

## **CONSTITUTION OF FIJI INDIAN ASSOCIATION WGTN INCORPORATED**

### **Article 1: Name**

The name of this organisation shall be: **FIJI INDIAN ASSOCIATION Wgtn Inc.**

### **Article 2: Key Objectives**

- a) To serve the interests of Fiji Indians in Wellington
- b) To be a non-profit and non-sectarian organisation and to be transparent and accountable for its activities.
- c) To promote and foster harmonious relationship amongst various sections of Fiji Indian community in Wellington.
- d) To facilitate Fiji Indian community needs through cultural, social/economic, political, educational and charitable activities.
- e) To establish youth and elderly fora to encourage and promote their well being through appropriate activities.
- f) Act as a conduit to help members of the Fiji Indian community in times of personal difficulties.
- g) To liaise with NZ Government and local bodies for the benefit of the Fiji Indian community.
- h) To promote and foster integration of Fiji Indian community with New Zealand culture and mainstream environment and to participate in New Zealand social activities where practical.
- i) The Association will strive to ensure unity among Fiji Indians and will foster better relations within the Fiji Indian community
- j) The Association shall make representations to the New Zealand Government for the economic, educational, social and cultural advancement of Fiji Indians in Wellington.
- k) In respect of Fiji:
  - Assist Fiji Indians as and when appropriate.
  - Assist Fiji during times of natural disasters and other civil emergencies.
  - Make appropriate representations to Government, other organisations and agencies on Fiji's social, political and cultural matters.
- l) And any other objective that may from time to time be established by the AGM.

### **Article 3: Membership**

**Membership** is open to all Fiji Indians in NZ who hold either permanent residence or citizenship of New Zealand, Work Permit and/or on student permit and their descendants who pay a prescribed annual fee. Fee would be charged for all members who are 18 years of age.

### **Membership Fees**

A flat rate of \$10 per person over the age of 18 years will be applicable. Membership fee may be amended by the AGM from time to time. The

membership fee will expire on 30<sup>th</sup> June coinciding with the end of the financial year.

#### **Foundation Members:**

The membership is restricted to those members who initiated the formation of the Association and have donated a minimum of \$1000 to the Association within 5 years of its formation. The foundation members will be issued with Association Certificate detailing their foundation membership status and privileges.

#### **Article 4: Officers**

There will be fourteen elected members of the Association, including a President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, a Communication Advisor and seven committee members.

- ❖ A **President** will be elected to chair the Association meetings, to make all necessary arrangements for Association's participation in any events, , to report on the activities of the Association at the annual general meetings and to direct the work of elected members. The President with the approval of the committee will also have the powers to co-opt any member of the community to help with any projects or undertake specific duties that may require expertise not resident in the elected officials, for fixed periods of time. The President or anyone the President delegates that responsibility to in consultation with Communication Advisor will also be responsible for issuing media statements or making comments in the media on issues of concern to the Association. The President in consultation with the Committee will have the powers to appoint new Committee member/s on resignation of any existing committee member/s. The nominated members will have full powers of existing members.
- ❖ A **Vice President** will be elected whose duties will be to aid the President in his/her assigned duties and responsibilities, and to be ready to take over the duties and responsibilities of the president should it become necessary in the absence of the President.
- ❖ A **Secretary** will be elected to adequately publicise all association meetings and to keep record of all business conducted by the association. These records will be available to Association Members. The Secretary will also maintain an up to date register of all paid members. The Secretary shall be the first point of contact for the Association. The Secretary will also carry out any other duties as assigned by the President from time to time.
- ❖ **Assistant Secretary:** The assistant secretary shall assist the Secretary in all matters relating to the running of the Association and shall act as Secretary in the absence of the Secretary.
- ❖ A **Treasurer** will be elected with duties to maintaining the treasury of the association, keeping an accurate record of all expenditure and income, and allocating funds as directed by the elected Committee. The Treasurer and the President and in the absence of the President, the Vice President will be the main signatory to any association payments

and withdrawals. The Committee will ensure that proper books of accounts are maintained. True and accurate entries are made of all assets and liabilities and all sums of money received and paid are accounted for and presented at every committee meeting on excel spreadsheet.

- ❖ **Assistant Treasurer:** The assistant treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in all matters relating to the running of the Association and shall act as Treasurer in the absence of the Treasurer.
- ❖ **Communication Advisor:** The Communication Advisor shall be responsible for publicising the activities of the Association by way of newsletters, electronic communication and other means necessary to disseminate the aims and objectives of the association. He/she will also be responsible for all media liaison work in consultation with the President.
- ❖ **Seven elected Committee Members;** They will help as part of the Association's Committee. Their specific duties will be to attend all meetings and support all Association initiatives including duties assigned by the President in carrying out the Constitutional requirements of the Association.

### **Article 5: Meetings**

The Committee will meet on as and when required basis to discuss Association business. The Committee must have at least seven out of fourteen members, one of who would be the President or in the absence of President the Vice President before a meeting can be conducted. At all meetings the Secretary and the Treasurer shall keep full minutes and full financial statements respectively and copies circulated to all members of the Committee.

### **Notice Period**

One week's notice will be provided before any such committee meeting is convened or shorter period of notice for emergency meetings. However if the dates are established well in advance of meeting and all Committee members have agreed to those dates then notice period is not required for regular Committee meetings.

