

# VICTORIA EVENING NEWCOMERS CLUB CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

## PREAMBLE

The Victoria Evening Newcomers Club (“VENC”) was formed in 1998 to welcome newcomers to Victoria to the community. VENC helps foster friendships and a strong, welcoming and caring community among all of its members.

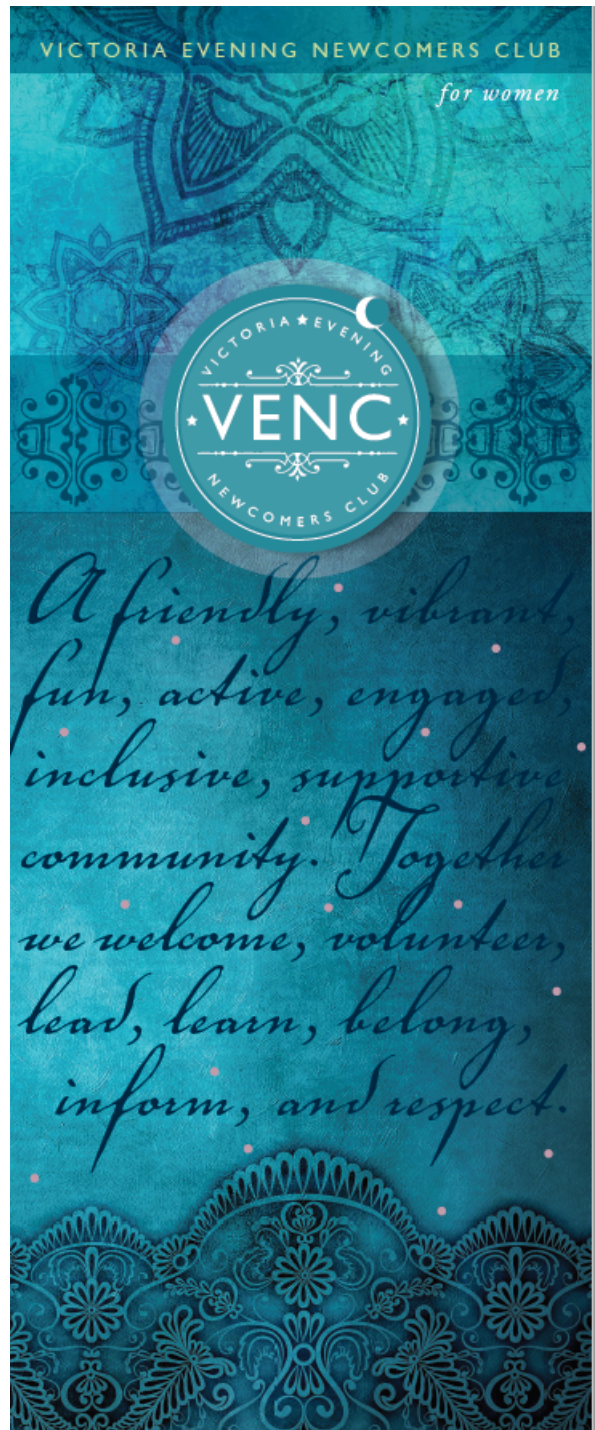
VENC does not limit membership to a fixed number of years. Rather, VENC encourages its members to continue to belong to the club, welcoming new women, having fun with new and longer-term friends while participating in VENC activities.

VENC has a culture of volunteerism and is run by its members who serve on the Executive and other committees. VENC members are activity group leaders and hosts. We welcome new members and contribute to a supportive community for all members.

VENC acknowledges and respects the Lekwungen-speaking Peoples on whose traditional territories the club meets and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continues to this day.

## CONSTITUTION

1. The name of the organization is the Victoria Evening Newcomers Club.
2. VENC has two purposes:
  - to welcome newcomers to the Greater Victoria area and help them make friends in the community through fun and engaging social activities; and
  - to provide volunteer-led social activities and foster and maintain a sense of community for all of its members, regardless of whether they are new or long-term members.



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## BYLAWS

### I Membership

I-1 Any person who identifies as a woman who has resided in the Greater Victoria area for fewer than three years or who has arrived as a refugee and resided in the Greater Victoria area for fewer than five years may become a member of VENC upon payment of the annual membership fee.

