

**2012 BYLAWS**  
**Of the**  
**VANCOUVER METIS CITIZENS SOCIETY**  
**(The “Society”)**

**DEFINITIONS**

- “VMCS” Vancouver Metis Citizens Society**  
**“BODs” Board of Directors**  
**“BCMF” British Columbia Metis Federation Society**  
**“AGM” Annual General Meeting**  
**“SGM” Special General Meeting**

“Métis”, “Métis Citizen”, “Métis Member”, “Citizen” or “Member” as the case may be, means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of Genealogy proven historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

“Métis Nation” means the Aboriginal peoples descended from the Historic Métis Nation, which is now comprised of all Métis Nation Citizens and is one of the “Aboriginal peoples of Canada” within S.35 of the Constitution Act of 1982.

**1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES and BYLAWS**

- 1.1 Whereas: The Métis residing in the areas defined as Vancouver and the coastal lower mainland areas of British Columbia share Historical and Cultural commonality with all Métis citizens in Canada and British Columbia.
- 1.2 Métis citizens residing in the Vancouver and District, Sunshine Coast and Howe Sound areas of British Columbia, have formed a Society for the mutual benefit of the Métis citizens residing in these areas to be known as the:
- 1.3 VANCOUVER METIS CITIZENS SOCIETY (hereinafter the "VMCS")
- 1.4 Guiding Principles and Bylaws, pursuant to which the VMCS shall endeavour to conduct its affairs have been established, and as time and circumstances change they require to be updated in accordance with the Historic Metis Nation’s spirit and intent of Governance, the Society Act of BC, and the Constitution of Canada.
- 1.5 In the conduct of it's affairs as set out in these Guiding Principles and Bylaws, the VMCS Board of Director’s (hereinafter BODs) shall endeavour to and Demonstrate Metis Nation leadership, financial and decision making accountability to its VMCS membership, financial partners and contractors.
- 1.6 The VMCS will work with and through cooperative strategic alliances with other partners when or where possible, to ensure the economic, educational, Michif language sustainability, social, cultural and political well being of its members.

- 1.7 One such strategic alliance, will be with the British Columbia Metis Federation Society, (Hereinafter the BCMF) which alliance shall be identified and defined by a joint Statement of Cooperation agreement.
- 1.8 Nothing in these bylaws abrogates or derogates from the rights all Métis citizens have.
- 1.9 Every VMCS member shall have the right to an opinion and to express that opinion freely, without fear of persecution or punishment or consequence except when such opinion and expression would be detrimental to the Métis people as a whole and or the Society in particular.  
Such consequences are defined in Sections 2.6 through 2.14.
- 1.10 The affairs of the VMCS shall be deemed community in scope and all input to the betterment of the VMCS with our collective knowledge, talents and skills, is graciously appreciated and encouraged.
- 1.11 All VMCS Members are encouraged to keep your yearly dues up to date and please contribute donations whenever possible to help support the society's office and administration costs. **A member who has failed to pay the current annual membership fee or debt due and owing by such member to the Society is not in good standing so long as the annual dues or debt remains.**

## **2.0 Society Membership**

- 2.1 The enforcement of the bylaws for the VMCS is the responsibility of the BOD's.
- 2.2 VMCS will ensure that their Membership application and approval procedure is consistent with the bylaws of other representative Métis Nation organizations in British Columbia, and the legislation of British Columbia and Canada.
- 2.3 VMCS will endeavour to ensure the Community and its citizens gain fair benefit from, and have equal access to, all aboriginal programs in Canada and the province of British Columbia.
- 2.4 Individuals who claim and can prove by Genealogy their Métis ancestry, and who reside within the Vancouver and Lower Mainland Coastal areas of British Columbia may apply for community acceptance with the VMCS by a membership application.
- 2.5 Applicants shall be entitled to have their applications dealt with in accordance with the VMCS privacy policy.
- 2.6 Upon receipt of a properly filled out application for a VMCS community membership, the VMCS Board of Director's (BODs) shall, without delay, take such steps as are necessary to review the application and notify the applicant of the results of the review.

- 2.7 Applicants for membership in the VMCS must submit an initial membership fee as established by the BODs in conjunction with their applications for membership and pay additional yearly dues fee to remain in good standing with the Society.
- 2.8 All new successful VMCS applicants will be required to attend a VMCS BODs meeting to be introduced, have their community acceptance letter signed by two (2), VMCS Board of Directors and welcomed as a new member.
- 2.9 A person that is refused membership in accordance with Bylaw Article 2.4 shall have the right to appeal the refusal in the manner provided by the VMCS BODs.
- 2.10 VMCS shall have the right to refuse membership to any person for legitimate purposes as determined by the VMCS Board of Directors. Applicants, whose applications are denied, shall be given written reasons for the denial. If the membership application is refused for any legitimate reason, the initial membership fee shall be refunded.
- 2.11 Notice of a suspension or removal to an existing VMCS Member shall be made in a written document which describes in plain, unambiguous language the proposed suspension or removal and reasons therefore as described in the VMCS Bylaws.
- 2.12 A person may be suspended or removed from the Society or have their name removed from the list of VMCS members by a majority vote at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Special General Meeting (SGM) called for that purpose.
- 2.12 a) Notice of suspension or removal must be given to that person at least 30 days prior to the AGM or SGM. That person has the right to give an oral and/or written response to the suspension or removal to the BOD's before the AGM or SGM.
- 2.13 No member may be suspended for more than 3 years. A suspended member may not run for any VMCS office or sit on any board or committee.
- 2.14 Members of VMCS shall not be suspended or removed from the Society or have their name removed from the list of VMCS members in any way except as is set out in bylaws 2.11 and 2.12 or by a unanimous vote of the VMCS Board of Directors.

