

BYLAWS OF THE NORTH HOUSTON ASTRONOMY CLUB

Article I

The name of this club shall be the North Houston Astronomy Club (The Club). The standard abbreviation shall be NHAC.

Article II

The Club shall be a not-for-profit organization sponsored by Lone Star College – Kingwood.

Article III

The Club does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, disability, age, veteran status, nationality, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. The Club is formed for educational and scientific purposes, for individuals and groups, for the primary purpose of:

1. Developing and implementing programs designed to increase the awareness and knowledge of astronomy for all interested individuals, but specifically for those living in the communities on the north side of Houston, TX.
2. Providing the opportunity for those individuals to pursue the science of astronomy in a dark-sky observation site.
3. Providing an opportunity for all of The Club members and guests to share their astronomical experiences and discoveries.

Article IV

Section I: General Membership Qualifications

1. Members in good standing shall be those membership units whose dues to the North Houston Astronomy Club are current.
2. Categories of membership units shall be:
 - a. Individual Membership.
 - b. Student Membership – individuals enrolled as students in any elementary, high school, college or university, who present evidence of that status upon payment of annual dues to The Club.
 - c. Family Membership – includes all persons of one family living at the same address as one (1) membership unit.
 - d. Honorary Membership – members who do not pay dues, but whose support and contributions have been beneficial to The Club and its purposes. Such members shall be selected annually by majority vote of the Executive Board. Any member may nominate an honorary member.
 - e. Honorary Memorial Membership—conferred upon members who have died while serving The Club or having substantially served The Club in the past. Such members shall be selected by majority vote of the Executive Board. Honorary Memorial Memberships shall not expire.

Section II: Dues

1. Dues shall be effective for a twelve-month period starting January 1st. After this date, a period of two months shall be allowed for payment of dues. Memberships not

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renewed by February 28th shall be deemed to have lapsed, and those members shall be removed from NHAC membership. Individual and family members joining after June 30th shall pay one half of the dues for that year. Student memberships shall run for 12 months from join date. The schedule of dues for each member classification shall be determined by the Executive Board. This information shall be published in The Club newsletter and website six months prior to taking effect.

Section III: Membership Benefits

1. Benefits of Membership in The Club include:
 - a. General Meeting presentations
 - b. Novice program
 - c. Dark-sky observing site and organized star parties
 - d. International Dark Sky Association group membership
 - e. The North Star newsletter
 - f. Astronomy and Sky & Telescope magazine discounts
 - g. Access to The Club library
 - h. Astronomical League group membership and the Reflector newsletter
 - i. Telescope loaner program
 - j. The right to make motions, nominate, vote and be a candidate for office
 - k. The right to attend Executive Board Meetings and address the Board at such meetings, except for brief periods when the President or Presiding Officer might close the meeting for any sensitive motions or discussions

Section IV: Quorum and Voting

1. 20% of the current membership units present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum and each membership unit in good standing shall have one vote. Voting members can vote by proxy by notifying a member of the Executive Board in writing or by E-mail.
2. The general membership shall vote on:
 - a. Changes to the Bylaws
 - b. Election of The Club Officers
 - c. Submission of motions to the Executive Board
 - d. Other business which comes before the general membership

Section V: Meetings

1. Regular meetings of The Club shall be on the fourth Friday of the at 7:30 PM.
2. Novice and Advanced Sessions, if offered shall be held at 6:30 PM.
3. Upon determination by the President in collaboration with the Executive Board, meeting times, dates and venues may be changed.
4. The active annual meeting schedule shall be published in the newsletter three months in advance of year end and monthly thereafter.
5. The Executive Board may call special General Meetings as needed.

Section VI: Meeting Procedures

1. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the terms of these bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order. In the absence of the President, the meeting shall be conducted by that Board Member holding the office named in the order in the list in Article VI, Section I of these bylaws.

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Article V

Section I: Composition of the Executive Board:

1. Current officers of The Club
2. Immediate prior year's President

Section II: Board Meetings

1. The Executive Board shall meet regularly in odd months. The President shall determine the schedule after collaboration with the Executive Board. The schedule shall be published on the website.
2. Special Executive Board Meetings may be called by the President or by any three Executive Board members as needed.
3. Executive Board Meetings may be conducted electronically.
4. Executive Board members shall each have one vote.
5. Members of the Executive Board may not hold more than one position on the Executive Board.
6. A simple majority of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum at an Executive Board Meeting.
7. All Executive Board Meetings shall be open to the membership.

