

CONSTITUTION OF THE MERIDIAN HIKING CLUB

In this constitution, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following words and expressions shall have the meaning assigned to them here under:

“club” means The Meridian Hiking Club,

“member” means paid up member of the club,

“committee” means the members elected to form the committee of the club to serve the club in its best interest,

“guest” means any person which is not a member of the club,

“hike leader” means any member who leads hikes for at least 10 days per year

“he” and “his” will indicate both genders.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE CLUB

To provide the means whereby club members can discuss and consult together on matters of mutual interest regarding Trails, Hiking, Walks, Camping tours, Adventure trips and Social events in a spirit of mutual respect and to the satisfaction of all club members.

To organise such Trails, Hikes, Walks, Camping tours and Adventure trips for the enjoyment of all club members.

2. ELEGIBILITY FOR CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Prospective members must:

- a) be 18 (eighteen) years of age or older,
- b) fill in an application for membership form in full and sign the indemnity section,
- c) pay the membership subscription
- d) Membership is subject to the committee’s approval.

3. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

A member of the club will automatically cease to be a member if for any of the following reasons:

- a) he resigns in writing,
- b) he fails to pay his membership subscriptions by the due date,
- c) by majority vote of the committee, he is asked to resign

4. REPRESENTATION

The committee will represent the views of all paid-up club members.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee shall consist of club members representing the following:

- a) Chairman
- b) Vice Chairman
- c) Secretary
- d) Treasurer
- e) Four (4) Additional Members

6. ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE

Members nominated as candidates for election must fulfil the following requirements.

- a) They must be paid-up club members, for a minimum of a year.
- b) They must have some knowledge of trails, hikes and walks.

7. ELEGIBILITY TO VOTE IN THE ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE

All members are eligible to vote in the election of committee members.

8. NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE

- a) Candidates may be nominated by members at the AGM.
- b) The nomination must be accepted by the proposed candidate.
- c) Nominations must be seconded and supported.
- d) Each member may only second and support one candidate for each position.

9. DETERMINATION OF A SUCCESSFUL COMMITTEE MEMBER

A successful committee member will be decided by a simple majority vote by the club members at the AGM.

10. PERIOD OF TENURE BY THE COMMITTEE

The committee will serve for a period of not more than 12 (twelve) months from the date of the election, at which time its period of tenure will cease, and elections will be held to elect a new committee.

All members of the former committee may offer themselves for re-election.

11. CO-OPTING OF A COMMITTEE MEMBER

The committee has the right to co-opt additional members in the event of a vacancy arising or if it is felt that another member is needed

12. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

The committee will elect a Chairman, Vice - Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer from the elected committee members in a closed session immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

These Officers will hold office for the same period as the committee members.

13. REMOVAL OF A COMMITTEE MEMBER

A member of the committee will automatically cease to be a committee member for any of the following reasons:

1. failing to pay membership fees,
2. resigning from the committee in writing

A committee member may be removed from the committee for the following reasons:

- a) committing actions or behaviour which have brought, or may bring, ridicule upon the club and/or reduce the credibility of the club and/or bring the club into disrepute, which have been investigated by the Committee, and he has been found guilty
- b) Where a club member feels that a committee member is not fulfilling his duties in the correct manner and the matter has been investigated by the Committee and he has been found guilty
- c) Where it has been found that he has breached confidential information.

14. REMOVAL OF THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Where the committee considers that the Chairman, Officer or Committee Member has failed to carry out their duty in the correct manner, then the committee can remove him from office, after an investigation has found him guilty.

15. DUTIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The duties of the committee members are:

To act only in the interest of their fellow members and the club and not for their own personal gain.

16. FREQUENCY OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee will meet as required and the meeting will commence when at least 60% of the Committee Members are present whether this is a physical or virtual meeting

17. CASTING VOTE

Where a decision is tied on any matter the chairman will, in addition to his normal vote, have a casting vote in order that the matter may be resolved.

18. PROXY VOTE

Where a committee member will be absent from any meeting and wishes to record a vote or opinion on any matter, then the vote or opinion shall be recorded in writing and handed to the committee for presentation at the next meeting.

19. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

The proceedings of all meetings shall be recorded in the minutes by the club secretary or other nominated member.
Copies of all minutes will be forwarded to committee members along with an action sheet within a week after the meeting. Meeting minutes must be filed.

Sub-committee will be appointed by the Committee.
If sub-committees are installed the same procedure is to be followed.
They must be a Club Member for at least a year
Made up of 60% committee members

20. AGENDA FOR MEETINGS

The chairman will send an agenda to all committee members a week before the meeting. Items for inclusion in the agenda for committee meetings are to reach the secretary or Chairman at least one week prior to the meeting.

21. PROTECTION OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AGAINST UNFAIR ACTION

No member of the committee may be subjected to any unfair action or treatment as a result of acting as a member of the committee or making any statement in the course or carrying out his committee responsibilities.
Where a member believes that he has been subjected to such action or

treatment, the matter is to be reported to the Chairman or the committee in the first instance, who will then arrange for the matter to be investigated.

22. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

- a) All details obtained from membership and application for membership forms is deemed confidential and may not be disclosed to any person, organisation or other club or used for any purpose whatsoever than the general day to day running of the club.
- b) Where it is necessary to discuss confidential information at any meeting and where it is decided that such information is not to be disclosed outside the confines of the meeting, all members are duty bound to ensure that it is not discussed. Any committee member found guilty of a breach of trust under this paragraph, will be removed from the committee and not be eligible for re-election.
- c) Any personal Information obtained from members or guests are to be disposed of to prevent a breach of the POPI Act.

23. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Administrative services for the club and committee will be performed by the Secretary and Treasurer or such person appointed by the Committee.

24. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the Constitution may only be made by the members in a Special or General Meeting requiring a Two Thirds Majority.

25. DISSOLUTION OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee may be dissolved on a simple majority of all eligible voters, voting in a referendum on its future existence.

This Referendum can only be requested by the Committee.

26. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The AGM will be held no later than 6 months after the Financial year end.

At least 30 (thirty) days' notice will be given to members, followed by the official invitation with agenda and financial statements 21 days before the AGM.

The attendance for members must be free of charge.

The agenda will include:

- Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- A report from the committee
- Treasurer's report and the year's financial statements
- Election of the committee for the coming year
- Decision of membership subscription and guest fees for the following year

The AGM meeting minutes must be sent to all members within 21 days after the AGM.

- All financial statements will be audited annually by at least two committee members

27. GENERAL

a) Membership application

- 1) The Application for Membership must be completed in full and forwarded to membership@meridian.or.za which will then be replied to with the bank details and amount to pay.

b) Applicants must include emergency contact information.

GUESTS

- 1) A guest fee will be charged to all guests.
- 2) The hike leader will be responsible for collecting the guest fee along with their contact details.
- 3) **All Hikers including Guests are to confirm that they are medically fit to hike and absolve the Leader and Meridian Hiking Club of all liability**
- 4) No guest fees are payable for children under 18 accompanied by an adult and should be of school going age being a minimum of 7 years old.

28 Disciplinary Procedure

All complaints lodged against members, committee members or officers shall be made in writing and forwarded to the Committee.

All complaints are to be investigated by the designated member on the Committee.

The Offending member or Officer shall be notified of the Complaint within 7 days after the Complaint has been investigated.

The Offending member shall be requested to make representations in mitigation of the offence to the Committee within 14 days.

After representations have been made the Committee shall consider the information and make a decision based on the merits and provide an outcome.

The outcome shall consider suspension or termination of membership.

The Member is entitled to Appeal the Decision.

Appeal process

Members may appeal the verdict made by the committee and such appeal must be lodged in writing within 14 days of the verdict.

A New meeting date shall be set by a New Committee comprising at least 5 of the Committee Members, within 21 days of the receipt of the Appeal.

The Appeal will be heard by the Committee with representations made by the Offending Member in mitigation of the original decision.

The Decision made shall be Final and Binding on All Parties.