

**CONSTITUTION**

**AND**

**BY-LAWS**

**OF THE**

**BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG CLUB**

**OF GREATER SEATTLE**

**CONSTITUTION OF THE BERNESE MOUNTAIN  
DOG CLUB OF GREATER SEATTLE  
(as revised by membership vote 11/04/2021)**

**ARTICLE 1 - NAME AND OBJECTIVES**

SECTION 1 - The name of the club shall be the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Greater Seattle (BMDCGS).

SECTION 2 - The objectives of the club shall be:

- (a.) To provide for the welfare of Bernese Mountain Dogs.
- (b.) To educate club members and the public on the breed and its health, care, and training.
- (c.) To protect and enhance the natural qualities of purebred Bernese Mountain Dogs through careful breeding, appropriate care, and training.
- (d.) To promote the American Kennel Club(AKC)-approved standard as the only standard against which Bernese Mountain Dogs shall be judged.
- (e.) To protect and advance the interests of the breed by encouraging sportsmanlike conduct at all times.
- (f.) To adhere to AKC and Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA) regulations when conducting sanctioned or licensed events.

**ARTICLE 2 - GENERAL**

SECTION 1 - Non-profit Goals

- (a.) The club shall not be conducted or operated for profit, nor shall any club funds be accrued for the personal financial benefit of any member or individual.

SECTION 2 - Revisions

- (a.) Members of the club shall adopt and may from time to time revise such by-laws as required to carry out the club's objectives.

**BY-LAWS OF THE BERNESE MOUNTAIN  
DOG CLUB OF GREATER SEATTLE  
(as revised by membership vote 11/04/2021)**

**ARTICLE 1 - MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1 - Eligibility**

- (a.) Membership shall be open to all persons who subscribe to the Constitution, By-Laws, and Code of Ethics of this club, and are in good standing with the AKC.
- (b.) Although membership is not restricted in regard to residence, the club's primary purpose is to be representative of breeders, exhibitors, and fanciers in the Greater Seattle region.

**SECTION 2 - Membership Categories, Requirements, and Dues**

- (a.) Membership categories are Adult and Junior ( Junior = under 18, nonvoting).
- (b.) Dues, payable on or before January 1 of each year, are: Adult individual = \$30; Adult family = \$40; Junior = Juniors are free. The Treasurer or person the Treasurer designates shall, during the month of November, send to each member a statement of dues for the ensuing year. Ten-percent (10%) of all dues shall be designated for a rescue fund to be used only for rescue-related expenses and when other funds are not available.

**SECTION 3 - Election to Membership**

- (a.) Membership shall be applied for only on a form approved by the Board of Directors. The form shall include the applicant's name, address, and telephone number, and any information deemed necessary to provide knowledge of the applicant; a statement that the applicant agrees to abide by the club Constitution, By-Laws, and Code of Ethics; and carry the endorsement of two sponsors unrelated to each other. Sponsors must be adult members in good standing with BMDCGS, should have personal knowledge of the applicant, and must be willing to supply a letter of recommendation and attend a board meeting at which the application is considered should the board so request.
- (b.) Completed applications and dues for the current year shall be submitted to the Membership Chair. For applications submitted after September 1, dues shall be prorated.
- (c.) The Membership Chair shall announce and have available for review submitted applications at the first club meeting following receipt of the application.
- (d.) The first year of membership shall be considered provisional and shall begin once the completed application is received by the club membership chair. Dues payment for the provisional year is required at the time of application. During the provisional year the applicant may not vote nor hold office but may participate in all other club activities.

(e.) At the first Board of Directors meeting following the end of the provisional year, the application shall be reviewed and voted on for membership status. Affirmative votes of three-fourths (3/4) of the members of the full Board of Directors shall be required to elect the applicant.

(f.) Applicants shall be notified of the results in a timely manner following the Board vote. Applicants who are not approved for membership may reapply in not less than six (6) months.

#### SECTION 4 - Termination of Membership by Resignation, Lapse of Dues, or Expulsion

(a.) Any member in good standing may resign from the club on written notice to the Secretary, but no member may resign when in debt to the club. Dues obligations are considered a debt to the club and are incurred on the first day of each fiscal year.

