

Constitution and By-Laws of Subordinate Lodges and Regions

**Revised, Adopted and Amended
at the**

XXXV Convention

held at

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

August 11 through August 14, 2017

ARTICLE I

Subordinate Lodges

Organizing of Lodges and their Purpose

Section 1. Subordinate lodges admit and hold together members of the Sokol U.S.A. living in and about a certain locality for the purpose of carrying out the mission, aims and objectives of Sokol U.S.A. as defined in its Charter, Constitution and By-Laws, and according to the Sokol principles.

Section 2. A new lodge may be organized in any place in the United States where there is no existing lodge upon petition of at least twelve (12) applicants having qualifications to become members of Sokol U.S.A. The petition for organizing a new Lodge shall be sent to the President with applications for membership and the medical examiner's reports when required. The President, upon examination and approval of all applications for membership, shall publish in the Official Publication the establishment and admittance of the new lodge, and, if no objections are made within 30 days from such publication, shall grant a charter to such lodge.

Section 3. A new lodge shall enjoy the rights and privileges, and incur the obligations provided in the By-Laws on the day and hour of its installation into Sokol U.S.A. The President, or an officer or member delegated by the President shall conduct the installation of new lodge.

Section 4. Every lodge shall be considered to be a constituent part of Sokol U.S.A. and, as such cannot withdraw from Sokol U.S.A. No lodge shall be permitted to have any By-Laws and regulations contrary to the provisions of the By-Laws of Sokol U.S.A., nor shall a lodge be considered a separate body. A lodge shall conduct its business only on the basis of the charter issued to it by Sokol U.S.A. The powers and duties of the lodge are set forth in the By-Laws of Sokol U.S.A. which apply equally to all lodges.

Section 5. Any lodge which in conjunction with its social activities owns or operates a club, may adopt regulations for the election, admission and expulsion of social members and for the government of such club. All regulations shall be first submitted, in writing, to the District Board for its approval and shall not be valid until duly approved by the District Board over the signatures of the President

and Fraternal Secretary of Sokol U.S.A. A social member shall not participate in Sokol U.S.A.'s or lodge's benefit funds and shall have no voice or vote in the affairs of the lodge in operation of the club.

Section 6. These By-Laws require any lodge that sells or dispenses liquor to have the liquor license and related business activity in a separate legal corporation entity not connected to GBU, the Sokol U.S.A. District or a Sokol U.S.A. lodge.

Duties of the Lodges

Section 7. A lodge is an intermediary between its members and the Sokol District Board. Every lodge shall have its officers and official seal.

Section 8. Every lodge shall hold regular meetings and should conduct regularly SFW activities for its members. Furthermore, the lodge should provide for educational, cultural and fraternal activities for its members.

Section 9. Every lodge shall strive to aid its members and their families in sickness and misfortune, and to cultivate social and fraternal life.

Section 10. Every lodge must timely pay to the District Board all assessments for premiums, district dues and all other dues prescribed by the Convention or these By-Laws for each and every adult and juvenile member.

Section 11. A lodge shall receive and admit a member with a valid Certificate of Transfer from another lodge.

Section 12. A lodge shall deny all lodge privileges to a member punished with separation from all fraternal relationship in accordance with these By-Laws upon receipt of notice of such punishment from the Fraternal Secretary. If the lodge refuses to comply with such punishment, the District Board shall promptly file a complaint against such lodge before the Dispute Resolution Committee for insubordination. Upon conviction, the offending officers or members of such insubordinate lodge shall be punished with suspension or otherwise as provided in these By-Laws, and if the circumstances warrant, the charter of such lodge may be revoked and it be dissolved.

The suspension of a lodge shall not affect the membership

certificates of the members who were in good standing at the date of such suspension. (See Article XVIII, Section 23).

Section 13. Every lodge shall file with the Fraternal Secretary required forms annually, namely:

- (a) Elected officers reports.
- (b) Annual Financial reports including name of bank and authorized signatures.
- (c) Any other reports which may be required in the future.

Section 14. In conducting meetings and the initiation of new members, the lodge shall comply with the provision of these By-Laws. All written or printed matters received from the District Board shall be read to the membership and acted upon if any action be necessary.

Section 15. A lodge shall not retain and use for any other purpose the monies collected from the members for the District Board. Lodge funds shall not be distributed among its members for the pecuniary gain or expanded for any other purpose except those specified in these By-Laws. A lodge may disburse its funds only for the following purposes:

- (a) Local administration expenses.
- (b) Fraternal and Charitable aid to destitute and distressed local members.
- (c) Any special assessment levied by the District Board.
- (d) Donations of reasonable amounts to any Charitable or Volunteer entity.
- (e) Donations to subsidize local, Region or National social and/or fraternal events.

Section 16. A lodge shall not send a request or appeal in any form to another lodge for financial aid without first obtaining the written approval of the Sokol President to do so.

Duties of Lodges toward the Region

Section 17. Every lodge is a member of the Region to which it has

been assigned by the District Board. The lodge shall receive all Region communications and correspondences as official, and shall fulfill all its duties towards the Region.

