

Freethought Society of the Midlands Bylaws

Columbia, South Carolina

Article I. Name and Purpose of Organization:

Section 1. Name of Organization:

The name of this organization is the Freethought Society of the Midlands (FSM).

Section 2. Purpose of Organization:

FSM is an educational and altruistic organization which advocates the use of reason and scientific inquiry for the betterment of humanity. FSM is committed to reasoned discussion and debate concerning all types of issues and beliefs including but not limited to religious belief systems, scientific discoveries, political and social events, and governmental actions. FSM works to enhance the reputation of freethinkers in the larger community and to provide a more positive and effective alternative to the damaging consequences of indoctrination, and to promote scientific interests and free inquiry.

Article II. Membership:

No one shall be barred from membership in FSM based on race, gender identity, age, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religious or political affiliation, disability, marital status, or nationality.

In order to qualify for active membership, a person must attend a minimum of three (3) activities in a six (6) month period. Exceptions will be made on an as-needed basis.

Article III. Governance:

The business and affairs of FSM shall be managed and controlled by the elected officers who shall serve with no financial compensation except for reimbursement of documented expenses approved by the president and treasurer.

Section 1. Elections:

All active members in good standing shall be eligible to hold any office. Officers shall be elected by simple majority vote of voting

members.

The slate of proposed officers will be formulated by the end of October with notices of elections posted on the website no later than the last week of November. Ballots will be cast the third Wednesday in December with absentee ballots posted through the website. Absentee ballots must be cast by the third Tuesday (the day before that third Wednesday) in order to be counted.

Section 2. Officers:

The officers of FSM are: president, vice-president, treasurer, executive officer, and secretary. Officers will be elected annually by voting members of FSM. Officers may serve no more than three consecutive terms in one position.

The webmaster position shall be an exception to the previous restrictions. It shall be appointed by consensus of the officers and will be on-going.

When needed, committee chairpersons will be selected from the voting members to oversee functions and activities. These will be limited time positions limited to the scope of the function or activity.

Section 3. Misconduct:

At the request of any member or on their own initiative, with appropriate due process, the officers shall investigate allegations of misconduct including but not limited to conduct injurious to FSM. If a majority of the officers recommends removal of an officer from office or a member from membership, a special meeting of the officers will be held to determine the appropriate procedure for such an action.

Section 4. Duties of the Officers:

The FSM is primarily a social organization and, as such, the duties assumed by the officers are flexible and based on the interests and talents of the individual officer with the following exceptions:

1.1 The president will convene regularly scheduled meetings, will preside over such meetings or provide for other officers to preside in his/her absence. The president shall appoint chairpersons as needed for projects and activities.

1.2 The vice-president will assume the duties of the president in his/her absence or if requested by the president. In addition, the vice-president, if requested, will assist the other officers in carrying out their duties on an as-needed basis.

1.3 The treasurer will manage funds and financial matters pertaining to FSM in an appropriate and business-like manner. He/she will provide reports on the financial status of the group at regularly scheduled intervals. He/she will make arrangements for an annual audit to be conducted.

1.4 The executive officer will carry out duties assigned by the president and/or vice president in the president's absence.

1.5 The secretary will be responsible for keeping records of all FSM actions including taking minutes of all meetings, and assuring all necessary notices to the membership are distributed in a timely fashion. Additionally, the secretary will maintain records of any and all public notices and advertisements pertaining to FSM.

Article IV. Adoption and Amendment of Bylaws:

Section 1.

Upon adoption of these bylaws, and upon adoption of amended bylaws, a certified copy shall be prepared by the Secretary, approved by the remaining Officers, and kept with the FSM documentation. The bylaws will be posted on the FSM website and copies may be distributed to members as needed.

Section 2.

These bylaws shall be amended as follows:

- (a) On an as-needed basis or when proposed by serving officers.
- (b) The proposed bylaw amendments shall be then posted on the FSM Facebook and Meet-up website/s for consideration. Information shall also be posted concerning the date of the meeting at which the amendment will be accepted.
- (c) A simple majority of the members shall be required to accept or reject the proposed amendments.
- (d) The ballots and a certified copy of the amended bylaws will be kept with the FSM documentation. A copy of the amended bylaws will be posted on the FSM website as well.