

## Article 1: Membership

1. The members of the society are the applicants for incorporation of the society, and those persons who subsequently become members in accordance with these bylaws, and in either case have not ceased to be members.

2. Every member shall:

- a) have read and come to an understanding of the constitution and bylaws, and
- b) sign an agreement to uphold the constitution and abide the bylaws.

3. The amount of the first annual membership dues will be determined by the *trustees*.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, dues may from time to time be changed by a 75% majority of voting members.

4. Signed membership applications may be sent to the society by mail, fax or other method, or given to any trustee.

## 5. Associate Membership

5.1 Associate members are nonvoting members of the society. Anyone may become an associate member by signing an application form and giving it to a trustee or other authorized society representative, or sending it to the society's mailing address, with a payment of the appropriate membership dues.

## 6. Applications for Membership

6.1 The Trustees will consider applications without bias, and notify the applicant in writing of their decision in a timely manner, stating clearly any area of concern or reasons for rejection, and return any dues paid in advance.

6.2 Any such decision may be appealed by the applicant to the next general meeting which may override the Trustee's initial decision with a 75% majority.

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<sup>1</sup> The society's "trustees" are the directors of the society according to the Society Act.

6.3 Notification to the successful applicant will include a copy of the constitution and bylaws.

## **7. Voting Membership**

7.1 The society has several categories of voting members, organized into bands united by their respective oaths.

### **7.2 The Folk House**

7.3 The society's *Folk* are voting members of the society. To become a voting member, any associate member may, with signature, swear a witnessed, ceremonial oath, as appended to the bylaws.

7.4 Fridhgard Folk have a vote at *athing*, or general meetings of the society, on the business of the society including the election of:

- a) the *House of Aldermen*, which is the executive body responsible for the administrative functions of the society, and
- b) the chief alderman, the *lawspeaker*, who is one of three trustees of the society.

## **8. House of Stewards: Guardians of the Hall**

8.1 The society's *Stewards*<sup>2</sup> are knowledgeable members of the society who have an interest in sharing their knowledge with others in any of a number of possible ways. The Stewards are a college of teachers and instructors, researchers and writers, academics and lay experts, professionals, artists, musicians and performers, and others, with interests in any area of Germanic studies, arts, crafts or sciences, which further, or are expressions of, the purposes of the society.

8.2 Stewards possess invaluable assets: the information, knowledge, expertise, insights and skills and that will be passed down to the future generations.

8.3 Any of the Folk in good standing may become a steward, who has:

- a) satisfied a prerequisite test of knowledge, and any other criteria, as defined

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<sup>2</sup> "Steward", from Old English and Old Norse, "stal-ward", or "ward of the hall".

- by the society's trustees, and where possible a panel of peers;
- b) signed and sworn a witnessed, ceremonial oath, as appended to the bylaws.

8.4 Every steward in good standing may vote in the election of:

- a) the *Witan*,<sup>3</sup> which is the executive council responsible for the execution of the society's *academic functions*, and
- b) the chair of this council, called the *thul*,<sup>4</sup> who is one of three society trustees.

8.5 Any steward may run for election to the Witan.

## **9. Weobond: The Sacred Band**

9.1 The *Weobond*<sup>5</sup> is the society's guild of devoted folks who:

- a) serve their own private groups, families or tribes as priestesses or priests, or
- b) as *Ring-givers*, have completed the prerequisite training and have been authorized by the trustees to perform priestly duties as representatives of the society, or
- c) have sworn an oath of troth to the gods and ancestors.

9.2 Any of the Folk in good standing may join the Weobond, who sign and swear a witnessed, ceremonial *oath of troth*,<sup>6</sup> as appended to the bylaws.

9.3 An oath-sworn member of the Weobond wields a vote in the election of the *Aett*, which is chaired by the *freyr or freya*, and which is responsible for executing the *religious functions* of the society.

## **10. Minors:**

10.1 A legal minor may:

- a) become an *associate member* of the society with the written permission of at

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<sup>3</sup> "Witan", from Old English, a plural form meaning "ones with wit" or the "wise ones".

