

# *St. Louis Area Dressage Society*

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## *ByLaws*

Revised Bylaws and new Standing Rules were voted on and approved at the St. Louis Area Dressage Society's General Meeting on 22 January 2011.

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### **Article 1: Name and Definition**

The name of the organization shall be The St. Louis Area Dressage Society (hereinafter referred to as "SLADS").

#### **Section 1.1: Service Region**

The primary service region of SLADS includes the state of Missouri and the southern portion of the state of Illinois. However, any person or persons wanting to join SLADS as a member is eligible.

### **Article 2: Non-Profit / Tax Status**

SLADS shall be operated strictly and exclusively as a not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Missouri and of the United States of America. Its purposes, consistent with its mission described herein, shall be exclusively charitable, scientific, literary, or educational within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code. In the event of dissolution, SLADS shall turn its residual assets over to an organization(s) that is (are) not for profit.

### **Article 3: Equal Opportunity**

SLADS seeks to serve all equine enthusiasts regardless of age, color, gender, race, religion, or national origin.

### **Article 4: Mission, Purpose, and Beliefs**

#### **Section 4.1: Mission and Purpose**

The mission of SLADS shall be to foster an interest in, and greater understanding of, dressage among people in the greater St. Louis area. The programs SLADS sponsors shall be primarily educational in nature and shall offer a framework in which individuals can progress with their education and the training of their horses. The purpose of SLADS is not for business or any other pecuniary profit whatsoever.

#### **Section 4.2: Beliefs.**

- We believe in promoting the well being of the horse.
- We believe our members are the heart and soul of the organization.
- We believe that all members, no matter what level of experience in the discipline of dressage, will be treated equitably and with respect.
- We believe that interactive communication is essential to a healthy organization.
- We believe the value of participation is in the process as well as the achievement.
- We believe in and appreciate the volunteer ethic.
- We believe in the pursuit of excellence in all of our activities.

### **Article 5: Standing Rules**

The Standing Rules of SLADS shall be established by the Board of Directors to specify the policies, procedures and rules by which the business of SLADS shall be conducted. The Standing Rules derive their authority from the Bylaws. Changes or additions to the Standing Rules require a majority vote of the Board of Directors and SLADS members (as specified in Article 12). Whenever a conflict exists between the Standing Rules and the Bylaws, the Bylaws shall be the prevailing authority. Once the Standing Rules have been established (or when amended), the amendments will be published in the next SLADS newsletter and within two weeks of approval on the website.

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### **Article 6: Membership and Dues**

#### **Section 6.1: Membership**

Membership in SLADS shall be open to any individual interested in the mission and beliefs of SLADS. Membership is upon application and payment of the prescribed dues on an annual basis, beginning on December 1st and ending on November 30th.

#### **Section 6.2: Dues**

Dues shall be paid on an annual basis and shall become due and payable for the year on December 1st, the beginning of SLADS' fiscal year. New members paying dues after October 31st will be considered as having paid dues through the following year. The amount of dues shall be determined by a majority vote of the Board of Directors of SLADS and approved either by a majority vote of the members present at the Annual Meeting or at a Special Meeting or by a majority of the ballots received from the membership through a mail ballot. A portion of the annual dues will provide members with a Group Membership to the United States Dressage Federation.

### **Article 7: Membership Rights, Obligations, Suspension and Expulsion**

#### **Section 7.1: Membership Rights**

Members in good standing (annual dues paid-in-full, and not indebted or in conflict with the rules and guidelines of SLADS, USDF, or USEF) shall be entitled to participate in all activities and receive all publications of SLADS.

#### **Section 7.2: Obligations**

Each member of SLADS, including each individual within a family membership, agrees that she or he shall abide by the Bylaws of SLADS and by any and all policies and procedures set forth by the Board of Directors of SLADS in their efforts to conduct the business of SLADS' mission and beliefs.

