

# **FUR TAKERS of OKLAHOMA, INC.**

## **BYLAWS**

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## **Article I – Name and Program**

### **Section: 1**

The name of the corporation shall be: Fur Takers of Oklahoma (DBA: FTO) and it shall be incorporated as a “non-profit” organization under the laws of the State of Oklahoma and the United States of America. All references to the corporation hereinafter shall be as the “Association”.

### **Section: 2**

The Association’s principal office shall be located at the residence of the President, or at an alternate location of his/her choosing.

### **Section: 3**

These bylaws shall establish operational policies for the implementation of the Associations policies, practices, promotions and to support its active membership by representing the memberships best interest in regards to fur harvesting (i.e.: “trapping”).

## **Article II – Purpose**

### **Section: 1**

the purpose of this Association shall be to provide and insure the support for the eminent management, protection, research, public education and controlled harvest of Oklahoma’s fur bearer resources, and to engage in any lawful act or activity for which corporations may be organized under the general corporation law of Oklahoma.

### **Section: 2**

Specific objectives for which this Association is formed are:

1. To provide an educational, nonprofit, benevolent Association for the members and for the general public.
2. To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America and the Constitution of the State of Oklahoma.

3. To advance and refine the methods of fur trapping, fur hunting and fur harvesting by the use of publications, conventions, meetings, lectures, demonstrations, exhibits, seminars and other available means and media.
4. To disseminate information supporting fur trapping and fur hunting as viable management tool in the annual harvest of Oklahoma's fur resource.
5. To utilize and apply the knowledge and experience of all the Association's members to further the promotion of humane and effective furbearer harvest recognizing all other public interest.
6. To serve the citizens of the State of Oklahoma and specifically those citizens who support the vocation, function and field of furbearer harvest.
7. To strive continually for the establishment and organization of branches and affiliates, throughout the State of Oklahoma pursuant to the objectives of the Association.
8. To create and develop library and office facilities, to take property by will, and to own, buy, sell and convey real property and transfer or accept personal property.
9. To promote and encourage the protection of existing wildlife habitats and waters and to work for the acquisition, development and management of potentially productive wildlife habitat.
10. To strive for the continual formulation of all fur bearer harvest regulations totally supported by the highest quality research data available to the State of Oklahoma.
11. To promote relationships between the Association and other respected wildlife user groups and organizations.
12. To assist and cooperate with legitimate conservation organizations in furthering the goals and objectives of the Association.
13. To support research efforts in the study and management of furbearing animals, with emphasis on increasing land productivity, identifying limiting factors and determining the most feasible means of harvest.
14. To encourage cooperation and mutual support between the association and agricultural producers.
15. To assist Association members with the process of marketing member's fur harvesting skills and knowledge to agriculture producers and Departments.
16. To assist Association members with the process of marketing furs for maximum profit and benefit, including the development of marketing alternatives, the provision of educational opportunities in fur handling, recognition of fur quality and grades.
17. To work with legislators and law enforcement agencies in reduction of theft of fur harvesting devices, illegal taking of furbearers and theft of legally taken furbearers.
18. To develop strong response to any attempt to infringe on the rights of fur harvesters.
19. To support the fur trappers and fur hunter's rights to pursue their vocation without discriminating Federal, State or local laws, regulations or ordinances.
20. To oppose all Federal laws, rules, regulations, policies or treaties that infringe on the right of a state to manage its resident wildlife.

### **Article III – Membership and Dues**

#### **Section: 1**

any person, who endorses the goals and purposes of the Fur Takers of Oklahoma, shall be eligible to become a member of the Association.

**Section: 2**

Classification of members shall be as follows:

1. Individual
2. Family (Husband & Spouse Respectively)
3. Junior, under seventeen (16) years of age.
4. Lifetime.
5. Corporate Sponsor

**Section: 3**

Classification of members' dues & entitlements shall be as follows:

1. Individual - \$20
2. Family - \$25 (Member & Spouse Respectively)
3. Junior, under seventeen (17) years of age. \$10
4. Lifetime. \$300

**Section: 4**

Classification of Corporate Sponsor / Donor fees & entitlements shall be as follows:

1. Corporate Donor
  - a. Listed on the "Corporate Donor" page of the Association website and appropriate newsletter publications, following the receipt of donation, if "donating party" so authorizes.
2. Corporate Sponsor
  - A. Silver (\$550 annually)
    - i. Advertised on the Association website "Corporate Sponsor" page.
  - B. Gold (\$650 annually)
    - i. Advertised on the Association website "Corporate Sponsor" page, and in the Association quarterly newsletter, so long as the newsletter exists.
  - C. Platinum (\$750 annually)
    - i. Advertised on the Association website "Corporate Sponsor" page and on the "HOME" page of the website, and in the Association quarterly newsletter, so long as the newsletter exists.

