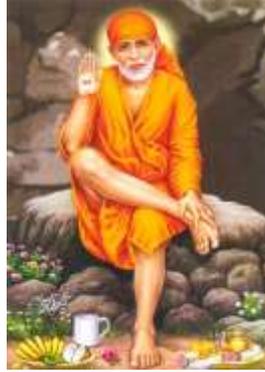


SOUTH JERSEY HINDU TEMPLE AND CULTURAL SOCIETY

(A non-profit tax exempt organization Tax ID # 47-2862760)



SJHTCS By-Laws

REVISION 4

APPROVED By: SJHTCS Board of Trustees

Dated: June 8, 2018

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BY-LAW -I

GENERAL

- 1.1 The Title of the Corporation is South Jersey Hindu Temple and Cultural Society, Inc. (Hereinafter referred to as SJHTCS).
- 1.2 The Corporate address is PO Box 534, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054. The corporation has been granted a non-profit tax exemption status with a tax ID of 47-2862760.
- 1.3 The Rules and Regulations as stipulated in these by-laws and the Certificate of Incorporation shall govern the administration of SJHTCS. However, in all matters of procedures not addressed by these By- Laws or Certificate of Incorporation, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the Authority.
- 1.4 Amendment 1 approved by the Board at its meeting on Sunday, October 16, 2016 as follows:
"The Board is authorized to implement changes to the by-laws as necessary to make operations more efficient including steps to control the financial viability of the operations. These changes will be adopted with a 2/3rd majority of the Board members approving it"
- 1.5 The Board at its meeting on Sunday, October 16, 2016 passed a resolution to make major changes to the bylaws. These changes were considered as Section 1.4 allowed the Board to make changes as needed for the improvement in the operations.

"The Board approved unanimously to dissolve the Executive Committee and assign specific tasks to each Board member to have improved efficiency in operations and better control on the fiscal matters".
- 1.6 The Board at its meeting on Thursday, June 7, 2018 passed a resolution to make a few changes to the bylaws. These changes were considered as Section 1.4 allowed the Board to make changes as needed for the improvement in the operations.

"The Board approved unanimously to remove the permanent clause from the by-laws, modify the term of the trustees to 2 years starting from June 1, 2018, have the number of trustees at 17 including the current board".
- 1.7 *In these By-Laws, wherever, "he", "his", and "him" occur, they also stand for "she", and "her".*
- 1.8 The SJHTCS shall consist of the following bodies:
 - Board of Trustees
 - Members

BY-LAW –II

MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 Any individual, who believes and follows the Hindu religion, Hindu culture and its philosophy and interested in the activities of SJHTCS as specified in the Articles of Incorporation, and over the age of eighteen is eligible to become a Member. The individual should submit an application for Membership in a prescribed Membership Application Form for formal Approval and pay the Membership Dues as stipulated in these By-Laws.
- 2.2 There shall be three categories of Membership
- Annual Member
 - Life Member
 - Benefactor/Patron Member
- 2.2.1 Annual Member
- a. Tenure: 1 year starting from June 1st to May 31st of the following year.
 - b. Membership fee is \$116 for the family.
 - c. Membership fee can be paid at once or within a month of receiving the form.
 - d. Renewal of membership will be on June 1st of every following year.
- 2.2.2 Life Member
- a. Tenure : Member for life
 - b. Membership fee is \$1,116 for the family.
 - c. Membership fee can be paid at once or in installments over the duration on 1 year.
- 2.2.3 Benefactor/Patron
- a. Tenure: Benefactor Member for life.
 - b. Membership fee is \$5,000 or above.
 - c. Split payment allowed for maximum of 24 months for the total amount.
- 2.2.4 Payment Notes: Membership dues can be paid by PayPal or check. Additional information can be found on sjshirdisai.org.
- 2.3 The annual certified list (membership dues will be verified by the Treasurer and Secretary from the receipt books prior to the certification) of the Members in each category shall be compiled and published in English Alphabetical order by the Board of Trustees by August 1 of each year. This will be posted on the website signed by the Secretary and President of the SJHTCS Board.
- 2.4 The Members shall follow the Articles of these by-laws in the performance of all SJHTCS activities and shall work towards the achievement of SJHTCS goals.