#### **Section 7.3: Suspension and Expulsion**

- A. Any member may be suspended or expelled from active participation in SLADS for just cause as determined by the prevailing standards and rules of the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF). Suspension or expulsion of a member will be determined by a vote of at least two thirds of the membership at a duly announced meeting. In all such cases, a written notice shall be given to the member in question ten (10) days in advance of such meeting, stating the charges and inviting the member to attend and be heard at such meeting. Should the member desire to appear and be heard at such meeting, he/she shall indicate such desire in writing to the President of SLADS, at least within 48 hours of the meeting date. The Board of Directors shall determine the applicability of any suspension and/or sanctions.
- B. Any member suspended or expelled from active participation by USEF shall be forthwith expelled from participation in SLADS and SLADS' activities without vote by SLADS.

### **Article 8: Meetings**

Membership Meetings: Annual and Special Meetings, Quorum, Voting, and Parliamentary Authority

#### **Section 8.1: Annual Meeting**

- A. An Annual Meeting of the membership of SLADS will be held during the first quarter of the year ending March 30, on a date and a place to be determined by the Board of Directors. Election of officers will be held at this meeting.
- B. Due notice of the time, place and agenda for the Annual Meeting must be given, as provided in Section 6 below. At this meeting annual reports from the President and the Treasurer shall be presented to the membership

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### **Section 8.2: Special Meetings**

Special Meetings of the membership may be held from time to time as the Board of Directors shall deem necessary, provided due notice of the time, place, and agenda for the meeting is given as provided in Section 6 below.

### **Section 8.3: Quorum**

At a general membership meeting, a quorum of the membership must be present. A quorum of the membership shall be defined as ten percent (10%) of the current voting members, in addition to the board of directors present at the meeting.

### **Section 8.4: Voting**

Each Individual Member shall be entitled to one vote. Each Junior Member shall be entitled to one vote. Each Family Membership is entitled to one (1) vote per Member, not to exceed two (2) votes. Except as otherwise provided, any action authorized at a membership meeting, which has been duly called, shall require a majority of the votes cast at such meetings by the membership entitled to vote.

### **Section 8.5: Parliamentary Authority**

SLADS shall conduct its meetings using modern business management methods, including advance preparation and dissemination of agendas, completion and publication of meeting minutes with action items and decisions, and decision making by consensus. Roberts Rules of Order Revised may be invoked if desired or necessary.

### **Section 8.6: Notice**

Due notice is defined by publication of notice of such meeting in any newsletter, on SLADS website or other regular communication distributed by SLADS to its members, at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting.

## **Article 9: Conflict of Interest**

Whenever a member of the Board of Directors or its Committees may derive personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, or there is an appearance of personal profit or gain, in any matter coming before the Board of Directors, the affected person shall:

- A. fully disclose the nature of the interest and
- B. withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter.

Any transaction or vote involving a potential conflict (or appearance of conflict) of interest shall be approved only when a majority of disinterested directors determine that it is in the best interest of SLADS to do so. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.

## **Article 10: Board of Directors**

General Powers, Number, Election, and Tenure, Resignation, Meetings, Quorum and Vote of Directors, Removal, Vacancies, Compensation, and Committees

### **Section 10.1: General Powers**

With the understanding that they are the representatives of SLADS membership, the Board of Directors shall act as the governing and policy making body of SLADS consistent with these Bylaws, to support and accomplish the mission of SLADS.

### **Section 10.2: Number**

The Board of Directors shall consist of an uneven number of members. There will be at least five (5) but no more than fifteen (15) members. Each individual must be a member of SLADS in good standing. The Directors shall

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include the Officers, as provided in Article 10 and one (1) or more at-large board members. A Director may hold only one position on the Board.

### **Section 10.3: Election and Tenure**

- A. The Board of Directors shall be elected from the membership, by the membership, at the Annual Election. Directors, who may also be Officers, shall be elected for terms of two (2) years and are permitted to serve for two (2) consecutive terms, unless overridden by a majority vote of the membership. At the end of the term, each Director shall transfer all records pertaining to SLADS to the Board of Directors or as directed by the current or incoming President of SLADS, within a reasonable period of time not to exceed twenty (20) days.
- B. The offices of President and Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting on the even years and shall serve from the first day after the election for two consecutive years.
- C. The offices of Vice President and Secretary shall be elected at the Annual Meeting on the odd years and shall serve from the first day after the election for two consecutive years.

