

Date: October 11, 2003

**THE SIKH SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN INC.**  
(A Non Profit Organization, Mich. # 23-72-73095N)  
990 E. Lincoln, Madison Heights, MI 48071  
Tel: 248-547-0927

**Final Constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan Inc.**

**PREAMBLE:**

There is but One God  
The Eternal  
The All Pervading  
The Creator  
The Supreme Being  
Without Fear; Without Enmity  
The Being Beyond Time  
Not Incarnated  
Self-Existent  
He can be realized through the grace of the Guru

**Article I ENTITY**

1.01 **Name:** This Organization shall be named the "THE SIKH SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN INC.". The word "Society" appearing in this text means the Organization.

**Article II DEFINITIONS**

- 2.01 **Gurdwara:** A location, either leased or owned by the Society, which is designated for meeting and holding discourse on *Gurbani* and *Sikh* doctrines in the holy presence of *Guru Granth Sahib*<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.02 **Sikh:** Any person believing in One Immortal Being, ten *Gurus* (from *Guru Nanak* to *Guru Gobind Singh*), the *Guru Granth Sahib*<sup>1</sup>, the utterances and teachings of the ten *Gurus*, the *Amrit* bequeathed by the tenth *Guru*, and attempts to live life as recommended by *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.03 **Registered Member:** Any Sikh (as defined in 2.02) fulfilling the following requirements will be considered registered member of the Society:
1. At least eighteen years of age.
  2. Submit a membership form (at the end of the constitution) to the Executive Committee.

**Article III OBJECTIVES**

- 3.01 To hold regular meetings and masses of the congregations at the *Gurdwara* in an effort to promote the understanding of *Gurbani*, Sikh History, *Gurmukhi* and the glorious traditions and heritage of Sikhism.
- 3.02 To maintain and promote the purity of the *Khalsa* traditions and inculcate love for its ideals in all its manifestations: form, faith and way of life according to *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.03 To mobilize Community's resources to develop a dynamic mechanism for defending and promoting the Sikh religion.

- 3.04 To organize the teaching of *Gurmat* (*Gurmukhi* script, *Panjabi* language, *Kirtan* and *Gurbani Paath*).
- 3.05 To arrange *Amrit-Sanchar* for the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> at least once every year. In case any other Sikh institution, within the Metropolitan area organizes *Amrit-Sanchar*, this *Gurdwara* would offer full co-operation and support to it; and need not organize its own *Amrit-Sanchar* during that year.
- 3.06 To assist with the integration of Sikhs into the U S Society, without compromising, in any way, their religious values, beliefs, culture or identities. The Society is obligated and committed to encourage Sikhs to wear their religious symbols (namely the five Ks (*Kakaars*)) in the United States. Discrimination against Sikhs because of: this practice, religious beliefs, customs, or dress will not be tolerated. The Society is committed to addressing any such concerns of its members to any body, employer, individual, entity, institution or group displaying discrimination.
- 3.07 The Society is not formed for pecuniary or financial gain. Its assets may not inure to the benefit of any individual member.
- 3.08 The Society shall be politically neutral. It shall not engage in nor attempt to participate in any governmental campaigns or legislation.

#### **Article IV GOVERNING THE SOCIETY**

- 4.01 The Society is committed to following an orderly and consistent process to govern the Society. It utilizes a committee system, comprised of Working Committee members to govern the Society. Committee members will be charged with certain defined responsibilities. Working Committee members shall be selected according to the methods set forth below. Members shall have finite term limits.
- 4.02 The Society shall be governed and run by the following committees: **Executive Committee and the Working Committee.**

#### **Article V APPROVAL OF THE SANGAT**

Every major decision by the Working Committee like; selecting a site for *Gurdwara* building, selecting a new Working Committee or spending money exceeding \$10,000.00 etc., must be brought to the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> for final approval (in Sunday *Divan* soon after the *Hukamnama*). The spokesperson of Executive Committee shall describe the subject of approval and day of approval to the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> from the stage 2 weeks prior to the final approval. He will also mail a copy of the same information to the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> and give them 2 weeks advance notice. There is a two-step process to obtain the final approval by the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>. The first step is the spokesperson of Executive Committee shall describe the subject for approval and will call *Jaikara* at the end to get consent of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>. If the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> respond with *Jaikara* of "*Bole So Nihal – Sat Shri Akal*", then the first step is complete. Then the second step to final approval is to obtain written signatures of at least 2/3<sup>rd</sup> members of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> physically present in *Divan* Hall of *Gurdwara Sahib* during the approval procedure. This second step is essential to complete the approval. The Executive Committee is responsible to get the signature from the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>. Failure to get 2/3<sup>rd</sup> written signature of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> will be considered no approval by the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>.

#### **Article VI: NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

The Nomination Committee shall assist the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> to choose the members of the Working Committee. The Nomination Committee shall consist of five members. No member of the Nomination Committee can be a member of the new Working Committee which he/she is nominating.

## (I) Qualifications for the members of Nomination Committee

Each of the Five members of Nomination Committee MUST:

- 6.1.01 Be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> Sikh.
- 6.1.02 Be a Registered Member of the Sikh Society Of Michigan for the last 12 consecutive months, and maintain his/her membership for the duration he/she is in this committee, except for the 1<sup>st</sup> time of the implementation of this Constitution.
- 6.1.03 Must work as a sevadar (servant) of the Gurdwara strictly on a voluntary basis (with no monetary compensation).
- 6.1.04 Not be a member of the outgoing Working Committee or Executive Committee.