- 2.5 Member (s) who do not accept the SJHTCS principles and by-laws and who work against the interest of SJHTCS may be removed after giving 30 days Show Cause Notice, and with 2/3 of the SJHTCS (Board) Members present in a specially called General Body Meeting consenting for the removal.
- 2.6 Members of any category shall be eligible to upgrade their membership by (a) paying additional dues applicable for the current year for the upgrade category, and (b) completing a prescribed application form, for the appropriate new Membership category. They can vote in their category if such requirements are met by June 1st of the election year.

BY-LAW – III

GENERAL BODY MEETINGS

- 3.1 The annual General Body Meeting will be held every year at a place and time designated by the Board of Trustees.
- 3.1.1 The president of SJHTCS shall preside over the General Body Meeting to conduct SJHTCS business. In his absence, the vice-president shall preside over the meeting.
- 3.2 The General Body Meeting shall be convened to consider the following business:
- President's Report.
 - Vice-President's Report
 - Treasurer's Report.
 - Secretary's report on activities
 - All the above reports shall be adopted and voted for approval with appropriate changes required
 - Specific business raised by the floor
- 3.3 The record date of membership eligible to vote shall be June 1st of the election year
- 3.4 A minimum of 30 members shall be required for a quorum to conduct the general body meeting. If the required quorum is not present, the President or Presiding Officer at the meeting shall adjourn the meeting and reschedule it for a later date not exceeding two months from the initial date.
- 3.5 The decision of the General Body shall be final in all matters of the Corporation. Any amendments to the By-laws or any other matter can be proposed by any member by submitting the same in writing to the SJHTCS Board 15 days prior to the General Body meeting. The SJHTCS Board shall review the amendment at its Board meeting and arrive at a decision to reject or accept the amendment and then present the matter at the general body meeting for discussions. A resolution on the matter will be discussed and voted. The resolution shall be passed if 2/3 of the members present vote in favor of it. However, an urgent matter other than amendments to the by-law can be raised at the General Body meeting with the permission of the President or the Presiding officer at the meeting.

BY-LAW-IV

ELECTION PROCESS

- 4.1 Election Committee

The committee to conduct the election for voting the Board of Trustees into office, shall be members of the General Body of SJHTCS. The Election committee shall be constituted by the sitting Board at least eight (8) weeks prior to election date. This committee will be called the Election Committee. This committee shall consist of at least three (3) and no more than five (5) members in good standing of SJHTCS. The Board of Trustees and Committee Chairpersons shall not be members of the Election Committee. The election committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- Publish and implement criteria for nomination/election, identify a schedule and the procedures for use in the elections
- Receive nominations for various positions, and after scrutiny for eligibility conduct elections, and announce the results

4.2 Election Process

Elections will be held after the organization reaches a count of 100 members. The election for Trustees shall be conducted by secret Ballots. The instructions shall be sent to the eligible SJHTCS Members as determined in Articles under By-Laws 3.3 at least three weeks prior to deadline date for the election as specified by the election committee. The Ballot shall be handed in the sealed envelopes to the Election Committee on the Election Day.

4.3 Election of Trustees

1. Board Structure:

- a. Board will consist of a maximum of 17 trustees
- b. Until section 4.2 becomes active, trustees will be selected based on self-nomination or a nomination by another personnel

2. Eligibility Criteria for all trustees:

- a. Member should be patron member or life member.
- b. Membership is in good standing (no outstanding membership dues).
- c. Applicant should formally submit their profile with explanation of their interest regarding why they want to serve as a trustee.

3. Board of trustee selection:

- a. Board of trustees will review the application and will have the final authority to evaluate the eligibility of the trustees in their next monthly board meeting.
- b. Each trustee position ends after 2 years starting from June 1, 2018

4.4 **Voting Rights**

Each eligible Member shall have one vote each during the elections.

