

5. Quorum

- (a) The presence of one-third of the total number of Delegates shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board of Delegates.
- (b) A simple majority vote by the quorum suffices to pass its motions and resolutions; in case of a tie, the President's vote is decisive. However, a change in the Constitution or By-Laws of the NÖSB shall require a two-thirds majority vote for adoption.
- (c) At the discretion of the President of the NÖSB, matters requiring an early decision may be settled by circularizing the Delegates to obtain their opinions of vote within a specified time.
- (d) In the event of an emergency matter arising in the affairs of the NÖSB which requires prompt consideration, and can not advantageously be postponed until the next regular meeting of the Board of Delegates, the Elected Officers may take appropriate action pending a special meeting.

6. Officers

- (a) The officers of the NÖSB are elected for a three year term and shall be as follows:
 - 1. President
 - 2. 1st Vice President
 - 3. 2nd Vice President
 - 4. 3rd Vice President
 - 5. Financial Secretary
 - 6. Treasurer
 - 7. Corresponding Secretary
 - 8. Recording Secretary

- (b) All Officers and Delegates must be American Citizens.
- (c) The Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Delegates present at the annual meeting following a National Song Festival; or, if there be no festival every three years, then at a special meeting called for such purpose, which election shall be held at least every three years.
- (d) No person shall occupy more than one such office at any one time.
- (e) The Financial Secretary and the Treasurer must be bonded.
- (f) Vacancies in any office shall be filled for the unexpired term, within sixty days, by a majority vote of the Officers.
- (g) The term of office for the Board of Delegates extends over a period of three years.
- (h) The member Societies may recall their chosen Delegates and elect others in their places at any time.
- (i) Any Officer may be removed from office for neglect of duty or malfeasance in office, after a hearing, on at least thirty days written notice, by a three-fourths vote of the Board of Directors.
- (j) A duly elected Officer shall not be removed from office because he or she is no longer a Delegate from a constituent body or of a member organization. He shall retain all rights, privileges and duties.
- (k) Candidates for office may be developed by committee and/or nominated by Delegates with the permission of the proposed candidate. A slate shall be drafted not less than three months prior to the annual meeting and distributed forthwith to the Societies.
- (l) Ballots for the election of Officers shall contain space for write-ins or nominations from the floor.

7. Committees

The President, with the collaboration of the elected officials, shall Appoint Two (2) standing committees.

- (a) A Music Committee, consisting of one (1) member of each society. This committee shall elect its own chairman and secretary.
- (b) A Finance Committee shall be comprised of two (2) members of the Board of Delegates; and the 1st Vice President who is designated as the Chairman.
- (c) The President may create other committees prescribing their duties, number of members and designate the Chairman and members thereof.
- (d) Any member of any committee may be removed by the authority appointing the committee of which he or she may be a member.

8. Duration of the Society

The Nordöstlicher Sängerbund shall exist so long as it has nine members of the Board of Delegates.

9. Dissolution of the NÖSB

- (a) Dissolution of the NÖSB may be effected by a four-fifths vote at a regular or special meeting of the Board of Delegates. A resolution to dissolve the NÖSB must be presented not less than three months prior to the regular or special meeting of the Board of Delegates. The societies of the NÖSB shall be so notified not less than two months prior to such meeting.
- (b) Such a meeting shall have full jurisdiction in the disposition of the possessions of the Nordöstlicher Sängerbund.

10. Amendments

- (a) A motion to change or amend the Constitution and/or By-Laws of the NÖSB must be presented and read at a regular meeting of the Board of Delegates.
- (b) No action may be taken until the following regular meeting and after each society has been duly notified in writing of the proposed amendments(s).
- (c) Following recommendation by the Board of Delegates, a vote of all societies of the NÖSB shall decide by a two-thirds majority.

11. Repeal

All former Constitutions of the NÖSB and Amendments thereof are hereby repealed.

12. Savings Clause

Should any section or portion of the Constitution or By-Laws become invalid by reason of any provision of law, the said section shall be deemed amended to conform with said law; but the same shall not affect the force or effect of any other provisions thereof.

Nordöstlicher Sängerbund, Inc.