## (II) Selection Procedure for the members of Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee will be selected as follows;

All registered members of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> will be informed about the selection of Nomination Committee by regular announcements in Sunday Divan from First Sunday of February (in the year when the term of the current Working Committee is supposed to expire). A list of eligible members for Nomination Committee will be made by the third Sunday of February and all the eligible candidates will be informed about the selection procedure to be held on last Sunday of February. This procedure will be carried out by the current Executive Committee.

On last Sunday of February, a Special *Divan* will be organized in *Gurdwara Divan Hall* with *Guru Granth Sahib*<sup>1</sup> in *Prakash*. The five members of the Nomination Committee will be selected by writing names of all eligible candidates on identical pieces of paper (one name on each), folding them, shuffling them, and then requesting a small child to pick five of them randomly. These randomly picked five candidates will be considered as the members of the Nomination Committee.

The names and contact numbers of the selected Nomination Committee members will be posted on Gurdwara Sahib notice board immediately after the selection and will remain posted until the selection of new Working Committee.

For the first time implementation of this constitution, the duties of Nomination Committee (as per Art VI, (III)) will be executed by the Coordination Committee in the month of Final Approval of this constitution by the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>.

*The nomination committee automatically dissolves after the selection and approval of the New Working committee.*

## (III) Duties of Nomination Committee

- 6.3.01 After the selection of Nomination Committee, it will select a spokesperson among its members to interact with *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> during the *Divans* in *Gurdwara*.
- 6.3.02 The spokesperson of the Nomination Committee will make announcements for the selection of new Working Committee and encourage the participation of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> in new Working Committee through regular announcements in Sunday Divans.

- 6.3.03 The Nomination Committee will record the names of the registered members who are interested in becoming the members of New Working Committee until third Sunday of March. Everybody submitting his/her name will be given a copy of Sikh Rehit Maryada<sup>2</sup> and Constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan and will be requested to read both the documents carefully in order to understand the responsibilities.
- 6.3.04 The Nomination Committee will screen and forward the list of eligible candidates from the pool of applications to the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>. This screening will assure each member fulfills the qualifications for the members of Working Committee (Art VII-II). On fourth Sunday of March, Nomination Committee will post the list of eligible candidates for new Working Committee.
- 6.3.05 In the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, new Working Committee will be selected in *Divan* Hall on First Sunday of April in *Gurdwara Sahib*. This procedure would be carried out by the spokesperson of the Nomination-Committee.
- 6.3.06 A member of the Nomination Committee will record the proceedings.
- 6.3.07 The names of all the eligible candidates of the 'Nomination-Committee' will be written on identical pieces of paper (one name on each), folding them, shuffling them, and then requesting a child to pick eleven of them randomly.
- 6.3.08 These randomly picked eleven candidates will be the members of the New Working Committee. All selected candidates will pledge in front of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> that they will abide the *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>2</sup> and Constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan.

## **Article VII: WORKING COMMITTEE**

### **(I) Structure and Tenure**

- 7.1.01 The Working Committee shall consist of 11 members only.
- 7.1.02 The tenure of the Working Committee shall be for two years ending on *Vaisakhi* day *Divan* (on Sunday).
- 7.1.03 No person can remain the member of Working Committee for more than two consecutive terms (four consecutive years).
- 7.1.04 Retiring member(s) can become the member of Working Committee after a gap of at least two years.

### **(II) Qualifications of the Working Committee Members**

- 7.2.01 Must be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> Sikh.
- 7.2.02 Must not be a member of Working Committee for more than two consecutive terms. This includes the Working Committee members from 1998 to 2002.
- 7.2.03 Must not be a member of Nomination Committee.
- 7.2.04 Must not be a member of any committee(s) of any other Gurdwara.
- 7.2.05 Regularly attend the Gurdwara & its activities.
- 7.2.06 Must have been rendering *Seva* to the Society in one form or the other (*tan, man* and *dhan*) within the Gurdwara premises.
- 7.2.07 Must be a Registered member of the Sikh Society of Michigan for a minimum of two consecutive years. This conditioned is waived for the first time implementation of this Constitution.
- 7.2.08 Must be a resident of Michigan for at least 2 consecutive years.

7.2.09 Must work as a *sevadar* of the Gurdwara strictly on a voluntary basis (with no monetary compensation).

### (III) Selection of Working Committee Members

Working Committee will be selected by the Nomination Committee as follows;

- 7.3.01 Nomination Committee will select a spokesperson among its members to interact with *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> during the *Divans* in *Gurdwara*.
- 7.3.02 The spokesperson of the Nomination Committee will make announcements for the selection of new Working Committee and encourage the participation of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> in new Working Committee through regular announcements in Sunday Divans.
- 7.3.03 Nomination Committee will record the names of the registered members who are interested in becoming the members of new Working Committee until third Sunday of March. Everybody submitting his/her name will be given a copy of Sikh Rehit Maryada<sup>2</sup> and Constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan and will be requested to read both the documents carefully in order to understand the responsibilities.
- 7.3.04 Nomination Committee will screen and forward the list of eligible candidates from the pool of applications to the *Sangat*. This screening will be based on the qualifications for the members of Working Committee (Art VII-II). On fourth Sunday of March, Nomination Committee will post the list of eligible candidates for new Working Committee.
- 7.3.05 In the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, the new Working Committee will be selected in *Divan* Hall on First Sunday of April in *Gurdwara Sahib*. This procedure would be carried out by the spokesperson of the Nomination Committee.
- 7.3.06 A member of the Nomination Committee will record the proceedings.
- 7.3.07 The names of all the eligible candidates proposed by the Nomination Committee will be written on identical pieces of paper (one name on each), folding them, shuffling them, and then requesting a child to pick eleven of them randomly.
- 7.3.08 These randomly picked eleven candidates will be the members of the new Working Committee. All selected candidates will pledge in front of *Sangat* that they will abide the *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>2</sup> and Constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan.

