

Bylaws of AGEHR Area I, Inc.

PREAMBLE

The American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, Area I, Inc., a non-profit corporation recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 charitable organization and incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under G.L. Ch. 180, shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with the corporation's Articles of Incorporation, with its amendments, and with these Bylaws as amended periodically.

ARTICLE I. NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1. The name of this corporation is AGEHR, AREA I, INC. (Hereinafter referred to as Area I) of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, Inc. (Hereinafter referred to as AGEHR, Inc.). The corporation reserves the right to use the names Area I of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers and the corporation's historical designation, N.E.G.E.H.R., the New England Guild of English Handbell Ringers.

Section 2. The purposes of this corporation shall be as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, and shall include, without limitation, the following objectives: to unite groups through education and to promote the use and employment of handbell and handchime ringing; to promote the exchange of ideas relating to the selection, arrangement, composition, programming, performance and appearance of handbell and handchime ringing; to disseminate all manner of handbell and handchime information by means of papers, publications, and any other lawful means; to sponsor and promote handbell and handchime conferences, seminars, workshops, clinics, concerts, and any other lawful events or activities; and to engage in any lawful act and to pursue any lawful activity and purpose for which a nonprofit corporation may be formed.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Membership in Area I shall be open to all members in good standing of AGEHR, Inc. who reside in the geographical area designated by AGEHR, Inc. as Area I.

Section 1.1. A member in good standing shall be any member who has paid annual dues and has no other outstanding financial obligations to Area I or to AGEHR, Inc.

Section 1.2. Any member serving in an appointed or elected position shall be a voting member in good standing.

Section 2. Area I shall be administered by a Chair elected from the voting members of the Area.

Section 3. With the approval of the Area I Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Area I Board, and the voting membership of Area I, members of Area I shall be organized into Sub-areas, hereinafter referred to as States and Provinces, with further possible division into Districts. The Area Chair, with the approval of the Area I Board, shall determine the number and boundaries of said Sub-areas.

Section 3.1. Any member who resides in states or provinces that are included within the geographical boundaries of Area I shall be a member of that State's or Province's organization. Each State or Province shall have a Chair who is responsible to the Area Chair and Area I Board.

Section 4. Area I and its States and Provinces shall operate under Bylaws consistent with AGEHR, Inc. Bylaws.

Section 5. All categories of membership shall have privileges as established by the AGEHR, Inc. Bylaws or AGEHR Inc. Board of Directors. Area I may grant additional privileges.

### ARTICLE III. OFFICERS

#### Section 1. Elected Officers and Officers by Succession

Officers elected by the Area I membership shall be the Chair-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers shall be chosen from the voting membership of Area I. The position of Area Chair is filled by accession, not by vote, and upon completion of the term of office of Chair-Elect he/she assumes the office of Chair. Elections will be held biennially, in odd-numbered years.

Section 1.1. Twelve months prior to the election, the Area Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee shall appoint a Nominating Committee Chair and a Nominating Committee of at least three members, one of which shall be the Past Chair. If the Past Chair is unable to serve on the Nominating Committee another board member may be appointed, excluding the other members of the Executive Committee. This committee shall nominate two candidates for each of the following offices: Chair-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. All candidates must be members in good standing of Area I and must give their consent to be nominated. Ballots containing candidates' names and biographical material shall be mailed to the entire voting membership of Area I. All ballots must be postmarked by the date designated and returned to and counted by a person or firm independent of the Board. A majority of the votes cast shall elect. An automatic recount shall occur if the margin of victory is less than or equal to 1% of the total votes cast. In the case of a tie, the election shall be determined by the majority vote of the Area I Board. Results of the election shall be announced to the membership in a manner determined by the Area I Executive Committee.

#### Section 2. Executive Committee

Section 2.1. The officers who constitute the Executive Committee shall be the Chair, Chair-Elect, Past Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and shall act for the entire Area I Board, subject to the Board's approval.

Section 2.2. A simple majority of the Executive Committee (3) shall constitute a quorum.

#### Section 3. Appointed Officers

The Area Chair, with approval of the Executive Committee, shall appoint the following from the voting membership:

1. State and Provincial Chairs
2. Membership Chair
3. Educational Liaison

#### Section 4. Terms of Office

Section 4.1. The Chair-Elect shall serve for six years as follows: a two-year term as Chair-Elect, a two-year term as Chair, and a two-year term as Past Chair.

Section 4.2. The Secretary and Treasurer shall serve two years and be eligible for reelection. They may serve no more than two terms consecutively in the same office.

Section 4.3. The term of each elected officer shall commence at the Biennial Area I Meeting, with the exception of the Treasurer. The Treasurer's term will commence at the beginning of the fiscal year following the election.

