

Baltimore Marathi Mandal Constitution

Preamble

Desirous of preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of Maharashtra, and of uniting into a cohesive group for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, we, the Marathi loving people of the Greater Baltimore and surrounding states do hereby constitute the Baltimore Marathi Mandal and bequeath to ourselves this Constitution and Bylaws.

1. This organization shall be known as the Baltimore Marathi Mandal (hereinafter called BMM or the Association).
2. An Executive Committee (EC) duly elected by BMM members as described in Article 7 shall manage all the business and affairs of BMM as per the Constitution and Bylaws.

3. Principles and Objectives

3.1	The objectives of BMM shall be:
3.1.1	To promote literary, educational, cultural and charitable activities related to preserving and promoting the heritage of Maharashtra in particular and India in general.
3.1.2	To create opportunities for and to nurture inter-cultural exchange.
3.1.3	To individually and collectively help and be of service to members of BMM and to the community in the surrounding areas.
3.2	BMM shall be a non-political organization.
3.3	Any member wishing to participate in the activities of BMM shall not be discriminated against on the basis of gender, age, race, national origin, color, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or the state of handicap.

4. Membership

4.1	Any person who subscribes to the objectives of the Association and pays the annual dues, as decided by the EC, is entitled to be a member of BMM. Every such member shall have an obligation to uphold the constitution and the bylaws of BMM.
4.2	The membership of BMM shall consist of the following categories:
1)	Family membership - Individual, his/her spouse, and minor children under 18. This membership shall entitle all members qualified in the foregoing list to participate in the Associations activities and enjoy all privileges except voting rights. Voting rights shall be limited to the individual and his/her spouse each having one vote.
2)	Individual Membership - This membership shall entitle the individual to participate in the Associations activities and enjoy all privileges including one voting right.
4.3	Annual dues for each membership category shall be decided by the EC.

5. Executive Committee

5.1	The EC shall be comprised of the following elected office bearers:
a)	President
b)	Vice President
c)	Secretary
d)	Treasurer

	e) Co-Treasurer
	f) Up to 3 General Office Bearers
5.2	These EC positions shall be elected by the members of BMM, in an election with a secret ballot, at an Annual General Body Meeting (AGBM) of BMM for a one-year term of office. The EC may also contain up to three additional members at large as outlined in Article 5.3. Any voting member of BMM is eligible to run for any office except as limited by Article 5.4.
5.3	Members at Large: The elected EC members by majority vote may appoint up to two additional members to serve on the EC for a one-year term of office. These appointed members should be full voting members of the EC.
5.4	Term Limits: All EC members (elected or appointed) shall be allowed to hold a particular office/position for one term only. However, they shall be allowed to hold another position on the EC for one more additional consecutive term. No member (elected or appointed) can serve more than two consecutive terms on the EC. An exception to these limits will be allowed in a situation where not enough candidates stand for election to fill all the elected EC positions.
5.5	All 5 members of first, founding EC shall have terms that run to Sankrant. The term of office for members of all subsequent ECs shall begin on Sankrant day each year and end on the day before Sankrant the following year.
5.6	If any vacancy arises on the EC through any cause, the EC may appoint any current member of BMM to fill that vacancy by majority vote. This appointment should be communicated to all BMM members within 30 days.
5.7	Any EC member may be dismissed from the EC by a minimum of two-thirds of the EC members voting for dismissal. Twenty-one day s notice shall be given to the EC member being considered for dismissal.
5.8	Each year in August or during Ganapati celebrations, the EC by majority vote shall appoint two Election Offices according to the provisions of the Bylaws. These officers will help conduct annual elections during the AGBM held per Article 7. The term of these Election Officers will end after the AGBM.

6. Finance / Asset Management

6.1	BMM shall be a non-profit organization. No dividends or monetary profits shall be declared or paid to the EC or BMM members thereof.
6.2	The association's income shall be derived from membership dues, fees for functions and events, and charitable donations and grants.
6.3	No monetary or physical assets of BMM shall be distributable to BMM members or other private persons. If the association is dissolved per Article 8, any remaining assets will be donated per Article 8.2.
6.4	All BMM members including EC members work as volunteers and cannot be compensated in any form for their time and effort for services rendered to, or duties performed on behalf of the association.
6.5	A non EC member shall be appointed by the EC for auditing the BMM accounts of the fiscal year and the results of this audit shall be published to all members by Sankrant day in the following year.