### **3.0 DIRECTORS**

- 3.1 The VMCS BODs shall be comprised of up to 9 (nine) and no less than 3 (three) Board members as follows:
- a) President
  - b) Vice President;
  - c) Secretary;

- d) Treasurer;
  - e) Five Directors.
- 3.2 A simple majority of the BODs, one who must be the President or in his absence the Vice President shall constitute a quorum for BOD meetings.
- 3.3 **In exercising the powers and performing the functions of a director, a person must act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the Society and display the care, diligence and skill of a reasonably prudent person.**
- 3.4 The VMCS BODs shall be respectable, honest, transparent and accountable to the citizens of VMCS and will provide written reports, including a financial report at each Annual General Meeting.
- 3.5 The VMCS BODs may exercise their duties on behalf of and in the name of the Society, raise funds, secure the payments owed or repayment of money owed to the Society.
- 3.6 The VMCS BODs shall designate any two directors and the treasurer, any two of which shall have signing authority for the purposes of conducting the financial affairs of the VMCS.
- 3.6 a) All expenditures in the financial affairs of VMCS must have majority prior approval from the BODs.
- 3.7 The VMCS BODs will endeavour to hold board meetings on a monthly basis but shall meet at least four (4) times per year at the call of the chairperson. The chairperson shall give at least one (1) weeks notice of meeting date and agenda for all regular VMCS board meetings.
- 3.8 The majority of the VMCS BODs may call a special meeting with one week notice to all members of the board.
- 3.9 Decisions of the VMCS BODs shall require a simple majority.
- 3.10 A person is disqualified from being a member of the VMCS BODs when he or she holds a position with the BCMF or other Metis organization, pursuant to which that person receives remuneration or income.
- 3.11 A person is not disqualified from being a Member of the VMCS BODs if that person receives an honorarium, salary or per diem for performing the duties of a director of the VMCS.
- 3.12 A member of the VMCS BODs may be removed from office only in the following circumstances:
- a) When he or she is disqualified or has clearly breached their fiduciary duty to the members of VMCS; or
  - b) When he or she is convicted of an indictable offence; or

c) When he or she has been removed by a simple majority vote of the VMCS members in attendance and entitled to vote at a VMCS AGM or an SGM and when notice of that Director's removal has been provided prior to the AGM or SGM; or

d) When he or she misses three consecutive meetings without just cause.

- 3.13 A process for removal, impeachment or suspension of a Board of Director member shall be in plain and unambiguous language.
- 3.14 A Director shall be given written notice of any proposed resolution to remove or suspend that Director and shall be given an opportunity to speak, first: to the BODs and then second: to the Métis citizens in attendance at an AGM or SGM where the removal or suspension will be subject to a discussion and/or vote.
- 3.15 The VMCS Board of Directors, by majority vote, may appoint a VMCS member to fill a vacancy on the BODs and that person shall hold the office for which there was a vacancy until a special General Meeting called for that purpose or an AGM is held, at which time nominations for the vacant position shall be accepted and the position filled by an election in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws.
- 3.16 On appointment to the BOD's, the President and Vice President will inform the new director of his/her portfolios, responsibilities and duties as a director. Training courses/education for directors, secretary, and treasurer will be given the highest priority.
- 3.17 The President may when the board deems necessary and beneficial, appoint a qualified person to act as an advisor or mentor, for the board, for membership issues or community meetings.

#### **4.0 ELECTIONS**

- 4.1 At the Annual General Meeting, the members present will elect a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer which are the Society Executive, and up to 5 additional BODs, who will all constitute a Board of Directors. All persons elected will hold office for a term of two years, and all shall have full BOD voting rights, when in attendance at meetings.
- 4.2 The number of terms that a member may hold office as member of the VMCS BODs is unlimited.
- 4.3 VMCS members shall be entitled to vote in an AGM election for a member of the BODs if that member;
- a) Is 18 years of age or older as of the date of the election;
  - b) Has been a resident within the VMCS geographical area for no less than for at least six (6) months prior to the date of the election, and
  - c) Members seeking elected office within the VMCS must have been a resident of British Columbia for at least twelve (12) months prior to the

date of the election.

d) Is a VMCS member in good standing.