Section 18. Every lodge shall collect and promptly pay over to the District Board all dues.

Section 19. Every lodge shall send its delegate or delegates to the annual meetings and other meetings of the Region. The delegate or delegates should be selected from members of the lodge.

Section 20. Lodges shall report on their work in regularly-scheduled sports, fitness and wellness activities to the Region Director.

Section 21. Every lodge is encouraged to take an active part in and support every undertaking of its Region.

Dissolution, Suspension and Expulsion of Lodges

Section 22. A lodge shall not be dissolved so long as it has at least seven (7) members, who are paying their dues and complying with all provisions of the By-Laws. When a lodge is dissolved, its funds, books, ledgers and all assets shall be turned over to the District Board. The District Board shall then distribute the assets of the dissolved lodge equitably and proportionately among the lodges which receive the dissolved lodge's members with transfers issued to them by the District Board.

Section 23. A lodge may have its Charter revoked or suspended for any one or more of the following causes:

- (a) For not holding the required regular meetings.
- (b) For refusing to be governed by the By-Laws or the mandates of a convention.
- (c) For permitting such discord and dissension to exist as to prevent the lodge from carrying on its function in an orderly manner.
- (d) For not obeying an order of the District Board.
- (e) For paying out of its treasury money for purposes not permitted under these By-Laws or the laws, rules and regulations of the United States and the several States.

Section 24. Before revoking the Charter of a lodge violating one or more of the foregoing provisions, the President shall by letter and notice in the *Sokol Times*, call and hold a meeting of the members and there make an attempt to re-establish discipline and order. Failing in that attempt the District Board shall revoke the Charter of such lodge and assign its members to other lodges in the same or neighboring locality and in that event the property and funds of such shall be disposed of as provided in the Section of these By-Laws dealing with property of dissolved lodges.

Section 25. If there are members, innocent and free from fault, in sufficient number to establish a new lodge, the District Board may grant them a Charter under a new number and name and shall disburse to each new lodge a share of the property and funds of the dissolved lodge proportioned to its membership after all debts and obligations of the dissolved lodge shall have been paid.

Section 26. If an officer of a lodge fails to perform such officer's duties as provided in the By-Laws, embezzles the money of the lodge, disobeys an order of the District Board or of such officer's own lodge, or if such officers' activities are detrimental to the lodge of Sokol U.S.A., the President shall suspend such officer from office and appoint an interim successor pending election of a new officer.

Section 27. If the violation for which a lodge officer is suspended is so serious that such officer may be separated from all fraternal relationship for life for the same, the President shall file a complaint against such suspended officer to the Dispute Resolution Committee.

Section 28. A lodge officer suspended by the President may appeal such suspension to the District Board within twenty (20) days from the day of suspension but the suspension shall remain in force and effect until a decision is rendered.

Section 29. If the misbehavior of an officer of a lodge be so grievous that its very existence shall be threatened, the President shall suspend such officer and take over the management of the affairs of the lodge until order is re-established in the lodge or until the District Board renders its decision.

Section 30. A lodge against which complaint is pending shall not

pay any money out of its treasury for any other purpose except to pay administrative expenses; and shall not issue transfer forms until the complaint is disposed of and concluded.

Section 31. No communication which by its nature is certain to cause discord and dissension among the membership and thus jeopardize the welfare and the future of Sokol U.S.A. shall be circulated by any member or members, officer or officers of a lodge.

Merger of Lodges

Section 32. A lodge organized and chartered for a certain locality shall not be removed therefrom so long as it has the necessary seven (7) members for sustaining it.

- (a) Two lodges located in the same town or in proximity to each other may merge into one lodge, provided that at least ten (10) days' notice of a meeting called to consider such merger is given in writing to all lodge members, and that a majority of the members present at such meeting of each lodge called for that purpose vote in favor of such merger by both. The merger must then be reported to the District Board for its approval.
- (b) In consummating mergers, all assets, records and all other property of the lodge requesting merger shall be transferred to the surviving lodge.

ARTICLE II

Lodge Officers

Section 1. The officers of a local lodge shall be: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Juvenile Chairperson, Board of Trustees, SFW Directors(s), Instructor(s), Lodge Reporter, and the necessary committees. With the exception of the President and Board of Trustees, other officers may be combined.

Section 2. Each lodge shall hold an annual meeting at which officers shall be elected for a period of one year or until their successors are elected and qualified. Remuneration of officers shall be fixed prior to the election. Members in good standing who have been members of their lodge for at least six (6) months may be elected to office. The election shall be by secret ballot or, if all

present agree, by open ballot, and the candidate receiving a majority of the votes shall stand elected.

Section 3. Upon the expiration of office, or in the event suspension from office, every officer shall promptly deliver to such officer successor all property and belongings of the lodge in his possession.

Section 4. Every officer who manages or handles the lodge's monies shall be covered by a Surety Bond.

