



## **Constitution of the Metrolina Phoenician Club**

Revised February 2022

### **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this non-profit organization shall be "The Metrolina Phoenician Club" (herein referred to as the "Club").

### **ARTICLE II – STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

#### **A. The purpose of the Club shall be:**

1. To serve as a social organization for Lebanese and Lebanese-Americans and others who support our common objectives
2. To preserve the Lebanese heritage and traditions
3. To promote and support humanitarian efforts including charitable efforts in Lebanon and the United States of America

### **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. Composition:**

1. Membership is open to anyone interested, with the approval of the Board.
2. Annual membership dues to be set by the Board.

#### **B. Privileges:**

1. Members shall receive official communication from the Club on a regular basis.
2. Members have the right to participate in any or all Club activities.
3. Members have the right to participate in Board Elections.

### **ARTICLE IV – THE BOARD**

#### **A. Number and Qualifications:**

1. The number and members on the Board shall be determined on a yearly basis by the current sitting Board.
2. The Board composition will be an odd number of members and to also include a subset of at least four officers and the Immediate Past President.
3. All Board nominees must have been paid members of the Club for the prior two years and the upcoming nomination year. Example: For the year 2020, a nominee must have paid dues for years 2018, 2019, and 2020.
4. An individual may only be nominated to serve on the Board by a current paid Club member.

#### **B. Election of the Board:**

1. The Board, with the exception of the Immediate Past President, who is a member ex-officio, shall be elected at each annual business meeting of the members.
2. The election shall be by secret ballot at the General Assembly. All Board Members shall be elected for a one-year term.

### **C. Selection Process:**

1. President:
  - a. The President of the Board may only serve 1 two-year term.
  - b. The same individual may not serve two consecutive terms.
2. Officers:
  - a. The Board shall elect the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer by a majority vote of the newly elected Board at the first meeting of the new year.
  - b. Responsibilities of the aforementioned officers are defined in section G. Duties of this Constitution.
3. Conflicts of Interest:
  - a. An individual may not serve as a Club Board Member if he or she serves on another social and/or cultural organization's Board

### **D. Termination:**

1. Failure to attend 3 meetings without an accepted excuse shall constitute a tender of resignation.
2. Vacancies by death or resignation shall be filled for the unexpired term by majority vote of the Board.

### **E. Vacancies:**

Should there be an unanticipated Board member vacancy, the vacancy shall be filled by a Board majority vote by the upcoming Board Meeting.

1. In the event of this occurrence, the Immediate Past President shall relinquish his or her voting privilege yet continue to serve as a trusted advisor in order to maintain an odd numbered voting Board. The Past President's voting rights will be restored once a replacement board member has been voted on.

### **F. Compensation:**

All Board Member duties are to be performed pro bono.

### **G. Duties:**

1. The Board shall present an annual report on club activities and finances to the entire Club membership during the Annual General Assembly.
2. The President shall preside over all Club events and Board meetings.
3. The Vice President shall preside at all Club events and Board Meetings in the absence of the President.
4. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures, and shall present a report at each regular Board Meeting. The Treasurer shall also ensure that all funds designated are disbursed properly. The Treasurer is responsible for maintenance of the 501(c)(3) status and annual tax filings. The Treasurer is to also maintain regulatory financial documentation, including but not limited to IRS requirements. The Treasurer is to provide financials to the Secretary for official recordkeeping.
5. The Secretary shall keep historical records, including Meeting Minutes, donation records, sponsorship records, the Annual Haffleh financial records, and other event financials prepared by the Treasurer

### **H. Committees:**

Committee chairs to be appointed by the President with the Board's approval. Specific Committees are enumerated in the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE V – FUNDS AND DONATIONS**

All funds and donations received or raised by the Club or raised by committee will be allocated by the Board.

**ARTICLE VI – NATIONAL REPRESENTATION**

The Metrolina Phoenician Club is affiliated with the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs.

**ARTICLE VII – CONSTITUTION**

To amend the Constitution, two-thirds approval is required from the current sitting Board.



## Bylaws of the Metrolina Phoenician Club

Revised February 2022

### ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

#### **A. Qualifications:**

The membership of this Club shall consist of those who pay annual dues and agree to the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Common Objectives of this Club.

#### **B. Annual Dues:**

The Board will determine the annual dues. Active members are required to keep their dues current. Failure to pay dues will result in loss of membership.

