

CONSTITUTION OF THE

AFRICAN COMMUNITIES OF MANITOBA INC.

(ACOMI)

Table of Contents

PREAMBLE	5
ARTICLE 1 - DEFINITIONS	6
ARTICLE 2 - NAME AND PLACE OF BUSINESS	6
ARTICLE 3 - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	7
ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP.....	8
4.1. Eligibility of membership	8
4.2. Membership Categories	8
4.3. Application.....	8
4.4. Admission	8
4.5. Membership Fee.....	8
4.6. Membership Rights and Obligations	9
4.7. Cessation of Membership - Individuals	9
4.8. Cessation of Membership - Organizations.....	9
4.9. Honorary Patrons	9
ARTICLE 5 – GOVERNANCE.....	10
5.1. Term of Office	10
THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY	10
5.2. Definition	10
5.3. Meetings.....	10
5.4. Functions of the Assembly.....	10
5.5. Decision-making.....	10
THE ACOMI COUNCIL.....	10
5.6. Qualification	10
5.7. Composition.....	11
5.8. Balanced representation	11
5.9. Decision-making	11
5.10. Functions of the ACOMI Council.....	11
The ACOMI ADVISORY GROUP	12
ARTICLE 6 – ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT	13
6.1. Term of Office	13
6.2. Executive Committee.....	13
6.3. Functions of the Executive Committee.....	13

ARTICLE 7 - DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	14
7.1. General.....	14
7.2. President.....	14
7.3. Vice-President.....	14
7.4. Secretary	15
7.5. Deputy Secretary-General.....	15
7.6. Treasurer	15
7.7. Deputy Treasurer	16
7.8. Member-At-Large.....	16
ARTICLE 8 - COMMITTEES	17
8.1. Terms of Reference.....	17
8.2. Standing Committees	17
8.3. Working Committees	17
ARTICLE 9 - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.....	18
ARTICLE 10 – DISSOLUTION	18
BY-LAWS	19
BY-LAW 100 - FUNCTIONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES	19
100.1. Programs Committee	19
100.2. Economic Integration Committee.....	19
100.3. Government and Civic Relations Committee	20
100.4. Culture and Heritage Committee	20
100.5. Youth and Education Committee.....	20
100.6. Membership Services Committee.....	21
100.7. Governance Committee	21
100.8. Finance and Fundraising Committee	22
100.9. Information and Communication Committee	22
BY-LAW 101 – FINANCES	22
101.1. Fiscal Year	22
101.2. Source of Funds	22
101.3. Accounts	22
101.4. Signatures.....	22
101.5. ACOMI Seal	23
101.6. Limit of Indebtedness	23
BY-LAW 102 – MEETINGS	23

BY-LAW 103 - EMERGENCY AND SPECIAL MEETINGS	23
BY-LAW 104 - VOTING FOR OFFICES AND PROCEDURES FOR ELECTIONS	24
104.1. Voting Rights	24
104.2. Election Period.....	24
104.3. Eligibility for Office	24
104.4. Election Process	24
BY-LAW 105 - RULES AND REGULATIONS	25
105.1. Enactment	25
105.2. Robert Rules of Order.....	25
BY-LAW 106 - AFFILIATIONS	25
BY-LAW 107 - INTERPRETATION	25
BY-LAW 108 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	25
BY-LAW 109 - IMPEACHMENT.....	26
BY-LAW 110 – MEMBER IDENTIFICATION	27
EFFECTIVE DATE.....	28
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS HISTORY	29

CONSTITUTION OF THE
AFRICAN COMMUNITIES OF MANITOBA INC. (ACOMI)
As amended in Winnipeg, MB. on 09th January 2011.

Incorporated in the Province of Manitoba on the 21st October 1997 as
African Communities of Manitoba (Africa Pavilion) Inc.

PREAMBLE

Whereas we the members of the African community resident in Manitoba, Canada are mindful of our cultural heritage as the major unifying factor providing us with an identity, unity of purpose and serves as the driving force in all our endeavors;

Whereas we are conscious of the diverse nature of our background and the differing languages spoken by our membership;

Whereas we are aware of the aspirations of our community, being one of the ethno-cultural groups in the Canadian mosaic;

Now therefore may it be known and understood that we the members of the various African organizations in Manitoba, desire to unite freely, and voluntarily under one organization, the African Communities of Manitoba Inc., also referred to as ACOMI; for the purpose of:

- promoting unity, friendship, brotherhood and sisterhood among people of African heritage in Manitoba, and
- to promote mutual understanding between peoples of African heritage and Canadians of other backgrounds, and
- to ensure that people of African heritage have access to the goods and services needed to address issues of poverty, homelessness, education, health, nutrition and social exclusion delivered in a culturally appropriate manner, and
- to preserve our common cultural heritage while recognizing our separate identities.