BY-LAW V

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

5.1 **OVERVIEW**

5.1.1 The affairs of SJHTCS shall be managed and administered by the Board of Trustees who shall be the policy making body to govern the affairs of SJHTCS.

5.1.2 The Board of Trustees shall exercise those powers delegated to them by these by-laws and shall

protect the interests of SJHTCS in all affairs. They shall discharge the duties of their position with great diligence, grace, care, and skill and with fiscal responsibility in handling the funds of the corporation.

- 5.1.3 All board of trustees shall serve a two-year term and are eligible to serve a second term if elected. However, no Trustees shall serve more than two terms on a consecutive basis.
- 5.1.4 The Board of Trustees shall be the sole and only legitimate authority to negotiate, and enter into agreements with Banks, Financial Institutions, or other Lending agencies or institutions on behalf of SJHTCS for obtaining loans. The principal amount of the loan, the interest, terms and amortization schedule shall be clearly documented and approved by the President of SJHTCS.
- 5.1.5 The Board of Trustees with the consent of the majority of the General Body shall have the right to postpone elections by not more than one year, for reasons of emergency, unforeseen circumstances or operational requirements.
- 5.1.6 A single signature of the Treasurer or Vice-President or President can approve expense on a single item of expenditure less than 1000 dollars. Two signatures either Treasurer and Vice President or Treasurer and President are required for expenses above 1000 to 2,000 dollars. However, an expense above this limit requires the approval of the Board.
- 5.1.7 The Board shall constitute a special committee as necessary to oversee the special projects involving major expenditures (new temple, etc.).
- 5.1.8 Each Trustee shall take up the responsibility for a particular task (head a committee) formulated by the Board to ensure the day-to-day operation of the corporation. This ensures involvement of all Trustees. See Section 1.6
- 5.1.9 Trustees are not entitled to any compensation from the Corporation for their services as trustees .

5.2 **Eligibility Requirements for Trustees**

- 5.2.1 All Trustees shall be SJHTCS patron members or life members in good standing to contest for the post of a Trustee.

5.3 **Exit and Removal**

- 5.3.1 A Trustee can resign at any time by giving at least thirty (30) days written notice to the Board.
- 5.3.3 Any Trustee can be removed from the Board with a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the board of trustees.

5.4 **Board Meetings and Quorum**

- 5.4.1 The Board shall meet at least 12 times (once a month) in a year. They shall meet soon after the General Body meeting and take appropriate actions in nominating the officers of the SJHTCS. The Secretary of the Board shall prepare the meeting minutes and also have arrangements for recording and taping the deliberations. The minutes shall be filed and placed safely in an appropriate location
- 5.4.2 A simple majority of the number of members constituting the Board shall constitute a Quorum for the transactions of the business. (Example is 9 for a Board of 17).

BY-LAW VI

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

- 6.1 Board at its meeting on Jan 7, 2017 passed a resolution to make a change to the by law as allowed by Section 1.4 of the by-law. The resolution approved unanimously as follows:
"The Board approved unanimously to dissolve the Executive committee and assign specific tasks to each Board member to have improved efficiency in operations and better control of the fiscal matters".
With this change, the Officers of the Board will be made of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer and Joint Treasurer.
- All trustees of the Board shall nominate and elect from themselves the President and the other officers. The elected officers shall serve in their respective positions for a period of two years. At the end of the term, the Board shall conduct elections for the officers from amongst themselves for the next two years with the option to be re-elected to the same position. However, no officer shall serve in the same position for more than two terms on a consecutive basis.
- 6.2 The Officers shall not receive any compensation for his/her service to SJHTCS.
- 6.3 The specific duties and responsibilities of the officers are detailed in other sections of this by-law.
- 6.4 Any officer elected by the Board can have his/her position relinquished by the Board of Trustees at any time with the consent of the majority of the trustees for better efficiency or operational requirements.