- 4.4 Proxy voting is not allowed for any VMCS AGM, SGM, meetings or Elections. You must be present at the meeting and be a member in good standing to be eligible to vote.
- 4.5 Documentary proof of residence shall include, but not be limited to, a Provincial Métis citizenship card, a telephone bill, a hydro bill, a driver's license or such Other documentary evidence that is satisfactory to the BODs or their designated elections officer.
- 4.6 Subject to the provisions of these bylaws, any member who is eighteen (18) years of age or older may, if qualified, be nominated and, if elected, hold office as a VMCS board member.
- 4.7 Elections to the VMCS BODs shall be accompanied with the following documents; the absence of requested information shall disqualify that candidate:
- a). Proof of residency; and
  - b). BCMF Métis citizenship card.
  - c). A current criminal record check (to be paid for by the candidate) provided by RCMP and/or Municipal Police may be requested and or required, prior, subsequent or following a candidates election.

## 5.0 MEETINGS

- 5.1 The President or Vice President of VMCS shall be the chairperson of meetings of the VMCS BODs and Community meetings.
- 5.2 A simple majority of the VMCS BODs, one of who must be the President or in his/her absence, the Vice President, with the attending members at the meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- 5.3 All VMCS Members shall be given proper notice and are encouraged to attend the VMCS meetings and participate in the Society. **Notice of a general meeting shall specify the place, the day and the hour of the meeting, and, in the case of special business, the general nature of that business.**
- 5.4 The Annual General Meetings ("AGM or SGM") shall be held once per year on 30 days notice to the members.
- 5.5 AGMs of the VMCS shall be held annually during the month of May starting in May 2012. The precise dates and location of an AGM shall be held at a time and location, chosen by the BODs that are conducive to enabling as many as possible of the VMCS members to attend. The agenda for each AGM shall include:
- a) Presidents Report;
  - b) Vice President Report;

- c) Treasurers Financial Report for Previous Fiscal Year
- d) Secretaries Report on membership;
- e) Such other matters as shall be included on the Agenda for that AGM

- 5.6 Special or Extraordinary General Meetings ("SGM") shall be held when circumstances require, on 30 days notice to the VMCS members. A Special General Meeting may be called by the Board of Directors or by a petition of not less than 15 VMCS members in good standing.
- 5.7 Notice of an AGM or SGM shall be accompanied with an agenda of the business that is expected to be transacted at the AGM or SGM. A general meeting may be adjourned from time to time and from place to place, but no business shall be transacted at an adjourned meeting.
- 5.8 All members in good standing shall be entitled to attend and participate at an AGM  
Or SGM.

## **6.0 VMCS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BCMF**

- 6.1 The VMCS has chosen the BCMF as the Provincial representative of the VMCS Métis citizens in the Vancouver / Coastal BC geographical area.
- 6.2 VMCS has a Statement of Cooperation agreement with the BCMF that sets out agreements for accountability, mutual recognition and a dispute resolution.
- 6.3 VMCS members and applicants for membership, will be advised to apply for a separate Provincial Membership Card, as provided by the BCMF for a Provincial Metis membership.
- 6.4 Successful BCMF applicants for membership that are accepted as Metis, will be provided a Provincial card mailed to the applicant directly from the BCMF citizenship registry office.
- 6.5 In the administrations of its functions as a Métis Community and as may be consistent with the intent of the BCMF joint Statement of Cooperation Agreement, the VMCS may jointly work with the BCMF, or separately on projects.

## **7.0 LEAVE OF ABSENCE IF SEEKING PROVINCIAL OR FEDERAL OFFICE**

- 7.1 Any VMCS member seeking federal government or provincial government elected office shall be required to take an unpaid leave of absence from any elected position that he or she may hold with the VMCS BOD's.

## **8.0 DISSOLUTION**

- 8.1 On the winding up or dissolution of VMCS, any and all assets remaining after all

the just debts of VMCS have been paid, shall be donated and transferred to a Metis society having a Metis Community purpose similar to that of the VMCS.

## **9.0** **Amendments**

- 9.1 Proposed bylaw amendments identified by a VMCS member or director will be reviewed by the BODs provided 14 days notice to the BOD's of the proposed amendment has been given.
- 9.2 Such amendments approved by the BODs must be presented at the next AGM for approval by the VMCS membership.
- 9.3 All proposed amendments to the bylaws originating from VMCS members to the bylaws must be filed and registered with the VMCS secretary no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the VMCS BODs meeting or AGM or SGM.
- 9.4 All amendments or Special Resolutions to the VMCS bylaws must be approved at a VMCS AGM. Those approved amendments to the text of the bylaws which are adopted by proper motion from the members at an AGM or SGM shall be filed immediately with the BC Society Act Office.

## **10.0** **RATIFICATION**

- 10.1 The VMCS Bylaws and Resolutions updates shall be in effect and deemed ratified immediately upon being passed at a meeting called for that purpose, and thereby being properly registered with the B.C. Registrar of Societies under the Society Act for approval, at which time they will come into effect.

Approved and Dated; at Vancouver, B.C., This 26th day of May 2012