ARTICLE 1 - DEFINITIONS

- 1.1. **“Africa”** refers to the continent of Africa and its contiguous islands as so recognised by the African Union or its descendant body.
- 1.2. **“African”** shall refer to:
 - i. a person who was born in Africa, or
 - ii. a person born of an African parent, or
 - iii. a person who has legally become a citizen of an African country, or
 - iv. the spouse of an African as described herein under (i), (ii) and (iii).
- 1.3. **“African Community Assembly”** refers to the open general meeting of all members of ACOMI, including individual members of affiliate and associate organizations and individual and honorary ACOMI members, and is referred to as the Assembly.
- 1.4. **“ACOMI Council”** refers to the body of elected and/or nominated representatives of the affiliate organizations, and is referred to as the Council or Board of the organization.
- 1.5. **“Executive Committee”** refers to a group of officials elected from the Council by the Council members; which is responsible for the function of the organization on a day to day basis.
- 1.6. **“Organization”** refers to a group of at least five (5) individuals properly constituted and who form a group with a stated common goal or objective. No more than two members from the same family shall count towards the five individuals stated herein.
- 1.7. Where the masculine is used in this document, it shall be determined to include the feminine and neuter, the singular shall include the plural, and vice versa, as the context may require.

ARTICLE 2 - NAME AND PLACE OF BUSINESS

- 2.1. The **name of the organization** shall be: “AFRICAN COMMUNITIES OF MANITOBA INC.” hereinafter referred to as “ACOMI”.
- 2.2. The **place of business** shall be in the Province of Manitoba, Canada and the office shall be located in Winnipeg at such an address as shall be secured by the ACOMI Executive Committee and approved by the Assembly.

ARTICLE 3 - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. ACOMI is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization and is not affiliated with any political party or religious organization.
- 3.2. ACOMI is operated as an organization without purpose of gain for its members and any profits or assets are used solely to promote its aims and objectives.
- 3.3. The motto of ACOMI shall be: **“Advancing Community Unity and Prosperity”**
- 3.4. The aims and objectives of ACOMI are:
 - To establish and operate a resource centre to be used for the delivery of food and emergency supplies; literacy programs; employment training and mentoring; referral services; and counselling for the benefit of the community.
 - To advance education by providing secondary and post-secondary scholarships to qualified low-income students of African heritage.

ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1. **Eligibility of membership** – Members of ACOMI may be individuals, associations or organizations that accept and support the aims and objectives of ACOMI.
- 4.2. **Membership Categories** – There shall be five categories of membership:- Affiliate organizations, associate organizations, individual members, Friends of Africa and honorary members. Article 5 describes the voting rights of the various membership categories.
- a) Affiliate membership shall be open to all African organizations. Affiliate organizations shall retain their identity and programs of activities. Members of affiliate organizations shall automatically become individual members of ACOMI. Affiliate organizations shall elect or nominate one (1) representative and one (1) alternative representative to the ACOMI Council.
 - b) Associate membership shall be open to non-African organizations. Representatives of associate organizations shall be observers on the Council.
 - c) Individual membership shall be open to those Africans not belonging to any affiliate organization, though these individuals are encouraged to belong and integrate into their appropriate ACOMI-affiliated community organizations.
 - d) Friends of Africa membership shall be granted to an individual who has been or lived in Africa or who has been closely associated with Africa (for example, as an expatriate, peacekeeper, peacecorp, etc.) and who wishes to be a member of ACOMI.
 - e) Honorary membership shall be granted to individuals who have made significant contribution(s) to the African community.
- 4.3. **Application** – Application for membership must be in writing using an ACOMI approved application form and must be accompanied by payment of the prescribed membership fee. The application package provided to a prospective member shall consist of (a) an application form, (b) the ACOMI constitution, (c) the ACOMI code of conduct, (d) a list of member rights, responsibilities and obligations.
- 4.4. **Admission** – At all times the ACOMI Council in its unfettered discretion shall have the authority to determine the admission of members to ACOMI. Admission requirements shall include a copy of the prospective organization’s constitution, a list of its Executive or/and governing officials and a list of members updated annually. The Council shall decide on the best way to identify ACOMI members e.g. by issuing a membership card.
- 4.5. **Membership Fee** – There shall be an annual membership fee(s) in such amount(s) as may be approved from time to time by the ACOMI Council. The annual

membership is due no later than January 1st of the current year. Delinquent fee(s) will be subject to a surcharge, to be approved by the ACOMI Council.