BY-LAW VII

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICERS

- 7.1 President
- The President is responsible for all SJHTCS affairs. He is the head of SJHTCS. He/she shall present the President's Report at the General Body Meeting.
 - He/she is overall charge of all the activities and finances of the Corporation and is responsible to the General Body and the Board of Trustees.
 - He/She shall provide leadership and direction for the SJHTCS activities.
 - He/she shall convene the General Body meeting and the Board of Trustees meeting in consultation with the other trustees as to the time, and place. He/she shall preside over such meetings.
 - May assign specified duties to various members of the Board and coordinate their activities
 - May form special committees to deal with specific issues as needed.
- 7.2 Vice-President
- The Board of Trustees elects amongst themselves the Vice President of the corporation.
 - He/she will assist in carrying out President 's responsibilities.
 - He/she acts in the absence of the President
 - He/she is subject to the direction of the Board and is the focal point for the day-to-day

affairs of the corporation.

- He/she shall see the resolutions and directives of the Board are carried out in the day-to-day operations with the assistance of other trustees who are assigned their specific responsibilities.

7.3 Secretary

- He/she is responsible for recording and taping the minutes of all the meetings of the Board and the General Body. He/she shall keep all the records in a safe place.
- He/she shall prepare the agenda for the meetings in consultation with the President and Vice President and inform all the Trustees. He/she is responsible to inform all the members about The General Body meeting, its location, date and time when one is approved by the Board.
- Circulate the minutes of the meetings and get it approved at a subsequent meeting.
- Present a written report of the activities of the corporation at the General Body meeting.
- In consultation with the Treasurer be responsible for update of the membership list.
- Put the latest list of members after its verification and is signed by the President and Secretary on the bulletin board every six months.

7.4 Joint Secretary

- The duties of the Joint Secretary are identical to the Secretary. However, he is empowered with these duties and responsibilities only in the absence of the Secretary.
- The Secretary can share his responsibility with the Joint Secretary in a formal manner to reduce his workload.

7.5 Treasurer

- The Treasurer is the principal account officer of SJHTCS.
- He/she is responsible for maintenance of the account books
- He/she is responsible for recording the receipt of funds (membership dues, event collections, religious tariffs fees, etc.). Issue receipt to members/devotees for such funds. Funds collected should be deposited into the bank accounts within 2 working days.
- He/she shall be responsible for opening account(s) in a bank with co- signatures of President/Vice President.
- Maintain the receipt for all deposits for reconciliation during audits.
- Present the monthly financial status at every Board meeting. May suggest methods on types of accounts to get better returns for large funds, if available.
- The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be from January 1 to December 31.
- Participate and assist the auditor in the accounts of the corporation
- Be responsible for collection of funds from the Hundi with at least two other officers present every month or earlier as needed. These funds shall be deposited into the bank accounts within two working days.
- Present the Treasurer's report at the General Body meeting.
- In consultation with the Secretary be responsible for updates of the membership list.

7.6 Joint Treasurer

- The duties of the Joint Treasurer are identical to the Treasurer. However, he is empowered with these duties and responsibilities only in the absence of the Treasurer.
- The Treasurer can share his responsibility with the Joint Treasurer in a formal manner to reduce his workload.

BY-LAW VIII

COMMITTEES

8.1 OVERVIEW

- As mentioned under article V, the Board shall set-up specific committees headed by a Trustee or be a part of it to assist in the day-to day operation of the corporation. This article provides the general responsibilities for such committees prior to the discussion of the roles and specifics of each committee in a separate manner.
- Members of all committees shall be members of SJHTCS in good standing during the term of membership in the committee.
- The Board in consultation with the President shall appoint the Chairpersons of the committee. One of the trustees shall be the chairperson for the committee or be the liaison for the board.
- Other members of each committee can be included by the Chairperson in consultation with the President and the information conveyed to the Board.
- Each committee shall consist of at least three members
- The terms for each Chairperson and its committee members shall be for two years and can continue for additional periods with the consent of the Board.
- The committee(s) shall meet periodically and prepare a report of their discussions and record the same in a form of minutes. Items requiring expenses for implementation would require the Board approval before the implementation.
- The fiscal year shall coincide with the SJHTCS fiscal year i.e. Jan 1 to December 31. Budgets for their committee tasks should be prepared and submitted for approval by the Board.
- The Chairpersons shall approve all expenses of a sub-committee. The Chairperson can Approve expenses within \$1000.00 for a single item. However, expenses above \$1000.00 would require approval by the Treasurer/Vice President/President.
- No individual member of a committee or its Chairperson shall enter into any contracts or agreements either written or oral with other individuals or institutions on behalf of SJHTCS.
- The Board and its President will deal all administrative issues with respect to the employees of SJHTCS. The concerned Chairperson may be contacted for some specific input in such matters.

