Part one

MARIAM DEARIT ASSOCIATION OF EDMONTON (MDAE)

BYLAWS

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INTRODUCTION

Mariam Dearit Association is a religious and social association of Eritrean community living in Edmonton, and is established to support members in social and religious aspects so that they live a fulfilling life in this great country, Canada.

The association is meant to provide a forum where we provide each other social, emotional, spiritual and financial support, and teach members, especially the young about our values, norms, traditions.

Furthermore, the association aims at helping Eritrean community, especially new comers to the city of Edmonton, so that they enjoy the benefits of living in Canada. It aspires to support members to integrate into the larger community and cultivate a spirit of cooperation among members.

In order to succeed and function smoothly, any association needs mission, goals, guidelines, rules, structure, and strategies. This document outlines, these basic requirements that we believe will give direction to our association. The guiding principles outlined herein are to be followed by every person who joins the association and the leadership which runs the day-to-day activities of the association. This obedience shall be based on the free will of the members.

1. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

1.1. VISION:

Creating a strong community, and support its integration into the Canadian society.

1.2. MISSION STATEMENT:

a. To provide a forum for community engagement through which members could improve their spiritual, and social aspects of life.
b. To encourage spiritual deepening of faith, so as to live prayerful life
c. To encourage young children to speak and learn languages, know social and spiritual values of their mother community in parallel with Canadian values and languages.
d. To motivate spiritual and corporal works of mercy.
e. To support members in sponsoring their family members and relatives living as refugees abroad.
f. Cultivate young students to value education and aspire for achievement.

1.3. OBJECTIVES:

a. Organizing, at least, quarterly social, educational and spiritual activities for members.
b. Organizing religious feasts and celebrations to help members stay connected with their roots.
c. Organizing retreats for members.
d. Providing financial support and encouragement for young students to pursue higher education.
e. Promoting associational spirit through leisure activities like picnics, camping...etc.
f. Encouraging youth to engage in cultural activities to maintain their good values.
g. Organizing and involve members in spiritual sharing.
h. Preparing for the annual celebration of Mariam Dearit spiritually.
i. Seeking to resolve community and family differences and issues.
j. Supporting new comers in the initial resettlement process (during registration and job search phases).
k. Welcoming newcomers visit the sick, & dying, comfort the mourning and help the needy within the community.

2. NAME

The association shall be named Mariam Dearit Association of Edmonton.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Anyone who resides in Alberta and has attachment and/or interest to associate themselves with the organization, and who supports associational mission and objectives has the right to membership. Members should be eighteen years of age and/or over.

3.1. MEMBERSHIP DUTIES AND RIGHTS

3.1. 1. MEMBERSHIP DUTIES

a. Any member must comply and serve to the objectives of MDAE.
b. Every member must respect and follow the association's bylaws, guidelines and annual plans.
c. Every member has an obligatory duty to report or act against if he/she comes across a fraud event or action against MDAE or its ownerships.
d. Every adult member has a duty to participate to voluntary activities or works of the association at least once a year, otherwise, should pay equivalent amount of money to the association as duty.
e. Every member has the duty to pay annual fees and contribution if required.

3.1.2. MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS.

a. Every member has the right to social, spiritual, emotional and educational benefits provided by the association. Underage family members by default enjoy the benefits provided by the association.
b. Every member who is 18 and above has the right to vote for association's leaders and be elected to serve the association at any leadership level provided that their competent.
c. Any member has the right to complain and claim by providing evidence.
d. Every person has the right to ask for membership according to associational procedures. And once a member can withdraw their membership accordingly.

3.1.3. CANCELLATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Every person has the right to cancel their membership at any time. But people who cancel/withdraw their membership have no right to refund or compensation of any kind.

4. ASSOCIATIONAL STRUCTURE

MDAE's system shall have four departments, and a board of directors and a commission of neutrality for administering the departments and the association as a whole.