4.6. **Membership Rights and Obligations** – All members shall:

- a) Actively participate in ACOMI affairs
- b) Volunteer in ACOMI projects and events
- c) Participate in running the ACOMI offices and accept and successfully carry out responsibilities or duties assigned by the ACOMI Executive and/or Council
- d) Be a good ambassador for ACOMI and promote the public image and reputation of ACOMI
- e) All members shall pay the membership fee as prescribed by the ACOMI Council from time to time.
- f) Members of affiliate organizations shall have the right to vote at any meeting of the Assembly and shall have the right to elect and/or nominate representatives to the ACOMI Council.
- g) Members shall have the right to be elected and/or nominated as members of the ACOMI Council

4.7. **Cessation of Membership - Individuals** - An individual may cease to be a member if:

- a) S/he leaves the province of Manitoba permanently;
- b) S/he is deceased;
- c) S/he is no longer in good standing;
- d) Fails to pay annual membership dues on time as specified in 4.5 herein. Membership may be renewed after payment of all outstanding dues and surcharges.
- e) Wishes to renounce or cancel her/his membership, and does so in writing to the ACOMI President.

4.8. **Cessation of Membership - Organizations**: An organization may cease to be a member if:

- a) The organization is duly dissolved, wound-up, deregistered or otherwise legally ceases to be in operation;
- b) The organization fails to pay to pay annual membership dues on time as specified in 4.5 herein. Membership may be renewed after payment of all outstanding dues and surcharges.

Cessation of membership for an organization affects its members – the members automatically lose their ACOMI membership. Such members can apply as individual ACOMI members.

4.9. **Honorary Patrons**: Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the ACOMI Council may honor an individual or organization that has made great contribution(s) to the African community by designating them as honorary patrons. The designation of honorary patron shall not confer any specific powers.

ARTICLE 5 – GOVERNANCE

5.1. **Term of Office**

- a) Positions shall be for a three (3) year term.
- b) No official shall serve in the same capacity for more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- c) All offices, roles, functions and responsibilities described herein are on a volunteer basis.

THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY

5.2. **Definition** The African Community Assembly refers to the open general meeting of all members of ACOMI, including individual members of affiliate organizations and of associate organizations, and individual and honorary ACOMI members;

5.3. **Meetings**: The Assembly shall be convened at least once every year also referred to as the Annual General Meeting (AGM);

5.4. **Functions of the Assembly**

- a) To receive and ratify the annual reports from the ACOMI Council;
- b) To receive and ratify the annual financial reports from the ACOMI Council;
- c) To ratify recommended amendments to the constitution.

5.5. **Decision-making**: The following membership categories shall have the right to vote at the Assembly

- a) Affiliate membership – members of all affiliate organizations
- b) Individual membership – individual Acomi members

THE ACOMI COUNCIL

5.6. **Qualification** – A member of the ACOMI Council shall be an elected or nominated individual who is an individual member of an affiliate organization in good standing of ACOMI and who:

- a) is over the age of eighteen (18) years;
- b) is a resident of Manitoba;
- c) is willing to uphold this constitution;
- d) has no criminal record.

- 5.7. **Composition** - The ACOMI Council shall consist of one representative from each ACOMI affiliate organization. Individual members (as defined in 4.2c) cannot be members of the Council.
- 5.8. **Balanced representation** – All representatives will have an alternate for the Council. Both the representative and the alternate can attend Council meetings but only one can vote on the Council. The alternate is to be kept informed of all Council meetings and decisions. Alternates will normally be called upon to take over from the representative in case the representative is unable to perform his/her duties as a member of the Council.
- 5.9. **Decision-making** - Members in attendance at ACOMI Council meetings shall have the power to make decisions by way of a majority vote, unless otherwise herein specified.
- 5.10. **Functions of the ACOMI Council** - The ACOMI Council shall:
- a) Elect the Executive Committee from among members of the Council;
 - b) Communicate decisions affecting the membership;
 - c) Set the direction and prioritize ACOMI activities;
 - d) Ratify appointment of chairpersons for various committees;
 - e) Approve projects and programs;
 - f) Receive and approve required reports from and through the Executive Committee;
 - g) Approve the annual financial budget;
 - h) Recommend auditor(s) to the Assembly;
 - i) Ensure that information from member groups is coming forward in an effective format to the Council for consideration and/or action;
 - j) Approve the membership dues recommended by the Executive Committee for the various categories of membership;
 - k) Approve all applications and terminations of membership;
 - l) Establish standing committees which are necessary for the organization
 - m) Undertake any other tasks requested or directed by the Assembly;
 - n) Oversee that Council members liaise with the community organization that they represent for community outreach duties and shall provide written or verbal reports to the ACOMI Council;
 - o) Allow each council member to serve on at least one standing committee. Council members may be appointed as chair of a standing committee;
 - p) Receive and approve amendments to the constitution;
 - q) Review Treasurer’s investment research results and recommend and decide on investment avenues;
 - r) Oversee the smooth-running of the Executive Committee and Committee

activities; the Executive and Standing Committees report to the Council.