(b.) A membership shall be considered lapsed and automatically terminated if the member's dues remain unpaid ninety (90) days after the first day of the fiscal year. The board may, at its sole discretion, grant an additional ninety (90)-day grace period to delinquent members in meritorious cases. In no case may a person whose dues are unpaid as of the date of that meeting be entitled to vote or stand for election at any club meeting.

(c.) A membership may be terminated as provided in Article 6 of these by-laws.

### **ARTICLE 2 - MEETINGS AND VOTING**

#### SECTION 1 - Club Meetings

(a.) Meetings of the club shall be held on a date and time designated by the Board of Directors. This may include in-person or via remote communications.

(b.) The Secretary or a person the Secretary designates shall provide written notice of each meeting at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the meeting.

(c.) The quorum for such meetings shall be twenty percent (20%) of the adult members.

#### SECTION 2 - Special Club Meetings

(a.) Special club meetings may be called by the President, by majority vote of board members who are present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors, or by the Secretary on receipt of a petition signed by five (5) adult members of the club.

(b.) Such special meetings shall be held, whether in person or via remote communications, on a date and time agreeable to the majority of the members of the Board of Directors, and designated by the person authorized to call such a meeting.

(c.) The Secretary or person the Secretary designates shall provide written notice of such a meeting at least five (5) days and not more than fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the meeting. The notice shall state the purpose of the meeting, and no other club business shall be transacted during that meeting.

(d.) The quorum for such a meeting shall be twenty percent (20%) of the adult members.

### SECTION 3 - Board Meetings

(a.) At least three (3) meetings per year of the Board of Directors shall be held, whether in person or via remote communications, on a date and time agreeable to the majority of the board members.

(b.) The Secretary or person the Secretary designates shall provide written notice to the general membership at least five (5) days prior to the date of the meeting.

(c.) The quorum for meetings of the Board of Directors shall be a majority of the board members.

### SECTION 4 - Special Board Meetings

(a.) Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, or by the Secretary on receipt of a written request signed by at least three (3) board members.

(b.) Such special meetings shall be held in a manner agreeable to the majority of the board members, on a date and at an hour designated by the person authorized to call such a meeting.

(d.) The quorum for such a meeting shall be a majority of the board members. Board members may participate via remote communication.

(e.) All special meetings held by the board in whatever manner decided will have minutes taken by the Secretary or, if the meeting is held remote communication, then the posts will be printed and logged to the Secretary's book for future reference.

### SECTION 5 - Voting

(a.) Each adult member, except for provisional members, whose dues are paid for the current year shall be entitled to one (1) vote at any meeting other than the annual meeting of the club at which the member is in attendance. The requirement for voting at the annual meeting is contained in Article 4, Section 2.

(b.) Proxy voting shall not be permitted at any club meeting or election.

## **ARTICLE 3 - OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

### SECTION 1 - Board of Directors

(a.) The Board of Directors shall be comprised of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three (3) Directors, all of whom shall be adult members elected for one(1)-year terms at the club's annual meeting, as provided in Article 4, Section 2. All shall serve during the calendar year following their election (January 1 through December 31).

(b.) General management of the club's affairs shall be entrusted to the Board of Directors.

## SECTION 2 - Officers

(a.) The President shall preside at all meetings of the club and of the Board of Directors, and shall have the duties and powers normally attached to the office of president, in addition to those specified in these By-Laws.

(b.) The Vice-President shall have the duties and exercise the powers of the President should the President be absent or unable to act.

(c.) The Secretary or person designated by the Secretary shall record the proceedings of all meetings and all matters in which the club requires a record; have charge of correspondence; notify members of meetings, new members of their election to membership, and officers and directors of their election to office; keep a roll of the club members, including addresses; and carry out such other duties as are prescribed in these By-Laws.

(d.) The Treasurer or person designated by the treasurer shall collect and receive all monies due or belonging to the club, and shall deposit same in the name of the club in a bank that the Board of Directors designates. The books shall at all times be open to the Board of Directors for inspection. The Treasurer shall report to the board at every meeting the condition of the club's finances and every item of receipt or payment not previously reported. At the annual meeting, the Treasurer shall render an account of all monies received and expended during the fiscal year to date. The Treasurer shall be bonded in an amount that the Board of Directors shall determine.