8.2 Religious Committee

- The Religious sub-committee is a very important committee in SJHTCS operations. It shall consist of members conversant with the Hindu tradition, rituals and values. The priest shall be part of the committee without voting rights.
- The tasks for this committee includes:
 - a) Recommend the religious days to be observed and identify the various religious festivals
 - b) Prepare the list of events for the annual calendar and convey the same to the Publication committee for the three- month event calendar as well as the annual calendar.
 - c) Oversee performance of daily service, rituals and special events and ensure steady supply of materials required for the religious operation.
 - d) Coordinate the religious services
 - e) Aarti funds shall be deposited in the Hundi.
 - f) The Chairperson of this committee shall not be responsible for the administrative matters with respect to the priests (salary, leave, sick leave, travel, terms of

employment, appointment and terminations, etc.). The President of the Board shall handle all such matters. President may request input from the chairperson prior to his decision.

- g) Coordinate with other committees for specific or major religious events conducted.

8.3 Cultural Affairs Committee

- Coordinate with other cultural organization in the area to identify cultural events to be conducted by SJHTCS.
- Interact with children to conduct specific cultural event for children.
- Evaluate future cultural activities to be undertaken by SJHTCS.
- Coordinate with other groups to sponsor concerts/musical events by SJHTCS. Provide estimate of costs, sources of revenues and overall financial impact to SJHTCS. Prepare a report to the Board and obtain its approval prior to confirmation of the concert/event with the artist or other groups.
- Coordinate with the education committee to teach classical Indian music and dance

8.4 Education and Library Committee

- This committee shall consist of members with credentials, experience and interest in the field of education and library affairs. They shall be responsible for planning and instituting educational pursuits of SJHTCS.
- Maintain a library. Ensure the various books are consistent with SJHTCS charter and are well maintained.
- Identify the various Indian languages to be taught to the devotees. Schedule these classes in consultation with other committees to avoid clash of events.
- Identify the books/text to be utilized for the classes in consultation with the specific teacher
- Prepare religious text materials for the events in consultation with the religious committee. Ensure such texts are available in various Indian languages including English.
- Encourage children to participate in various events and arrange specific contests for the children at a regular interval to help them assimilate the Indian culture

8.5 Food Committee

- The food committee shall consist of devotees who choose to volunteer their services for the following:
 - a) Support the cook in preparation of food and the distribution of the same to the devotees during specific and major religious events. In specific, this will be required during major events. Coordinate with the other Committees specifically with the religious committee to arrive at a good estimate of the number of devotees attending the specific event.
 - b) Ensure the religious cook coordinates with the religious committee with respect to naivedyam/prasadams on a regular basis. Make sure the materials required for the preparations are available
 - c) Coordinate with the pool of volunteers to assist in handling the food distribution at the events, clean up after the event and handling heavy loads, etc.
 - d) Submit monthly financial reports in consultation with the Treasurer
 - e) Check with the Board regarding the charges, if any, to be levied for the food.

