**BY LAWS**

**MISSISSIPPI TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the trappers of Mississippi, associate ourselves for the following purposes: to promote sound environmental education programs; to promote sound conservation, legislation and administrative acts; to save and faithfully defend from waste the natural resources of Mississippi; to secure a continued annual fur harvest using the best tools presently available for that purpose; and to cooperate with other organizations and agencies with compatible goals.

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

This organization shall be known as the Mississippi Trappers Association, hereinafter called the “MTA”, incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Mississippi.

**ARTICLE II – DEFINITIONS**

1. COMMITTEE shall refer to a special commissions created to accomplish a specific task.
2. MEMBER shall refer to an individual whose application has been accepted, and whose current dues are paid.
3. BOARD shall refer to the collective group of elected officers.
4. OFFICER shall refer to an elected official.
5. GUIDELINES shall refer to established standards and procedures for certain MTA activities.
6. The word SHALL be deemed a required or mandatory action.
7. The word MAY be deemed a permissive action.
8. Any pronoun herein shall be interpreted to represent either sex.

**ARTICLE III-GOALS**

It shall be the goal of the MTA to:

1. Educate the public on the consumptive use of wildlife resources as a necessary and proper tool of wildlife management.
2. Develop, support, and promote a comprehensive educational program based upon scientific study and technological research for the advancement, restoration, wise use, management and conservation of wildlife and other natural resources.
3. Educate trappers in the proper harvesting and management of furbearers. Promote sensible, scientifically sound legislation and administrative procedures pertaining to the management of furbearing animals.
4. Oppose unscientific and inappropriate legislation pertaining to the management of furbearing animals.
5. Educate the public concerning the unscientific and factually unfounded information and attitudes promoted by anti-sportsman organizations.
6. Press for the prosecution of trap thieves, fur thieves, and others who would bring the sport of trapping into disrepute.
7. Discourage and eliminate unjust and fraudulent trade practices in the marketing of raw furs.
8. Encourage and promote a strong and active state association.
9. To keep and maintain an account of at least Fifty Thousand and no/100 Dollars ($50,000.00) to be used as a legal fund account.

**ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

1. Any person who endorses the goals and purposes of the MTA shall be eligible to become or remain a member, unless his membership is challenged for good reason by a member in good standing. In such case, the complaining member, and the member in question shall present their cases to the Board for review. If the Board by a simple majority vote declines to accept the applicant, the application and dues shall be returned, along with a letter of explanation from the President of the MTA.
2. Membership fees shall be due and payable at the time of the application and in January of each year thereafter.
3. All individual members of the MTA shall be entitled to official publications of the MTA as a privilege of membership.
4. All members shall have the right to attend and be heard at all official meetings of the Board and Committees except during executive session thereof.
5. No member shall obligate the MTA in any way to any person or organization without prior approval of the Board. Similarly, no member shall be entitled to represent MTA policy, in writing or otherwise, without prior consent by the Board.
6. Dues for individual members shall be established by the Board and approved by the membership at the annual meeting. A member in arrears shall be dropped from the rolls. A member to be reinstated shall pay current dues. If a member in arrears has tendered a bad check, reinstatement shall be accomplished by making the check good and paying a penalty fee to cover expenses. No membership benefits shall be extended until the bad check is made good and the penalty fee is paid.
7. Any individual member may terminate his or her membership at any time by notification, in writing, mailed to the Secretary / Treasurer of the MTA, but such member shall not be entitled to any refund of dues or contributions.
8. It is the duty of each member to assist in every feasible manner in promoting the goals and objectives of the MTA, and to act at all times and in every manner in a way befitting a sportsman and a good citizen.
9. The Board shall establish the benefits and privileges of membership, except that it shall have no authority over membership privileges and benefits expressly provided by this document.