### (IV) Duties of Working Committee

- 7.4.01 The Gurdwara is the home of the Guru and to keep it running smoothly and in order, every working committee member should try his/her best to come to every Divan early and stay till the end, and try to do whatever is needed to ensure smooth running of all events.
- 7.4.02 Each member of Working Committee must read and understand the Constitution of Society and *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>2</sup> and possess the respective copies at his/her home.
- 7.4.03 The Working Committee will handle any sale, purchase or major alteration of the property of the Society, subject to the approval of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> (as per Art V).
- 7.4.04 The Working Committee will approve the funds required for Gurdwara matters. Working Committee will be authorized to approve funds less than \$10,000. If the funds exceed the limit of \$10,000 the whole amount will require the approval of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> (as per Art V).
- 7.4.05 Day to day decisions of the Working Committee will be subjected to a majority vote of the members present (Quorum).
- 7.4.06 Every week, two out of eleven members of the Working Committee will do all the cleaning in Gurdwara Sahib and this will be done on rotation basis.

#### 7.4.07 Regular Meetings

- 7.4.07.01 The Working Committee will meet at least once every three months. The meetings shall be held on the First Sunday of March, June, September and December. If the meeting cannot be held for any reasons on these specified days, then it should be held soon thereafter, but no later than two weeks from the scheduled days. The regular meetings shall be held on Sundays only, soon after the Sunday *Divan* around 2:00 PM. Any member of the *Sangat* can participate in the meetings except voting for decisions.
- 7.4.07.02 Joint Secretary will convene the Working Committee meeting and take the minutes of the meeting. If he/she fails to call the meeting any member of the Executive Committee can call the meeting.
- 7.4.07.03 The agenda and minutes of any meeting will be circulated to all the Working Committee members within 2 weeks of the meeting by regular mail.
- 7.4.07.04 If any Working Committee member is absent for two consecutive meetings he/she can lose their membership from the Working Committee.
- 7.4.07.05 Undisciplined person(s) can be asked to leave the meeting by President/Joint Secretary.
- 7.4.07.06 All meetings of the Committee shall be held in the Gurudwara Sahib in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib unless an act of God prohibits the meeting to be held in the Gurudwara. Under such circumstance, the meeting can be held at a mutually convenient place to the Working Committee.
- 7.4.07.07 A quorum is established when 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the membership or 8 members, whichever is more, are physically present for the meeting. No proxy will be honored for absent members.
- 7.4.07.08 No votes are valid, unless majority of a quorum is established.
- 7.4.07.09 Every major decision by the Working Committee like; selecting a site for Gurudwara building, selecting a new Working Committee or spending money exceeding \$10,000.00 etc., must be brought to the *Sangat*<sup>A</sup> for final approval (as per Article V).

#### Article VIII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

##### (I) Structure and Tenure:

- 8.1.01 The Executive Committee shall consist of 5 members out of 11 members of Working Committee.
- 8.1.02 The tenure of the Executive Committee shall be for two years ending on *Vaisakhi* day *Divan* (on Sunday).
- 8.1.03 The Executive Committee shall consist of the following members:
- A) President
  - B) Vice President
  - C) Secretary
  - D) Joint Secretary
  - E) Treasurer

##### (II) Qualifications of Executive Committee

- 8.2.01 Must have all the qualifications as that for a Working Committee member (as per Art VII (II)).

8.2.02 The president and Secretary should have proficiency in both spoken and written Panjabi and English languages to communicate effectively within and outside the Sikh community.

**(III) Selection Procedure of Executive Committee**

8.3.01 The Working Committee can appoint Executive Committee of five members by a unanimously vote among the Working Committee members who meet all the above qualifications (as per Art VIII, (II)). These unanimously selected members will serve as members of Executive Committee. The unanimously selected members must be introduced to the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> in the following Sunday Diwan (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of April) of selection of new Working Committee.

8.3.02 If the Working Committee cannot make a unanimous decision or there are more than five qualified members who meet the above qualifications (as per Art VIII, (II)) and are willing to serve in Executive Committee then they will be selected during Sunday Diwan (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of April) in the presence of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>. Their names will be written on identical pieces of paper (one name on each), folding them, shuffling them, and then requesting a child to pick five of them randomly. These randomly picked five candidates will be considered as the members of the new Executive Committee.

8.3.03 The five selected members of Executive Committee should mutually decide the official positions i.e. President, Vice-President, Secretary, Joint Secretary and Treasurer, among themselves.

**(IV) Duties of Executive Committee Members**

The Gurdwara is the home of the Guru and to keep it running smoothly and in order, every Executive Committee member should try his/her best to come to every Divan early and stay till the end, and try to do whatever is needed to ensure smooth running of all events.

All members of Executive Committee will do all the cleaning in the Gurdwara along with rest of the Working Committee members on rotation basis.