I-2 Paid members of VENC may participate in all VENC events and activity groups.

I-3 Notwithstanding section I-2, the Executive Committee may approve the forming of a limited number of activity groups to cater to the interests of members based on their tenure in VENC. For example, members who have joined in the past year, or members who joined more than 5 years ago.

I-4 VENC membership year runs from September through August. To remain in the club, members must renew their membership annually prior to August 31<sup>st</sup>

I-5 The amount of the annual membership fee shall be set each year by the Executive Committee and shall not be refundable except at the Executive Committee's discretion.

I-6 New members who join after May 31<sup>st</sup>, will pay membership fee upon joining the Victoria Evening Newcomers' Club. Their membership period will be from their date of joining until August 31<sup>st</sup> of the next calendar year.

I-7 Any membership which has not been renewed by September 30<sup>th</sup> of any year shall expire on that date except at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

I-8 Former members may re-join VENC if their membership has lapsed for less than one year, or if they are within new member joining period established in I-1.

I-9 A woman who would qualify for VENC membership, as described in I-1 and is not yet a member may attend a maximum of two club-wide events as a paying guest, or two activity events without being required to pay the membership fee.

I-10 Subject to clause I-9, members are welcome to bring paying female guests to the VENC's dinner meetings.

### II Dispute Resolution

II-1 If a member has conducted herself in a way that brings discredit to VENC or causes serious discord within the VENC membership, the Executive Committee shall discuss and attempt to favourably resolve the issue with the member. Should such discussion be unsuccessful, the member may be asked by the Executive Committee to resign. Should the member not resign, the Executive Committee, by majority vote, may terminate the member's membership and make them ineligible for future membership.

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### III Club-wide Events

- III-1 General meetings shall include a minimum of three club-wide events annually, one of which will be the Club's Annual General Meeting.
- III-2 Club-wide events may be cancelled due to insufficient participation or other reasons.
- III-3 Members who have registered to attend a club-wide event and who later cancel will have their payment reimbursed only if they cancel by the cancellation cut-off date as stipulated in the invitation.

### IV Activity Groups

- IV-1 Activity groups are the central focus of VENC and are led by volunteer Activity Leaders.
- IV-2 The term of Activity Leaders shall be limited to no more than three years for the same activity, except in extraordinary circumstances when the Executive Committee may agree to an exemption.
- IV-3 Where possible, the Activity Leader shall actively seek her successor, giving priority to recruiting a newer member.
- IV-4 If a Leader cannot be found for an activity group, the group shall be retired.
- IV-5 Activity Group member lists shall be cleared annually, prior to membership renewal. Once membership is renewed, members shall select activities for the coming year and lists will be repopulated based on new selections.
- IV-6 Activity Groups shall run year-round except with the agreement of the Activity Leaders and group members.
- IV-7 Unless agreed otherwise by the Activity Group members and the Leader, activity group events are not open to spouses, friends, children and/or pets.

### V New Members

- V-1 New members are members who have joined VENC after the beginning of the current membership year, as established in I-4.
- V-2 New member orientation meetings will be held a minimum of twice per year.

### VI Officers and Executive Committee

- VI-1 VENC shall be managed by an Executive Committee including, at minimum: a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, an Activities Coordinator, Membership Coordinator and an Events Coordinator.
- VI-2 The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer are the officers of the club.