4.1. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES of the DEPARTMENTS

4.1.1 SOCIAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

This department is responsible for:

a. Organizing and conducting educational activities like general knowledge competitions and debating.…etc
b. Identifying ways to Post-secondary Scholarships, grants and bursaries program-Awarded on academic excellence, community involvement and other special abilities.
c. Engage members in social and recreational programs BBQ days, trips/picnics to geo-historical sites, tours to city attraction places and others (Zoo, museum, city hall and parks), to help them integrate to Canadian society.
d. Organizing sport activities so that youth and children stay healthy and aspire for achievement in the area of sports.
e. Supporting newcomers with the initial settlement services to facilitate their transition.
f. Searching for ways of helping the needy among the community.

❖ The department should include children, Youth, Students, Newcomers, parents in its activities for holistic development of the organization.

4.1.2. SPIRITUAL DEPARTMENT

Spiritual department is the backbone of the association. Hence, it should carry out the following responsibilities:

a. Organizing spiritual activities, and setting biannual and annual plans for the activities.
b. Mobilize community members to pray and share the Good News together as family.
c. Organizing retreat for the community two weeks to the celebration of Mariam Dearit.
d. Collaborate with the church community to organize retreat one week to Christmas celebration, and the holly week. If the church as a whole is not having retreat plans, take the initiative to do so for the community.
e. Ensuring that the community takes charge and celebrate all the Marian Celebrations such us (KidaneMihret and Baele Mariam) that fall on Friday, Saturday and Sunday as far as there are no other feasts in conjunction with it.

4.1.3. COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The department has the following responsibilities:

a. Keeping members connected and informed of the associational activities and plans.
b. Familiarizing the association with the outside world—government and other organizations—by conducting meetings and preparing brochures about the association.
c. Providing knowledge and information to members about values and traditions of source society and Canadian society through meetings, and preparing materials.
d. Communicating associational objectives and strategies to members so that they are orientated towards the greater goal--by sending e-mails and hard copies to members.
e. Informing members about the revenues and expenses of the association through meetings, e-mailing, and regular mails to those who can't take part in meetings.
f. Search for external sources of funding in consultation with the directors.
g. Utilizing modern media like facebook to promote associational goals.
h. Develop communication media and strategies as needed.
i. Mobilizing support to the idea of creating (in the long-run) a physical space where members can meet and maintain their heritage.

4.1.4. TREASURY DEPARTMENT

a. General Financial Overview role

1. Supervise and prepare budgets, accounts and financial statements to the board of directors.
2. Liaise with designated staff about financial matters
3. Ensure that appropriate financial systems and controls are in place
4. Ensure that record-keeping and accounts meet the conditions of funders or statutory bodies
5. Ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

b. Funding, fundraising and Sales

1. Advise on the association's fundraising strategy
2. Ensure use of funds complies with conditions set by funding bodies
3. Ensure fundraising and sales complies with relevant legislation and is bound by effective financial systems and controls
4. Ensure effective monitoring and reporting

c. Financial Planning and budgeting

1. Prepare and present budgets for new and/or ongoing work
2. Advise on financial implications of strategic and operational plans
3. Present revised financial forecasts based on actual spend.

d. Financial reporting

1. Present regular reports on the Association's financial position
2. Prepare accounts for audit and liaising with the auditor, as required
3. Present statements and sheets at the annual general meeting (AGM)
4. Advise on the Association's reserves and asset policy.
5. Banking, book keeping and record keeping

e. Manage bank accounts

1. Set up appropriate systems for book-keeping, payments,
2. Ensure everyone handling money keeps proper records and documentation

4.2. COMPOSITION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD):

This board shall include:

1. President (the head of the association)
2. Vice president (also research and development planner)
3. General Secretary (also Director of Membership)
4. Director of spiritual department
5. Director of social affairs department
6. Director of treasury department
7. Director of communication and information department

4.2.1. DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES of BOARD of DIRECTORS

a. Board meetings, general management staff meetings and annual general meeting with their plans and work done statistics.
b. Preparing, filing and presenting quarterly and annual statistics/reports.
c. Present their plans and statistics to the meetings and handover the copy of their plans and work done statistics to the head of the association at the meeting.
d. Predicting outcomes of activities or programs to be done within each year and prepare annual budget.
e. Committed to serve for two consecutive years (full term)
f. attend and act as a model members at programs/activities/events
g. Once elected by the association members at annual general meeting (AGM), the board elects positions of each board member and assign management staff to their respective department and positions.
h. Ensures the board adheres to its bylaws, objectives, guidelines and meeting minutes, promote membership and establish governance.
i. Developing new strategies and procedures to catalyze tasks of the association which can take the association on upper position.