Section 5. No lodge or any of its officers may contribute, distribute or dissipate the assets of the lodge to any organization or person, charitable or non-charitable, except it be consistent with the By-Laws of Sokol U.S.A. and the laws of the State in which it is domiciled.

Duties of Lodge Officers

President

Section 6. The president shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) To preside and maintain decorum at all meetings.
- (b) To see that the By-Laws, rules and regulations are followed and carried out.
- (c) To authorize and sign all official documents.
- (d) To sign all vouchers and checks properly submitted by the Financial Secretary or Treasurer and which have been approved by the lodge meeting.
- (e) To inspect the books of the lodge at any time to see that the lodge's money is regularly deposited in the bank and that the lodge's property is in proper condition.
- (f) To call special meetings when deemed necessary, or when requested by 25% of the members.
- (g) To cast the deciding vote in the case of a tie.
- (h) To appoint all committees, standing or otherwise, which are necessary to carry out objectives of Sokol U.S.A.
- (i) To perform all other duties as provided in the By-Laws.

Vice-President

Section 7. The Vice-President shall have all the power and duties of the President in the President's absence. In the event that the office of President becomes vacant, the Vice-President shall become President and hold such office until the next election.

Recording Secretary

Section 8. The duties of the Recording Secretary are as follows:

- (a) To record and keep minutes of every meeting of the lodge.
- (b) To keep a list of names of the lodge officers and committees.
- (c) To call meetings and take attendance.
- (d) To record changes in membership.
- (e) To record the sum total of receipts and expenditures.
- (f) To keep a record of sick members and notify the Committee on sick when to visit a sick member.
- (g) To receive lodge correspondences and read same at meetings.
- (h) To carry on all correspondence of the lodge.
- (i) To publish notice of all meetings, regular or special, in the *Sokol Times* and the local general newspaper.
- (j) To notify all officers of the date and time of any special meeting called by the President.
- (k) To perform all other functions, fraternal or otherwise, required by the lodge.

Financial Secretary

Section 9. The duties of the Financial Secretary are as follow:

- (a) To keep an accurate record of the lodge's receipts and disbursements.
- (b) To keep a roll of all the members and to record therein the various dues each member is required to pay monthly as well as the date and the amount of dues paid.
- (c) To keep an accurate record of the financial condition of the lodge and to make a report at the quarterly meetings.
- (d) To write out checks for bills and expenditures authorized by the lodge meeting.
- (e) To send to the Fraternal Secretary the full amount in payment for the monthly assessment bills, and as evidence that have been duly paid, present proper receipts quarterly to the District Board for audit.
- (f) To carry on all correspondence relative to financial matters of the lodge.
- (g) To announce at each meeting the names of the members in arrears and those members who have been suspended or expelled.
- (h) To send to the Fraternal Secretary monthly reports of the lodge containing all statistical changes in membership both adult and juvenile.
- (i) To immediately report every case of death of a member to GBU Financial Life, and upon receipt of the death certificate and all other necessary documents, to forward them to GBU Financial Life without delay.
- (j) To assist the beneficiary in the event of death of a member in the preparation of proof of loss on GBU's form's.
- (k) To perform all other duties necessary and incidental to the duties as prescribed above.

Treasurer

Section 10. The duties of the Treasurer shall be as follows:

- (a) To collect and receive all regular and other dues from the members.
- (b) To sign all checks for bills and expenditures authorized by the lodge meeting.
- (c) To keep an accurate record of receipt and disbursements of the lodge and, together with all pertinent documents, submit them quarterly to the Board of Trustees for audit.
- (d) To deposit all monies of the lodge in a federally insured bank or saving institution designated by the lodge in the name of the lodge and providing for at least the Treasurer and one other officer to sign for withdrawals.
- (e) To perform all other duties necessary and incidental to the duties prescribed above.

Juvenile Chairperson

Section 11. The duties of the Juvenile Chairperson shall be supervision of the juvenile membership as follows:

- (a) Instruct juvenile members in the art of self-government, the management of their own affairs, and the method of conducting their meetings.
- (b) Supervise the children while traveling to, as well at, gymnastic festivals and meets.
- (c) Collect juvenile members' dues and turn them over to the lodge Treasurer at the lodge meetings.
- (d) Instruct the children in the Sokol principles and aims as well as the By-laws.
- (e) Keep a membership roll of the juvenile members and investigate new candidates for membership.

Report to the monthly lodge meetings about the juvenile members activities.

Board of Trustees

Section 12. The Board of Trustees shall consist of three or five members according to the decision of the lodge, and their duties shall be as follows:

- (a) To inspect, examine and audit at least quarterly all accounts of the officers and to report same to the lodge.
- (b) To see to it that all property belonging to the lodge is properly managed.

Directors of Sports, Fitness, and Wellness

Section 13. The SFW Director(s) are the leaders of the SFW classes whose duties shall be as follows:

- (a) To chair meetings of the SFW instructors.
- (b) To train the adult members who lead and supervise the juvenile members.
- (c) To submit statistical reports on the SFW activities of the lodge to the regular lodge meeting and to the District SFW Director.
- (d) To keep an inventory of the SFW apparatus, equipment and SFW uniforms owned by the lodge.
- (e) To be of assistance in all SFW activities.
- (f) To at all times set a good example to all other members.