### **Section 10.4: Resignation**

Any member of the Board of Directors may resign by submitting a written statement of resignation to the President of SLADS. Such resignation will be effective upon its acceptance by the President or the President's designee.

### **Section 10.5: Conflict of Interest Statement**

All members of the Board of Directors are required to sign a Conflict of Interest Statement. This document shall be completed prior to the completion of one month in office. The Secretary will maintain all signed Conflict of Interest Statements as part of the official record of SLADS.

### **Section 10.6: Meetings, Times, Locations and Types of Meetings.**

- A. The Board of Directors shall meet at such times and places as the President of SLADS shall designate. The President shall annually schedule regular meetings of the Board of Directors for the current year shortly after the Annual Meeting, and no further notice shall be required for members of the Board. The Board of Directors shall meet at least eight (8) times during the membership year. One month advanced notice of these meetings will be given to the membership through publication in the official SLADS newsletter, electronic posting on the official SLADS website and through individual e-mail.
- B. The President may call Special Meetings of the Board of Directors and must call such meetings at the request of any two (2) Directors. Notices of any Special Meeting shall be given at least two (2) days prior to the date of such meeting. Such notice may be made by telephone, fax, or written notice delivered by mail or electronic means of communication to each member of the Board of Directors at their home or business address. Notice will also be posted on the official SLADS website and the membership electronically alerted to the purpose of the meeting. The purpose of the Special Meeting shall be specified in the notice of the meeting.

### **Section 10.7: Quorum and Vote of Directors.**

A majority of the Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transactions of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors. The vote of a majority of the Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be an action of the Board of Directors, except as otherwise required by these Bylaws.

### **Section 10.8: Removal**

In accordance with Article 7, Section 3, any member of the Board of Directors may be removed, after given due notice, with just cause by the members of SLADS and may be removed, after given due notice, for just cause by of the Board of Directors.

### **Section 10.9: Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, the Nominating Committee shall submit nominations to be voted on by the membership in a special election to be held two months after membership notification of

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nominees. A Director elected to fill such a vacancy shall hold the office for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor.

### Section 10.10: Compensation

No member of the Board of Directors may be paid for his or her board service, except that an actual expense incurred may be reimbursed. No Board member may hold any paid/salaried position with SLADS.

### Section 10.11: Committees

- A. Standing Committees. There shall be Standing Committees of SLADS to coordinate and perform the activities of SLADS, as set forth in the Standing Rules. The Coordinator of each Standing Committee is responsible for coordinating such functions as any Standing Rule adopted by the Board of Directors shall designate. Each Coordinator shall report on a monthly basis the activities of her or his Committee to the Board of Directors.
- B. Other Committees and Activities. From time to time, the Board of Directors may assign additional responsibilities to the Standing Committees or may delegate the authority to appoint ad hoc committees to conduct the work of SLADS.
- C. Nominating Committee.
  1. The Board of Directors shall appoint, in September, a Nominating Committee of two (2) to four (4) members of SLADS. The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least one Board member. Every effort should be made to select the remaining members of the Nominating Committee from the membership.
  2. It shall be the duty of the Committee to determine the open positions on the Board of Directors, as defined by these bylaws and Standing Rules, and to provide to the membership the list of open positions along with their associated duties. The Committee will accept nominations for the listed positions from the membership. In all cases, consent of the suggested nominee must be obtained prior to the nomination.
  3. The Nominating Committee shall notify the Secretary of the names of the persons so nominated at least sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Meeting. The Secretary shall submit a ballot of nominees to all current members no less than thirty (30) days prior to the last date on which the ballots must be returned. The ballot will list the names of the nominees along with the number of positions open for election.
  4. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting. In the case of nomination from the floor, the suggested nominee must be a current member of SLADS in good standing, must be physically present at the meeting in which the election is held, and their consent to be nominated must be obtain prior to nomination.
  5. The Nominating Committee will ensure that all names of nominees for the elected position(s) along with the number of positions that are opened are known to electing membership at the Annual Meeting prior to the actual election.  
*(Amendment #1 - Article 10.11(C) was approved by the general membership on April 10, 2011)*

## Article 11: Officers, Number and Duties, Election and Tenure, Removal, Vacancies and Compensation

### Section 11.1: Number and Duties

- A. All Officers shall be SLADS members in good standing.
- B. The Officers, a total of no less than four (4), shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, each of whom shall be elected by the membership.