The singular form is "wita".

<sup>4</sup> "Thul", from Old Norse, "thyle" in Old English. A *skald, bard, scholar, keeper of lore*.

<sup>5</sup> "Weobond" is a constructed word from Old English "weoh" (sacred or holy) and "bond", a band.

<sup>6</sup> An *oath of troth* is an oath commonly sworn to declare one's religious loyalty to the gods and ancestors.

least one parent or guardian;

b) at age 13, become a voting member of the *Folk*, providing:

(i) he or she is capable of reading and understanding the constitution and bylaws, and

(ii) written permission is given by at least one parent or guardian;

c) if legally self-responsible, become a member.

## **11. Voting Rights**

11.1 Associate members do not have the right to vote, but they nevertheless enjoy the protection of the bylaws.

11.2 All members of the *Folk* in good standing are entitled to one vote each, and to elect the *House of Aldermen* and the *lawspeaker*.

11.3 Each *Steward* in good standing wields one additional vote in the election of the *Witan* and the *thul*.

11.4 Each member of the *Weobond* in good standing wields one additional vote in the election of *Fridhgard Aett* and the *freyr or freya*.

11.5 Members forfeit the right to vote who are found not in good standing according to these bylaws.

11.6 Voting members, in the event they cannot attend a meeting, may vote by proxy using signed paper ballots.

## **12 Ending Membership**

12.1 A person ceases to be a member of the society:

(a) upon submitting, in writing, a signed and dated resignation to a trustee or to any authorized society mailing address;

(b) upon having one's membership revoked according to these bylaws;

(c) upon death, or

(d) in the case of a corporate membership, upon dissolution.

### **13. Member Privacy**

13.1 The society and its officers shall regard membership information as confidential, and will not share any personal information to anyone without permission of the member.

13.2 All of the society's members shall respect the privacy of fellow members, and not publicize information about them without permission.

13.3 The society's trustees, and all officers of the three executive committees (the Aldermen, the Witan and the Aett), as well as the Ring-givers (the authorized priests and priestesses of the society), are considered by these bylaws and Canadian law to be "*public figures*" and as such may be named publicly.

## **Article 2: Executive Committees**

### **1. The House of Aldermen**

1.1 The *House of Aldermen* is the executive committee responsible for executing the administrative functions of the society.

1.2 The house should include at least three elected aldermen, one of whom is chair of the committee, the *lawspeaker* (one of three trustees of the society).

1.3 An act of decision of the Aldermen is not invalid if there is less than the prescribed number of persons in office.

1.4 The Trustees may appoint society members as interim aldermen if positions are left vacant for whatever reason, pending the next general election.

1.5 All voting members of the society in good standing wield votes in the election of, and may run for election as, aldermen.

1.6 The term of office for aldermen may be up to three years.

1.7 If no successor is elected, the incumbent alderman may serve another term.

1.8 Those folk elected as aldermen will sign and swear the *Alderman's Oath*, as appended to the bylaws.

1.9 The House of Aldermen may meet, conduct business and delegate tasks as it sees fit.

1.10 The responsibilities of the Aldermen include coordinating:

- member services, administration and communications, newsletter publication;
- general society business, meetings, general meetings, elections;
- proposed changes laws, bylaws, policies and procedures;
- oversight of society enterprises or businesses;
- government communications, record keeping;
- financial management, assets and logistics;
- risk assessment, risk management, conflict resolution;
- marketing and publicity;
- outreach coordination including public event engagements, interfaith efforts and diplomatic missions.

1.11 The lawspeaker will oversee the operations of the Aldermen on behalf of the Trustees.

1.12 In the fulfillment of their responsibilities, the Aldermen will work closely with the Trustees.

## **2. The Witan: The Wise-Ones**

2.1 The *Witan* are the executive committee responsible for the *academic functions* of the society, which includes at least three elected witan, one of whom is chair of the committee, the *thul* (one of three trustees of the society).