Sports Fitness and Wellness

Instructors

Section 14. The duties of the Instructors shall be as follows:

- (a) Serve under supervision of the SFW Directors.
- (b) Provide proper training of the classes in their care.
- (c) Keep a record of hours of their classes and the number of participants, and submit this record to the SFW Director at the meeting of the SFW Committee.

Lodge Reporter

Section 15. The duties of the Lodge Reporter shall be as follows:

- (a) To send articles pertaining to lodge activities to the *Sokol Times*, local newspaper, radio and television stations.
- (b) To submit reports of the Lodge Reporter's activities to the District Board.

Lodge officers and Committees Compliance

Section 16. At the request of the District Board or its duly authorized representatives, lodge officers and committees shall submit all lodge records and books for examination, and shall provide to the examiner or examiners all such additional information as may be required. All lodge officers or members of a committee, upon expiration of their term of office or upon their suspension from office, must surrender to their respective successor all money, books, forms, documents and all other lodge property which is in their possession. Upon failure or neglect to do so, the Board President has the right to take appropriate legal action.

ARTICLE III

Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings of the lodge shall be held in a place and at a time decided by the annual meeting. If the date or place of the meeting has to be changed for any reason, the members shall be notified of the change.

Section 2. Special meetings shall be called in case of necessity either at the President's own initiative, or at the written request of lesser of 25 members or 25% of the members, or at the order of the District President. Notice of the special meeting must be given in writing to every member at least ten days prior to the meeting. No business other than that for which the special meeting was called shall be transacted.

Section 3. A quorum shall consist of five members in good standing for the transaction of business at all lodge meetings.

Section 4. Every meeting of the lodge shall be conducted according

to the provisions of the By-Laws adopted at the last Convention and also according to Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 5. The order of business at meetings shall be as follows:

- (a) The President calls the meeting to order.
- (b) The Recording Secretary calls the roll of officers.
- (c) The President appoints a Sergeant-of-Arms.
- (d) The Recording Secretary reads at least three consecutive sections from the By-Laws.
- (e) Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, their correction, and adoption.
- (f) Report of the Committee for Investigation of Applicants.
- (g) Voting on candidates for membership.
- (h) Admission of members with transfer certificates.
- (i) Admission of new members.
- (j) Collection of dues.
- (k) Reports of other committees.
- (l) Reading of lodge correspondence.
- (m) Announcements in Official Publication.
- (n) Appeals and grievances.
- (o) Unfinished business.
- (p) New business.
- (q) Applications of new members.
- (r) Announcements of suspended and expelled members.
- (s) Election of officers or appointment of committees.
- (t) Report on receipt and disbursements.
- (u) The President adjourns the meeting.

Section 6. All members are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner and to pay attention to all proceedings. Any member

wishing to make a motion or take part in a debate shall first ask the President's permission to speak, and shall speak only when the floor has been given such member by the President. Members taking part in the debate should speak briefly and to the point in question, refraining from any derogatory remarks about or insults to fellow members. A member may have the floor only twice on each subject of debate.

Section 7. Any member, who behaves improperly, disturbs the meeting or uses impolite language shall be called to order by the President, and if such member disobeys, the President has the right to penalize such member either by denying such member the right to speak for the rest of the meeting or by a monetary fine. If such member even refuses to submit to order, the President shall ask such member to leave the meeting or shall call upon the Sergeant-of-Arms to eject the member from the meeting.

Section 8. Motions of great importance shall be made in writing. Before any motion may be considered, it must be seconded, and thereafter may be acted upon in the following order.

- (a) Action of the motion to be postponed to the next meeting.
- (b) Motion to be placed on the table.
- (c) Motion to close discussion on the motion.
- (d) Action on the motion to be postponed to a specific date.
- (e) Action on the motion to be postponed indefinitely.
- (f) Motion to be referred to a committee.
- (g) Motion to be supplemented and amended.

Motions listed sub a, b, and c, are voted upon without debate. Of the entire above points only one can be passed. Every motion is decided by majority of votes *pro* or *con*.

Section 9. A motion to close discussion must be immediately put to vote.

Section 10. Every motion before being put to vote shall be repeated by the President. The President never votes except in case of a tie. If the President refuses to vote either way, the motion fails.

Section 11. Whenever several motions for the expenditure of

money in varying amounts have been made, voting on the individual motions shall be tabled until all motions for the expenditure of money shall have been made, at which time each motion shall be voted on consecutively beginning with the motion for the expenditure of the smallest amount.

Section 12. Political and religious questions shall not be discussed at the lodge meeting.

Section 13. A member of another lodge may be admitted to the meeting upon proof of being a member in good standing of Sokol U.S.A. and upon being recognized by at least one member of the lodge. Such member is admitted only as a guest and has no right to take part in the debate or to vote.