4.2.2. Duties and Responsibilities of Head of the Association (President)

a. Accountable for the association and board of directors
b. Ensures the board of directors adheres to byelaws, objectives and annual plans of the association.
c. Prepares agenda for board meeting, general management staff meeting and annual general meeting collaborated with board of directors.
d. Reviewing minutes and replying accordingly.
e. Informing management staff and all members with analytical reports.
f. Approval of annual plans, programs and budgets at board meetings.
g. Chairs board of directors meetings, general management staff meetings, and annual meetings, represents the association on events and is official spokesperson for same.
h. Prepares and presents analytical reports at meetings.
i. Represents for the association's correspondence
j. Committed to attend all meetings of the association but not must at the department meetings.
k. Communicates with the commission of neutrality if there are any concerns.
l. Assists all department directors at their respective department activities and programs.

4.2.3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

a. Takes the same authority and responsibility in the absence of the President
b. Assists the president for all aspects of the presidents roles
c. Is part of leadership as member of board of directors in the association, hence, forms a unit from all departments for research and development of new tools, strategies and ideas and is coordinator of the unit.
d. Ensures the board adheres to the bylaws, meeting minutes and objectives of the association by being connected to the activities of all departments.
e. Attending the board of directors meetings, general management staff meetings and annual general meeting.
f. Time and etiquette (code of conducts) keeper of all meetings

4.2.4. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

a. Responsible for the records of the association (keeps bylaws, guidelines, minutes, and handed over plans and reports/statistics).

b. Attends and records all meetings' attendance and minutes accurately, stores and retrieve information of the association.
c. Presents draft of minutes to president and vice president for review within no longer than two days from the date of meeting.
d. Keeps the seal of the association
e. Acting director of membership and performs all membership responsibilities.

4.2.5. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS OF DEPARTMENTS

a. Prepare plans, budgets and statistics/reports of work done in their respective departments and presenting it to the board and to the public.
b. Taking decisions on the behalf of the association along with the President, vice president and general secretary.
c. Organizing events, activities and programs and directing all management staffs in their respective departments.
d. Conducting meetings of their respective departments.

4.3. COMMISSION OF NEUTRALITY (CON):

This commission shall be composed of three members (Ex-president and two newly elected members), and carry out the following responsibilities:

a. Look over the function and discipline of the whole association including the leadership.
b. Organize and manage new elections and hold power during transition when some disciplinary failure occurs among the board of directors.
c. ensure transfer of authority and assets of the association completely and on time from existing board of directors to newly elected board of directors
d. Impartially monitor ongoing association's activities, programs, and disciplines between management staff and all members and among all management staff especially among members of board of directors.
e. Act independently and impartially, ensures all laws are in place, and play mediation role in case of conflict in the association's matters only.
f. Act like a bridge between outgoing and incoming directors.
g. Shall have no voting right and shall have no right to be elected for a term
h. Manages elections and voting
i. The term of CON shall be two years, they replaced by new CON an hour before new board members elected.
j. Enforces and gives verbal and written warning at times of unacceptable behavior among the leadership and other members of the association.

4.4. COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE

All departments and leaders of the association should carry out their activities strictly according to the association's policies and procedures. The board of directors and superiors in every department should be informed and inform leadership of the associational activities. Financial decisions and other major decisions affecting the association should only be taken by the Board of directors.

5. AMENDMENT AND DISSOLUTION

a. Proposals for amendment of the bylaws and dissolution of the association can be made by 2/3 of members. Board of Directors should call for a general meeting to amend the bylaws, rename or dissolve the association.
b. Property and money which belonged to the association should be given to charities upon the dissolution of the association, to which charities to be given is done through voting in a meeting of members.

6. LEGAL STATUS OF THE ASSOCIATION

This association was formed according to the article_____ bylaws of the city of Edmonton to promote social and spiritual life of its members.

Note: for policies and procedures, refer to part two, on a separate document.