- s) Set an amount limit of funds to be used by the Executive Committee as 'petty cash' or for short term operating expenses;
- t) Regularly review the performance of the various committees, and recommend and take corrective actions where appropriate.

The ACOMI ADVISORY GROUP

- 5.11. The ACOMI Council in its unfettered discretion shall have the authority to create or form the ACOMI Advisory Group which will consist of non-voting members to advise and guide ACOMI in the right direction. The Advisory Group will meet at least once every calendar year and the Council shall seek advice and direction from the group. Members of the group shall be drawn from the Canadian public.

ARTICLE 6 – ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

6.1. Term of Office

- a) Each position shall be for a maximum term of three (3) years.
- b) No official shall serve in the same capacity for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

6.2. Executive Committee

- a) The day to day management of ACOMI shall be vested in the Executive Committee.
- b) The Executive Committee shall carry out the plan of the organization forward by being responsible for governance and recruitment, staffing and community relations.
- c) The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer and Past-President. The position(s) of Member-at-Large may be created as needed by the Council.
- d) The Executive Committee shall be elected from and by the members of the ACOMI Council

6.3. Functions of the Executive Committee - Members of the Executive Committee shall severally and collectively:

- a) Be responsible that the day to day management of ACOMI occurs;
- b) Represent only the interests, aims and objectives of ACOMI;
- c) Work together as a team in providing leadership to ACOMI;
- d) Execute decisions made by the ACOMI Council and/or Assembly (AGM);
- e) Have power to constitute ad-hoc committee(s) with specific terms of reference;
- f) Prepare annual reports and annual financial reports for approval by the ACOMI Council before submission to the annual general meeting;
- g) Liaise with other organizations;
- h) Liaise with government;
- i) Be accountable to the ACOMI Council;
- j) Report regularly to the Council

ARTICLE 7 - DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

7.1. General

- a) The Executive Committee shall develop operational manuals and codes of conduct for all committees.
- b) Each member of the Executive Committee shall on leaving office surrender all records, monies and property belonging to the Council to his/her successor or to the corporate office, and shall obtain a certificate declaring that the surrender has been completed and that s/he is not indebted to the Council.

7.2. President

The President shall:

- a) Be the chief executive officer of ACOMI;
- b) Preside at all meetings of the ACOMI Executive Committee, ACOMI Council and the Assembly whenever s/he is present except when s/he chooses to ask another person to preside;
- c) Co-sign legally binding documents with the appropriate members of the Executive Committee, giving copies of the same to the Secretary-General;
- d) Be the spokesperson and represent ACOMI;
- e) Present at all ACOMI Council meetings an update of activities and annual general meeting an annual report of ACOMI;
- f) Be an ex-officio member of all committees;
- g) Be a co-signer on ACOMI accounts.

7.3. Vice-President

The Vice-President shall:

- a) Act for President whenever the President is unavailable;
- b) Assume the responsibilities of the president in the event of the President's office becoming vacant, until a by-election is held;
- c) Perform any other duties delegated by the President and/or the Executive Committee;

7.4. **Secretary**

The Secretary-General shall:

- a) Record and keep minutes of the Assembly, ACOMI Council, and Executive Committee meetings;
- b) Keep a confidential copy of names and contact information of all members;
- c) Be in charge of all non-financial correspondence and provide correspondence reports at meetings;
- d) Responsible for maintaining an archive of records and other ACOMI resources;
- e) Be a co-signer on ACOMI accounts;
- f) Will develop the secretariat and will be responsible for its smooth running.

7.5. **Deputy Secretary-General**

The Deputy Secretary-General shall:

- a) Play the role of organizing secretary for ACOMI, including facilitation of events with affiliate and associate organizations, and other organizations.
- b) Act as Secretary-General whenever the Secretary-General is unavailable;
- c) Assume the responsibilities of the Secretary-General in the event of the Secretary-General's office being vacated until a by-election is held;
- d) Perform any other duties assigned by the Secretary-General and/or the Executive Committee.

7.6. **Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall:

- a) Be in charge of all financial matters of ACOMI;
- b) Be responsible for collecting and receiving membership dues and contributions and all monies belonging to ACOMI and shall issue receipts;
- c) Deposit or cause to be deposited in an authorized financial institution all monies belonging to ACOMI;
- d) Be the custodian of all ACOMI financial books, cheque books, and other financial instruments and documents;
- e) Make available to the appointed auditor(s) all ACOMI financial documents and other supportive materials;
- f) Be a co-signer on ACOMI accounts;

- g) Prepare an annual budget at the beginning of each fiscal year with input or consultation with chairpersons of various committees;
- h) Prepare an annual financial report with collaboration by chairpersons of committees, and present the report at the ACOMI Council for review before presentation to the annual general meeting of the Assembly;
- i) Provide a quarterly financial statement to the ACOMI Council.
- j) Receive financial reports from various committee Financial Secretaries;
- k) Conduct research on investment options and present results to the ACOMI council for consideration, investment recommendation and decision.