2.2 An act or decision of the Witan is not invalid if there is less than the prescribed number of persons in office.

2.3 The Trustees may appoint society members as interim witan if positions are left

vacant for whatever reason, pending the next general election.

2.4 All stewards in good standing wield votes in the election of, and may run for election as witan.

2.5 The term of office for witan may be up to three years.

2.6 If no successor is elected, the incumbent may serve another term.

2.7 Those stewards elected as witan will sign and swear the *Witan's Oath*, as appended to the bylaws.

2.8 The Witan may meet, conduct business and delegate tasks as they see fit.

2.9 The responsibilities of the Witan include:

- to work to increase knowledge and awareness of Nordic and Germanic culture and history.
- ongoing review of Germanic and Nordic studies in general, and any other area of study, art or science which would further the society's purposes, such as anthropology, archaeology, behavioural psychology, biology, etc.;
- creation and/or publication of topical papers, books, artworks or other expressions of culture;
- library and archiving;
- original academic and field-based research;
- original translations of related modern and Medieval literature;
- development of Nordic philosophies, theologies, epistemologies, etc.;
- development of courses of study, teaching and instruction to increase knowledge and awareness of Nordic and Germanic culture and history;
- development of criteria to be considered in the selection of those stewards to be authorized to teach on behalf of the society;
- the oversight of those stewards acting as authorized representatives of the society.

2.10 The thul will oversee the operations of the Witan on behalf of the trustees.

2.11 In the fulfillment of their responsibilities, the Witan will work closely with the

Trustees.

### **3. The Fridhgard Aett: House of Aethlings**

3.1 The *Aett* is the executive committee responsible for the *religious functions* of the society.

3.2 The Aett should include at least three elected *aethlings*,<sup>7</sup> one of whom is chair of the committee, the *freyr* (one of three trustees of the society).

3.3 An act or decision of the Aett is not invalid if there is less than the prescribed number of persons in office.

3.4 The Trustees may appoint a society member as an interim *aethling* if a position is vacant, pending the next general election.

3.5 All members of the Weobond in good standing wield votes in the election of the Aett.

3.6 Any Weobond fellow in good standing may run for election to the Aett in any position other than the *freyr*.

3.7 Any authorized priests or priestesses of the society, who are called Ring-givers, may run for election as the *freyr* or *freya*, who is chair of the Aett.

3.8 If a qualified candidate is not found, any Weobond fellow may fulfill this role with the promise to complete the Ring-giver training and authorization process as soon as possible.

3.9 The term of office for aethlings may be up to three years.

3.10 If no successor is elected, the incumbent may serve another term.

3.11 Those elected as aethlings will sign and swear the *Aethling's Oath*, as appended to the bylaws.

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<sup>7</sup> "Aethling" means "one of the aett".

3.12 The Aett may meet, conduct business and delegate tasks as it sees fit.

3.13 The responsibilities of the Aett include:

- perpetual maintenance of holy sanctuary, sacred forests and burial grounds;
- keeping of troth, leading religious rites for each of:
  - private groups who request help,
  - members of the society, and
  - members of the public;
- training priestesses and priests in both private and public domains;
- instruction in various practices, techniques and belief systems that assist individuals and families in gaining spiritual and physical health;
- assisting the folk in making all the rites of passages in life's journey;
- provision of whatever family or individual support services or counseling that may be possible to provide in times of need or crisis;
- pursuit of active visionary or spiritual engagements and relationships with divinities and other beneficent wights, and the taking of auspices;
- safekeeping of holy relics;
- full revival of our ancestral troth as a living religion, to be helpful, empowering and inspiring to our folk in the present day, while being as true as possible to the indigenous culture of our European ancestors;
- creation of inspirational music, writing and other media of communications;
- training and certification of the society's *Ring-givers*, who are the priests and priestesses authorized act in that capacity on behalf of the society.

3.14 The freyr will oversee the operations of the Aett on behalf of the Trustees.

3.15 The Aett will work closely with the Trustees in the fulfillment of their responsibilities.

#### **4. The Band of Ring-givers**

4.1 Ring-givers are a guild of priests and priestess authorized by the trustees to perform religious rites on behalf of the society.