#### Section 5. Vacancies

Section 5.1. If a vacancy should occur in the office of Chair, the Chair-Elect shall accede to the office for the unexpired term and immediately appoint a nominating committee of at least three who will nominate two persons for the office of Chair-Elect. Within a period of one month after the nominees have been selected and confirmed, a ballot containing these two names and biographical material shall be mailed to the entire Area I voting membership. Election shall be by a majority of those ballots postmarked by the date designated, and returned to and counted by a person or firm independent of the Board. Under these circumstances, the Area Chair's term shall not be shorter than one year or exceed three years.

Section 5.2. If a vacancy should occur in the office of Chair-Elect, the Area Chair shall immediately appoint a nominating committee of at least three who will nominate two persons for the office of Chair-Elect. The election procedure will follow that as specified in Section 5.1 of this article.

Section 5.3. If a vacancy should occur in the office of Secretary or Treasurer, the Area Chair shall appoint, with the approval of the Executive Committee, a voting member to fill out the remainder of the term. If the person filling the vacancy serves one (1) year or less, he/she shall be eligible for nomination and election for the full terms of office as specified in Section 4 of this Article. If the appointee serves for more than one year, he/she shall be eligible for nomination and election for only one full term.

Section 5.4. If a vacancy should occur in an appointed office, the Area Chair shall appoint a replacement, with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 5.5. Any officer moving from the geographical area designated as Area I shall relinquish his/her office immediately.

Section 5.6. Any officer elected to the AGEHR, Inc. Board of Directors shall relinquish his/her Area I office immediately.

#### ARTICLE IV. Standing Committees

Section 1. The Area Chair, with the approval of the Executive Committee, shall appoint from the voting membership Standing Committee Chairs as specified in the Area I Official Records. Upon recommendation of the Standing Committee Chairs, members of the committees shall be appointed by the Area Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The Standing Committee Chairs shall serve in an ex-officio capacity on the Area I Board. All Standing Committee Chairs shall report to the Chair-Elect who will represent them at meetings of the Area I Board.

#### ARTICLE V BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The focus of the Area I Board shall be on policy and governance matters. Policy pertinent to guiding the implementation of specific programs and services shall be established in cooperation and communication with the appropriate committees and/or chairs.

Section 2. The Area I Board shall consist of all elected and appointed officers and officers by succession cited in Article III, Sections 1 and 2.

Section 3. The Area I Board shall meet three times a year. The Area Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee may call special meetings. Members of the Area I Board shall attend all meetings of the Area I Board. Ex-officio members will be invited by the Area Chair to attend meetings when needed.

Section 4. A simple majority (50% + 1) of the Area I Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Area I Board. Each officer cited in Article III, Sections 1 and 2 is eligible to cast one vote only irrespective of the number of positions (elected or appointed) he/she may hold.

Section 5. Upon evidence of any officer's incapacity or unwillingness to serve, the Area I Board, by two-thirds (2/3) vote, may declare that office to be vacant.

#### ARTICLE VI. ADMINISTRATION

The Area I Fiscal Year shall run from October 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### ARTICLE VII. CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

All Area I Festival Conferences and Workshops shall be self-sustaining and operated under the constraints of non-profit organizations.

State and local conferences and workshops may be held when deemed appropriate, economically feasible and not in conflict with AGEHR Inc., Area I events or other local events.

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICIAL RECORDS

Section 1. The Area I Board shall establish documents necessary for implementing these Bylaws and for governing the organization. These shall include the Book of Motions, the Polity Manual, and any additional records as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The rules of procedure contained in Robert's Rules of Order, most recently revised, shall govern the meetings of Area I in all cases where they are applicable and when they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws or any official records adopted by Area I.

Section 3. Nothing contained herein shall operate to relieve Area I of any rule or regulation in which it is governed by AGEHR Inc. Bylaws.

ARTICLE IX. BYLAWS REVISIONS

Section 1. Amendments and revisions to the Area I Bylaws may be initiated by an Area I voting member, a committee appointed by the Area Chair, or by the Area I Board.

Section 2. Bylaws revisions shall be reviewed by the Area I Board. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Area I Board shall be required for approval before the revisions are submitted to the AGEHR, Inc. Board of Directors.

Section 3. Amendments and revisions as approved by the Area I Board and the AGEHR, Inc. Board of Directors shall be mailed to the voting membership of Area I at least 30 days prior to ratification. Amendments and revisions to the Bylaws shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of all ballots received. All ballots must be postmarked by the date designated and returned to and counted by a person or firm independent of the Board.

ARTICLE X. DISSOLUTION

Section 1. Should Area I be dissolved, its net assets shall be transferred to AGEHR, Inc.

Section 2. Should any authorized Sub-Area of Area I be dissolved, its net assets shall be transferred to the next higher level of Area I.