7.7. **Deputy Treasurer**

The Deputy Treasurer shall:

- a) Act as Treasurer whenever the Treasurer is unavailable
- b) Assume the responsibilities of the Treasurer in the event of the Treasurer's office being vacated until a by-election is held;
- c) Perform any other duties assigned by the Treasurer and/or the Executive Committee.

7.8. **Member-At-Large**

The Member-At-Large shall:

- a) Perform duties as specified by the Council

ARTICLE 8 - COMMITTEES

8.1. Terms of Reference

- a) Structure – Every committee shall consist of volunteers, with a chairperson and approved by the ACOMI Council. Every committee shall have a Secretary;
- b) Term – The committee chairperson shall be in office for the term of Executive Committee.
- c) Programs – The committees shall prepare an annual program of action and budget using a template approved by the Executive Committee and subject to approval by the Executive Committee and the ACOMI Council;
- d) Meetings - The committees shall hold committee meetings as often as needed. All committee meetings shall be open to the general membership.
- e) Standing Committees – Shall meet at least once after the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to set goals and priorities. They shall then report to the Council. A written report must also be submitted to the AGM.
- f) Funds – The committee shall, through the chairperson, be accountable for all funds of the committee. The chairperson shall receive and handover all funds to the Treasurer within fourteen (14) days of an event. Committees shall have no powers to open or operate bank accounts.
- g) Reporting – The committee chairperson shall regularly submit written reports on programs and activities of their committee to the ACOMI Council.

8.2. Standing Committees

ACOMI shall have the following standing committees:

- a) Programs Committee
- b) Economic Integration Committee
- c) Government and Civic Relations Committee
- d) Culture and Heritage Committee,
- e) Youth and Education Committee,
- f) Membership Services Committee
- g) Governance Committee
- h) Finance and Fundraising Committee,
- i) Information and Communication Committee

8.3. Working Committees

- a) Working committees may be formed by interested members from time to time as required, and will be subject to approval by the ACOMI Council.
- b) A member of the Council must sit on the committee but shall not be the chairperson.

ARTICLE 9 - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

- 9.1. Suggestions and/or proposals calling for an amendment to the constitution must be submitted to the Governance Committee;
- 9.2. The committee shall consider all suggestions and amendments and ascertain the need for amendment;
- 9.3. The committee shall circulate the proposed amendment to all members not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the regular meeting of the ACOMI Council or of the African Community Assembly at which the amendment is to be considered;
- 9.4. The suggested and/or proposed amendment shall be discussed and ratified, if accepted, at the African Community Assembly meeting;
- 9.5. For the amendment to pass, it shall require the approval by a simple majority of the members present at the African Community Assembly.

ARTICLE 10 – DISSOLUTION

- 10.1. Upon dissolution and after the payment of all debts and liabilities, all remaining assets will be given to a qualified donee described in subsection 149.1(1) of the Income Tax Act.

BY-LAWS

These By-Laws, consistent with the Constitution of the African Communities of Manitoba Inc., further define and/or regulate the smooth running of ACOMI, its Council, the Executive Committee, other Committees and the general membership. The pattern of relationships and procedures so described is recommended to enable a more effective approach to accomplish the tasks and the work of the African Communities of Manitoba Inc.

BY-LAW 100 - FUNCTIONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

100.1. Programs Committee

- a) Provides general oversight and direction to the activities of ACOMI
- b) Evaluate and generate (new) programs for ACOMI
- c) Functions closely with the Finance and Fundraising Committee
- d) Promote the development of the ACOMI Resource Centre;
- e) Manage all activities related to the development of the ACOMI Resource Centre;
- f) Oversee the day to day running of the ACOMI Resource Centre;
- g) Identify needs and initiatives for maintaining and/or improving the Resource Centre;
- h) Present program of activities to the ACOMI Executive Committee for inclusion in the overall plan of action.
- i) Advise the Acomi Council on how to improve the Resource Centre to cater for the needs of the general public especially Acomi membership
- j) There may be working groups of this committee to cover short-term or seasonal programs or projects such as soliciting applicants for the Scholarship Program and making recommendations to the Executive for approval.
- k) Sample programs would include services to specific populations, community outreach programs to address issues such as poverty, youth alienation (gang involvement), child care services, etc.