### **Communications**

The Communication Advisor together with the Secretary or anyone else co-opted from the existing committee will be responsible for keeping all paid members of the Association informed with activities of the Association.

### **Voting**

Only financial members of the association will be eligible to vote in any elections. Such voting will be conducted through a ballot system if it is deemed necessary and will be conducted by a small independent committee appointed by the President in the first instance.

### **Expenses**

The Committee members will be reimbursed for all approved reasonable expenditure directly incurred in carrying out agreed duties on behalf of the Association.

### **Annual General Meetings**

The Committee will decide when to hold the annual general meeting but as a general rule they should be held within two months after the end of the financial year. The annual general meeting will be held each year at a time and place fixed by the Committee members. All nominations for Executive positions must reach the Secretary of the Association one week before the AGM to enable the Association to publish the names of the nominees to all paid members of the Association.

### **Business at the Annual General Meeting**

At the annual general meeting the following business shall be transacted

1. Consideration of the Annual Report presented by the President.
2. Approval of the audited annual accounts and the Consolidated Accounts as presented by the Treasurer.
3. Recording of the appointment of Trustees
4. Election of office bearers
5. Consideration of any other general business.

### **Special General Meeting**

- I. Any paid member of the association at any time can call this provided two third paid members agree in writing (petition) for such a meeting. In the event of such a meeting the paid member will request the Secretary and the President to call a meeting and specific reason/s for such a meeting will also be disseminated to all paid members by the Secretary or the President. As a general rule such a meeting will be called within one month of such notification.
- II. Special General Meeting can make changes to the constitution provided two third of the foundation members and two thirds of paid financial members vote for such a change. Foundation members shall be counted as financial members also for the purpose of amendments to the constitution.

**Venue:** The Secretary will provide details of the venue, times etc of the meetings.

### **Article 6: Finances**

- I. Funding for the Association is to come from various means, including membership fee (to be determined by annual general meeting). Community funding trusts for specific projects, major donations or sponsorships etc. All funds will be handled by the Treasurer and will be subject to a full audit.
- II. Acquisition: The Committee will have powers to purchase and or acquire assets on behalf of the Association only with the approval of Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting.
- III. Powers to borrow: The Committee will have all the powers to borrow funds on behalf of the association as long as the process and the

- amount has been fully endorsed by two third paid members of the association by annual general meeting or special general meeting.
- IV. Disposal of Assets: the Committee in consultation with two third paid members of the association can dispense of association assets to a recognised charity/s identified by the association members.
  - V. Contracts: No Committee members must gain from any tenders or contracts or work given by the Committee and neither would the Committee consider any such submission for tenders or contracts.
  - VI. The financial year of the association shall end on 30<sup>th</sup> June

#### **Article 7: Termination of Committee member's Office**

The full Committee may suspend the appointment of any member of the Committee on the following grounds:

- ❖ Continued absence from meetings (missed 3 consecutive meetings without valid reason)
- ❖ Serious misconduct. Where the Committee considers that the behaviour of an elected member has or can bring the Association into disrepute and has also breached the Association's Code of Conduct

*The elected committee shall have the powers to suspend any member for serious misconduct and the committee will also provide the suspended member an opportunity to present his/her case before a decision is made.*

#### **Article 8: Friends of the FIJI INDIAN ASSOCIATION Wgtn Inc.**

The committee can offer honorary paid membership to non-members who are friends of the association. They will not have any voting rights and will not be able to hold any executive position/s.

#### **Article 9: Life membership**

From time to time the Committee may award life membership to individuals for meritorious service over a sustained period (10 years or more) to the **FIJI INDIAN ASSOCIATION Wgtn Inc.** Such award would only be granted to financial members. Life membership exempts holders of such distinction from all annual subscriptions and allows them free entry to any paid functions of the association.

#### **Article 10: Resignation**

Any member of the Committee can resign by sending their resignation letter to the Secretary or the President. In the case of the resignation of Secretary, Treasurer or the President, a proper handing and taking over of duties are to be completed within the resignation period.

#### **Article 11: Amendments**

This constitution can be amended by two thirds of paid members of the association present at any special general meeting or at the annual general meeting.

**Article 12: Registered Office**

The registered office will be at residence of the Secretary, Wellington or any other office as agreed by the Executive from time to time.

**Article 13: Auditor**

An external auditor will be appointed by the Committee to audit the full set of the Association's accounts each year prior to the annual general meeting.

**Article 14: Co-opt**

The Committee will have powers to co-opt any person in an advisory capacity to help with one off specific projects for defined periods of time.

**Article 15: Indemnity of Committee members of the Association**

No Committee member shall be liable for any loss by the Association other than a loss attributable to a Committee member's dishonesty or the wilful commission or omission of an act known to be a breach of trust.

**Article 16: Dissolution**

The Committee must call a special general meeting for dissolution of the Association in accordance with set procedure laid out by the registrar of such associations. Once the Association is dissolved then any remaining assets after the settlement of all affairs of the Association including any debts, claims etc. will be donated to a charity nominated by the Association.

**Article 17: Ratification**

This constitution has been approved by the first annual general meeting of the members of the *FIJI INDIAN ASSOCIATION Wgtn Inc.* based in Wellington