4.2 Any Weobond fellow may apply to the Aett to become a Ring-giver, contingent on the successful completion of the prerequisite training, and swearing in, with the

oath appended to the bylaws.

4.3 Any Ring-giver may run for election as the freyr or freya, who is chair of the Aett.

### Article 3: The Trustees

1. The Trustees are the society's directors as defined in the Society Act of British Columbia, may exercise and do all things the society can exercise and do, and consist of three persons: the *freyr* or *freya*, the *thul*, and the *lawspeaker*.

2. Each trustee is elected by his or her respective *house* in separate elections:

- a) The lawspeaker, chief of the Aldermen, is elected by *the Folk*.
- b) The thul, chief of the Witan, is elected by the *Stewards*.
- c) The freyr or freya, chair of the Aett, chief priest and Ring-giver, is elected by the *Weobond*.

3. Trustees may be reelected any number of times, in terms of up to three years.

4. If no successor is elected, the person previously elected or appointed may continue to hold office.

5. A trustee may be removed from his or her position before the completion of the current term:

- a) with a 75% majority vote by their house,
- b) with a 75% majority of vote total vote of *all houses*, or
- c) temporarily, if under a formal investigation for alleged wrongdoing.

6. If there are less than three trustees in office:

- a) any act of the remaining trustee(s) is not invalid, and
- b) the remaining trustee(s) may appoint a member to serve as an interim trustee until the next general meeting and election.

7. Trustees shall not be paid for acting as trustees, but shall be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses incurred in the course of their duties.

8. Trustees shall submit their year end expense reports, to the Aldermen, no later than eight weeks prior to the annual general meeting.

9. Trustees may meet, adjourn and conduct business in what manner they see fit, notwithstanding that minutes shall record the proceedings of all trustee meetings.

10. The Trustees make decisions and resolutions on behalf of the society by consensus.

11. In the event that consensus cannot be reached:

11.1 The dissenting trustee will put forward, in good faith, an alternative proposal which represents a negotiated settlement, an acceptable compromise or friendly amendment.

11.2 In the event that, after a counter proposal has been made, a consensus still cannot be reached, all three trustees shall jointly draft a new alternative proposal, and take that proposal back to their respective houses for straw votes.

11.3 The Trustees will continue to act collectively to resolve any impasse that may arise, and seek to negotiate an agreement between the dissenting houses until a resolution has been reached.

11.4 Negotiations should be conducted in a timely manner, so as not to impede the business of the society.

12. A trustee who votes in favour of a resolution, in order to preserve trustee consensus, may nevertheless do so *under objection*, and have his or her written statement of dissent added to the official record.

13. A trustee shall delegate some, but not all, of their duties to the executive committee for which he or she is chair:

- a) the lawspeaker shall delegate duties to the *Aldermen*,
- b) the thul shall delegate duties to the *Witan*, and
- c) the freyr shall delegate duties to the *Aett*.

14. The Trustees shall work cooperatively together, and with their respective committees, in the delegation and completion of tasks and duties.

15. All newly elected trustees will sign and swear a witnessed ceremonial oath, as appended to the bylaws.

## **16. The Lawspeaker**

16.1 The lawspeaker is ward of the Fellowship's *orlog*, or foundational law, and is charged with its safekeeping, ensuring that the organization's founding laws and principles are well understood by all members.

16.2 The lawspeaker oversees the execution of the *administrative functions* of the society, with the assistance of the *House of Aldermen*.

16.3 The lawspeaker is elected by the Folk, and any member of the Folk in good standing may run for election as lawspeaker.

## **17. The Thul**

17.1 The thul is ward of the Fellowship's *lore* and is charged with its increase and safekeeping.

17.2 The thul oversees the execution of the *academic functions* of the society, with the assistance of the *Witan*.

17.3 The thul is elected by the Stewards, and any steward in good standing may run for election as thul.

## **18. The Freyr or Freya**

18.1 The freya is ward of the Fellowship's *luck* and is charged with its increase and safekeeping.

18.2 The freyr oversees the execution of the *religious functions* of the society, with

the assistance of the *Aett*.