100.2. Economic Integration Committee

- a) Provide analysis of the job market for the community;
- b) Analyze trends in employment;
- c) Provide information on professional development of various careers;
- d) Provide information on professional credentialing;
- e) Suggest and advocate for changes in the credentialing process;
- f) Identify barriers related to professional development and credentialing of immigrants, including members of the African community;
- g) Engage or negotiate with employers to provide community members

opportunities to acquire employment.

- h) Promote business ownership by Africans;
- i) Identify sources of information for beginning a business;
- j) Identify and promote programs for business development;
- k) Oversee programs relating to employment.

100.3. Government and Civic Relations Committee

- a) Identify government and civic issues that African immigrants need to know;
- b) Recommending educational programs to enhance Africans understanding of how governments operate in Canada;
- c) Sensitizing and mobilizing the community with its role relative to elections and democracy in Canada;
- d) Act as the immigration and refugee settlement advisory committee for ACOMI;

100.4. Culture and Heritage Committee

- a) Be responsible for all Folklorama related activities, including African Pavilion;
- b) Be responsible for all activities related to the Africa Fest;
- c) Play the leadership role in preserving and promoting African culture and arts;
- d) Coordinate all social and cultural events of ACOMI;
- e) Present their program of activities to the ACOMI Executive Committee for inclusion in the overall plan of action.

100.5. Youth and Education Committee

- a) Organize seminars, workshops, symposia and educational conferences;
- b) Propose, plan, initiate and develop educational programs based on identified needs;
- c) Identify individuals, organizations and programs for educational resource sharing in Manitoba and in Africa.
- d) Actively promote the development of an African Research Institute, either as a free standing institute or in collaboration with other existing institutes;
- e) Work in collaboration with other educational institutions;
- f) Be responsible for the development and maintenance of an educational resource centre and for promoting the availability and accessibility of such material(s);
- g) Identify and promote youth mentoring programs;
- h) Develop and coordinate youth mentorship programs;
- i) Organize annual youth congress;
- j) Arrange recreation and sports activities;
- k) Develop awards and youth recognition programs;
- l) Oversee programs relating to youth.

100.6. Membership Services Committee

- a) Encourage and promote membership to ACOMI and keep an accurate and up-to-date list of all members
- b) Promote and facilitate the participation of members in community events and activities.
- c) Create learning opportunities for Council members and member organizations
- d) Establish a member benefits program (such as group purchasing of goods or services)
- e) Work on the issue of credentials
- f) Identify resources to help members
- g) Develop activity plans involving members.
- h) Identify or create and promote awareness of health and wellness resources;
- i) Identify and promote awareness of community specific health and wellness problems and/or risks;
- j) Promote existing crisis intervention services to the membership;
- k) Organize recreational and sports activities.

100.7. Governance Committee

- a) Members must have working knowledge of the constitution;
- b) Members must be willing and able to protect and defend the integrity of the ACOMI constitution;
- c) Receive and consider comments on the constitution and its by-laws, and make amendment recommendations if necessary to the ACOMI Council and to the Assembly;
- d) Is the final arbiter or interpreter of the constitution;
- e) Shall develop and publicize procedures for proposed amendments to the constitution.
- f) Distribute copies of the current or up to date constitution to all members.
- g) Shall be chaired by the immediate Past-President or if unavailable, the prior most recent Past-President
- h) Advertise available positions for which elections need to be held;
- i) Develop information brochures to educate members on any elections process;
- j) Receive nominations and consider potential candidates proposed by any member of ACOMI;
- k) Make such inquiries as in its discretion it deems necessary to ascertain the names and qualifications of any persons eligible for election and/or nomination to an ACOMI body or office;
- l) Conduct ACOMI elections;

100.8. Finance and Fundraising Committee

- a) Coordinate all finance, audit and fund-raising activities for ACOMI;
- b) Collaborate with other committees in arranging fund raising function(s);
- c) Identify potential funding sources and be primarily responsible for grant applications;
- d) Prepare monthly financial statements for presentation to the Council;

100.9. Information and Communication Committee

- a) Publicize, promote programs of ACOMI and shall undertake publicity campaigns to advance the goals and objectives of ACOMI;
- b) Publish and distribute ACOMI newsletter, brochures, DVDs, websites, and other communication materials;
- c) Collect and disseminate information to the membership and the African community at large;
- d) Monitor the media for issues related to Africa and Africans;
- e) Prepare appropriate rebuttal and critiques to press coverage on African affairs; liaise with the media and be responsible for press releases after consultation with the council through the President;
- f) Promote the ACOMI's programs within the African community
- g) Build goodwill about the ACOMI outside of the community
- h) Act as the public relations advisory body to the Council;
- i) Arrange media interviews on matters related to ACOMI.