Section 14. A District Officer or a duly authorized representative of the District Board shall be admitted to the meetings of any lodge. If the Sokol District Officer's or District Board representative's visit concerns official matters, the local order of business shall be interrupted and precedence shall be given to action on such matters.

Section 15. Meetings of various committees are held when necessary and are conducted according to the local rules of order, for departments of physical training, dramatics and singing, the lodge shall appoint leaders, and formulate rules according to which these departments shall be conducted and to which every participating member shall be subject.

ARTICLE IV

Lodge Jury

Section 1. A Jury of the lodge shall be appointed from time to time for the purpose of trying and judging complaints against any member or officer which are beyond the authority of the President to penalize.

Section 2. Every member and officer of the a lodge, and every District Officer has the right to file a complaint against any member or officer of a lodge who has transgressed the By-Laws, neglected duties, violated the order and rules of the lodge and Sokol U.S.A., or who by behavior has caused damage or detraction to the honor of another member, the lodge, or Sokol U.S.A.

Section 3. Every complaint must be in writing signed by the accuser and filed with the President clearly specifying the nature, place and date of the transgression. Upon receipt of a complaint, the President shall nominate a committee of three members to investigate the complaint. If the majority of this committee finds the complaint to be unsubstantial, all further proceedings shall cease. If however, the committee finds that the complaint is based on facts, it shall be the duty of the president at the next regular meeting to present the complaint and the findings of the committee, whereupon the meeting shall appoint a Jury consisting of five members whose names have been randomly drawn.

Section 4. Members cannot serve on the Jury who are:

- (a) Witnesses in the matter
- (b) Relatives of the accused.
- (c) Those against whom the accuser or accused object for a good reason.
- (d) Those who have been members of the lodge for less than six (6) months.

Each party to the matter shall have the right to object against two members of the original Jury who then shall be dismissed from the Jury and their place filled by other members whose names shall be randomly drawn. The jury members shall give the President their word of honor that they will judge fairly and impartially.

Section 5. The hearing shall be held in the lodge's meeting place, at a date and time designated by the Jury. At least seven days prior to the hearing, the Recording Secretary shall deliver to the accused a copy of the complaint together with notice of the day, time and place at which the hearing is to be held.

Section 6. All parties to the matter shall appear at the hearing without representation. If the accuser fails to appear without good reason given, the complaint shall be dismissed with prejudice. If the accused fails to appear without good reason given, the hearing shall proceed in the accused's absence. Absence of the accused shall be considered as acknowledgement of guilt and/or lack of defense.

Section 7. The proceedings of the hearing may be postponed at the

request of the accused only for a valid reason, and only with the unanimous consent of the Jury.

Section 8. The President shall preside at the hearing, and shall have duty to see that justice is carried out. The hearing shall be conducted similarly, but not strictly, to the rules of procedure of the Civil Courts.

Section 9. The Recording Secretary summons the witnesses and records the entire proceedings of the hearing.

Section 10. The accused and the accuser each have the right to call witnesses. The witnesses shall make a promise or oath upon their honor that they will tell the truth and nothing but the truth. Witnesses must be members of the lodge, and only in special cases may the testimony of non-members be admitted. The testimony of non-members, however, must be sworn to before a Notary Public.

Section 11. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Jury shall retire to decide upon a verdict which, to be valid, must be the decision of a majority of the members of the Jury. The Jury shall have the power to impose the following penalties:

- (a) Removal from office in the case of an officer.
- (b) Suspension from the lodge.
- (c) Recommendation, upon unanimous decision, to the District Board that the accused be separated from fraternal membership. Every verdict must be recorded in writing, signed and delivered to the President in a sealed envelope. The verdict of the Jury shall be read at the next meeting of the lodge, and shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The lodge meeting shall accept the verdict as correct and valid without any protest or debate.

Section 12. If not satisfied with the verdict, the accused shall have the right within thirty days from the pronouncement of the verdict to appeal first to the District Board, then to the Dispute Resolution Committee, and finally to the Convention. Upon receipt of written notice of appeal to the District Board, the Recording Secretary shall provide to the accused and the District Board a correct copy of the record of the hearing, signed and sealed by the President. While the appeal is pending, the verdict of the Jury is suspended. If the

accused fails to timely appeal to the District Board, the verdict of the jury shall be deemed valid and final.

ARTICLE V

Membership

Section 1. Any person not over 80 years of age who is of good character, in good health, and not a member of an organization incompatible with the principles of Sokol U.S.A. may apply to a local lodge for membership in the Sokol U.S.A.

Section 2. There shall be three classes of membership:

- (a) Adult Member – who shall be at least 16 years of age. An adult member has a voice and vote and may be elected to hold any office in Sokol USA
- (b) Junior Member – who shall be between the ages of birth and 15 ½ . A junior member shall have a voice but no vote and may not be elected to hold any office in Sokol USA.
- (c) Social Member – shall be adults that have neither voice nor note and shall not be elected to hold office in Sokol USA. Social Members shall not be counted in the determination of votes or delegates to the National Convention.