**Section: 4**

the amount of dues for each classification of membership shall be set by a written resolution of the Board of Directors, and approved by the general membership. Membership dues shall be payable at the time of application, and on each anniversary thereafter, except for Lifetime membership.

**Section: 5**

any member may terminate his or her membership at any time by notification, in writing, mailed to the President of the association, but such member shall not be entitled to any refund of dues or contributions.

**Section: 6**

No membership of another organization, shall be recognized by this Association for the purposes of voting, conducting business, fur sales or auctions, promotions, etc.

**Article IV – Elections and Voting**

**Section: 1**

All members of the Association in good standing, with the exception of Corporate Sponsorships, shall have the right of discussion in the affairs of the Association and hold any office in the Association, so far as they meet the requirements set forth in the Association’s bylaws. The election of all officers and directors shall be at the Spring meeting, and all voting shall be by secret ballot except when a nominee is unopposed.

**Section: 2**

Membership voting shall be as follows:

1. Individual – each current member allowed one (1) vote.
2. Family – one (1) vote member and one (1) vote for spouse.
3. Junior – No vote.
4. Lifetime – (1) vote.

**Section: 3**

voting on Association business shall be determined by a simple majority vote of the eligible members present, unless otherwise stated within the Association’s bylaws.

**Section: 4**

during the voting and election process, “write in” candidates and nominees for election are prohibited. Nominations for candidacy are to be verified and turned in prior to the period set for “mail out” or “absentee” ballots.

**Section: 5**

No person, removed from an office of elected position by the Board of Directors, regardless of membership or standing, will be eligible for re-election for a period of four (4) calendar years following the year of removal. The President of the Association however, may reappoint such a member to an interim position, if it so benefits the Association and the Board of Directors approves the interim appointment.

**Section: 6**

for the purposes of elections, all “absentee” ballots will be mailed out 30 days prior to the month of elections. All ballots are to be returned postmarked with a return address within 10 working days of the election date. All ballots, without discrimination, will be held on file for a period not less than two (2) years. After two (2) years, all ballots will be destroyed.

**Section: 7**

## Contested Election Results:

1. Ballots of all elections shall be preserved in accordance with Article IV, Section 5.
2. Election results may be contested within thirty (30) days of an election. If no contestation is filed within thirty (30) days of an election, ballots will be subject to review by an appointed election review committee and then destroyed.
3. Notice of contest must be filed, in writing, only by the losing candidate within thirty (30) days of said election. All candidates or contestants shall be entitled to be present during the recount.
4. Members who were ineligible for election or who did not accept a nomination, are not eligible to file for contestation.

**Section: 8**

Corporate Sponsors are not allowed a vote in Association business. "Corporate Sponsorship" benefits are strictly promotional of the sponsoring businesses at Association events, on the Association website and other venues which the Association may elect to participate in.

**Article V – Meetings****Section: 1**

there shall be semi-annual meetings of the members of the Association: the Spring meeting and the Fall meeting. The date and location of each meeting to be held shall be voted and approved at a preceding meeting, within 13 months of the scheduled date.

**Section: 2**

Special meeting of the members of the association may be called at any time by the President, or by one-third (1/3) of the members of the Board of Directors.

**Section: 3**

Notice of the time and place of all semi-annual and special meetings shall be given by mail or the approved magazine not less than ten (10) days prior to the time of meeting or by waiver of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors.

**Section: 4**

any member of the Board of Directors may organize and host a "regional" or "district" meeting at a location and time of their choosing so long as it does not conflict with the stated Spring and Fall Association Meetings, and with the appropriate "National Association" Director present during the meeting. "Regional" or "District" meeting expenditures may not exceed \$500 per event. The Director hosting such an event must turn in all event receipts to the Secretary / Treasurer, not to exceed a period of 6 calendar months, to be eligible for reimbursement from the Association.