BY-LAW 101 – FINANCES

101.1. Fiscal Year - The fiscal year of ACOMI shall be from October 1st of one year to September 30st of the next year: ACOMI shall obtain funds from:

101.2. Source of Funds - ACOMI shall obtain funds from:

- a) Membership subscriptions,
- b) Grants,
- c) Donations,
- d) Wills and bequeaths,
- e) Any other fundraising and investing activities

101.3. Accounts - All funds belonging to ACOMI shall be deposited in a chartered financial institution(s) approved by the ACOMI Council.

101.4. Signatures - There shall be three (3) signatories (President, Secretary-General, and Treasurer) to ACOMI account(s) and withdrawals shall require any two (2) of these signatories;

- 101.5. **ACOMI Seal**: ACOMI shall have a seal to be applied on all official legal documents and to apply the ACOMI seal shall require the presence of the President, and the Secretary-General or the Treasurer. The seal shall be kept under lock and key by the Treasurer and only made available at Executive or ACOMI Council meetings when there are documents that require the ACOMI seal.
- 101.6. **Limit of Indebtedness**: The Executive Committee may arrange for an overdraft protection or line of credit up to the amount and for a time approved by the ACOMI Council.

BY-LAW 102 – MEETINGS

- 102.1. The Assembly shall meet at least once a year, and this shall constitute the annual general meeting (AGM)
- 102.2. Affiliate organizations shall prior to the annual general meeting appoint two delegates to the Assembly and notify the Secretary-General accordingly, at least seven (7) days prior to the AGM. The delegates shall have the right to vote on behalf of their organization, and will be valid for other Assembly meetings within the fiscal year, unless revoked by the affiliate organization.
- 102.3. The ACOMI Council shall meet at least once every two (2) months.
- 102.4. The Executive Committee shall meet as often as the President and the Executive Committee determine, but there shall in any case be at least one meeting every two months.
- 102.5. The various Committees shall meet as often as is necessary in accordance to terms of reference and plan of activities.
- 102.6. There shall be given at least thirty (30) days notice for the Assembly; five (5) days notice for the ACOMI Council and ACOMI Executive Committee meetings, except for emergency meetings as described under By-Law 103.

BY-LAW 103 - EMERGENCY AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

- 103.1. An emergency meeting shall be understood to be a meeting called to address an issue of an urgent nature that has drastic implications to ACOMI and/or the community. An emergency meeting shall be a meeting of the Executive Committee or the ACOMI Council. Twenty-four (24) hours notice for emergency shall be required.

103.2. A special meeting shall be a meeting requested by more than 50 percent of members of the ACOMI Council and may be convened by any member of the ACOMI Council. Such request shall be in writing and shall state the purpose of the meeting and the expected result of the meeting; and shall be called with a notice of at least seven (7) working days from the post-mark of mailing.

BY-LAW 104 - VOTING FOR OFFICES AND PROCEDURES FOR ELECTIONS

104.1. **Voting Rights** - Voting rights will be granted to affiliate organizations and individual members in good standing with ACOMI.

104.2. **Election Period** - Elections will be held prior to expiry of the term.

104.3. **Eligibility for Office** - To be eligible for elective office one must be:

- a) A member of an affiliate organization in good standing;
- b) Resident of Manitoba;
- c) Willing to uphold this constitution;
- d) Law abiding with no criminal record.

104.4. **Election Process**

- a) Only affiliate organizations have the right to either elect or select a representative to the ACOMI Council;
- b) The selection of candidates by an affiliate organization must be determined by voting conducted in a duly convened affiliate organization membership meeting;
- c) Results of selections by an affiliate organization will be accepted only if accompanied by minutes of such a meeting of an affiliate organization at which the voting was performed;
- d) When elections are conducted, the ACOMI Elections Committee will count the votes and tally them up in a setting open to the membership and public ;
- e) The election or selection of representatives to the Acomi Council must occur at least three (3) months before the current officers' term expire;
- f) The chairperson of the Elections Committee shall convene a meeting of ACOMI Council members for purposes of electing a new Executive Committee at least three (3) months before the term of the current Executives expire.
- g) The new Executive and ACOMI council will be introduced to the community shortly following the elections results.

- h) The new ACOMI Council and Executive Committee will take office at least three (3) months before the term of the current officials expire.

BY-LAW 105 - RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 105.1. **Enactment** - The ACOMI Council may enact any rules and regulations affecting the operation of ACOMI as long as they are not inconsistent with the constitution and the by-laws. Such rules and regulation shall have force and effect only until the next annual African Community Assembly meeting of the members when they must be ratified by a simple majority. Otherwise such rules and regulations shall cease to have effect from and after the date of such annual general meeting.
- 105.2. **Robert Rules of Order** - All meetings of members, Committees, the ACOMI Council and the Executive Committee shall be guided by principles of the Robert's Rules of Order.