BY-LAWS

1. Membership and Dues

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

- (a) Applications for membership shall be made by written petition to the Corresponding Secretary of the NÖSB. The application must be accompanied by a copy of the constitution and by-laws of the applicant, and must state the date of organization and/or incorporation.
- (b) An application for membership must be accompanied by initiation fee, together with the current year's dues.
- (c) The amount of dues shall be fixed from time to time at the annual meeting.
- (d) Acceptance shall follow a majority vote by the Board of Delegates at their regular meeting.
- (e) In the event an application is not accepted, the initiation fee and dues shall be returned promptly to the applicant.

2. Resignation and Expulsion

- (a) Resignations must be submitted in writing to the Corresponding Secretary of the NÖSB, and shall be acted upon at a regular meeting of the Board of Delegates.
- (b) Members who are in arrears with their dues over a period of two years may be expelled by two-thirds vote of the Board of Delegates.
- (c) Members who offend the principles of the NÖSB may be expelled by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Delegates.

3. Privileges of Members

The Membership is entitled to:

- (a) Participate in all Song Festivals of the NÖSB.
- (b) Participate in all meetings of the Board of Delegates.
- (c) Present motions at meetings of the Board of Delegates.

4. Duties of Members

The members are expected to:

- (a) Foster the best interests of the NÖSB
- (b) Participate in the Song Festival of the NÖSB and attend the mass-chorus rehearsals preceding the same.

- (c) Pay the annual dues for each registered member in the amount fixed for the coming year by the Board of Delegates at its annual meeting.
- (d) Pay the annual dues due on the first of January of each year, and forward the same to the Financial Secretary of the NÖSB not later than March 31 of the current year.

5. Duties of the Delegates

The Board of Delegates is vested with the control of all activities of the NÖSB, except the Prize Singing; its functions are to:

- (a) Receive and analyze the reports of its officers.
- (b) Select the city and fix the year in which the forthcoming Song Festival is to be held.
- (c) Render final decisions regarding a proposed dissolution of the NÖSB.
- (d) Conduct the business and affairs of the NÖSB, except where otherwise noted.
- (e) Exercise control over the treasury of the NÖSB.
- (f) Review periodic business and financial reports for presentation.
- (g) Fix the amount of Bond for which the Treasurer and Financial Secretary are to be bonded.
- (h) Authorize the holding of a vote.
- (i) Adjudge the admission/expulsion of members in the NÖSB.
- (j) Bear full authority in making the arrangements for holding Song Festivals of the NÖSB.
- (k) Supervise and conduct the election of officers.
- (l) Supervise collection of annual dues.
- (m) Authorize payment of expenses by the President or other officers, designated by him for the benefit or in the name of the NÖSB.

6. Duties of Officers

President

The President shall have all the duties usually incidental to such office. He shall preside at and conduct all meetings of the Society. He shall represent the society on all public occasions; he shall be responsible for the execution of the Society's Constitution, By-Laws, and Rules and Regulations, unless otherwise provided for; he shall call all meetings required by the Constitution or By-Laws; he may call special meetings of the society. In the event of an equally divided vote, his vote shall be decisive; he shall be an ex-officio member of all Committees; he shall sign, together with the Treasurer or Financial Secretary all checks or drafts on the fund of the Society.

The President, at the invitation of a society or societies, being a constituent body or bodies of a member organization of the NÖSB shall arbitrate disputes among or between such constituent bodies or give council.

Vice President

In the absence of the President, the First, Second or Third Vice President, in the order, shall fulfill the function of the President. Should all four of these officers be absent, the meeting may choose its own Chairman. The First Vice President shall act as Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall have charge of and supervision over the financial affairs of the NÖSB and shall be responsible therefore. He shall have custody of all monies and the securities of the society; he shall keep regular and accurate books of account; he shall deposit the funds of the society in banks, to be designated by the Board of Delegates; he shall prepare and present a detailed statement of the financial affairs of the society to the Board of Delegates at annual meetings of the Board of Delegates or at such other time as may be duly required; he may sign, together with the President, all checks or drafts on the funds of the society; he shall give bond in such form or amount as may be fixed and approved by the Board of Delegates, the premium to be paid by the society.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the society in payment of just demand against the society, upon audit by the Finance Committee and on orders signed by the President, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements; he may sign, together with the President, all checks or drafts on funds of the society; he shall give bond in such form and amount as may be fixed and approved by the Board of Delegates, the premium paid for by the Society.

Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary shall attend and act as Secretary at all meetings of the society; keep and maintain, in the records of the society, correct minutes of all meetings of the NÖSB; record petitions for membership in the NÖSB. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the President shall appoint a substitute.

Corresponding Secretary

The Corresponding Secretary shall perform the usual duties of a corresponding secretary and receive/answer correspondence pertaining to the business of the NÖSB.

7. Duties of the Music Committee

The Music Committee is to select and arrange the musical program for each Song Festival and:

- (a) Select, together with the local and appointed musical directors, the choral songs of the Song Festival.
- (b) Select the Prize Songs.
- (c) Appoint judges, who have mastered the German language.
- (d) Sub-divide, allocate and supervise the Prize-Singing contest.

- (e) Keep a record of the attendance of all singers at rehearsals and at the concerts of the Song Festival.

8. Rules of Prize Singing

- (a) All rules pertaining to the Prize-Singing Contest are to be established by the Music Committee.
- (b) They must be approved by the Board of Delegates.
- (c) Printed copies of these rules shall be mailed to all members of the NÖSB not less than six months prior to the opening date of the Song Festival.
- (d) After the rules are adopted, no alterations are permissible.

9. The National Song – Festival

Character of the Festival

- (a) Whenever feasible, a National Song Festival of the NÖSB shall take place every three years.
- (b) These Festivals are initiated officially by resolutions of the Board of Delegates.
- (c) The Board of Delegates may designate one or more members to plan and carry out such festival.
- (d) The Society Member in whose locality the Song Festival is to be held, shall be in responsible charge of all financial and other arrangements relative to the Festival, with the exception of the musical program and the Prize-Singing.

10. Participation and Admission

- (a) All registered members and their constituent societies are permitted to participate in the National Song-Festival of the NÖSB.
- (b) Non-member societies may apply to the Festival Committee for permission to participate in a National Song-Festival.
- (c) If these societies are located in cities or counties where a member society already exists, consent must be secured from them.
- (d) Non-member societies are not entitled to a prize, materially or otherwise.
- (e) No society shall hire professional singers to take part in the Prize Singing Contest.
- (f) Any society bringing professional singers to take part in prize singing shall risk disqualification.

11. Court of Arbitration

Adjudication of Disputes

- (a) Disputes which may arise between or among member organizations of the NÖSB, or among members of the Executive Committee of the Song Festival, shall be decided by the Board of Delegates.

- (b) The opposing factions have the right to submit their claim to the Board of Delegates in person.
- (c) The decision of the Board of Delegates is final.

12. Rules for Meetings of the N.Ö.S.B.

All meetings shall be conducted in the customary parliamentary manner. The order of business of regular meetings shall be as follows:

- (a) Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting
- (b) Reading of letters and communication
- (c) Proposals of candidates for membership
- (d) Election of new members
- (e) Report of Officers
- (f) Report of Committees
- (g) Reports of Societies
- (h) Unfinished business
- (i) Elections of Officers
- (j) New business

13. Awards

- (a) Awards shall be granted, upon application, to individual members of affiliated singing societies under the following conditions:
 1. SILVER PIN – 25 cumulative years of active participation in the United States.
 2. GOLD PIN – 40 cumulative years of active participation in the United States.
 3. HONORARY DIPLOMA – 50 cumulative years of active participation which can be combined with service in Germany and the United States.
- (b) Award applications are available upon request of a member Singing Society. That Society's President and Secretary will verify the accuracy of the application with their signatures.
- (c) The awards cannot be gained through purchase.
- (d) Membership in several German American singing groups will be recognized. However, the member must be an active singer in a NÖSB affiliated club in order to receive the award.
- (e) No duplicate applications will be accepted based on membership in several choruses, etc.
- (f) A singer is only entitled to either the silver or gold pin on each particular occasion.
- (g) Applications should be sent to the Chairman of the Honors Committee.
- (h) Upon request, an officer of the NÖSB will be present at the award ceremony provided the request is receive in a timely manner.

14. The Banner

At the meeting of the Delegates following a National Song Festival, the banner of the Nordöstlicher Sängerbund shall be given in care of the Society in whose locality the Song Festival was held. This society shall be held responsible for the proper handling and preservation of the banner; and shall present the same to the President of the NÖSB at the next National Song Festival, who then shall present the banner to the Festival Committee of the current Song Festival

At the direction of the President or Vice President of the NÖSB, the banner may be properly displayed on special occasion.