18.3 The freya is elected by the Weobond.

18.4 Any Ring-giver in good standing may run for election as freyr.

#### **Article 4: Meetings of the Society**

1. The annual general meeting of the society may also be called the *althing*,<sup>8</sup> and any general meeting other than the annual general meeting is *extraordinary* and may also called a *thing*.<sup>9</sup>

2. General meetings shall be held at the time and place, in accordance with the Society Act, that the trustees decide.

3. A general meeting may be convened by:

- a) a petition by a simple majority of voting members,
- b) a motion passed by two out of three executive committees (Aldermen, Witan and/or the Aett), or
- c) the trustees, or
- b) in case of a formal *hearing*, which is part of a membership revocation or review.

4. The first annual general meeting of the society must not be held more than 13 months after the date of incorporation. After that, an annual general meeting must be held once every calendar year and not more than 13 months after holding the preceding annual general meeting.

5. *Regular business* of an althing includes

- a) the adoption of rules of order;
- b) the consideration of financial statements;
- c) the reports of the houses, if any;
- d) the reports of the executive committees;
- e) the report of the Trustees;
- f) the election of trustees and executive committees;

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<sup>8</sup> An “althing” was the annual general assembly in pagan Iceland.

<sup>9</sup> A “thing” was a meeting or assembly on the European mainland during the pagan era.

- g) the report of the auditor, if any;
- h) the swearing in of new members, if any;
- i) the counting of proxy votes, if any;
- j) amendment of the constitution and bylaws, if any;
- k) any other business that, under these bylaws, ought to be conducted at a general meeting, or business that is brought under consideration by the report of the Trustees included with the notice convening the meeting.

6. *Special business* is defined as:

- (a) all business at a thing except for the adoption of rules of order,
- (b) any business concerning any membership hearing that has been convened.

7. *Business from the floor* is defined as any business which is not *regular business* or *special business*.

7.1 Business from the floor may only be resolved at the meeting in question if a simple majority of voting members are present at the meeting. Otherwise, the business shall be tabled until the next meeting, or until a poll of voting members *not present* at the original meeting is conducted.

8. Any trustee may chair a general meeting, or in their absence, any executive committee member, or in the event that no executive member is present within 30 minutes of the scheduled start of the meeting, any voting member.

9. A resolution proposed at a general meeting does not need to be seconded and the chair may move, propose and vote on a resolution.

10. In the event of a tie vote in resolutions requiring a simple majority, the freyr or freya, or the aethling authorized to act on his or her behalf, or the member acting as chair, may cast a second, deciding vote.

## **11. Notices**

11.1 Every member of the society is entitled to written notice of any general meeting, to be given directly to the member, or to be postmarked a minimum of 28 days prior to

the meeting.

11.2 To demonstrate that notice has been given it is sufficient to show that the notice was properly stamped and addressed and put in a Canadian post office receptacle, or to produce a delivery receipt for the notice given by a private courier company.

11.3 Notices sent by mail will be deemed to have been given on the third day following the day on which the notice, ballots or polls, were posted.

11.4 The accidental omission to give notice, or the failure to receive a notice, does not invalidate the proceedings at that general meeting.

11.5 All notices of general meetings shall include:

- a) the time, date and place of the meeting,
- b) a meeting agenda describing the business of the meeting,
- c) details of any proposed motions, elections or other business to be conducted at the meeting, and
- d) a description of the ritual or ceremonial portions of the meeting.

11.6 Voting members who cannot possibly attend a general meeting may cast their votes by proxy on the business specified in the notice with a signed document sent to the society's mailing address and postmarked no later than 14 days prior to the meeting.

11.7 In extraordinary or emergency circumstances, when a member is prevented from attending a general meeting by, for example, sudden illness, the trustees may, at their discretion, accept a member's proxy votes so long as they are delivered to the society or to the location of the meeting up to the hour when the meeting is convened.