#### **C. Suspension and Expulsion of Members:**

Any member of the Club may be suspended or expelled for good cause by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

#### **D. Common Objectives:**

All members shall agree to be bound by the Common Objectives. Amendment to these objectives shall be prepared by the Board and approved by two-thirds majority of the members in attendance at the Annual General Assembly.

In keeping with the statement of purpose, the Club shall:

1. Sponsor at least one Annual Fundraiser (Haffleh)
2. Have at least one Annual General Assembly
3. Organize and assure the disbursement of fund to orphanages, charities, or institutions in Lebanon or the United States at the discretion of the Board
4. Participate in local community events as recommended by the Board
5. Disseminate information about Lebanon from the Lebanese Information and Research Office from the Embassy of Lebanon, located in Washington, D.C. or the Lebanese Honorary Consul located in Raleigh, North Carolina

#### **E. Family Memberships:**

Family membership shall include the spouse and dependent family members living at the home under the age of 22. Family Memberships Dues are currently set to \$60. The Board may adjust Dues as deemed appropriate.

#### **F. Single Memberships:**

Individuals over the age of 22 are required to pay a Single Membership.

Single Membership Dues are currently set to \$20. The Board may adjust Dues as deemed appropriate.

#### **G. New Members:**

All new members shall be added to the official communication distributions of the Club and have access to the Constitution and Bylaws on the Metrolina Phoenician Club website.

## ARTICLE II – MEETING OF MEMBERS

### **A. Annual General Membership Meetings:**

The membership of the Club shall meet at least once each calendar year at the Annual General Assembly separate from any other event. The time and place to be set by the Board.

### **B. Notice of Annual General Membership Meetings:**

Notice of the Annual General Assembly shall be communicated to all active members at least 15 days prior to the meeting.

### **C. Voting:**

All active members eighteen years of age or older, shall have one vote. Voting members will be required to be present to exercise their voting privilege. A simple majority of members present shall be required on all voting matters considered at each Annual General Assembly, except as otherwise provided herein.

## ARTICLE III – COMMITTEES

Each Board Member is to be assigned to two committees:

### **1. Special Events Committee**

- a. Shall be responsible for any and all social activities of the Club (i.e., dinner, receptions, dances, etc.)
- b. Each event shall have a separate Special Events Committee dedicated to it

### **2. Humanitarian Aid Committee**

- a. Shall be responsible for any and all fund raising efforts to help various relief projects as well as other approved charities by the Board

### **3. Membership Committee**

- a. Shall be responsible for recruiting new members and maintaining an accurate membership directory and community membership directory

### **4. Scholarship Committee**

- a. Shall be responsible for reviewing the applications of individuals who have applied to the Metrolina Phoenician Club Scholarship and determine if their application qualifies to be considered for the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs Scholarship
- b. This Committee is also responsible for reaching out to the community to contribute to the fund

### **5. Building Fund Committee**

- a. Shall be responsible for raising funds to build a clubhouse.
- b. This Committee shall be led by the Vice President

### **6. Public Relations Committee**

- a. Shall be responsible for handling all publicity including contacts with other civic, community, social and service organizations

### **7. Marketing Committee**

- a. Shall be responsible for social media, website updates, flyer creations, email communications, and promotion of events

#### **ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEE SELECTION PROCESS**

**A. Chairpersons:**

Shall be appointed by the President and approved by the majority of the Board.

**B. Co-Chairpersons:**

Shall be appointed at the request of the Committee and approved by the Board.

**C. Termination:**

Failure to attend 3 meetings without an accepted excuse shall constitute a tender of resignation. Vacancies by death or resignation shall be filled for the unexpired term by majority vote of the Board.

#### **ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed by a majority vote of the current sitting Board.



## About the Metrolina Phoenician Club

Revised February 2022

### About Us

In 1984, the late Theodore J. Solomon, a successful business man and a well-known icon in Charlotte, met with his friend the late Mike Shaheen, a successful contractor and builder, and expressed his concerns for the many displaced people and orphans from the old country, a sad situation created by the raging civil war. He asked if Mike could help him form a Lebanese Club in Charlotte to raise funds for the charities and orphanages in Lebanon. He wanted this organization to be purely non-political and totally blind to religions. Ted put in \$500 to get the organization started.