**ARTICLE V – OFFICERS**

1. The elected officers of the MTA shall consist of the President; Vice President; Public Relations Officer; Secretary; and Treasurer, all of whom shall be members in good standing. These officers shall be elected biannually, by secret ballot vote, at the annual meeting. A plurality vote shall elect all officers. Terms of office shall commence on the day following the conclusion of the annual meeting.
2. The Board shall consist and be made up of the elected officers listed in item 1 of this section, and also the elected District Directors from the various regions of the state, as duly elected by the membership. The appointed NTA Delegate and the appointed Legislative Officer may sit on the Board in an advisory, non-voting role.
3. The elected officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws. In cases of conflict, these bylaws and the Board, in that order, shall prevail.
4. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve for more than five (5) terms in the same office, or shall any elected officer receive a salary or hourly wages from the MTA, although any officer shall be entitled to expenses reasonable incurred in the performance of his duties, subject to Board approval.
5. The PRESIDENT shall preside over all meetings of the MTA, except that chairmen shall preside at committee meetings, and he shall exercise general supervision over the affairs and officers of the MTA. He shall also perform such duties as are authorized and directed by the Board. He may appoint any committee, with Board approval, which he feels is needed during his term of office, and shall serve ex-officio on all committees unless specifically excluded by the Board.
6. The VICE PRESIDENT shall assume the duties of the President in the latter’s absence, as well as any other duties prescribed by the Board. The Vice President shall also oversee the organization and execution of the annual meeting and fur sales, and shall report to the President and the Board of these activities.
7. The PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER shall work with the legislature and other government groups to promote sound conservation and continued furbearer harvesting. He / she shall assist in the education of trappers and the public as well as other duties prescribed by the Board.
8. The SECRETARY shall record all minutes of board meetings and the annual meeting, as well as other duties prescribed by the Board.
9. The TREASURER shall perform all financial duties to include check writing, membership cards, tax forms, investment of special monies, and all other financial duties necessary to operate the MTA. He / she shall provide a quarterly report to the Board. He / she shall insure that monies collected be deposited as soon as possible, not to exceed fourteen (14) days after receipt.
10. When a vacancy exists in any elected office other than the presidency, a successor shall be appointed by the Board for the duration of the term. In the event of a vacancy in the presidency, the Vice President shall succeed to that office for the duration of the term.
11. Any member who has been a paid member for at least two (2) years, and who has paid his membership fee for the succeeding year, shall be eligible for elected office. In no case shall any member hold more than one MTA elected office at a time.
12. Nothing in these bylaws shall prohibit the Board from selecting and designating a “temporary” non-elected officer.

**ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES**

1. The President, with Board approval, may establish such special committees as may be deemed necessary from time to time to fulfill the objective and goals of the MTA. Each special committee will report at such time and place as may be specified and may be dismissed at any time by the President or Board.
2. The Board shall assign responsibilities to all committees relating to the administration, conduct, regulation, and oversight of particular activities or special areas of endeavors of the MTA.
3. Committee chairmen are authorized to appoint subcommittees and ad hoc committees from among the members of their respective committees, as each chairman deems necessary. Timely notice of all committee or subgroup meetings shall be transmitted by the chairmen.

**ARITCLE VII – ANNUAL MEETING**

1. An annual meeting shall be held during the fall of each year (Sept – Nov), date subject to approval by the Board.
2. A meeting of the Board shall be held at all annual meetings. An agenda for this meeting shall be prepared each year by the President, with the input and advice from the Board. This input and advice shall be solicited by the President no later than twenty (20) days before the meeting. This agenda shall not preclude any other business that might be brought before the Board, but shall take precedence over any other matter unless the Board suspends the regular agenda by a majority vote.
3. A general membership meeting shall be held at all annual meetings, at which the membership shall be apprised of the state of the MTA, including a Treasurer’s report, at which the general membership shall give advice and counsel to the Board. The President shall prepare an agenda for the general membership meeting with the input and advice for the membership, as solicited through the quarterly newsletter or published on the MTA’s website. This agenda shall not preclude any other subject that might be brought before the membership for discussion.
4. Following each annual meeting, a copy of all bylaw changes shall be provided each member in the next quarterly newsletter or published on the MTA’s website.
5. The President or presiding officer shall see that order and decorum is maintained at all times during the Board and the general membership meetings.

**ARTICLE VIII – ELECTIONS**

1. Any officer may receive nominations at the annual meeting. Nominations must be made in written form and be signed by the member in good standing who made the nomination. Incumbent officers do not have to be re-nominated if they wish to continue to serve the association.
2. The President shall secure the acceptance of all nominations by all nominees.
3. Each office SHALL be voted on separately.
4. The President shall present the nominees for each office to the membership and the membership shall elect each officer by secret ballot provided by the MTA during the annual meeting.
5. If the election is challenged in writing by January 1 by a member in good standing, the Board will resolve the conflict.
6. Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the Board may recommend removal of any elected officer with a 3/5 (Three Fifths) vote.

**ARTICLE IX – AMMENDMENTS**

1. Any proposed amendment must be endorsed by three (3) Board members or twenty (20) members in good standing.
2. Once an amendment has been properly endorsed, it shall be presented at the next annual meeting. If a majority of members present vote for the amendment, it will immediately become part of these bylaws.

**ARTICLE X – EFFECTIVE DATE**

These bylaws shall take effect immediately upon being ratified by the Board and Members. They shall also carry the most recent date of amendment to the bylaws. This document was most recently amended on September 28, 2019, at the annual MTA membership meeting.