## **12. Quorum and Adjournments**

12.1 Quorum for a general meeting consists of at least three voting members which shall include at least one trustee, or a greater number as resolved by voting members at a general meeting.

12.2 If quorum is not achieved within one hour of the scheduled time of the meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned to a date not later than 21 days after the date of the meeting that was adjourned.

12.3 At any time during a general meeting that there ceases to be a quorum present, business will be suspended until such time as there is a quorum present, or until the meeting is adjourned or terminated.

12.4 Business other than the election of a chair and the adjournment or termination of the meeting must not be conducted without quorum being achieved.

12.5 General meetings may be adjourned from time to time and from place to place if necessary.

12.6 When a meeting is adjourned for more than 21 days, notice of the adjourned meeting must be given as in the case of the original meeting.

#### **Article 5: Policy, Bylaw and Constitutional Amendments**

1. Amendments to the bylaws or constitution require a two-thirds majority vote by voting members.

2. The Trustees may resolve to create, adopt and amend policies not inconsistent with the bylaws and constitution, and will inform members of any policy change in a timely manner.

3. The three executive committees may author policies governing their respective committees, which shall take effect with a resolution by the Trustees.

#### **Article 6: Seals**

1. The Trustees may supply official seals for the society, and may recall, destroy and replace any such seals.

2. One common seal for the society shall be kept by the lawspeaker, which shall be affixed to trustee resolutions, authorizations and oath documents.

3. A seal may also be kept by each trustee in his or her capacity as chair of one of the three executive committees, the Aldermen, Witan and Aethlings. These house seals may be affixed to resolutions and authorizations of their respective committees.

#### **Article 7: Borrowing**

1. The Trustees may, on behalf of the society, raise or secure the payment or repayment of money in order to execute the purposes of the society.
2. A two-thirds majority of voting members may restrict the borrowing powers of the Trustees, but the restriction shall expire at the next annual general meeting.

#### **Article 8: Auditor**

1. This part applies only if the society is required or has resolved to have an auditor.
2. The first auditor shall be appointed by the Trustees, who may fill any vacancies occurring in the office of auditor.
3. At each annual general meeting occurring during which time the society is required or has resolved to have an auditor, the society shall appoint an auditor to hold office until the next annual general meeting.
4. An auditor may be removed by ordinary resolution and the auditor shall be promptly informed in writing of the auditor's appointment or removal.
5. A trustee, or any member of the society's executive committees, or an employee of the society, shall not be its auditor.
6. The auditor may attend any general meeting, and will be notified of the meeting in the same manner as any member of the society.

#### **Article 9: Cultural Assets**

1. Holy relics, artworks, intellectual properties, expressions of material culture, and

other significant objects, that are donated to, and accepted by, the society shall be preserved, protected and held in trust for future generations.

2. In the case of the dissolution of the society, or with a 75% majority, members shall return such cultural properties to their creators or the family or heirs of the creators. Otherwise, the objects should be donated to, or sold and proceeds donated to, a nonprofit organization with compatible purposes.

#### **Article 10: Dissolution**

1. Prior to the winding up and dissolution of the society, final inventories and financial statements will be issued to the members.

2. Physical assets may be auctioned or sold.

3. After the orderly repayment of any debts of the society, whatever remains shall be donated to one or more organizations, as members see fit, where the purposes of the organization(s) are compatible with those of the Fellowship. If such an organization cannot be found, remaining assets will be donated to the benevolent charitable society of the members' choice.

4. Where perpetual covenants on parcels of land may exist, governing wilderness areas or burial grounds, the society will sell, donate or transfer its titles to an appropriate organization capable of honouring the covenant.

