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# THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB 2014

## **Article I**

The organization will be known as The Bahamas Press Club 2014 (Hereinafter called the Press Club).

## **Article II**

This Constitution shall be the governing authority for the Press Club, subject only to the Constitution of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, and any actions or acts performed by the Press Club must be consistent with this Constitution.

## **Article III**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- a) To promote and protect the interest of persons who are employed by the working press and the media;
- b) To monitor and ensure as much as possible the high quality, standard and professionalism of those employed in the media in The Bahamas, especially members of the working press.
- c) To promote freedom of expression in The Bahamas and abroad;
- d) To ensure public access to pertinent information and to always work to guarantee the accuracy of that information.
- e) To lobby for a Freedom of Information Act in The Bahamas and for greater access by the public to the decisions of public authorities;
- f) To establish a code of ethics for the practice of media professionals in The Bahamas and to promote ethical behaviour by those professionals, especially members of the working press;
- g) To investigate complaints against media professionals in accordance with that code and issue appropriate penalties in accordance with the code in f.
- h) To make a request to the Commissioner of The Royal Bahamas Police Force for an accredited National Press Pass for all working press, which includes reporters (hard news, sports, feature); journalists (hard news, sports and feature); photojournalists; news photographers; freelance journalists; freelance photographers; videographers;

broadcasters; editors and those who aid in disseminating news or any combination of these positions in The Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

- i) The Bahamas Press Club 2014 shall become affiliated with the National Press Club, Washington, D. C., and with other professional bodies in the Caribbean and abroad.
- j) To establish a non-resident membership throughout the family of Islands in The Commonwealth of The Bahamas and elsewhere as required.

#### **Article IV** **MEMBERSHIP**

- (a) Membership shall be open to all members of the working press and including those who aid in disseminating news of any combination in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.;
- (b) A new member to the Press Club cannot participate in the Press Club's general elections unless that member has had consistent attendance for six months, is in good standing and is financial;
- (c) A member who desires to be a candidate for the office of President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President or 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President must be a member who has been attending meetings consistently for a period of one year and is in good financial standing;
- (d) Members are required to comply with this Constitution and with the code of ethics of the Press Club upon signing the application prescribed by the Executive Committee and paying the first month's dues.
- (e) Membership shall be open in three (3) categories:
  - (1) Ordinary (full) – dues to be paid.
  - (2) Allied– dues to be paid.
  - (3) Honorary – No dues to be paid.

#### **Article V** **DUES**

Dues shall be one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per year or such sums as may be determined by the Press Club in a General Meeting with a 2/3 majority of those financial members present. Dues shall be payable twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) at the time of application and the remaining seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) within ninety (90) days. Thereinafter dues shall be paid before 1<sup>st</sup> June of each year.

Failure of a member to complete payment in a specified time will require that special arrangements be made with the treasurer for payment. Failure to respond within 30 days will result in removal from active membership and suspension of all privileges. Re-instatement will require full payment.

#### **Article VI** **OFFICERS**

- (a) Executive Members of the Press Club shall serve for a two-year term and not more than two consecutive two years term in any office and shall be eligible for re-election if they desire to continue to serve after having served one term. They shall be as follows:

(1) President - who shall be responsible for the general direction and control of the club; shall make statements on behalf of the club; convene all meetings; preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee and general meetings of the club. Shall vote on the Executive Committee to break any ties in voting; shall be one of two signatories on cheques of the Club; the President may give assignments to other officers at his/her discretion.

(1a) If the President resigns for any reason known or unknown to the Club; abandons the post;

fails to hold regular meetings for a period of two consecutive months, then the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-

President shall hold the office of President and conduct meetings of the Club for sixty (60)

days after which elections must be called in accordance with the Club's Constitution

in order to fill the vacant post.

(2) 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President – who shall act in the capacity of the President when the President is

absent, is subject to the direction and control of the President and shall be one of the

signatories on the cheques of the Club whenever the President is not available.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-

President is also to serve on a relevant Sub- Committee.

(3) 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – who shall act in the capacity of the President when the President and 1<sup>st</sup>

Vice President is absent, and is subject to the control and direction of the President. If the President and/or 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President resigns or for some other reason vacate their posts, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President shall hold office of the President for sixty (60) days after which elections in accordance with the Club's Constitution must be called in order to fill the vacant post/s. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President is also to serve on a relevant sub-committee.

(4) Secretary - who shall keep all minutes of all meetings and is subject to the control and direction of the President; be responsible for the collection of all dues; distributing official correspondence and keeping official records of regular general meetings; Executive Committee meetings and annual general meetings of the Press Club. If for some known or unknown reason the President, 1st Vice-President and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-president are unable to preside at any particular general meeting/s then the Secretary will preside and conduct the meeting in their absence. If they should vacate their offices at the same time then the Secretary will be the acting President and shall hold that office for sixty (60) days after which elections in accordance with the Press Club's Constitution must be called

in order to fill the vacant posts of President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President.