Section III: Powers and Duties

1. The Executive Board of the North Houston Astronomy Club shall have the final responsibility for formulating policies for the overall management of The Club.
2. The Executive Board may delegate its authority to others as provided in the bylaws, or by resolution of the Executive Board.
3. Each member of the Executive Board shall submit a report to the Executive Board in November.
4. The Executive Board has the authority to enact its decisions in all matters except amendments to the Bylaws, which must also be brought before the general membership for a vote.
5. The Executive Board must consider motions submitted to it by the general membership.
6. Any member of the Executive Board may be removed from Office and the Executive Board by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.
7. Membership status may be denied to any person by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.
8. All of The Club expenditures shall be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Article VI

Section I: Positions

1. The officers of the North Houston Astronomy Club shall be President, Vice President, Program Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Astronomical League Coordinator (Al-Cor), Observation Chair, and Communications Chair.

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Section II: Qualifications

1. All officers must be members in good standing and must have been so for a consecutive period of six months immediately prior to nomination for election.

Section III: General Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of all Executive Board members to provide support for all other members of the Executive Board, to assist when and where needed, and to respond to inquiries about The Club.

Section IV: Officers' Duties:

1. **President** – The President shall be the chief executive officer of the North Houston Astronomy Club. The President shall be responsible for the execution of the policies and programs of the Executive Board and for the administration of the affairs of The Club. The President shall have the authority to execute instruments necessary to carry out these duties. Specific duties include:
 - Submit to the Executive Board meeting for approval a list of meeting times, dates and places for General Meetings and Executive Board Meetings.
 - Assemble and submit an annual budget to the Executive board at its November meeting.
 - Establish the agenda for, and officiate at, meetings of the general membership and the Executive Board.
 - Maintain cooperative liaisons with other local, state, and national astronomy groups.
 - Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
2. **Vice President** – The Vice President shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President. The Vice President shall also assist the President in the organization and orchestration of the General Meetings. In the event that the President is unable to officiate at meetings the Vice President shall have the full authority to officiate. Specific duties include:
 - Schedule, coordinate, and set up the novice program before the General Meeting.
 - Coordinate and cooperate with standing committee chairs to facilitate article IV.
 - Work in support of the Program Committee Chair to schedule, coordinate, and set up the formal presentations at the General Meetings.
3. **Program Chair** – The Program Chair shall coordinate with the members of the committee to recruit and schedule speakers for the main presentation at the General Meetings. Specific duties include:
 - Recruit and schedule formal speakers for the General Meetings.
 - Determine audio/visual needs, obtain biographical information for the speakers, and communicate this information to the President, Vice President, and Communications Chair.
 - Communicate directions for the meeting location to the speakers.
 - Arrange for the introduction of each speaker.
 - Act as speaker host.
4. **Secretary** – The Secretary's specific duties include:

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- Take minutes of motions and decisions at General Meetings and Executive Board Meetings and submit these to the Executive Board for approval.
 - Store and inventory The Club documents.
 - Coordinate with the Communication Chair to ensure effective communication as needed.
5. **Treasurer** – The Treasurer shall have general charge and supervision of the records of accounts of The Club, and subject to the direction of the Executive Board, shall have charge of, and be responsible for, all cash and securities of The Club. The treasurer shall have the power to give receipts for cash, securities or other property delivered to The Club and the power to disburse funds in accordance with procedures established by the Executive Board. The Treasurer shall perform additional duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President. Signatories on The Club checking account shall be the President, Treasurer and one other member of the Executive Board. Check books shall be held by the President and Treasurer. Specific duties include:
- Provide an accounting of income and expenditures at every Executive Board meeting.
 - Keep an updated roster of the Active Members.
 - Maintain special accounts with Sky & Telescope magazine, Astronomy magazine, the Astronomical League and the International Dark-Sky Association.
 - Be an ex-officio member of the Membership Committee.
 - **Membership Committee** – The Membership Chair shall coordinate with the members of the committee to act as the point of contact for prospective members and shall manage the member packet. Specific duties include:
 - Establish welcoming procedures for new members and guests.
 - Provide nametags for members of The Club.
 - Provide member packets to new members.
 - Establish procedures for managing The Club library.
 - Establish procedures for managing The Club logo merchandise.
6. **The Astronomical League Coordinator (ALCor)** – The ALCor shall coordinate with the Astronomical League and promote their programs within The Club. The ALCor shall also perform such duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President. Specific duties include:
- Communicate The Club roster data to the Astronomical League.
 - Coordinate with the Treasurer relative to Astronomical League dues.
 - Promote Astronomical League certification programs.
 - Present Astronomical League Awards to those deserving at the General Meetings.
7. **Observation Chair** – The Observation Chair shall coordinate with the members of the committee to coordinate observing by The Club. Specific duties include:
- Search out and develop a dark sky observing site as needed.
 - Maintain relationship with the observing site owners.
 - Establish and maintain a telescope loaner program.
 - Establish an observation schedule and publicize it to the membership.
 - Coordinate outreach events for community groups.