Article 12: Oaths

1. Folk Oath:

*Before the Folk, in the company of the gods,  
(may name ancestral deities)*

\_\_\_\_\_, *and before my ancestors,*

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, solemnly swear that:*  
(swearer's name)

- *I have read and I understand,  
both the constitution and the bylaws;*
- *I am wholly in agreement,  
with the organization's stated purposes;*
- *I support the contemporary revival,  
of the indigenous folk-religion, of my European ancestors;*
- *I will preserve the peace of the Fridhgard,  
our sacred sanctuary,*
- *and I will abide by, and uphold the bylaws,  
in all matters regarding the society and its activities;*

*These things I swear, lest I lose my vote at thing and my good  
standing among the Folk.*

Signed on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the month of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(witness signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(witness name)

**2. Steward's Oath:**

*As the mighty gods of my ancestors, bear me witness,*

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, swear this solemn oath:*

*(swearer's name)*

- To cleave to the highest ethical standards,  
during the course of my work, for the Fridhgard  
Fellowship;*
- To gain knowing and skill, wisdom and worth;*
- To pass on what I have learned, to those who come after me;*

*These things I promise, lest I lose my place as a Steward.*

*Signed on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the month of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(signature)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(witness signature)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(print name)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(witness name)*

**3. Oath of Troth**

*By the hoary ghosts of my ancestors,*

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear,*  
*(swearer's name)*

*my everlasting troth, to the ancient gods of my people.*

*However Wyrd may challenge me, be the weather fair or foul:*

- Ever will I honour my ancestors,*
- Ever will I work, to achieve my utmost;*
- Ever will I strive, to gain in wisdom and worth;*
- Ever will I hold dear, the Gifts of the Gods;*

*Hear me, \_\_\_\_\_,*  
*(may name one or more deities, or "great gods")*

*hear my holy oath, sworn before the Folk!*

*Signed on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the month of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(signature)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(witness signature)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(print name)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(witness name)*

4. Oath of the Trustees, Aldermen, Witan, and Aethlings

I, (name) \_\_\_\_\_ , most solemnly swear:

- to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, in relation to, and during the course of my duties, so far as that does not violate the privacy of the members;
- that I have read and understand the Society Act of British Columbia;
- and that I understand my legal responsibilities according to Canadian law;
- that I have read and I understand the Fridhgard's Constitution, Statement of Belief and Bylaws;
- that I understand the founding pillars upon which Fridhgard Law is based.

Further, during the course of my duties, I swear, by all that is holy:

- that my each and every choice:
  - will reflect the purposes of this organization;
  - will consider the greater good while protecting the individual's rights;
- that among my highest priorities are always to:
  - secure and maintain the peace enjoyed within the Fridhgard;
  - to guarantee the Fridhgard's sanctuary for all, according to ancient tradition;
  - and to the best of my abilities, embody our traditional virtues in all my dealings.

As a ward of the Fellowship I swear, to bring wisdom to bear at all times, and carry the holy relics of my office, in the most sacred trust. I am but a caretaker of the Fridhgard Fellowship, responsible for its safekeeping, until my successor.

Before the gods, my own ancestors and the folk, I so swear.

Signed on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the month of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(witness signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(witness name)

## Appendix 1: Misconduct & Membership Revocation

1. Complaints regarding the alleged misconduct of society members should be directed to any of the Trustees. Further provisions are given below in the case that the accused is among the Trustees.

1.1 The society has no jurisdiction over civil or criminal matters, which are under the purvey of the Canadian and provincial governments. Nevertheless, the society may elect to apply punitive measures against a member found guilty in a criminal or civil court.

1.2 The society has jurisdiction regarding complaints alleging:

- a) the violation of the bylaws or the betrayal of its constitution;
- b) moral and ethical corruption;
- c) the defamation of the society or its members;
- d) the fomentation of needless interpersonal conflict;
- e) the obstruction of the execution of the society's business.

2. Under no circumstances may a member or a former member, whatever his or her standing, be declared an “*outlaw*” by the society.

2.1 The outlawing and shunning of an individual is a tribal, clan or family matter, and as such is not within the jurisdiction of the society.

2.2 In all but the most extreme cases, it is a designation that is likely irrelevant to the society, which is a sanctuary and a fridhgard where even outlaws, *provided they abide the law*, are welcomed.