- (5) Assistant Secretary – who shall act in the absence of the Secretary and under the Secretary’s direction and control, and in the case of a vacancy in the post of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary shall hold that office for sixty (60) days after which elections in accordance with the Constitution must be called in order to fill the vacant post of Secretary. The Assistant Secretary is to also serve on a relevant committee.
- (6) Treasurer – who shall collect the Club dues from the Secretary and all other monies collected by the Club and shall ensure the same is deposited in the bank; shall superintend the accounts of the Club and shall prepare an annual financial report for the members in general meeting; and shall be one of the signatories on the cheques of the Club. The Treasurer is to also serve on a relevant committee.
- (7) Assistant Treasurer – who shall act in the absence of the Treasurer, and shall be under the Treasurer’s direction and control, and in case of any vacancy in the post of Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall hold that office for 60 days after which elections in accordance with the Constitution must be called in order to fill the vacant post of Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer is to also serve on a relevant committee.
- (8) Public Relations Officer – who shall be appointed by the President and is subject to the control and direction of the President; distribute President or Vice-President’s approved press releases and President’s or Vice-President’s approved responses to the media, ensuring proper dissemination of accurate information and the promotion of all Press Club’s activities.
- (9) Education Officer– responsible for arranging training and educational seminars sponsored by  
the Press Club.

Together, the above nine officers shall comprise the Executive Committee and shall be

responsible for the general running of the Press Club between general meetings.

A quorum shall be five (5) of the Executive Committee and decisions shall be by simple majority.

Each month, the Executive Committee shall convene a meeting of members and by written correspondence to each member present and absent communicate decisions and actions of the Executive Committee. A quorum of which shall be five. Members must be financial to vote. Any member of the Executive Committee who is absent for two (2) consecutive meetings without cause shall be relieved of their duties.

The Executive Committee may appoint an auditor and legal counsel for the Press Club.

## **Article VII**

- (a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the Club each year during the month of June at a time designated by the Executive Committee.
- (b) At every second Annual General Meeting there shall be the election of the officers of the Press Club after the presentation of yearly reports from each designated officer. The election shall be conducted by an Election Officer appointed by the Executive Committee, with the voting conducted by Secret Ballot.
- (c) The Annual General Meeting has the power to amend this Constitution by a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the financial members. The AGM may also overturn any decisions of the Executive Board, including any disciplinary action; or give general or specific directions to the Executive Committee.
- (d) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by the President with all the powers of the Annual General Meeting, or by the written request of any five (5) members of the club sent to the Secretary. There shall be at least fourteen (14) days notice for an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- (e) All decisions of general meetings shall be by simple majority – except for amending the constitution, which shall require a two-thirds majority of fully paid up members. A quorum for a general meeting shall be one third (1/3) of all fully paid up members. Members may vote by proxy.

## **Article VIII**

### **DISCIPLINE**

- a) The President shall appoint a disciplinary panel of three persons from amongst financial members (one of whom shall be from the discipline of the person against whom the complaint is made), who shall have the power to recommend to the Executive Committee the following:
  - (a) Warning
  - (b) Suspension
  - (c) Expulsion.
- b) The Executive Committee can affirm or reject any recommendation of the panel and publish the complaint and consequent decision. The decision of the Executive Committee can be overturned by the Annual General Meeting.
- c) If a complaint is made against an officer of the Press Club, a general meeting must be called within fourteen (14) days of the complaint to appoint a panel to investigate the complaint and make its findings known to the general meeting. The officer against whom the complaint is made shall not take part in choosing the disciplinary panel. The same standard shall apply to regular members.

- d) If the President or any Executive Officer is accused of misusing the office for political or personal gain, a hearing will be conducted and if any be found guilty will be stripped of their responsibilities.

**ARTICLE IX**

The President shall appoint the following Committees:

- (1) Ethics Committee: to establish a code of ethics for media professionals and keeping the same under review; to review complaints from the public with respect to the conduct and performance of media professionals and to advise the Executive Committee of its findings and to take appropriate action.
  
- (2) Any other Committees deemed necessary for the smooth functioning of the Press Club.

**Article X**

Absentee members cannot be nominated for the office of President and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President. Absentee members nominations for other Executive Committee offices requires a letter of intent sent to the presiding officer prior to nominations. Absentee members for nomination must be a member of the Press Club for a period of one year, has attended Club meetings regularly, is in good standing and financial. A Proxy Ballot can only be used by a member in good standing who has been a member of the Press Club for a period of six months. The Presiding Officer and the Press Club should be informed two weeks prior to the election date. The presiding officer should receive Proxy Ballots five days before the Press Club's election date. Proxy Ballots before usage should have the initials of the Presiding Officer and date placed on the back of the ballots on the bottom right hand corner in order for the absentee member's official usage. After being marked, candidate should fold ballot in half, sealed and placed in given envelope.

**Article XI**

The Bahamas Press Club 2014 can be dissolved by the Annual General Meeting, by a two -thirds majority.

**Article XII**

This Constitution is governed by the laws of The Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

**Article XIII**

The Executive Committee Members of The Bahamas Press Club 2014 shall be exempt from any potential legal actions.

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<i>President</i> Anthony A. Newbold 1.242.422.5079	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</i> Anthony Capron 1.242.468.0862	<i>Secretary</i> Lindsay D. Thompson 1.242.434.5643	<i>Asst. Secretary</i> Shenique Miller 1.242.376.9958	<i>Treasurer</i> Vincent Vaughan 1.242.425.6007	<i>Asst. Treasurer</i> Carla Palmer 1.242.445.2279	<i>P.R. Officer</i> Kendeno Knowles 1.242.395.2312	<i>Education Officer</i> Julian Reid 1.242.376.0174
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