## SECTION 3 - Vacancies

(a.) Any vacancies occurring during the year shall be filled until the next annual election according to majority vote of all current members of the Board of Directors at the first regular board meeting following the creation of such vacancy, or at a special board meeting called for that purpose except that the Vice-President shall automatically fill a vacancy in the office of president, and the Board of Directors shall fill the resulting vacancy in the office of vice-president.

## **ARTICLE 4 - THE CLUB YEAR, ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS**

### **SECTION 1 - Club's Fiscal and Official Year**

(a.) The club's fiscal and official year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

### **SECTION 2 - Annual Meeting and Elections**

(a.) The annual meeting shall be held in the month of November. During that meeting, officers and directors for the ensuing year shall be elected from those nominated in accordance with Section 3 of this article. and officers and directors elected for the ensuing year shall be announced during the annual meeting in November. Voting shall be by e-ballot of adult members who have attended at least two prior meetings or club sanctioned events in the calendar year. E-votes results shall be reviewed by the Tellers Committee, or the organization who conducts the election for the Club. The Tellers Committee, appointed by the President, shall consist of three (3) inspectors of election who are members in good standing and who are neither members of the current Board nor candidates on the ballot provided. The nominated candidate receiving the greatest number of votes for each position shall be declared elected. The elected officers and directors shall assume their positions on January 1, and retiring officers and directors shall within thirty (30) days provide their successors with all properties and records relating to their position.

### **SECTION 3 - Nominations**

(a.) No person who is not a member of the club or was not nominated may be a candidate in a club election.

(b.) During the month of July, the Board of Directors shall select the Nominating Committee of three (3) members and at least one (1) alternate, not more than one of whom shall be a member of the board. The Secretary shall immediately notify the committee members and alternate(s) of their selection.

(c.) The Board of Directors shall name a chair of the Nominating Committee, and it shall be that person's duty to call a committee meeting to be held on or before August 10. The committee shall nominate at least one (1) candidate for each position, and after securing the consent of each person so nominated shall immediately communicate the nominations in writing to the Secretary. On receipt of the Nominating Committee's report, the Secretary or person the Secretary designates shall, before August 20, notify each member in writing of the candidates nominated, so that additional nominations may be made by the members if they so desire.

(d) Additional nominations of eligible members may be made by written petition addressed to the Secretary and received at his/her regular address on or before October 1, signed by three (3) members and accompanied by the written acceptance of such additional nominee signifying his/her willingness to be a candidate. No person shall be a candidate for more than one position, and the additional nominations provided for herein may be made only from among those members who have not accepted a nomination of the Nominating Committee. The Secretary or

person the Secretary designates shall, before October 15, notify each member in writing of the final list candidates nominated.

(e) Nominations cannot be made at the Annual Meeting or in any manner other than as provided above.

## **ARTICLE 5 - COMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 1 - Appointment**

(a.) The Board may each year appoint standing committees to advance the work of the club. Such committees shall always be subject to the final authority of the Board of Directors. The board also may appoint special committees to aid in particular projects.

## **ARTICLE 6 -DISCIPLINE**

### **SECTION 1 - American Kennel Club Suspension**

(a.) Any member who is suspended from the privileges of the American Kennel Club shall for a like period be automatically suspended from the privileges of this club.

### **SECTION 2 - Charges**

(a.) Any member may prefer charges against another member for alleged conduct prejudicial to the best interests of the club or the breed. The Board of Directors may, at its discretion, initiate disciplinary proceedings against any member for conduct that, in the opinion of the Board, is considered prejudicial to the best interests of the club or the breed.

(b.) Written charges with specifications must be filed in duplicate with the Secretary, together with a deposit of \$50.00, which shall be forfeited if, following a hearing, the Board does not sustain such charges.

(c.) The Secretary shall promptly send a copy of the charges to each member of the Board of Directors or present the charges at a board meeting. The Board shall first consider whether the actions alleged in the charges, if proven, might constitute conduct prejudicial to the best interests of the club or the breed.