**Section: 5**

A quorums for the transaction of business at any such meeting shall consist of all members present in good standing. Any business properly coming before any meeting may be transacted.

**Section: 6**

The members of this association are empowered by a majority vote at any such meeting to remove any members of the Board of Directors or Executive Officers upon finding of just cause, provided that notice of proposed removal shall be given to the Board of Directors in the notice of meeting at which such proposal is to be acted upon.

**Section: 7**

The Executive Officers and Board of Directors shall be elected at the Spring meeting on even numbered years, beginning in the year 2016.

**Article VI – Board of Directors**

**Section: 1**

The control and management of the association shall be vested in the Board of Directors.

**Section: 2**

The Board of Directors shall be composed of a minimum of six (6) Directors to be elected by the general membership. Directors must have been members in good standing for at least 2 previous years to be eligible to hold the office (after the first election).

**Section: 3**

Members are not eligible for nomination or election if they hold an executive, director or committee position in another organization. No employee of any Federal or State agency will be eligible to hold any elected position within the Association.

**Section: 4**

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors and Executive Board shall be held immediately before the convening of each membership meeting, and as needed.

**Section: 5**

Special meeting of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, and in his absence, by the Vice-President, or by a third (1/3) of the members of the Board of Directors. By consent of three-fourths (3/4) of the members of the Board of Directors, special meetings may be held without notice at any time and place. Notice of all regular and special meetings, except those by consent of three-fourths (3/4), shall be given twenty-one (21) days prior to the time fixed for the meeting.

**Section: 6**

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors shall consist of one-third (1/3) of the members of the Board of Directors.

**Section: 7**

The Board of Directors, pending removal, may suspend the powers of any officer of the association at any time for good cause, by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors. Notice of the proposed removal must be given to the Board of Directors in the notice of the forthcoming meeting. Removal must be approved by the membership.

**Section: 8**

The Board of Directors shall have the power to overrule any decisions or actions made by the Executive Board.

**Section: 9**

Temporary vacancies in the Board of Directors shall be filled by the Board of Directors. The appointee(s) shall complete the un-expired portion of the term.

**Section: 10**

Each elected Board of Director member must serve on at least one (1) committee as “chairperson”, and one (1) committee as a volunteer. Standing and Special Committees will be announced as necessary or required by the Association President.

**Section: 11**

No active employee of any Federal or State agency will be allowed to hold an elected position on the Board of Directors in order to prevent a conflict of interest between parties, but such member, may be appointed to an interim position by the Associations President, with a 2/3 approval by the Board of Directors, for purposes of facilitating a meeting between the Association and any Federal or State entity.

**Section: 12**

Members are not eligible for nomination or election if they hold an executive, director or committee position in another organization.

**Article VII – Executive Officers**

**Section: 1**

The Executive Officers shall be composed of the following: No more than three (3) or (4) officers consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary and/or Treasurer; to be elected by the general membership. Executive Officers must have served at least 2 previous years (after the first election) as a Director to be eligible to hold an Executive position.

**Section: 2**

It shall be the function of the Executive Board to prepare agendas for Directors meetings. The Executive Board shall prepare an annual operating budget to be presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the Spring Board of Directors meeting. No person shall serve on the

Executive Board for more than ten (10) consecutive years without any intervening absence from the Board for two (2) years.

**Section: 3**

The Executive Board, subject to the Board of Directors approval, may hire and determine appropriate compensation for employees, if any are determined to be needed, unless such compensation has already been approved by the membership.

**Section: 4**

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors and Executive Board shall be held immediately before the convening of each membership meeting, and as needed.

**Section: 5**

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and of the membership. He / She shall perform the duties necessary to the office.

**Section: 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 of Directors.

**Section: 7**

The Secretary's responsibilities shall include but may not be limited to: issue notices of meetings, keep minutes of the same, be responsible for corporate books, records and papers required by law, be custodian of the corporate seal, conduct correspondence duties, conduct an annual property inventory and perform other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the President.

**Section: 8**

The Treasurer responsibilities shall include but may not be limited to: receive and disperse funds, keep correct and complete books, maintain records of financial transactions and make such financial reports as may be required by the Board of Directors or the Executive Board.