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- Encourage novice members to participate in observation activities.
 - Engage in cooperative efforts to preserve dark skies.
8. **Communications Chair** – The Communications Chair is responsible for coordinating all communications between the club and its members. This would include activities such as:
- **Webmaster** – The Webmaster is responsible for establishing and maintaining an up-to-date and cutting-edge The Club website. The Webmaster shall also perform such duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President. Specific duties include:
 - Post The Club meeting announcements on the website.
 - Keep website meeting and observation schedules current.
 - **NHAC List Server Administrator** – The Administrator will establish and maintain the NHAC list server.
 - **Social Media** – The Coordinator is responsible for updating social media outlets (such as Facebook, Twitter, Meet up, etc.).
 - **Newsletter** – The Editor is responsible for the construction and compilation of the newsletter. The name of the newsletter shall be “North Star”. The Editor shall also perform such duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President. Specific duties include:
 - Publish The Club newsletter to be distributed to the membership regularly.
 - Solicit contributions to the newsletter from the general membership.
 - Take advantage of current technology in order to produce an attractive and professional newsletter.
9. **Assistants and Committee Membership** – At the discretion of an officer, an assistant position and committee may be created to assist with the responsibilities of that office. The officer may fill those positions with members in good standing of his/her choice.

Section V: Vacancies

1. An office shall become vacant:
 - When the individual's membership has lapsed
 - When the office holder submits a written letter of resignation to the Executive Board
 - When an office holder is judged unable to perform their duties, as decided by a 2/3rd majority vote of the Executive Board
2. A vacancy in an office shall be filled from the eligible membership, by appointment by the Executive Board, except in the case of the President where the Vice President shall serve in the position.
3. Any member selected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the duration of the term.

Section VI: Terms of Office

1. All elected positions are for a one-year term from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Newly elected board members shall be introduced to the membership at the January meeting.

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Section VII: Election Procedures

1. The elected positions governed by these bylaws shall be all the officers of The Club.
2. In September, the President shall establish a Nominating Committee which shall present nominations of candidates in good standing at the November General Meeting.
3. Information on candidates shall be posted on the website in November and December.
4. Elections shall be held at the December General Meeting.
5. Nominations from the general membership shall be accepted at any time prior to the December election.
6. Election Process:
 - a. All uncontested nominations may be elected as a slate by a single ballot of the general membership.
 - b. For any contested position, the vote shall be by secret written ballot. The winner of a contested position shall be the candidate with the most votes.
 - c. The President shall appoint at least two members to count the vote.
 - d. In the case of a tie, a second vote will be taken amongst the top candidates who tied. In the case of another tie, the winner shall be determined by the flip of a coin.

Article VII

Section I: Standing Committees (Program, Membership, Observation)

1. Each committee chair shall work with the President and Treasurer concerning the budget to be submitted at the November Executive Board meeting.
2. Assist the other officers relative their general responsibilities.

Section II: Committee Meetings

1. The schedule and type of committee meetings shall be determined by each committee chair.
2. All committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with these bylaws, and Robert's Rules of Order may be declared the active rules of procedure at the discretion of the committee chair.

Section III: Ad-hoc Committees

1. The President can appoint chairpersons and establish temporary committees to perform specific functions.
2. Such ad-hoc committees may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Nominating Committee
 - b. Audit Committee
 - c. Bylaws Committee

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Article VIII

Section I: Fiscal Year

1. The fiscal year of the North Houston Astronomy Club shall run from January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year.

Section II: Amendments

1. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board followed by a two-thirds vote of the general membership.
2. Proposed bylaws changes shall be posted on The Club website at least one month prior to the general membership meeting at which they are to be considered.

Section III: Dissolution

1. If the Executive Board determines by a 2/3 vote, followed by a 2/3 vote of the general membership, that The Club should be dissolved, then the Executive Board shall determine the final disposition of all monetary and physical assets of The Club at its last meeting.

Revision History:
July 23, 1999
March 31, 2000
December 15, 2000
February 22, 2002
December 20, 2002
January 23, 2004
November 20, 2009
June 26, 2015
February 26, 2021