(d.) If the Board considers that the charges do not allege conduct which would be prejudicial to the best interests of the club or the breed, it may refuse to entertain jurisdiction.

(e.) If the Board entertains jurisdiction, it shall fix a date for a board hearing not less than three (3) weeks nor more than six (6) weeks thereafter.



(f.) The Secretary shall promptly send to the accused member (respondent) by registered mail, one (1) copy of the charges, together with a notice of the hearing and an assurance that the respondent may personally appear in self-defense and present witnesses as desired.

### SECTION 3 - Board Hearings

(a.) The Board of Directors shall have complete authority to decide whether counsel may attend the hearing, but both complainant and respondent shall be treated uniformly in that regard.

(b.) Should the charges be sustained, after hearing all evidence and testimony that complainant and respondent may present, the Board may by majority vote of those present suspend the respondent from all privileges of the club for not more than six (6) months from the date of the hearing.

(c.) If the Board deems that suspension is insufficient, it may also recommend to the membership that the penalty be expulsion. In such case, the suspension shall not restrict the respondent's right to appear before fellow members at the club meeting during which the board's recommendation is considered.

(d.) Immediately after the board reaches a decision, its findings shall be recorded in writing and filed with the Secretary. The Secretary, in turn, shall notify each party of the board's decision and penalty, if any.

### SECTION 4 - Appeal of Disciplinary Action

(a.) The respondent or complainant may request, in writing, a review by the general membership of any decision of the Board regarding discipline. If the disciplinary decision is expulsion, review will occur automatically as described in SECTION 3 (c.) above.

(b.) At the review meeting, the President shall read the charges and the board's findings and recommendations, and shall invite the respondent or complainant, if present, to speak if either so desires.

(c.) The respondent or complainant shall have the privilege of addressing the members, though no evidence shall be taken at the review meeting.

(d.) The members present shall then vote by e-ballot on the Board's disciplinary decision. A majority vote of the adult members present and voting will be required to uphold any disciplinary decision other than expulsion. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those adult members present and voting at the meeting shall be necessary to uphold expulsion. Results of the vote will be shared within 30 days of the meeting.

(e.) If an expulsion is recommended but not upheld by membership vote, a second vote shall be taken on suspension.

## **ARTICLE 7 - AMENDMENTS**

### **SECTION 1 - Proposal of Amendments**

(a.) Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws may be proposed by the Board of Directors or by written petition addressed to the Secretary and signed by twenty percent (20%) of the adult members.

### **SECTION 2 - Consideration of Proposed Amendments**

(a.) The Board of Directors shall promptly consider amendments proposed by such petition, and the Secretary must submit such proposed amendments to the members, together with the Board's recommendations, for a vote within three (3) months of the date on which the Secretary received the petition. The Constitution or By-Laws may be amended by affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the adult members who complete their e-ballots, provided that the proposed amendment was included in the club newsletter and 3-mailed to each member at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the vote.

## **ARTICLE 8 - DISSOLUTION**

### **SECTION 1 - Dissolution Process**

(a.) The club may be dissolved at any time by the written consent of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the adult members. In the event of dissolution of the club, whether voluntary or involuntary or by operation of law, no club property nor any proceeds therefrom nor any club assets shall be distributed to any club members, but after payment of the club's debts its property and assets shall be given to a charitable organization, selected by the Board of Directors, for the benefit of dogs.

## **ARTICLE 9 - ORDER OF BUSINESS**

### **SECTION 1 - Meetings of the Club**

(a.) At meetings of the club, the order of business, in that the character and nature of the meeting may permit, shall be as follows:

- Roll call
- Minutes of the prior meeting
- Report of the President
- Report of the Secretary
- Report of the Treasurer
- Reports of the committees
- Election of officers and directors (annual meeting only)
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Adjournment

## SECTION 2 - Meetings of the Board of Directors

(a.) At meetings of the Board of Directors, the order of business, unless otherwise directed by the majority vote of those present, shall be as follows:

- Roll call
- Minutes of the prior meeting
- Report of the Secretary
- Report of the Treasurer
- Reports of the committees
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Election of new members
- Adjournment

END