



©Finger Lakes Bonsai Society

## **ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION FOR THE FINGER LAKES BONSAI SOCIETY**

*Adopted on June 18, 2019*

*Last amended on (not yet amended)*

## Article I. The Society

- (a) The Finger Lakes Bonsai Society (hereinafter referred to as FLBS) is a non-profit unincorporated association based in Ithaca, NY. As such, contributions to it may be considered tax-deductible, although recognition has **not** been obtained from either the IRS or NYS.
- (b) The mission of FLBS is to educate its members about and promote general interest in the horticulture, art, and craft of the practice of bonsai, which is the creation, refinement, maintenance, and display of miniature artistic trees.
- (c) FLBS is intended to serve as the focal point for bonsai enthusiasts in the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions of New York State. In fulfilling the above mission and related functions, FLBS will
  - (i) *hold regular meetings;*
  - (ii) *create occasional special programs for its members, sometimes with guest lecturers or demonstrators;*
  - (iii) *manage communication among its members; and*
  - (iv) *engage the public with outreach and education efforts (e.g., mounting public displays, giving lectures, and presenting demonstrations).*

## Article II. Membership

- (a) Membership in the FLBS shall be open to anyone upon request and shall remain active as long as they remain in good standing.
- (b) Good standing is defined as being current on annual dues and abiding by all provisions of these Articles. The good standing of any member violating terms of membership may be removed by majority vote of the officers, who must notify said member as soon as is practical.
- (c) No member shall comment upon any proposed governmental legislation or candidate for public office in the name of FLBS.
- (d) No member shall commit FLBS to any contract or perceived obligation without explicit approval of at least one FLBS Officer.
- (e) Members understand that, as an unincorporated association, FLBS holds no legal status as an entity and thereby cannot and does not assume liability for any action taken in the name of FLBS. Likewise, members understand that any action taken in the name of FLBS has the potential to put **all** other members in legal jeopardy, and shall conduct themselves accordingly.

- (f) Member benefits are: receipt of relevant notices and messages, eligibility to attend and participate in FLBS-sponsored workshops or one-on-one mentoring, and obtain associated discounts or club subsidies offered in conjunction with FLBS activities
- (g) Non-members may be in the FLBS mailing list upon request to and the discretion of the President. Non-members do not pay dues nor attend FLBS functions.

### Article III. Finances and Fiscal Year

- (a) The FLBS shall observe a fiscal year of July 1 through June 30.
- (b) The officers shall fix the amount of dues annually, with the default being continuation of the previous year's amount.
- (c) Dues to FLBS shall be payable on May 1 for the following fiscal year and are overdue if not paid by July 1.
- (d) Initial dues shall be waived for up to one year in order to encourage newcomers.
- (e) FLBS funds shall be held in a dedicated checking account and used for official FLBS business and activities only, not for the personal financial benefit of any member.
- (f) At least two officers shall have access to and check-writing privileges for the FLBS account. Any officer can authorize eligible disbursements.

### Article IV. Officers

- (a) Each officer is also a director, and must be a member in good standing. A member may only serve as a single officer at a given time. All officers must take an active role in suggesting, participating in, and leading FLBS activities.
- (b) Each officer's term shall last for two (2) years, coinciding with consecutive fiscal years. Any office vacated before its respective term ends may be filled by the President's appointment of a member in good standing, after consultation with remaining officers. The Vice President shall assume the office of President if it becomes vacant and serve until the next regularly scheduled election.
- (c) An election of officers with expiring terms shall be conducted annually, either at a scheduled meeting announced in advance or, if no office is contested, conducted electronically. Contested elections shall be decided by majority of member votes cast. Proxy votes are not permitted.

- (d) The President shall have primary responsibility for communications with members, as well as scheduling general meetings and determining their agendas, but should seek guidance and input from all the officers. The President shall conduct each meeting, but may delegate part of all of this responsibility to an outside presenter or another FLBS officer or member. The President may delegate responsibility for storing FLBS-owned materials between periods of their use (such as tools or display items) to other members.
- (e) The Vice President temporarily assumes the role of President in the event of the President's inability to serve for a limited period of time.
- (f) The Secretary/Webmaster shall take a primary role in recordkeeping and maintenance of the FLBS website.
- (g) The Treasurer shall
  - (i) *manage the funds of the society;*
  - (ii) *provide a detailed summary of all financial activity at least annually to the other officers;*
  - (iii) *hold such funds in a non-interest-bearing checking account with at least one other officer holding checks, check-writing privileges, and having their name on the account;*
  - (iv) *collect annual dues and any fees for materials or workshops;*
  - (v) *collect a 20% surcharge on the gross amount of financial transactions among members that take place at meetings. Examples of such transactions are sales or auctions of used materials. New materials purchased or prepared expressly for membership use and sold at-cost are expressly exempt from this surcharge.*
- (h) A Senior and/or Associate Sensei shall participate actively in agenda setting and occasionally lead or assist in FLBS activities.

## Article V. Changes to Bylaws

These articles may be amended by either a unanimous vote of officers or a majority vote of members. Changes shall be communicated to members as soon as is practical.