

CONSTITUTION OF THE LAO-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION (SAMAKHOM-LAO-AMERICAN)
NOVEMBER 1969

TO REPLACE THE STATUTES REVISED AS OF DECEMBER 1963

Article I. Name of the Association

The Association shall be known in English as the Lao-American Association (LAA) and in Lao as the Samakhom-Lao-American (ສາມາຄົມ ລາວ-ອາເມລິກັນ (ສອກ)).

Article II. Purpose of the Association
Lao-American Association

The (LAA) is an educational and cultural organization devoted to strengthening the bonds of understanding between the peoples of the Kingdom of Laos and of the United States. It is non-profit, non-political and non-sectarian. Its annual program of activities may include the following:

1. Sponsorship of activities of other organizations having similar aims.
2. Educational programs, especially those bearing on the languages, cultures, history, institutions and ideals of Laos and the United States.
3. Organization of lectures, exhibits, concerts, broadcasts, screenings, and other cultural and artistic activities.
4. Publication of bulletins, brochures, books, etc.

Article III. Location

The principal center of the Lao-American Association (~~Samakhom-Lao-American~~) (LAA) shall be in Vientiane with branches in other parts of the Kingdom when deemed financially and culturally justifiable and practicable. Branch associations shall function under the authority of this constitution and the Board of Directors.

Article IV. Membership

1. Regular Membership in the Association is open to all citizens of Laos and of the United States 18 years of age and over, upon payment of the current dues, who share the aims of the Association and who wish to participate in its activities. Voting rights are reserved to Regular Members.

2. Associate Membership is open to all those 18 years of age and over who do not hold Lao or American citizenship but in every other way conform with the requirements for regular membership. Associate Members shall pay the same dues as Regular Members and be eligible for participation in all activities of the Association save that of holding office and voting.

3. Student Membership is open to all students under 22 years of age registered in classes of the Lao-American Association for so long as they continue in their courses, and to former students who express a continued interest in the Association and are not eligible for Regular or Associate Membership. Student Members may not vote or hold office but shall have other privileges of Membership determined by the Board.

4. All memberships are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

Article V. Board of Directors. Election and Duties

1. The Board of Directors shall be the governing body of the Association, elected from the regular membership or from persons willing and eligible to become members, and consisting of an equal number of Lao (6) and American (6) citizens. An additional two members of each nationality, to be designated first and second alternates, shall be elected to serve in case of resignation. At the first meeting following its election the Board shall choose from its membership the following officers:

President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer

2. Elections: The Board of Directors shall be elected by secret, mailed ballot, prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Membership, from a slate of 12 Lao and 12 American candidates, to serve for a term of 12 months. An affirmative response by 25% of the membership shall constitute election. The candidates for the Board shall be selected in advance by circulating to all regular members a list of those eligible for office and requesting that they choose candidates from among those listed. In addition, the President shall appoint a committee of not more than three persons to supervise this poll of the membership and to present other suitable names when necessary.

The election of officers at the first meeting of the new Board shall be by secret ballot with each member stating his choice opposite the office listed on the ballot. In case of a tie, a new vote will be taken. Until such time as the newly elected Board has convened and selected its officers, the outgoing officers shall continue to perform the duties of their respective offices.

3. Duties of Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall:

- a) Be responsible for the implementation of the present constitution.
- b) Be the constituted authority of the Association and prepare to its name the annual report of its activities.
- c) Approve all activities of the Association including recommendations of any scholarships that may become available.
- d) Approve activities of the various branches and the appropriate raising and use of available funds allotted to them.
- e) Determine amounts of dues and fees.

4. Duties of the Officers:

The President shall preside over all meetings of the general membership and of the Board of Directors. He shall be the official representative of the Association and shall be responsible for the execution of the provisions set forth in the Constitution and for implementing the decisions of the Board of Directors and of those of the membership meeting in general assembly. On voice or roll call votes at meeting of the Board he shall vote only to make or break a tie; in all other ballots he shall vote as a regular member. He may call special meetings of the Board and of the general membership at any time that he feels it is necessary. He shall share with the Treasurer the responsibility for supervising all financial transactions of the Association.

The Vice-President shall assist the President in all his duties, replace him in case of absence and undertake any special commissions assigned to him by the President.

The Secretary shall record the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors and of the general membership meetings and be responsible for the supervision of the staff in filing correspondence, preserving records, issuing membership cards and notifying the membership of meetings.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for submitting at the request of the Board, reports of the financial status of the organization and presenting a report to the General Membership at the Annual Meeting. He shall also supervise the keeping of financial records, and share with the President the responsibility for supervising all financial transactions of the Association.

Article VI. Administration

The general administration of the Association is delegated to the Director of the Lao-American Association, and to his staff where matters of policy are not concerned and where the Board is kept fully informed, in advance, of all planned activities. The right is reserved to the Board to inquire into the administrative activities at any time and to take appropriate action where the Board's responsibilities are concerned.

All members of the administrative staff, including the Director, serve subject to the approval of the Board.

Article VII. Fiscal Management

The Lao-American Association (LAA) shall function as a non-profit association and shall support itself by:

1. Membership dues
2. Income from activities
3. Tuition
4. Subsidies and grants
5. Donations.

All grants and donations shall be subject to the approval of the Board.

Real property of any kind necessary to carry out the aims and objectives of the Association may be acquired and retained or disposed of by permission of the Board. All Board members serve without remuneration and no member shall be held individually responsible for the financial obligations of the Association.

The Director of the Association shall present to the incoming Board for approval a budget forecast for the forthcoming fiscal year. The Director shall further obtain and present to the Board an independent audit of account at the close of the fiscal year.

Article VIII. Meetings, Quorum, and Procedure

1. The Board of Directors shall meet at least once each month. An Annual Meeting of the General Membership is required and shall be held as soon as ^{practicable} ~~possible~~ after the beginning of the calendar year. Special meetings may be called at any time by the President or on the written request of 25% of the regular membership.

2. A quorum at the meetings of the Board of Directors shall consist of at least half the members of the Board, two of whom must be officers and two of whom must be of a different nationality than the others present.

A quorum at the Annual Meeting of the general membership shall consist of the Regular Members present. At this meeting the members of the new Board shall be presented to the General Membership and the Annual Reports given.

A quorum at a Special Meeting of the General Membership shall consist of the Regular Members present.

Article IX. Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by:

1. having the proposed amendments sent by mail to the entire Regular Membership, accompanied by a form for acceptance or rejection, with a one month's period allowed for consideration. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members voting will constitute approval; or

2. calling a special general meeting after having circulated by mail the proposed amendments, again allowing for one month's consideration, and approval would be constituted by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of Regular Members present and voting.

Amendments to the Constitution are subject to the approval of the Lao Minister of the Interior or his designee and of the American Ambassador or his designee.

Article X.

Dissolution

*under extraordinary circumstances
by RLG or*

The Association can be dissolved only at a Meeting of the General Membership attended by at least three-quarters of the Regular Members, provided that approval for dissolution is given by at least two-thirds of the members present. A report of the dissolution shall be made to the proper authorities, such as the Ambassador of the United States of America and the Minister of the Interior of the Kingdom of Laos.

The possessions of the Association shall be turned over to charity or to organizations selected by members of the Board of Directors, but only after the approval of two-thirds of the Board of Directors.