**The duties of the individual Executive Committee Members are listed below.**

**1. Duties of the President**

8.4.1.01 To meet with the Executive Committee members weekly to ensure the proper working of Gurdwara.

8.4.1.02 To appoint committees (like Public relations committee, Maintenance and Improvement committee, Akhand Path and Langar committee, Education and Library committee, Fund raising committee and Special events committee) for proper functioning of the Society.

8.4.1.03 To take regular feedback from other committees (as mentioned above in B) to ensure their proper working on monthly basis.

8.4.1.04 To file and keep all the records and minutes of the meetings of the Society.

8.4.1.05 The withdrawals of money from the checking and saving account shall require the signatures of President and Treasurer.

## 2. Duties of the Vice-President

- 8.4.2.01 To assist the President in performing his/her duties. The various duties can be divided through mutual agreement.
- 8.4.2.02 Act as President when President is unable to perform the duties.
- 8.4.2.03 In the event of early resignation or death of President, Vice-President shall act as President until the selection of new working committee.

## 3. Duties of the Secretary

- 8.4.3.01 In consultation with Executive Committee, organize the program of the Gurdwara Divans (both regular and Gurburab Divans).
- 8.4.3.02 Act as the Stage Secretary during the Divans.
- 8.4.3.03 Manage opening of the Gurdwara building for all functions/divans.
- 8.4.3.04 Manage the *Chaur Seva* of Guru Granth Sahib during all Divans.
- 8.4.3.05 Supervise the Gurdwara Bulletin boards and keep an eye on all notes/printouts posted on them.
- 8.4.3.06 Encourage and invite the participation by Sadh Sangat including children and should allocate time to various outside and local participants.
- 8.4.3.07 In consultation with the Executive Committee, organize the *Amrit Sanchar* every year.
- 8.4.3.08 Shall handle letter writing and most of the correspondence for the Society.
- 8.4.3.09 Shall invite Raagi Jathas/other guests as approved by the Executive Committee. Shall also arrange their transportation to and from Gurdwara.
- 8.4.3.10 Act as a resident agent of the Sikh Society of Michigan.

## 4. Duties of the Joint-Secretary

- 8.4.4.01 Joint Secretary will convene the Working Committee meetings and take the minutes of the meeting. If he fails to call the meeting any member of the Executive Committee can call the meeting.
- 8.4.4.02 To assist the Secretary in performing his/her duties. The various duties can be divided through mutual agreement.
- 8.4.4.03 Act as Secretary when Secretary is unable to perform the duties.
- 8.4.4.04 In the event of early resignation or death of Secretary, Joint-Secretary shall act as Secretary until the selection of new Working Committee.

## 5. Duties of the Treasurer

- 8.4.5.01 To maintain financial record and operate the savings and checking accounts of the Society. President and Treasurer together will be authorized to withdraw money from the account upto \$5,000. For the amount ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000, Working Committee approval is required. For the amounts exceeding \$10,000, approval of *Sangat*<sup>d</sup> is required (as per Art V).
- 8.4.5.02 The President and Treasurer of the Society will maintain the checking/expense account and the balance should not exceed more than \$20,000 in this account.
- 8.4.5.03 Collect cash and check offerings (*Charat*) at least once a week. This includes the offerings deposited in cash-box (*Golak*).



- 8.4.5.04 Issue receipts for cash offerings. This includes any offerings coming from individuals as a result of *Kirtan/Paath* at their houses. For offerings made with checks, receipts need to be issued only when requested.
- 8.4.5.05 Make payments for all bills/invoices received by the Gurdwara and for all expenses made by *sevadars*. Keep all bills/invoices neatly filed for any auditors to review them at any time.
- 8.4.5.06 Maintain financial ledgers and keep all books balanced and in order and get them audited by a Chartered Accountant by every *Vaisakhi*.
- 8.4.5.07 The withdrawals of money from the checking and saving account shall require the signatures of President and Treasurer.
- 8.4.5.08 All funds collected by the Society shall be deposited promptly in the bank account of the Society.
- 8.4.5.09 The cash amount of offerings shall be counted in the presence of at-least two members of the congregation.
- 8.4.5.10 All religious congregations held in private homes through an announcement or with the involvement of the Society shall fall under the propriety of the Society and all offerings/proceeds therefrom shall be receipted by the Society.
- 8.4.5.11 Prepare current Balance sheet and Income/Expense Report and present them at least once in three months at a meeting of the Executive Committee and post them on the Bulletin board. Mail a copy of the annual Income/Expense Report (Annual Statement) to all registered members of the Society.
- 8.4.5.12 Monitor and manage all insurances for the Gurdwara.
- 8.4.5.13 Monitor incoming mail received at the Gurdwara site and at any P.O. Box rented by the Gurdwara.

**Article IX: OTHER COMMITTEES:**

Except Executive Committee, the following committees shall be appointed by the President. New committees can be added or existing committees can be deleted depending on the need and circumstances of the organization. Each committee will be under one of the members of working committee (other than executive committee members) and that member can choose other members from *Sangat* to execute the different responsibilities. All below committees should submit their quarterly report to President in writing.

- a) Public Relations committee
- b) Maintenance and Improvement committee
- c) Langar committee
- d) Education and Library committee
- e) Fund raising committee
- f) Special Events committee (for example: Gurdwara Picnic, Sikh Youth Symposium, Sikh Day Camp etc.)

Following points include (but are not limited to) the functions and responsibilities of above committee:

**(I) Public Relations Committee**

- 9.1.01 To organize functions in Gurdwara to familiarize non-Sikh community of United States regarding Sikh religion and customs.