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### **Section 11.2: Terms**

The officers' terms are defined in Article 10, Section 3, and shall be staggered as defined in Article 10, Section 3 of these Bylaws.

### **Section 11.3: Responsibilities and Authority**

Any Officer may be requested by the Board of Directors to give Bond, at the expense of SLADS, for the faithful performance of his/her duties in such amount and with such sureties as the Board of Directors may direct. The Officers of SLADS shall not receive a salary for their services as an Officer of SLADS, but may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

- A. President. The President shall be the executive officer of SLADS. The President shall supervise and control the business affairs of SLADS, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The President shall prepare the agenda and preside at all meetings of the members, of the Board of Directors. The President shall be the signee, with any other officer of SLADS authorized by the Board of Directors, for any certificate of SLADS, any deed, mortgage, bond, contract, or other document which shall be required by law or company to be signed or executed. The President shall perform all duties incident to the office of the President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee, and act as the representative of SLADS.
- B. Vice President. In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the designated Vice President shall perform the duties of the President and, when so acting, shall have all the authority of and be subject to the restrictions upon the President. The Vice President shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.
- C. Secretary. The Secretary shall record and keep the minutes of the proceedings of the members and of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall be responsible for furnishing to each Director the minutes of the prior meeting and the agenda of the next meeting of the Board of Directors at least five (5) days before the next meeting. The Secretary shall maintain the permanent files of SLADS. The Secretary shall perform all duties incident to the office of the Secretary.
- D. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of SLADS. The Treasurer shall receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to SLADS in such banks or other depositories as shall be approved by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall submit at least quarterly financial reports to the Board of Directors. The Treasurer, at the Annual Meeting, shall submit a written report of financial transactions of SLADS for the preceding fiscal year. The Treasurer may perform other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer may be bonded. Financial audits will be conducted for the account(s) of SLADS at the conclusion of each Treasurer's term in office.

### **Section 11.4: Removal**

Any Officer may be removed by the same process as for the removal of a member of the Board of Directors, as prescribed in Article 10, Section 8 of these Bylaws.

### **Section 11.5: Vacancies**

- A. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise, may be filled through a special election one month after the membership is notified of the nominees.
- B. The Nominating Committee shall submit nominations to be voted on by the general membership at this meeting. The Director elected shall hold office for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor.

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### **Article 12: Amendments**

#### **Section 12.1. Amendment of Bylaws**

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new Bylaws may be adopted. Proposed amendments shall be presented to the Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled meeting for clarification and wording before presentation to the membership. Proposed amendments shall be carefully screened by the Board of Directors for impact on existing sections to avoid conflict, confusion or contradiction.

#### **Section 12.2. Approval Process**

Board-approved amendment proposals shall be published in the newsletter prior to discussion at a general meeting. After discussion by the membership, the finalized amendment proposals shall be published in the newsletter twice and posted on the official SLADS website along with a ballot. Ballots received by the meeting day shall count in addition to the votes cast by those members present at the meeting. The amendment is passed by a simple majority of ballots and members present at meeting.

#### **Section 12.3: Exception Process**

An exception to the above Amendment process may occur if the Bylaws must be amended in order to meet any state or federal law or to meet USDF GMO compliance. Regulatory Amendments will be adopted immediately into the current SLADS Bylaws. These Regulatory Amendments will be published to the membership with the next newsletter and posted on the official website within two weeks.

### **Article 13 Contracts, Checks, Deposits, Funds, and Finance**

#### **Section 13.1: Authorization**

The Board of Directors may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of SLADS, in addition to the officer so authorized by these Bylaws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of SLADS, and authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

#### **Section 13.2: Establishment of Debt Amount**

At the January Board meeting of each year the Board of Directors shall review and establish a policy naming the amount of money for which a check or debt incurred can be issued in the name of SLADS requiring the signature of two authorized signatories. This policy will be noted as a separate line item within the official minutes of the meeting.