BY-LAW 106 - AFFILIATIONS

- 106.1. Subject to approval by a majority of the voting members of the ACOMI Council, ACOMI may affiliate with other associations, organizations or institutions as it deems appropriate.

BY-LAW 107 - INTERPRETATION

- 107.1. The final interpretation of this constitution rests with the Governance Committee.

BY-LAW 108 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 108.1. Conflict of interest shall be deemed to have occurred when:
- a) Any member of the ACOMI Council or Executive Committee or other committee awards, approves or gives himself or herself an honorarium without the consent or approval of the ACOMI Council;
 - b) Any member of the ACOMI Council or Executive Committee or other committee awards, assigns, grants, gives to self or performs services for which s/he is paid or receives monetary or material gains without the consent and/or approval of the ACOMI Council;
 - c) Any member of the ACOMI Council or Executive Committee or other committee awards, gives or approves paid contract or services to his or her family members, business associates, or relatives without the consent and approval of the ACOMI Council;

- d) Any member of the ACOMI Council or Executive Committee or other committee awards, gives, appoints or approves a paid position within the Council to any individual who is a member of his or her family, business associates, or relatives, out of favoritism or influence pedaling;
- e) The ACOMI Council reserves the right to award paid contracts, employment, services, honoraria or positions in the organization to any member of the African Community provided that due process has been followed;
- f) Award of paid contracts, employment, services, honoraria or positions must be done on the basis of merit criteria and merit in this context is based on the possession of appropriate/required qualifications, credentials, experiences, knowledge, skills, and demonstrated competence in the area.

BY-LAW 109 - IMPEACHMENT

- 109.1.** Any member of ACOMI Council or Executive Committee is liable to being charged with misdemeanor (misconduct, crime, offense, wrongdoing, delinquency) in office, where misdemeanor means convicted of a criminal offence or in violation of this constitution.
- 109.2.** Any member of the council can bring a motion of impeachment to the ACOMI Council and the motion must be passed by a simple majority.
- 109.3.** The ACOMI Council shall appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of at least three (3) members from amongst themselves to investigate the misdemeanor;
- 109.4.** The process shall require a motion passed by simple majority of members present and voting at the ACOMI Council meeting;
- 109.5.** After passing such a motion the ACOMI Council shall investigate the point at issue without the subject person present;
- 109.6.** Subject to 19 (e), the official so accused of misdemeanor in office shall with immediate effect stop performing his/her duties pending the results of an investigation, and the ACOMI Council shall appoint some other person to act in his/her position until the matter is resolved;
- 109.7.** The ad hoc committee may after due consultation with the Executive Committee and/or the ACOMI Council seek legal counsel;
- 109.8.** The official under investigation must be accorded the opportunity to explain his/her case at all levels of the investigation;
- 109.9.** After the investigations, the ad hoc committee shall make a recommendation to the

ACOMI Council as to the validity of the allegations and recommend appropriate sanctions;

109.10. For criminal allegations, the ad hoc committee must recommend impeachment if there is legal evidence of a felony or conviction of criminal offence, and the ACOMI council must accept the report as presented;

109.11. The verdict of the ad hoc committee shall be unanimous if the committee is to recommend to the Council to impeach the official(s);

109.12. For other allegations, the ACOMI Council shall adopt the recommendations by a simple majority of members of the ACOMI Council present;

109.13. The decision of the ACOMI council shall take effect immediately and the affected person shall be notified in writing of the decision.

109.14. If the individual is cleared of all charges of wrong doing, s/he shall be reinstated in office and the matter shall be deemed closed.

BY-LAW 110 – MEMBER IDENTIFICATION

The ACOMI Council shall decide on the best way to identify individual members of ACOMI. Following are some suggestions:

110.1. Issue of Membership Cards

110.2. Keep an electronic list of all members. For voting during the Assembly each member is given a voting card after signing-in before the meeting. Each member will require a certified identification card e.g. driver's license or passport to be used to match up the member's name against the ACOMI electronic list.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This constitution shall come into force upon, and only upon being ratified by the members entitled to vote thereon in accordance with this constitution.

RATIFIED AND ENACTED this9th..... day ofJanuary, 2011.....

AFRICAN COMMUNITIES OF MANITOBA INC.

Per: ...(Signed).....
André Doumbè - President

Per: ...(Signed).....
Christiana Weah - Secretary General

Per: ...(Signed).....
Frank Indome - Treasurer

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS HISTORY

The Constitution of the African Communities of Manitoba Inc. was declared in force at a Council Meeting on December 16, 2005.

- The constitution has been amended by the Council on 27th. September 2009.
- The constitution has been amended by the Council on 09th. January 2011.

The By-laws were adopted by the Council on December 16, 2005.

- The by-laws have been amended by the Council on 27th. September 2009.