7. General Body

7.1	The General Body of the Association shall consist of all dues paying members, and will have power over the EC or any other Committee of the Association.
7.2	An Annual General Body Meeting of the Association will be held coincident with Diwali celebrations, or during November or December of each year.
7.3	The following activities shall take place during the AGBM
7.3.1	The Election Officers shall conduct an election for the EC.
7.3.2	The President will present a State of the Association report.
7.3.3	The Treasurer will report on the fiscal status of the Association.
7.3.4	Any other special motions, such as motions to amend the constitution, shall be considered.
7.4	A special General Body meeting may be called by a majority vote of the EC or by a written petition signed by 1/3rd of the dues paying members. In the either case, the President shall inform the General body of the matter and call a General Body meeting within 30 days of receiving such notice.

8. If the Association ceases to function or the EC decides that the Association is no longer able to fulfill the objectives outlined in this constitution, then the association may be dissolved as follows in Section 8.1

8.1	The EC shall circulate a notice of intent of dissolution to all members and call a Special General Body Meeting no earlier than 30 days from circulating such notice. At this meeting, the motion to dissolve can be considered only if enough members are present to cast the greater of 25 votes or votes equal to 25% of all dues paying members. The motion to dissolve must pass by a two-thirds majority of all votes cast.
8.2	Upon dissolution of the Association, the Executive Committee shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Association, donate of all of the assets for charitable purposes to non-profit organizations.

9. This constitution may be amended as follows:

Any BMM member, including EC members, may circulate a notice of intent to amend and a description of the proposed amendment to all members at least 30 days prior to the Annual General Body Meeting. At this meeting, the motion to amend can be considered only if enough members are present to cast the lesser of 25 votes or votes equal to 25% of all dues paying members. The motion to amend must pass by a two-thirds majority of all votes cast.

Baltimore Marathi Mandal (BMM) Bylaws

1. The postal address of the association is 4523 Haywagon Way, Ellicott City, MD 21043. The

Executive Committee (EC) may change this at any time with majority vote but must inform the General Body of the change 30 days prior to the effective date.

2. Membership

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| 2.1 | The payment of membership dues shall keep the members in good standing and entitle them to membership for one calendar year or part thereof. Membership shall not be transferable. The annual dues for BMM membership shall become due and payable on January 1st. |
| 2.1 | In the case of persons newly moving into the area and joining BMM on or after July 1st, the EC may decide to charge one-half of the regular annual dues for the remainder of their first calendar year of membership. |

3. Executive Committee

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| 3.1 | No meeting of the EC can be held without a seven-day notice to the EC members. Minimum of five EC members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business meetings of the EC. Decisions of the EC shall be passed only by a majority vote of those present. |
| 3.2 | The Secretary or Vice President may prepare an agenda for the proceedings of the meeting of the EC. He/she shall prepare minutes of the meeting in English, and these minutes shall be ratified at the next EC meeting. |
| 3.3 | Only an EC member or a BMM member authorized by the EC shall represent BMM at any conference, meeting, seminar or gathering. |
| 3.4 | The EC may appoint committees of members of BMM to perform special tasks consistent with the realization of the aims and objectives of BMM, to investigate specific problems, procedures and matters of interest, and to make recommendations to the EC. These ad hoc committees shall cease to operate after completion of assigned tasks, or at the discretion of the EC. |
| 3.5 | Each EC member and his/her heirs, executors and administrators, and members of all ad- hoc committees and General Body of the BMM shall all times be indemnified and held harmless from matters legitimately undertaken by him/her in the execution of the responsibilities of his/her office. |

4. Responsibilities of EC Officers

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| 4.1 | The President shall be the Chief Officer of the BMM. He/she shall lead the EC and serve the General Body, oversee the general and proper conduct of the business of the Association, and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the EC and the General Body are executed. The President shall present a report on the state of BMM at the AGBM. |
| 4.2 | The Vice President shall lead operational aspects of the Association. He/she shall work closely with the Treasurer and Secretary and serve as backup for them. He/she shall have the authority and responsibility of the President if the President is disabled or inactive for any reason. |
| 4.3 | The secretary shall record and publish the proceeding of all meetings of the BMM and its EC, attend to the incoming and outgoing correspondence, and keep all the documents and records of the BMM. |