#### **Section 13.3: Handling of Funds**

All checks, drafts, or orders for payment of money, notes or other forms of indebtedness exceeding the current year's Board amount of authorized indebtedness issued in the name of SLADS shall be signed by the President and either the Treasurer or Secretary. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall sign such documents. In the absence of both the Treasurer and Secretary, the Vice President shall sign such documents. The Vice President cannot sign for both the President and Treasurer/Secretary on the same document. All monetary transactions resulting in an amount equal to or less than the current year's Board- authorized amount of indebtedness for expenditures approved by the Board at a properly called meeting require only the signature of the Treasurer or Secretary. All funds of SLADS shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of SLADS and in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board of Directors shall select.

#### **Section 13.4: Acceptance of Gifts**

The Board of Directors may accept or refuse, on behalf of SLADS any contribution, gift, bequest or device for the general purpose or any special purpose of SLADS.

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### **Section 13.5: Handling of SLADS Funds**

SLADS shall be prudent and cautious in the handling and spending of SLADS funds. Other than day-to-day business expenses, monies shall not be spent without appropriate financial controls, accountability, and serious Board of Director evaluation. All continuing business expenses (as defined herein) in excess of the current year's Board-authorized amount of indebtedness (total cost) and all other expenses shall have prior approval by the Board of Directors, unless previously approved as part of SLADS's budget. All budgeted funds shall not be exceeded without approval of the Board.

### **Article 14: Dissolution**

If at any time SLADS discontinues its activities, dissolves or otherwise ceases to exist or function, then any funds remaining in its treasury after all debts have been paid shall be distributed to the USDF or to a USDF Group Member Organization of SLADS choosing. Any other physical assets shall be distributed to a dressage organization that is in current operation with an active membership and management.

### **Article 15: Miscellaneous Provisions**

#### **Section 15.1: Indemnity**

SLADS shall, to the extent legally permissible, indemnify each person who is, or shall have been, at the time, an Officer, Director or representative of SLADS specified by the majority of the board of Directors, including Coordinators and Functional Managers (collectively, "Indemnified Person") against any and all liabilities and expenses (including judgments, fines, penalties and reasonable attorneys' fees) incurred by or imposed upon such indemnified Person in connection with or arising out of any action, suit or other proceeding, whether civil or criminal, in which an Indemnified Person may be a defendant or with which an Indemnified Person may be threatened or otherwise involved by virtue of his or her having been such Officer, Director or specified representative of SLADS (other than a proceeding voluntarily action initiated by such Indemnified Person unless such proceeding was authorized by the majority of the Board of Directors).

SLADS shall provide no indemnification with respect to:

- A. Any matter as to which any such Indemnified person shall be finally adjudicated in such action, suit or proceeding not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his or her action was in the best interest of SLADS; or
- B. Any matter settled or compromised, pursuant to a consent decree or otherwise, unless (a) such settlement or compromise shall have been approved as being in the best interest of SLADS, after notice that indemnification is involved, by a disinterested majority of the Board of Directors or (b) there had been obtained at the request of a majority of the Board of Directors then in office an opinion of independent legal counsel to the effect that such Indemnified person appears to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his or her actions were in the best interest of SLADS.
- C. SLADS' obligation hereunder shall insure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of an Officer, Director or specified representative if SLADS is entitled to indemnification hereunder. Indemnification under this Section may include payment by SLADS of expenses in defending a civil or criminal action or proceeding in advance of the final disposition of such action or proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by such Indemnified Person to repay such payment if it is ultimately determined that such Indemnified Person is not entitled to indemnification under this section.

SLADS' obligations hereunder shall be offset to the extent of any otherwise applicable insurance coverage under a policy maintained by SLADS or other person or of any other source of indemnification. The rights of indemnification provided in this Section shall not be exclusive of or affect any other rights to which any indemnified Person may be entitled under any agreement, statute, and vote of the membership or otherwise. Nothing

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contained in this Article shall affect any right to which any indemnified Person may be entitled by contract or otherwise under law.

### **Section 15.2: Affiliations**

SLADS shall be affiliated with the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and the United States Dressage Federation, Inc. (USDF). SLADS may affiliate with other appropriate horse organizations as approved by the Board of Directors and listed in the Standing Rules.