

## CONSTITUTION

(revised March 2009)

### 1. Name of the Club

The English Speaking Club of Bern is defined as an association according to Paragraph 60 ff. of the Swiss Civil Code (ZGB) based in Bern.

### 2. Aims of the Club

The club gives members the opportunity to speak English. It is independent of religion and politics.

### 3. Membership

Any person who speaks English and is at least 18 years of age may join the club.

### 4. Types of Membership

- a) Basic member:
  - pays no membership fee
  - can not vote
  - receives no reductions on drink prices
  - requires an attending premium member who takes responsibility in order to rent the club
  - can bring along visitors
- b) Premium member:
  - pays a membership fee
  - can vote
  - receives reductions on the price of drinks
  - can rent the club
  - can bring along visitors
- c) Premium Student member:

One who is a registered full-time student or apprentice and who pays half of the yearly standard premium membership fee; has all the rights and privileges of being a premium member of the English Speaking Club of Bern.
- d) Premium Couple members:

Couples who are married or live in the same place pay one and a half yearly standard premium membership fee and have all the rights and privileges of being a premium member of the English Speaking Club of Bern.

### 5. Joining and resigning the Club

Applications must be submitted to the committee which must approve the new members. After that, the membership of new Premium members is valid upon payment of fees. All new Members receive a membership card. Notice to resign from the club should be submitted in writing to the committee. Dues are not reimbursed upon resignation.

## **6. Exclusion**

Inappropriate behaviour of a member may lead the expulsion from the club at committee discretion.

## **7. Rights and Privileges of Premium Membership**

### a) Voting:

Premium members have the right of proposal and voting at an AGM or an EGM. Voting in absence is accepted by postal mail. Votes and elections are based on the majority verdict, if not stated differently in the constitution. In a case of a tie vote, the president casts the deciding vote. Decisions made by the committee may be changed by a 2/3 majority. The general meeting may have secret voting (paper ballots) if asked by a simple majority of the present premium members.

### b) Rental of the club:

Premium members have the right to rent the club for private parties in accordance with the current rental agreement.

## **8. Membership Fees**

The standard premium membership fee is determined at a general meeting for the club year.

## **9. Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

This meeting is held in the last quarter of a calendar year. The agenda should include at least:

- a) acceptance of the minutes of the last general meeting
- b) acceptance of reports
- c) fixing of the membership fees
- d) election of the officers and other committee members
- e) election of the auditors
- f) discussion of new proposals

## **10. Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)**

A special meeting can be called and must be held within the next 45 days, by:

- a) the committee
- b) at least a fifth of the registered Premium members, who must make their request in writing to the committee

## **11. Calling a General Meeting**

Notice must be posted at least 30 days in advance and must include the agenda. New proposals for the agenda must be submitted to the committee in writing 14 days prior to the meeting.

## **12. Plebiscite**

Instead of summon an AGM or EGM, decision can be taken by a quorum of Premium Members (see 7 a) by postal letter, e-mail or fax.

## **13. Committee**

- a) consists usually of 10 members, including the offices of president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary
- b) is elected for the term of one year by the AGM
- c) quorum for decisions is 6 members
- d) in a case of a tie vote, the president casts the deciding vote
- e) members may be impeached by a 2/3 majority at an EGM

**14. Responsibility of the Committee**

The committee is responsible for and represents the club and organizes all activities within the club. If the total assets fall below the equivalent of three months' rent an EGM must be called.

**15. Auditors**

The AGM elects two auditors for a period of one year. They audit the treasurer's financial statement before the AGM. Auditors must not be members of the committee.

**16. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year is the period from September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>.

**17. Financial Liabilities**

Only the Club's assets are liable for debt entered into by the Club.

**18. Dissolution of the Club**

Only an EGM may dissolve the club. In this event, a committee of liquidators is appointed by the members and their powers determined. The net assets of the Club shall be put in trust for a new club in Bern with the same name, aims and dissolution requirements. After 10 years, should the foundation of such a club not occur, the funds and any interest are to be spent in furthering the interests of the English language in Bern.