Mike took this challenge to heart and got the project rolling with the help from his good friends Ed Trouble, Walid Maalouf, and Frank Mack, all well established and known personalities in the community and all became original founding members. It took three years of their hard work and dedication and in April 1987, the club which Ted had named **The Metrolina Phoenician Club (MPC)**, was registered as a non-profit organization with the following Statement of Purpose:

- To serve as a social organization for Lebanese and American Lebanese
- To preserve the Lebanese heritage and traditions
- To promote and support humanitarian efforts in Lebanon and USA

In that first year and under the first President Walid Malouf, the MPC had around 100 members. In 1988, the MPC invited Danny Thomas to Charlotte for one of their fundraising haffleh's. Danny Thomas, a son of Lebanese immigrants, was the founder of St. Jude Cancer Hospital for Children as well as the American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charity (ALSAC). The MPC became very close to Danny who spent a whole weekend in Charlotte entertaining the crowd and was a great help to the fundraising efforts that year. During the first three years, the club successfully raised \$60,000 which was sent to aid the needy and orphanages in Lebanon. To this day, the MPC continues to support ALSAC and The Children Cancer Center in Beirut, Lebanon which is the affiliate of St. Jude Hospital in Memphis.

The MPC has since become one of the leading social and cultural clubs in the community. Over the years, membership has grown to include many friends of Lebanese who share and support our common objectives as well as the various activities provided by the Club.

Many activities are organized by the MPC throughout each year to promote camaraderie among members. These events include the Spring Picnic complete with homemade falafel sandwiches; the Game Night of backgammon, bingo, and trivia; the Iftar Dinner during the month of Ramadan; the Dutch Treat outings, and the Annual Christmas Party/General Assembly where Santa comes by with loads of toys for the children. Last, but not least, and by far the most popular event, is our annual Haffleh, which attracts a crowd of 300 or more from the community each year. The Annual Haffleh is also our main fundraiser to support charitable organizations both here in the USA and in Lebanon. American and Traditional Lebanese foods are served at these gatherings while Arabic, international music, and Dabkeh dancing is enjoyed by everyone.

**There is no room to mention all the people who supported the MPC through the years and kept it alive and thriving. We will forever be grateful and never forget all those members who have served and passed on as well as those who are still with us and working hard for the success of the Club.**

## About Our Charities

Many organizations are supported by the MPC, both in Lebanon and the USA, namely: The Children Cancer Center, School of the Blind and Deaf, Crèche St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Smile Train, Safe Alliance, American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charity, St. Nektarios Orthodox Church, Palestinian Children's Relief Fund, Basmeh & Zeitooneh, and Project Refugee Smile.

## About Our Scholarships

In 2007, Tony and Lakana Bikhazi established an annual scholarship fund of \$2,000 per year as an encouragement and support to our high school graduates going to college. In 2012, Charles and Mary Saleh matched the scholarship amount and both families continue their support every year. Through the generosity of our community, several additional members also contribute to the fund. As of this year, 2019, the MPC has proudly awarded over \$60,000 to 40 first year college students.

The MPC is affiliated with the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Club (SFLAC) which includes 67 clubs in 21 states. One important benefit our Club members receive from the Federation is an additional annual scholarship. The SFLAC has awarded 42 of our youths to college with \$64,225 thus far. These scholarships have helped build a community and civic culture that will stay with our youths into their future. The criteria of both scholarships is available on the website.

## A Posteriori of Lebanon Essay Contest Award

— A new contest sponsored by Tony and Lak Bikhazi

Tony and Lak Bikhazi are happy and excited to announce an essay contest for first-time visitors to Lebanon who write an essay about her/his experience. The essay can be about a personal experience or it can describe a familial relationship. It should bring out culture and heritage including, but not limited to, the historic and beautiful places visited – an experience that solidifies our connection with Lebanon, a reminder of where many of us come from.

There will be **\$1,000 first place award with \$500 awarded for second place.**

- The contest is open to current members of the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs
- Essays should be no longer than 250 words and submitted to our Executive Editor, Mrs. Lori Malouf Coronado, by email to [sflacbulletin@sflac.org](mailto:sflacbulletin@sflac.org)
- Submissions must be received by **May 1**

*Posteriori*: A Latin philosophical term, meaning “from what comes after”, referring to that which comes after experience.