Section 3. To become a member of Sokol U.S.A. the applicant must first become familiar with the principles of Sokol U.S.A., submit an application for membership to the lodge, and be recommended for membership by one member of the lodge. If the candidate for membership is known and recommended by several members, the meeting may take immediate action on the application for membership; otherwise the President shall refer the application to the Committee for Investigation of Applicants. If the report of the Committee is favorable and the lodge meeting voted for the admission of such candidate, the candidate may apply for a benefit certificate and must submit to an examination by a physician if so required.

Section 4. A candidate for membership shall pay at the time of submitting an application an admission fee in the amount prescribed by the lodge. In event the candidate is rejected by the District Board,

the admission fee shall be returned. If the candidate fails to attend the next regular meeting of the lodge following notice of rejection by the District Board, the lodge is entitled to retain the admission fee.

Section 5. At the request of the District Fraternal Secretary or the Committee on Membership, every candidate desiring a Benefit Certificate must provide proof of age by birth certificate. The GBU Financial Life reserves the right to issue a benefit certificate for a lesser amount than applied for by the candidate, or applied for by a current member for additional certificates.

Section 6. A candidate who had previously been a member of Sokol U.S.A. may be re-admitted only if all dues have been paid to the lodge of which such candidate formerly was a member. A member who was once separated from fraternal membership in Sokol U.S.A. may not be re-admitted into membership of Sokol U.S.A.

Section 7. An applicant becomes a member and acquires the right to privileges of membership after having been duly initiated, and having paid the required admission fee and assessments.

Duties of Members

Section 8. Every member should know and faithfully observe the By-Laws of Sokol U.S.A., and shall work for the welfare and the good name of the lodge, of the Region, and of Sokol U.S.A.

Section 9. Every member shall be responsible for payment of the member's required certificate premiums to the GBU home office and in addition is responsible for payment of assessments and special dues prescribed by the By-Laws, the Convention, and the Region and the lodge.

Section 10. A member who has a paid-up certificate and who continues to pay the administrative dues to the lodge and to the region shall be accorded all rights and privileges of membership. A member who has a paid up Single Premium or 3 Payment Life Certificate issued since July 1984 is considered a member for life and also shall be accorded all the rights and privileges of membership.

Section 11. Monthly dues to be paid to the Region per member are fixed by the annual meetings of the Region.

Section 12. Every lodge has the right according to its needs and circumstances to establish its own regular or special dues for the administrative purposes of the lodge.

ARTICLE VI

Social Members

Section 1. Every lodge shall have the right to admit adult social members without distinction of age.

Section 2. National dues of social members will be \$1.00 per month. Local dues shall be determined by lodge and region.

Section 3. Social members are not entitled to benefit from funds to which they do not contribute, and have no right to vote on any question pertaining to these funds and the property of the lodge.

Section 4. Social members may not be elected to or hold any office in Sokol USA.

ARTICLE VII

Change of Status

Transfer of Member From/To Lodge

Section 1. Every member in good standing, who moves to another city where there exists a lodge of Sokol USA may obtain a Transfer Form from the member's present lodge and transfer to the other lodge.

Suspension from Membership Rights

Section 2. A member who fails to pay the regular monthly rates, dues or fines for three months, upon the report of the Financial Secretary shall be suspended, i.e. temporarily deprived of the rights, privileges and benefits of membership, except of equities as provided in the member's Certificate of Membership.

Section 3. A suspended member (beginning with the date of suspension) has no right to take part in the lodge's deliberations or discussions, to vote or to be elected to office. In the event of death of a suspended member the beneficiaries shall not have any right or

claim, except as provided in the By-Laws or the Certificate of Membership.

Section 4. The suspension of member, as well as the amount of indebtedness, shall be recorded in the minutes of the lodge meeting, and the Financial Secretary shall give notice of suspension to the member and to the District Fraternal Secretary.

Section 5. To regain the right of membership the suspended member must attend the next regular meeting of the lodge and pay all the arrears. Upon failure to do so, the member shall be considered expelled.

Expulsion from the Organization

Section 6. A member may be expelled from a lodge of Sokol U.S.A. for the following reasons:

- (a) For non-payment of the regular assessment rates, lodge dues, and fines.
- (b) For violating the By-Laws and for transgressions enumerated in Article XIX.
- (c) For violating the Civil Laws and upon conviction of crime by a Criminal Court.

Section 7. A member who is suspended for non-payment of assessment rates, dues, and fines, and upon notice of the Financial Secretary, fails to attend the next regular meeting of the lodge and pay all arrears in full, shall be expelled at said meeting from membership in the lodge and Sokol U.S.A.

Section 8. A member who violates the By-Laws may be expelled only after having been tried by the lodge Jury, found guilty and convicted, and having exhausted all appeals as provided in these By-Laws.

Section 9. A member who has been convicted of a crime may be expelled upon the proof of such conviction.