3. Membership revocation is always a process fraught with great risk for the society, which may only see its membership conflicted and reduced as a result. Only as the last resort, after all other reasonable efforts to resolve, settle or mediate the conflict have been exhausted, may a membership review take place and formal charges be laid.

4. In the Trustees' consideration as to whether to proceed with formal charges against the accused, actionable allegations of misconduct must meet reasonable

standards of evidence. Hearsay, gossip or speculation are not suitable grounds to proceed. Eyewitness testimony or compelling evidence, and a substantial likelihood of a conviction, is required to proceed with the filing of formal charges.

5. If the accused is a trustee:

- a) he or she will not participate in the initial consideration of the allegations;
- b) consideration of the allegations shall be undertaken by the highest ranking executives of the society who are at “*at arm’s length*” from both the accused and the accuser. (*A person who is at arm’s length is not a coworker, roommate, spouse, partner, family member or close friend, etc.*)

6. In the event that the accused is a trustee, a steward or a member of the Weobond, or any other agent, representative or volunteer on behalf of the society, and formal charges have been laid, the accused will temporarily resign from the positions in question, pending the outcome of the case.

## **7. Charges and Membership Reviews**

7.1 Any member against whom formal charges have been laid forfeits the right to vote, pending the outcome of the case.

7.2 Once the Trustees have decided to proceed with charges, the accused shall be served, in writing via post or courier, with full and detailed disclosure of all the charges and allegations, in a swift and timely manner, at least six weeks prior to the hearing at which the case will be heard.

- a) Any subsequent actionable allegations which come to light against the accused must be disclosed to the accused immediately.
- b) No new allegations may be heard at the hearing that were not disclosed to the accused.

7.3 In the initial notice of charges, the accused shall be given the choice of

- a) a judge who is mutually agreeable to the concerned parties,
- b) a tribunal of judges at arms length to both the accused and the accuser, or
- c) a jury of no more than twelve and no fewer than three willing members, chosen at random, who are at arms length to both the accused and the accuser.

7.4 The hearing may not take place using remote communications media of any sort, but must consist of a physical meeting of the concerned parties. This attendance requirement may be waived, and written and signed statements, or recordings of sworn statements, from complainants, alleged victims or other witnesses may be admissible evidence, in the case that the party in question:

- a) is a legal minor, or
- b) is too distraught or traumatized, or
- c) is restrained or debilitated,
- d) or where every reasonable effort has been made to notify the party with no success, or
- e) the party has failed to agree on a date and/or location for the hearing, or
- f) after being notified, the parties refuse to participate or fail to attend.

7.5 The accused shall be given opportunity to defend him or her self against each and every allegation, may appoint another member to assist in his or her representation at the hearing, may have legal counsel present, may introduce evidence, and may both call and cross-examine witnesses.

7.6 The accused is presumed to be innocent until found guilty of misconduct during the course of a hearing.

7.7 All parties attending the trial or submitting statements into evidence, including all witnesses, the jurors or judges, the complainant and the defendant, shall swear solemn oaths to tell the truth, on threat of penalty, declaration of mistrial or the dismissal of charges.

7.8 All voting members of the society shall be notified of a membership hearing and may attend the hearing as an observer.

## **8. Deliberation and Consequences**

8.1 The judge, tribunal or jury presiding at a membership review hearing, shall:

- a) consider all the evidence in the unbiased pursuit of truth;
- b) be guided, in every decision, by the society's purposes, foremost among which include the restoration of health and wholeness to the individuals, families and communities of the folk;

- c) seek solutions such as reconciliation, settlement, restoration, remediation or rehabilitation, probation, demotion, or penalties, rather than the revocation of membership, which shall be reserved for those found guilty of only the most serious of charges;
- d) deliver a verdict in a timely and efficient manner, explaining the reasons for the decision.

## **9. Appeals**

9.1 Any verdict arising as a result of a hearing may be appealed at any general meeting occurring at least 9 months after the verdict was delivered.