- 9.1.02 To organize Sikh community of local area to respond to problems that Sikhs face here as well as in other parts of the world.
- 9.1.03 To identify new Sikh families who live here and inform them about the activities of our Gurdwara and welcome them to participate in them.
- 9.1.04 To publish news and information booklet quarterly highlighting the activities of our Gurdwara and Sangat and organize its distribution to the Sikh and interested non-Sikh population in the area.
- 9.1.05 To publicize in the press and news media regarding the major functions and activities of the Sikh community in and outside the Gurdwara.

### **(II) Maintenance and Improvement Committee**

- 9.2.01 To maintain the physical structure of the building in a sound and presentable state at all times.
- 9.2.02 Carry out repairs in a timely manner.
- 9.2.03 Take preventive measures to diminish loss and damage to the physical structure of the building.
- 9.2.04 To maintain and beautify the surroundings of the Gurdwara within its boundaries including landscaping.
- 9.2.05 To maintain the parking lot.
- 9.2.06 To suggest improvements and execute and supervise the approved projects inside and outside the Gurdwara building.

### **(III) Akhand Path and Langar Committee**

- 9.3.01 In consultation with Executive committee, manage all the *Akhand Paths* organized by Gurdwara. This includes preparation of *Paathi* and *Sevadar* lists, and monitoring the flow of Path.
- 9.3.02 To organize *Langar* for regular *Divans* of the Gurdwara.
- 9.3.03 To organize Langar for major functions in the Gurdwara.
- 9.3.04 To organize Langar for distribution to the poor and destitute in the Non-Sikh community.
- 9.3.05 To organize food for Gurdwara's organized functions outside Gurdwara such as picnics, camps, and seminars.
- 9.3.06 To maintain the kitchen and *Langar* Hall in hygienic conditions.
- 9.3.07 To maintain the proper stock of Utensils, paper-plates, cups, spoons, napkins etc.
- 9.3.08 To issue utensils for programs at home and maintain a record of it.

### **(IV) Education and Library Committee**

- 9.4.01 To organize education of our children, youth, and adults to learn Gurbani, Gurmukhi, Sikh history, and current affairs affecting Sikh Panth all over the world.
- 9.4.02 To educate Americans in general and American education system in particular about the Sikhs, their beliefs, customs, and traditions.
- 9.4.03 To organize seminars and discussions inside the Gurdwara as well as in surrounding educational and religious institutions to create public awareness about Sikhs.
- 9.4.04 To obtain and distribute educational, printed material in form of news pamphlets, books, documents pertaining to Sikh religion and political affairs in India and overseas.
- 9.4.05 To maintain a well-stocked library in the Gurdwara to include books on Sikh religion, history, politics, Gurmukhi educational material, dictionaries, and literature on comparative religion.
- 9.4.06 To maintain audio and video recording and relay equipment in the Gurdwara. Arrangements for duplicating audio and videotapes shall also be made available to members.
- 9.4.07 To catalog printed material audio and videotapes and to make them available for borrowing.

9.4.08 To organize recording of major performances by visiting Ragi Jathas and speakers in our Gurdwara.

9.4.09 Maintenance of website of Gurdwara.

**(V) Fund Raising Committee:**

9.5.01 The members of the Fund Raising Committee shall consist of treasurer and other members from Sangat.

9.5.02 To raise the funds when requested for various projects approved by the Working/Executive Committee. No individual(s) can do fund raising without the approval of Working/Executive Committee.

9.5.03 To coordinate fund raising activities of various committees to avoid duplication of effort and to minimize any possible inconvenience to donors.

9.5.04 To support and organize activities to promote the financial health of the organization.

**(VI) Special Events Committee**

The President of the Society will from time to time, as necessary, announce formation of Ad Hoc Committee for the purpose of resolving specific issues and/or undertake special projects. These committees shall be dissolved as soon as they have submitted their report and have completed the project they had undertaken. The term of these committees shall automatically expire when the president who appointed them retires. If their continued existence is needed, they shall be renewed/re-appointed by new President.

**Article X: CONFLICT RESOLUTION COMMITTEE:**

**(I) Need, Structure and Tenure of Conflict Resolution Committee**

10.1.01 The Conflict Resolution Committee is a Committee of five persons, created to resolve conflicts and differences.

10.1.02 This Committee will be formed on the concept of Panj Pyaare.

10.1.03 Conflict Resolution Committee can be formed whenever there are irreconcilable differences among the members of the *Sangat*<sup>d</sup> and the *Sangat*<sup>d</sup> feels the need of it.

10.1.04 The maximum duration of Conflict Resolution Committee Committee is two months.

**(II) Functions of Conflict Resolution Committee**

10.2.01 In the true Sikh tradition, the five member of Conflict Resolution Committee will act as impartial judges to make decisions; and thus create a forum of justice preventing the Sikh community affairs from going through civil court.

10.2.02 Before making a decision or come to any resolution of the conflict, it is very important for the Conflict Resolution Committee that they should contact, meet and discuss the matter in details with the members of the *Sangat*<sup>d</sup>. The decisions of the Conflict Resolution Committee will be considered final only, if it is approved by the *Sangat*<sup>d</sup> (as per Art V). Conflict Resolution Committee is created, it will end when a majority of its members believe the dispute(s), conflict(s) or problem(s) has been resolved subject to a maximum time period of two months.

10.2.03 Any difference of opinion on fundamental tenets of Sikhism shall be referred to Shri Akal Takht, Amritsar, INDIA for clarification and final ruling.