Section 10. Expulsion of a member may be approved at the lodge meeting and recorded in the lodge minutes with the reason for

expulsion. The Financial Secretary shall give notice of expulsion to the member and to the District Fraternal Secretary

Section 11. Such a duly expelled member shall cease to be a member of the lodge and Sokol U.S.A. commencing the date of the lodge meeting at which the expulsion is approved. The expelled member shall thereafter have no right or claim to any benefits from the lodge or Sokol U.S.A. except of equities as provided in the expelled member's insurance certificate.

Such expelled member shall have the privilege of maintaining current insurance in force by continuing payment of the required premium and such other assessments as may be required of the members holding certificates of the same class.

Reinstatement to Membership

Section 12. A suspended or expelled member can be reinstated only at a regular lodge meeting and after having paid all arrears.

Section 13. The reinstatement of a member shall be recorded in the minutes of the lodge meeting, and the Recording Secretary shall notify the District Fraternal Secretary of the member's reinstatement.

Section 14. A member expelled because of a conviction by the lodge, Dispute Resolution Committee or any Criminal Court, or because of a criminal offense, may not be reinstated to membership in Sokol U.S.A.

ARTICLE VIII

Penalties

Section 1. A member or an officer may be placed before the lodge Jury or Dispute Resolution Committee for the following transgressions:

- (a) For intentionally disclosing in public and to non-members the matters discussed at a lodge meeting and the affairs of Sokol U.S.A.
- (b) For malicious slander, criticism, and abusive statements orally

or in writing against other members, the lodge or District Board Officers.

- (c) For dissuading a candidate for membership from joining Sokol U.S.A. or causing member to withdraw from Sokol U.S.A.
- (d) For abusive behavior against a fellow member and for disrespectful behavior towards the lodge officers.
- (e) For embezzling or misappropriating any of the funds of the lodge and for damaging or destroying the property of the lodge.
- (f) For false statements made at the time of admission into Sokol U.S.A.
- (g) For filing suit against the lodge or Sokol U.S.A. before a Civil Court, without first exhausting all appellate forums of Sokol U.S.A. as herein provided.
- (h) For falsification, withholding, or concealment of any official documents or for the misuse of the lodge seal and the documents of the lodge.
- (i) For violation of the By-Laws, rules and regulations, and disrespect of the decisions of the District Board and the Convention.

ARTICLE IX

Regions of Sokol U.S.A.

Organization and Purpose

Section 1. A region consists of lodges located within the area of the region to which they have been assigned by the District Board.

Section 2. Regions are established for the purpose of facilitating the SFW activities, contests, public exhibitions, as well as educational work of Sokol U.S.A.

Section 3. To achieve their objective, the regions have the right to establish their own departments; adopt their rules and regulations not inconsistent with these By-Laws; elect their officers and committees; and to assess the lodges and their membership by

regular dues in amounts necessary for these purposes.

Section 4. Each Region shall submit an annual report to the District Board, prepared by a Region officer, detailing the activities of the lodges within the Region. The reports shall be presented at the annual meeting of the District Board.

Region Location

Section 4. The numbers, names, and seats of the regions are as follows:

Region 1: “Michal M. Hodza”, seat New York, New York

Region 2: “Jan Francisi”, seat Bridgeport, Connecticut

Region 3: “Adirondack”, seat Gloversville, New York

Region 4: “Pavel Mudron”, seat Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Region 5: “Matus Cak Trenciansky”, seat Pittsburgh, PA

Region 6: “L’udevít Stur”, seat Chicago, Illinois

Region 7 “Jan Kollar”, seat Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Region 8: “Lake Erie”, seat Cleveland, Ohio

Region 9: “Jan Holly”, seat Lansford, Pennsylvania

Region 10: “Tatra”, seat Charleroi, Pennsylvania

Region 15: “Nitra”, seat Binghamton, New York

Region 16: “Masaryk Sunshine”, seat Tampa, Florida

Region Officers and their Duties

Section 5. Regions shall have the following officers:

- (a) President
- (b) Vice President
- (c) Recording Secretary
- (d) Treasurer
- (e) Financial Secretary
- (f) Directors and their assistants

(g) Financial Committee

(h) Fraternal Activity Committee and other necessary committees

President

Section 6. The Region President orders the calling of all regular and special meetings of the region, presides at the meetings, and sees that the region officers and committees properly perform their duties.

Vice- President

Section 7. The Region Vice-President assists the Region President in the performance of duties and assumes these duties in the Region President's absence.

Recording Secretary

Section 8. The Region Recording Secretary calls meetings of the region; records the proceedings of such meetings; and publishes in the *Sokol Times* monthly reports about the activity of the region. Under the direction of the Region President, the Region Recording Secretary attends to all correspondence matters concerning the region and related to duties of the office.

Financial Secretary

Section 9. The Region Financial Secretary keeps records of the receipts and expenditures of the region and attends to all matters pertaining to the office.

Treasurer

Section 10. The Region Treasurer receives all payments from the lodges as well as all other income of the region, and keeps books of all region accounts; and makes all disbursements and takes care of the money belonging to region. The Region Treasurer shall furnish a bond in the amount fixed at the annual meeting of the region.