1. Any individual having charge or control of the Associations funds shall give such bond as the Board of Directors desires for the custody of such funds. Cost of such bond shall be borne by the Association.
2. All expenditures shall be approved by the President or the Board of Directors. The President's open market purchase authority shall be limited to five hundred dollars (\$500.00). Purchases in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) must have the Board of Director's approval and be preceded by solicitation of three (3) competitive written bids. The Board of Directors may waive competitive bids. The practice of splitting purchases to avoid competitive bidding shall be prohibited.
3. All written checks will bear the signatures of the current presiding President and Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Directors.
4. An audit of the Association's financial affairs shall be done after the election of a new Treasurer. This shall be an informal audit done by the incoming Treasurer unless there is

a motion and vote of the Board of Directors or the membership for a formal audit. If a formal audit is voted for then it must be performed by a Certified Public Accountant approved by the Executive Board. The formal audit report, if required, shall be submitted to the Board of Directors.

**Section: 9**

Officers shall be elected to serve a term of office for two (2) years. The President and Vice President shall be eligible to serve for not more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office.

**Section: 10**

In the event that a Secretary and/or Treasurer position cannot be filled during an election, the newly elected President shall appoint an “interim” representative from the Board of Directors. The “interim” position may not be filled by a “first term” Board of Director member.

**Section: 11**

No family members or members of the same household will be allowed to hold the positions of President and Treasurer at the same time.

**Section: 12**

No active employee of any Federal or State agency will be allowed to hold an elected position on the Executive Board in order to prevent a conflict of interest between parties, but such member, may be appointed to an interim position by the Associations President, with a 2/3 approval by the Board of Directors, for purposes of facilitating a meeting between the Association and any Federal or State entity.

**Section: 13**

Members are not eligible for nomination or election if they hold an executive, director or committee position in another organization.

**Article VIII – “Proxies”**

**Section: 1**

In the event a member of the Board of Directors cannot attend a meeting, they shall be entitled to fill the position of their absence with a “proxy” representative, providing the Board of Directors member has notified the Board of Directors and the Executive Board of the proxy within 14 days of a stated meeting.

**Section: 2**

In the event a member of the Board of Directors does not attend two stated consecutive meetings, without justifiable reason for their absence, and does not provide a “proxy” for representation, that Director will be removed from the Board of Directors and the Board of Directors will

appoint an interim Director that they find in good standing with the Association, to resume the duties of the vacated position.

**Section: 3**

All “proxy” votes can be cast or made for “old”, previously “tabled” and brought forth, or pending business only. A “proxy” will not have a vote at any Board of Director, or Executive Board meeting where new business is being introduced.

**Article IX – Committees**

**Section: 1**

The President shall appoint the chairperson only of all Standing and Special committees as needed. The Chairperson shall be responsible for committee member selections. The Standing Committees shall be in accordance with Article VII, Section 6 of these bylaws.

**Section: 2**

The Chairperson of a “standing” or “special” committee, shall submit a report of activities and findings at the Spring and Fall Association meetings.

**Article X – Parliamentary Authority**

**Section: 1**

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the deliberations of all meetings of the members, Board of Directors, Executive Board and all committees, unless they are inconsistent with these Bylaws, or unless they are superseded by any special rules of order that the Board of Directors may adopt.

**Article XI – Amendments**

**Section: 1**

These Bylaws may be amended at any annual meeting of the Association by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the eligible voters present, provided an advance notice of not less than twenty-one (21) days shall be sent to each member with notification of intent to modify, along with any proposed changes.

**Section: 2**

This Association may not be “merged” or “joined” with any other association in a manner that will alter or change the name of the Association, or “negate” the statuses and positions of the

current standing membership, unless the membership votes unanimously (100%) in favor of such a change.

**Section: 3**

In the event a “merger” is achieved on behalf of this Association, in a manner which alters the Associations name, or negates the status of the membership positions, all assets of the Association, both tangible and non-tangible, will be donated to the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation for the stated agency to “use” or “disperse” as they deem to be necessary.

**Section: 4**

The established Association bylaws will be open for public view. All amendments, corrections and revisions henceforth will be annotated, cited and referenced, along with the date of alteration.

This order of Bylaws, established for the Fur Takers of Oklahoma Association, Inc. were written and established on October 12, 2013 ... in good faith with “founding” members’ approval.