### (III) Qualifications for the Conflict Resolution Committee

Each of the Conflict Resolution Committee Members MUST:

10.3.01 Be a practicing *Amritdhari*<sup>3</sup> Sikh.

10.3.02 Must work as a sevadar (servant) of the Gurdwara strictly on a voluntary basis (with no monetary compensation).

10.3.03 Not be a member of the Working Committee.

### (IV) Selection of the Conflict Resolution Committee

Conflict Resolution Committee can be formed whenever there are irreconcilable differences among the members of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> and the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> feels the need of it. Conflict Resolution Committee will be selected from the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> (only during Divans on Sundays) whenever the need arises. Any Amritdhari Sikh can lead the procedure for the formation of this committee. Demand for Conflict Resolution Committee Members shall be made on stage and interested candidates would be asked to come on stage. If the number of interested members exceeds five than the names of all the members on stage will be written on identical piece of papers and a child would be requested to pick five. Those five would form the Conflict Resolution Committee.

Written signatures of at least 2/3<sup>rd</sup> members of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> physically present during the selection procedure of Conflict Resolution Committee is essential to the formation and validation of the Conflict Resolution Committee. The person who is leading the procedure for the formation of this committee has the responsibility to obtain the signatures of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> physically present during this procedure to ascertain whether the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority has honored the request for the Conflict Resolution Committee.

### Article XI: General Rules of Membership

- 11.01 Any member of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> who tries to create commotion or disorderly conduct during the divan shall be asked to leave the Gurdwara premises.
- 11.02 Members of the Sikh Society of Michigan cannot initiate any legal action against any other member of the Society or Society itself without the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> written approval of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>.
- 11.03 Any assets of any sort, liquid/immoveable property, of Sikh Society of Michigan shall not be subject to any division under any circumstances.
- 11.04 No funds of Gurdwara can be used for litigations unless approved by the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> (as per Art V).
- 11.05 **Resignation:** Any member(s) of the Society may resign from the membership/Working Committee/ Executive Committee by giving a written notice to Executive Committee. In the event of vacancy created in Executive Committee, the Working Committee shall appoint a suitable member from the existing working committee to the vacated *seva*. Each new member must have the same qualifications of the original member and be finally approved by the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> (as per Art V). If the entire Executive/Working Committee resigns, then it must be presented to *Sangat* and decision will be taken by the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> (as per Art V).
- 11.06 **No Confidence Motion:** There is a process under which a No Confidence Motion will be honored. No Confidence Motion against any Executive Committee or Working Committee

member will be considered in writing to the Working Committee of the Society. The No Confidence Motion to be honored must have a signature of 100 registered members and be approved by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority of the total membership of the Working Committee, will be presented to the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> for Final approval (as per Art V).

No Confidence Motion against entire Executive Committee or/and Working Committee must be brought directly to *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> for discussion and final decision (as per Art V).

## Article XII: AMENDMENTS

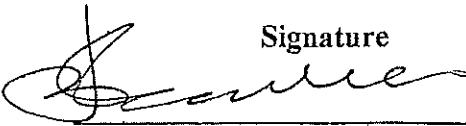
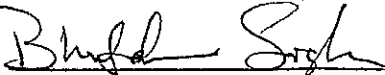
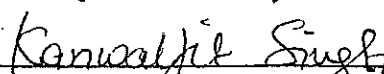
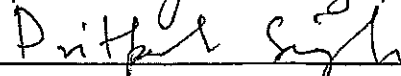
All proposed amendments and/or additions to this Constitution should be addressed in writing to the Working Committee of the Society. Each proposed amendment should be signed by at least 100 registered members (as per Art V). Any difference of opinion on fundamental tenets of Sikhism shall be referred to Shri Akal Takht, Amritsar, INDIA for clarification and final ruling.

All proposals will be first discussed in the general meeting of Working Committee. The decision about the amendment, approved by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> or 8 members (whichever is more) of the Working Committee, will be presented to the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> for Final approval (as per Art V).

## REFERENCES

1. **Guru Granth Sahib:** The Holy Book of Sikhs. It is considered the Supreme Spiritual Authority and Head of the Sikh religion, rather than any living person. The living Guru of the Sikhs, the book is held in great reverence by Sikhs and treated with the utmost respect. The *Guru Granth Sahib* contains teachings/revelations of the Sikh Gurus, as well as those of Bhagats, Sufis and other spiritual personalities.
2. **Sikh Rehit Maryada** – Literally means code of conduct. The *Sikh Rehit Maryada* contains a set of guidelines on how a Sikh should live his/her life. Currently being published and distributed by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar, India.
3. **Amritdhari** – A term applied to any Sikh who has “undergone *Amrit* Ceremony” and living his/her life as mentioned in *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>1</sup>.
4. **Sangat:** The term Sangat is applied to the devotees who gather/come to the Gurdwara to pay obeisance to Guru Granth Sahib.
5. **Kesadhari:** A person with uncut hair on head and face. For males, he must be wearing turban.

This Constitution has been written very carefully by the following Sevadars of Constitution Committee selected and authorized by the Sangat of the Society on August 10, 2003.

Name	Signature	Date
1. Baljit Singh		10/11/03
2. Bhupinder Singh		10/11/03
3. Kanwaljit Singh		10-11-03
4. Pritpal Singh		10/11/03
5. Rajinder Singh	_He voluntarily opted out from the Constitution Committee.	



**CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS 01**

(Original Effective October 11<sup>th</sup> 2003, Amended on 03/26/2017)

**ARTICLE VI: NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

It is expected that before becoming the member of the Nomination Committee, each member has read, understood, and is in complete agreement with the responsibilities of the Nomination Committee as defined in the original constitution of the Sikh Society of Michigan and constitution amendments – 01.

**(I) Qualifications for the members of Nomination Committee**

Each of the five members of the nomination committee:

6.1.01 can be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> or a *Non-Kesadhari*<sup>6</sup> Sikh.

**(II) Selection Procedure for the members of Nomination committee**

6.2.01 If the current (outgoing) executive Committee has proposed more than five eligible candidates, then the names of all the eligible proposed candidates will be written on identical pieces of paper (one name on each), folding them, shuffling them, then requesting a child to pick five of them randomly.

6.2.02 These randomly picked five candidates will be the members of the New Nomination Committee. All selected candidates will pledge in front of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> that they will abide the *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>2</sup> and Constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan.

**(III) Duties of Nomination committee**

6.3.07 Refer to Section (II) Selection Procedure for the members of Nomination committee, Sub Section 6.2.01.

6.3.08 Refer to Section (II) Selection Procedure for the members of Nomination committee, Sub Section 6.2.02.



- 6.3.09 Once the list of eligible candidates is posted, no applicants can be added or deleted by the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> member or by the current Working Committee. Only the Nomination Committee has the authority to amend the posted list.
- 6.3.10 The list of eligible candidates posted is for *Sangat's*<sup>4</sup> review. If any member of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> has concerns about the eligible candidates, he/she should submit the concern in writing (with signature) to the Nomination Committee by the Friday before the First Sunday of April. The nomination committee should then investigate the concern and decide if the eligible member can continue, or if his/her name has to be removed from the list of eligible candidates. The nomination committee does not need to respond directly to the member who submitted the concern if the complaint has no validity.
- 6.3.11 In case of a valid complaint from the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>, the eligible candidate can be removed from the list by the Nomination Committee. But if the eligible candidate agrees and commits to make amendments and correct the complaint, the Nomination Committee should consider if the candidate should continue to be on the eligible members list.

**ARTICLE VII: WORKING COMMITTEE**

It is expected that before becoming the member of the Working Committee, each member has read, understood, and is in complete agreement with the responsibilities of the Working Committee as defined in the original constitution of the Sikh Society of Michigan and constitution amendments – 01.

**(I) Structure and Tenure**

- 7.1.01 The Working Committee shall consist of 11 (Eleven) members. If the Nomination Committee does not have 11 (Eleven) eligible members, then the Working Committee shall consist of (Nine) members.
- 7.1.05 The Working Committee shall consist of a minimum of 5 (Five) *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> members.

**(II) Qualifications of the Working Committee Members**

- 7.2.01 Can be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> or a *Non-Kesadhari*<sup>6</sup> Sikh.





- 7.2.06 Must have been rendering Seva to the Society with *tan, man, and dhan* within the Gurdwara premises.
- 7.2.10 Must be willing to devote 8 to 10 hours per week to fulfill the various responsibilities//activities of the working committee.
- 7.2.11 Must be present at weekly Deevans unless he/she has already informed the President/Joint Secretary his/her inability to attend the weekly Deevan.
- 7.2.12 *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> member's financial contribution is a major source of income to the Gurdwara. Therefore, Working Committee members MUST be donating minimum \$50.00 monthly (for full year) financial contribution to the Gurdwara prior to become eligible Working Committee member unless he/she is having financial hardship. The Nomination Committee have to document the financial hardship situation of the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> member not meeting this financial contribution requirements. The Nomination Committee must take pledge from the *Sanagt*<sup>5</sup> member that he/she will start his/her financial contribution to the Gurdwara once hardship is over. (This Sub Section 7.2.12 will be effective from April 2018)

**(III) Selection of the Working Committee Members**

- 7.3.07 If the Nomination Committee has more than five (minimum required per Article VII: Section 7.1.05) eligible *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> candidates, then, first the names of all the eligible *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> candidates proposed by the Nomination Committee will be written on identical pieces of paper (one name on each), folding them, shuffling them, then requesting a child to pick five of them randomly. Then names of all the eligible *Non-Kesadhari*<sup>6</sup> candidates proposed by the Nomination Committee will be written on identical pieces of paper (one name on each), folding them, mixing them with remaining eligible *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> candidates, shuffling them, then requesting a child to pick four or six of them randomly.
- 7.3.08 These randomly picked Nine or Eleven candidates will be the members of the New Working Committee. All selected candidates will pledge in front of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> that they will abide the *Sikh Rehit Maryada*<sup>2</sup> and Constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan.



**(IV) Duties of Working Committee Members**

- 7.4.07 In the event of the early resignation or death of all executive committee members, the remaining Working Committee members can fill all the vacant positions from the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> or within the Working Committee per required qualification of the positions per the Sikh Society of Michigan Constitution until the selection of a new working committee.
- 7.4.08 The working committee shall review issues/concerns of the Internal Review Committee (IRC). Based on the findings of the review the working committee can proceed to compilation, review or full audit by Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with the approval of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>. (This Sub Section 7.4.08 will be effective from January 2017)
- 7.4.09 If required by Federal or State laws then the working committee shall proceed to compilation, review or full audit by Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and inform the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>.

**ARTICLE VIII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

It is expected that before becoming the member of the Executive Committee, each member has read, understood, and is in complete agreement with the responsibilities of the Executive Committee as defined in original constitution of Sikh Society of Michigan and constitution amendments – 01.