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- VI-3 There shall be no fewer than 7 and no more than 12 members of the Executive Committee.
- VI-4 The responsibilities and tasks of the Executive Committee positions may be changed from time to time, and/or combined at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- VI-5 A majority of members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- VI-6 Each member on the Executive Committee has one vote on the Committee except when two or more individuals occupy an Executive Committee position (such as co-chairs for a position). In such cases, only one of the people occupying the role shall exercise a vote on the Executive Committee and count toward a quorum.
- VI-7 The Executive Committee may appoint Club members as non-voting, advisory members of the Committee or to subcommittees of the Committee. Individuals appointed to such non-voting, advisory roles may not exercise any authority on behalf of the Executive Committee or VENC.
- VI-8 Executive Committee members are initially elected for a one-year term and may stand for re-election in the same or another position for up to 2 (two) additional consecutive one-year terms, for a total of three consecutive years. The one-year term of office shall run from one Annual General Meeting until the next.
- VI-9 Notwithstanding, VI-7, a person who serves in another Executive Committee position and then becomes President may serve a total of four consecutive years on the Executive Committee.
- VI-10 Former Executive Committee members can be re-elected to the Executive Committee after a break of not fewer than three years.
- VI-11 No member can serve on the Executive Committee for a total of more than six years.
- VI-12 Nominations for election to the Executive Committee shall be by a slate presented at the Annual General Meeting by the current Executive Committee. It shall include one or more candidates for each office, supplemented by nominations from the floor.
- VI-13 All VENC members are eligible to serve on the Executive Committee unless they have served the maximum number of terms, as per VI-10.
- VI-14 Whenever possible, the President shall be succeeded by another member of the current Executive Committee to provide continuity.
- VI-15 The Executive Committee may at any time appoint a member to the Executive Committee to fill a newly created position or a vacancy, subject to clauses VI-7, VI-8, VI-9 and VI-10.
- VI-16 The Executive Committee shall normally meet once a month, at times and locations determined by the Executive Committee.
- VI-17 After the Annual General Meeting, all VENC records and reports shall be turned over to the new Executive Committee at a meeting attended by both recently retired and newly elected Executive Committees.

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### VII Duties of the Officers

VII-1 The President is the chief executive of VENC. She shall preside at all VENC meetings and its Executive Committee and provide oversight to the Executive Committee members in the execution of their duties.

VII-2 The Vice-President shall carry out the duties of the President in her absence.

VII-3 The Secretary shall manage VENC correspondence; keep the Minutes of VENC and the Executive Committee meetings and maintain custody of VENC's records and documents except those required to be kept by the Treasurer.

VII-4 The Treasurer shall keep VENC's financial records and present financial statements to the Executive Committee, club members, and others as required.

VII-5 The Treasurer shall ensure that all **disbursements are approved by the Executive Committee** and that VENC's bank account signing officers (President, Vice President and Treasurer) are updated to reflect changes in the Executive Committee at the beginning of the new membership year.

VII-6 The Executive Committee shall maintain records of role descriptions and assigned responsibilities for each Executive Committee position and review them for accuracy at least every two years.

### VIII Voting

VIII-1 All decisions of the Executive Committee shall be by majority vote.

VIII-2 Members must be notified of any proposed changes to the VENC Constitution and/or Bylaw at least one month in advance of the vote.

VIII-3 Changes to VENC's Constitution and/or Bylaw changes shall be by a majority vote of not fewer than 75% of the members present at the general meeting, held not sooner than the end of the notice period in VIII-2.

### IX Fiscal Year

IX-1 The club's fiscal year shall be from April 1st to March 31st.

IX-2 There shall be an Annual General Meeting will be held within 90 days of the fiscal year end. Members shall be provided with a financial statement for the twelve months prior to the Annual General Meeting.

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### X Non-Profitability

X-1 The income and property of VENC shall be applied solely towards the objectives of the club and no portion thereof transferred directly or indirectly to the members. Nothing herein shall prevent the payment of approved remuneration for services actually rendered to VENC.

X-2 The Executive Committee will use due diligence in ensuring value-for-money in its purchases of goods and services for VENC use, including when purchasing from VENC members.

### XI Posting of Bylaws

XI-1 VENC's Constitution and Bylaws shall be publicly available on its website.

### XII Use of Personal Information and Privacy Protection

XII-1 VENC shall ensure the accuracy, confidentiality and integrity of its members' personal information.

XII-2 The personal information collected by VENC shall only be used to communicate with members with regard to their membership in the club and the services and programs provided.

XII-3 VENC shall only collect the personal information of its members it needs when it needs it. It shall not sell, lease or trade member personal information to third parties, nor shall it disclose member personal information without member knowledge and consent.

XII-4 In order that members can benefit to the fullest extent from their membership in VENC, member personal information may be shared with other members of the club.

XII-5 The personal information of other VENC members shall only be used for the personal, social use of VENC members. It may not be used for soliciting, selling or commercial purposes. Members who violate this shall have their VENC membership terminated and be ineligible for future membership.