Financial Committee

Section 11. The Region Financial Committee examines the books

of the receipts and expenditures, and submits a financial report at every annual meeting of the region.

Region Directors

Section 12.

- (a) The Region Directors are in charge of the gymnastics and SFW activities in the region; they arrange and conduct courses for the lodge instructors and assist them in their work.
- (b) They prescribe the exercises, issue rules of order for region gymnastics meets, SFW activities, contests and public exhibitions; their plans for the activities of region are subject to the approval of the region meeting.
- (c) They see to it that gymnastics activities in the lodges are regularly conducted, for this purpose; they visit the lodges, explain gymnastic exercises and issue appropriate directives.
- (d) It is their duty to prepare and submit to the National Directors statistical reports containing data on membership taking part in the gymnastics, SFW activities, and exhibits of the lodges within their region.
- (e) At the region meetings they submit reports about their own works as well as about all gymnastics and SFW activities in the lodges and in the whole region.

Assistant Directors

Section 13. The Assistant Directors shall:

- (a) Assist the Region Directors in their work and, in their absence, assume their office.
- (b) Carry out the directives of the Region Directors, and report to the Region Directors all matters related to their official duties.

General Rules

Section 14. The District Board supports the regions in their activities morally and financially.

Section 15. All projects of the region shall be reported to the District Board and submitted for approval to the SFW Department.

Section 16. Region meetings are open to all members of Sokol, but the right to discuss and vote on the agenda of the meetings is reserved to the region officers and delegates of the lodges of which the region consists.

Section 17. Region meetings shall be conducted according to the rules of procedure governing the lodge meetings.

Section 18. Region officers shall be elected according to the provisions governing the election of lodge officers.

Section 19. Each region shall be responsible for the establishment of gymnastics, cultural, SFW activity and other committees whose duties shall be comparable to those set forth in the provisions of these By-Laws applicable to the District Board.

Section 20. The regions shall be administered and shall discharge all their official functions according to the provisions applicable to the administration and official activities of lodges.

Section 21. The region dues for each coming year are determined at the annual meeting of the region by a majority vote of the lodge representatives.

Section 22. Each District/Region shall submit an annual report to the National Directors, prepared by a District/Region officer, detailing the activities of the lodges within the District/Region. The National Directors shall present the reports at the annual meeting of the Supreme Lodge/District Board

ARTICLE X

Oaths

Section 1. Officers Oath of Office

I, hereby do solemnly promise that I will faithfully carry out all duties of the office with which you have entrusted me and that I shall observe the By-Laws and work for the welfare of the lodge and Sokol U.S.A. with all my ability. I promise to guard the lodge’s property and at the expiration of my term of office to return in good order all the lodge funds and other lodge property that may be under my care. I give my word of honor that I shall faithfully discharge all duties of my office to the best of my ability.

Section 2. Oath of Loyalty for New members

I,, hereby do solemnly promise that as your brother (sister) member I will always be guided by the Constitution and By-Laws, submit to all their provisions, protect and help the interest, honor and good name of Sokol U.S.A. Lastly, I promise upon my honor that I will always be your loyal brother (sister).

Section 3. Sokol Pledge for Juvenile members, I do solemnly pledge to:

- S** erve my Nation to the best of my capacity
- O** bserve the ideals of Sokol brotherhood
- K** now and promote the Sokol aims
- O** ffer my abilities to attain the Sokol goal
- L** ove my Country and respect my fellow man

ARTICLE XI

Validity of By-Laws

Section 1. The Convention of Sokol U.S.A. is authorized to change, add to, amend or suspend these By-Laws as it deems necessary. With the legal adoption of such amendments, the former section pertaining to the same shall become void, suspended.

Section 2. These By-Laws were revised and adopted by the XXXV Convention of the Slovak Gymnastic Union “Sokol” held from

August 11 through 14, 2017 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and shall remain in full force and effect from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2022.

Section 3. These By-Laws shall be observed by the District Board, District Officers, Regions, Subordinate Lodges, their Officers and all Membership without exception.

Section 4. Unless otherwise specified, the provisions of these By-Laws in which the word “member” occurs shall apply to both male and female members.

Section 5. The President shall have authority to decide matters involving the interpretation of these By-Laws and in matters not adequately covered in the By-Laws, but such decisions may be appealed to the Dispute Resolution Committee and further appealed to the Convention of Sokol U.S.A. by any party or parties affected thereby.

Section 6. Every copy of the By-Laws duly certified by the President and attested by the Fraternal Secretary shall be received as evidence in all matters and suits arising before any Civil Court.

Section 7. All contested points of procedure at Conventions and all other meetings shall be decided on the basis of “Roberts Rules of Order”.

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned Officers, hereby certify that the foregoing By-Laws were approved and legally adopted by the 34th Convention of the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol of the U.S.A. held from July 28 through July 30 in Bethlehem , Pennsylvania, and that the same have been declared the legal By-Laws of the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol of the United States of America effective January 1, 2014.

Attested by;

Joseph Bielecki, Supreme President
Milan S. Kovac, Supreme Secretary