**(I) Structure and Tenure**

- 8.1.01 The Executive Committee shall consist of 5 (Five) members out of 9 (Nine) or 11 (Eleven) members of Working Committee.
- 8.1.03 The Executive Committee shall consist of the following members:
- A) President – Must be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> Sikh.
  - B) Vice President/Joint Secretary - Must be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> Sikh.
  - C) Secretary - Must be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> Sikh.
  - D) Treasurer - Can be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> or *Non-Kesadhari*<sup>6</sup> Sikh.
  - E) Joint Treasurer - Can be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> or *Non-Kesadhari*<sup>6</sup> Sikh.



**(V) Qualifications of the Executive Committee Members**

- 8.2.02 The President, Vice President/Joint Secretary, and Secretary should have proficiency in both spoken and written Punjabi and English languages to communicate effectively within and outside the Sikh community.
- 8.2.03 Must devote at least 8 to 10 hours per week to fulfill the various responsibilities/activities of the Executive Committee.
- 8.2.04 Must present at weekly Deevans unless he/she has already informed the President/Joint Secretary his/her inability to attend the weekly Deevan.

**(VI) Duties of Executive Committee Members**

**2) Duties of the Vice-President/Joint Secretary**

- 8.4.2.01 Assist the president and secretary in performing his/her duties. The various duties can be divided through mutual agreement.
- 8.4.2.02 Act as President or Secretary when President or Secretary is unable to perform the duties.
- 8.4.2.03 In the event of the early resignation or death of the President, Vice-President/Joint Secretary shall act as President until the selection of a new working committee.
- 8.4.2.04 In the event of the early resignation or death of the Secretary, Vice President/Joint Secretary shall act as Secretary until the selection of a new working committee.
- 8.4.2.05 Vice-President/Joint Secretary will convene the Working Committee meetings and take the minutes of the meeting. If he/she fails to call the meeting, then any member of the Executive Committee can call the meeting.

**4) Duties of the Joint Secretary**

- 8.4.4.01 Refer to duties of Vice-President/Joint Secretary.
- 8.4.4.02 Refer to duties of Vice-President/Joint Secretary.
- 8.4.4.03 Refer to duties of Vice-President/Joint Secretary.
- 8.4.4.04 Refer to duties of Vice-President/Joint Secretary.



**5) Duties of the Treasurer**

8.4.5.06 Maintain financial ledgers and keep all books balanced and in order and get them reviewed by Internal (*Sangat*<sup>4</sup>) Review Committee (IRC) every quarter (March, June, September, and December). At the end of year, if *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> members from IRC are not satisfied with the internal review, then they can give in writing to working committee that they are not satisfied with the internal review results. The working committee can proceed to compilation, review or full audit by Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with the approval of *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>. (This Sub Section 8.4.5.06 will be effective from January 2017)

**6) Duties of the Joint Treasurer**

- 8.4.6.01 Assist the Treasurer in performing his/her duties. The various duties can be divided through mutual agreement.
- 8.4.6.02 Act as Treasurer when Treasurer is unable to perform the duties.
- 8.4.6.03 In the event of the early resignation or death of the Treasurer, Joint Treasurer shall act as Treasures until the selection of a new working committee.
- 8.4.6.04 Assist Treasurer to maintain financial ledgers and keep all books balanced and in order and get them reviewed by Internal (*Sangat*<sup>4</sup>) Review Committee (IRC) every quarter.

**ARTICLE IX: OTHER COMMITTEES:**

It is expected that before becoming the member of the other Committees, each member has read, understood, and is in complete agreement with the responsibilities of the Committee he/she is a member of as defined in the original and constitution amendments - 00.

g) Internal (*Sangat*<sup>4</sup>) Review Committee (IRC).

Following points include (but are not limited to) the functions and responsibilities of the above committee.

**l) Public Relations Committee**

9.7.06 Chairperson of the Public Relation Committee must be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> Sikh.



**VII) Internal (Sangat<sup>4</sup>) Review Committee (IRC)**

- 9.7.01 Member of IRC can be a *Kesadhari*<sup>5</sup> or a *Non Kesadhari*<sup>6</sup> Sikh.
- 9.7.03 IRC must consist of a treasurer, Joint Treasurer and up to three independent members from *Sangat*<sup>4</sup>.
- 9.7.04 IRC will make best effort to review all the records maintained by the Treasurer and the Joint Treasurer quarterly.
- 9.7.05 The tenure of IRC shall be for two years ending with the tenure of the present Working Committee on *Vaisakhi day Divan* (on Sunday)
- 9.7.06 In the event the *Sangat*<sup>4</sup> members of this committee at the end of the year are not satisfied with the internal review results then they must report in writing with details to working committee.

**REFERENCES**

- 5. Kesadhari: - Refer to Original Sikh Society of Michigan constitution.
- 6. Non-Kesadhari
  - a) He/She must be a member of the Sikh Society of Michigan who follows the Sikh ideology and definition of SIKH as per Society's constitution Article II; Section 2.02.
  - b) He/She believes that our Guru's teaching teaches us to become an Amritdhari/ Keshdhari "Sabat Surat" Sikh. He/She will work towards following our Guru's teaching.
  - c) He/She will never make or support anyone making offensive remarks to Amritdhari/ Keshdhari Sikhs or trying to discourage Sikh Society of Michigan's sangat members to become Amritdhari/ Keshdhari Sikhs.