4.4	The treasurer shall:
4.4.1	Keep custody of the BMM funds and financial instruments.
4.4.2	Keep full and accurate account of receipts and distributions.
4.4.3	Deposit or disburse the BMM funds as authorized by the EC.
4.4.4	Keep track of all BMM assets.
4.4.5	Render an account of all the transactions conducted as a treasurer to the EC at the regular meetings, and present a financial summary to the members at the general body meeting.
4.5	The co-treasurer shall work in absence of Treasurer and should perform all duties of Treasurer.
4.6	The Members at Large shall be responsible for maintaining effective communication with the membership. They may play lead roles in communications including web site management, publicity etc., or in any other area designated by the EC. The Members at Large may also act as Cultural Co-ordinators and shall take the initiative and leadership in formulating, organizing and executing the cultural activities and programs of the BMM.

5. Finance

5.1	The fiscal year of BMM shall be the calendar year.
5.2	The EC will conduct all business for the BMM, including but not limited to, purchasing or hiring goods and services and entering into contracts on behalf of the BMM.
5.3	The account in the name of BMM shall be maintained in a bank or a savings institution and operated jointly by the President and the Treasurer. No ad hoc committee of BMM will be authorized to receive funds or separately maintain a bank account in the name of BMM.
5.4	Only the members of the EC shall make expenditures on behalf of BMM. Expenditures of more than \$250 by any EC member must have prior approval from the EC.
5.5	Notwithstanding Article 5.2, any contract or financial transaction exceeding \$2000 shall require the consent of the General Body.
5.6	The outgoing EC shall prepare audited financial statements of their fiscal year no later than Sankrant Day of the following year. A copy of these statements shall be published in the Association s newsletter within 30 days. The outgoing treasurer will retain responsibility for filing taxes for the previous fiscal year.
5.7	The outgoing EC must hand over control of all business matters and financial and physical assets to the incoming EC at least 1 week prior to the end of their term.

6. BMM meetings

6.1	Per Article 7 of the constitution, the EC shall call an Annual General Body Meeting each year
6.2	In addition to the provisions of Articles 7, 8 and 9 of the constitution, the EC, by a majority vote, shall be allowed to call a general body meeting of the BMM membership for any purpose it deems fit.

- 6.3 Special meetings of BMM shall be called by the EC, on receipt of a requisition by at least 1/3rd of the voting members of BMM.
- 6.4 A written notice of any General Body Meeting, including an agenda, shall be given to all BMM members no less than 30 days before the date of the meeting.
- 6.5 Except as specified in Articles 8 and 9 of the Constitution, at any BMM meeting called with proper notice per the By Laws and Constitution, the members present shall constitute a quorum.
- 6.6 Eligible BMM Members must routinely cast their ballots in person. If one spouse in a Family membership is present, he/she may cast a proxy vote for his/her spouse in addition to his/her vote. Absentee ballots shall be permitted only as arranged with the Vice President or Election Officer (for annual elections) at least 1 day in advance of any BMM meeting.

7. Election Procedures

- 7.1 The EC shall designate two Election Officers per Article 5.8 of the Constitution. These election officers will be responsible for soliciting candidates for all elected posts, conducting the elections (if necessary) for the next EC including counting the votes and certifying the election results.
- 7.2 The EC must communicate the identity of the nominated Election Officers to the General Body by Sept. 15th each year.
- 7.3 The list of eligible voters will be frozen on Sept. 15th each calendar year. Any person becoming a BMM member after this date shall not be eligible to vote in elections held during that year.
- 7.4 The Election Officers shall receive nominations for all positions on the EC, no later than 15 days prior to the AGBM.
- 7.5 The Election Officers shall mail/Email the names of the candidates in the slate(s) to the BMM members at least 1 week before the date of the annual meeting.
- 7.6 The election shall be conducted during the AGBM and the results of the election shall be declared prior to adjournment of the AGBM.

8. Official Communications

- 8.1 Notice of Meetings, elections and other matters can be provided to the General Body by Email, or regular Mail. In case of members wishing to get notice by regular mail, the date of mailing of the notice shall be used in interpreting sufficiency requirements in the By Laws and Constitution.
- 8.2 The Association shall periodically publish a newsletter. Notice of official Association matters can also be provided through this Newsletter.

9. These By Laws may be amended as follows:

- 9.1 Any BMM member, including EC members, may circulate a notice of intent to amend and a description of the proposed amendment to all members at least 30 days prior to any General Body Meeting. At this meeting the motion to amend the must be passed by a simple majority of all voting members present.