- 8.6 Fund Raising Committee
- The members of this committee shall be effective in fund raising activities for the corporation demonstrated by such experiences in the past. The Chairperson nominated by the Board can choose the proper persons for this activity.
 - Coordinate and schedule specific events for raising funds in consultation with the Board.
- 8.7 Membership Committee
- This committee is entrusted the task of increasing the SJHTCS membership in the various categories.
 - Interact with members to upgrade their membership over time
 - Maintain a list of members
 - Review the membership applications for approval by the Board.
 - Coordinate with Treasurer for issue of receipt to the member on his/her payments
 - Suggest methods for increasing membership. Members of the committee are available at major SJHTCS events with a view to enroll new members.
 - Interact with fund raising committee on a regular basis
- 8.8 Publications Committee
- This committee consists of members interested and experienced in printing and publications
 - Coordinate with various committees with regards to printing of flyers, etc. for specific events. Ensure approval of the flyer by the Board prior to the printing.
 - Coordinate with the religious committee on the three-month religious calendar as well as the annual calendar.
 - Publish news provided by the Board
 - Print copies of the prayers books, bhajans and other religious materials provided by the Religious committee, educational committee and with approval of the Board.
- 8.9 Public Relations Committee
- This is a very critical committee for disseminating the proper information about SJHTCS to the public. The President of the Board should head this committee to ensure the correct news about SJHTCS is propagated
 - It can interact with the newspaper, TV, Radio and other media to release proper and correct information
 - Provides publicity and arrange the reception of special guests
 - Interact with all committees to assure proper public relations exist with the devotees.
- 8.10 Youth Activities Committee
- The youth committee shall consist of young persons. It shall have an advisor nominated by the Board. Its main objectives shall be the furtherance of religious and cultural education and instruction amongst the young members of the community.
 - Coordinate the youth activities
 - Conduct "Bal Vihar type " classes for the children in consultation with the education committee.
- 8.11 Volunteer Committee
- The committee should maintain a list of volunteers at all times with their contact numbers or email ids for ease of contact specifically during special events.
 - This committee shall contain members who have the volunteer spirit and are ready to work with enthusiasm for the betterment of SJHTCS.

- It will have a large force required for both the regular and special events. This will allow for the sharing of the burden at different times.
- The other committees shall work with this group to assist them in their needs of volunteers for any occasion.

8.12 Information Technology Committee

- This committee has an important role to play in terms of advising the board the various methods to adapt the modern technology in the operations of the facility.
- This committee is charged with the task of keeping the database updated at all times.
- The list of members in the various categories shall be maintained in consultation with The Secretary/Treasurer
- The database shall be shared with the publication committee for mailing the flyers and other relevant materials produced by SJHTCS.
- Develop and maintain the web site in an efficient manner and ensure it is devotee friendly, activities and upcoming events are well informed and conducted events are projected in the proper manner.
- Streamline the scheduling of events like priest services, hall utilization, arranging of lectures, emergency information to devotees can be done more efficiently with the IT tool.
- Ensure the personal information collected from the devotees is well safeguarded with access limited to identified officers
- Prepare budgets for purchase of hardware required for proper implementation of IT technology.

8.13 Community Overreach Programs

The basic purpose of this committee is to provide a link with the community to understand the religious programs that could benefit them.

The committee should schedule specific programs like general health issue talks, health clinics, stress relief measures, medical talks, topics of general interests, religious discourses, soup kitchen etc.

8.14 Finance, Inventory and Budget Committee

This is high level committee consisting of senior level members from the Board of Trustees.

- Evaluate the capital costs for high activity items like construction of new buildings, services, etc.
- Recommend the allocation of funds for major capital projects.
- Develop policy for investment of funds.
- Develop budgets for purchase of major operational equipment/services.

8.15 Special Events Committee

- This committee will be set up by the President with information to the board for specific special events approved by the board.

8.16 Audio-video/ Photography Committee

- This is a special committee that will have at least three persons to assist the use of audio equipment in religious functions, devotees renting the hall for private events.
- The persons of this committee are responsible for taking photographs/video of routine and special events and giving this to the IT committee for including in the web site after proper editing/review by the President.
- Develop budgets for purchase of hardware.
- Take measures for proper storage of the costly equipment and audio/video files.