

## **By-law of the Ontario Environment Network**

### **1. Interpretation**

The term "Network" refers to the Ontario Environment Network, a non-profit organization.

The term “environmental organization, association or group” shall mean an organization, association or group that is working, principally or through elements of its activities, to protect, conserve, restore and/or promote a clean, healthy, sustainable environment for present and future generations.

The term "Steering Committee" refers to the elected Steering Committee of the Ontario Environment Network.

The term “Management Committee” refers to the Management Committee of the OEN Steering Committee, the membership of which shall consist of the Officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer).

The term "member" refers to a member organization as defined in Section 4.

The term “subscriber” refers to an individual or a non-member group that supports the Purpose and Objectives of the Network.

The term "provincial Network meeting" refers to a meeting organized by the Network which is open to all who wish to attend.

The acronym "CEN" refers to the Canadian Environment Network.

The term “Coordinator” refers to the Coordinator or Executive Director of the Ontario Environment Network.

### **2. Purpose**

The Network is a not-for-profit organization that exists to enhance and enable the work of protecting, conserving, restoring and promoting a clean, healthy, sustainable environment for present and future generations. For this purpose, it facilitates cooperation among environmental non-governmental organizations across Ontario, and supports its members

### **3. Objectives**

Without limiting the generality of the above Purpose, the Network will act as a clearinghouse with the following Objectives:

- a. inform the public about environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) that operate in Ontario and encourage public participation in them;
- b. enable environmental groups across Ontario to gain equitable access to discussions about means and measures to protect the environment including consultations with government;
- c. support projects that enhance the collective efforts of environmental groups;
- d. promote networking and caucus activity among environmental groups across Canada through the Canadian Environmental Network (CEN) and its Regional and Affiliate networks and Caucuses;
- e. foster development and maintenance of issue specific provincial caucuses for member groups;
- f. conduct OEN affairs in a manner which ensures active consultation with its staff and member groups;
- g. operate in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner;
- h. ensure a safe and supportive work environment for OEN employees and volunteers.

### **4. Membership**

a. any non-profit, nongovernmental environmental organization which supports the Purpose, Objectives and By-laws of the Network may apply to become a member. The process for determining membership is as follows: the membership application will be reviewed by the steering committee or coordinator and if the group applying meets the criteria, the steering committee or Coordinator will approve their application; if there are any questions, the group will be contacted through a designated group representative to seek clarification; if there are concerns about the group's eligibility, the matter will be brought to the full Steering Committee to make the a final decision.

b. an annual membership fee will be required, set annually by the Steering Committee in consultation with the membership at the Annual General Meeting. The Steering Committee may waive the fee for one year for an organization which is unable to pay.

- c. subscribers (individuals and non-member organizations) may participate in a given Network activity if approved by the members involved in that activity.
- d. membership and all membership rights shall cease if an organization fails to pay its membership fee within four months of notification, or if the Steering Committee finds the organization has ceased to meet any of the other criteria for membership.

## **5. General Operating Procedures**

- a. "The Network is committed to working in a non-sexist, non-racist, non-violent and democratic manner standard at minimum in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.
- b. the Network will try to achieve consensus - as defined in the OEN "Decision-Making Process Policy" - on all decisions, but at any membership meeting, any member may request that a majority vote be taken. In these cases, one delegate per paid-up member organization shall be entitled to vote. A simple majority will decide the question except as otherwise stated in these By-laws. Generally voting will be by show of hands, but a secret ballot is appropriate for elections, and any voting member may request one for other questions.

The Chair may vote only when s/he is the sole representative of a member organization present at a membership meeting.

- c. the Network will remain non-partisan
- d. operation of the Network office shall be under the direction of the Steering Committee. No staff member shall make decisions as to the hiring of permanent staff, application for funding or the making of capital expenditures without the approval of the Steering Committee or a designated sub-committee to be determined by the Steering Committee.

## **6. Steering Committee**

a. Composition of the OEN shall strive to have Provincial representation as outlined below. If it is not possible to meet the geographical representation, portions 6.a(i), 6.a(iii) and 6.a(iv) of the By-law can be suspended, in part or in whole, by a Steering Committee vote to ensure that the work of the OEN is not stalled:

- i) a representative from each of the following regions:
  - Northwestern
  - Northeastern
  - Eastern

- Central
- Metro
- Golden Horseshoe/Niagara Peninsula
- Southwestern;

- ii) there shall be three members-at-large;
- iii) the regional representatives should reside or work and/or have interest in environmental matters in the regions they represent;
- iv) one of the representatives should be a youth representative between age 18 and 25;
- v) the quorum for the Steering Committee shall be four.

**b. Elections to the Steering Committee:**

- i) Election for the Steering Committee will occur at the Annual General Meeting
- ii) in the event of a vacancy the Steering Committee may appoint an interim member
- iii) the Steering Committee may declare the position of one of its members to be vacant if the person misses two consecutive meetings of the Steering Committee without what it considers adequate cause.

**c. Mandate**

- i) to carry out any and all activities which are consistent with the Purpose and Objectives of the Network;
- ii) to allocate the core funds of the Network in accordance with an annual budget approved by the Steering Committee;
- iii) to hire and supervise Network staff;
- iv) to approve capital acquisitions of over \$10,000;
- v) to approve contractual obligations of more than \$10,000;
- vi) to encourage and enable the full involvement of member groups in organizational activities and decisions, notably through a system of caucuses and/or committees;
- vii) to review and approve an annual activity, revenue source and budgetary plan and monitor progress and expenditures against the plan throughout the year;
- viii) to organize provincial meetings of the Network;
- ix) to designate one (1) membership meeting annually as the Annual General Meeting;
- x) to encourage government to continue and/or initiate funding of environmental organizations and/or the Network;

## **7. Head Office of the Network**

Shall be located within Ontario.

## **8. Provincial Networking Meetings**

- a. shall be held at least annually;
- b. the location shall be rotated from region to region as is practically and financially possible;
- c. Objectives:
  - i) to facilitate networking among groups;
  - ii) to offer a forum for groups to share information, each others' political and educational strategies and to plan joint projects among groups;
  - iii) to build trust and affinity among environmentalists;
  - iv) to discuss the Network's involvement in the CEN;
  - v) to enable member groups to discuss issues and positions to be presented to government and other bodies;
  - vi) to contribute to the understanding of member groups on environmental issues and process through workshops, skills development seminars, etc.

## **9. Membership Meetings**

- a. shall take place at a provincial Network meeting to conduct any business and/or actions consistent with the purpose of the Network;
- b. quorum shall be ten member organizations;
- c. proper notice for membership meetings shall be mailed no less than one month before the meeting;
- d. each year one membership meeting shall be designated as the Annual General Meeting at which the following business will be conducted;
  - i) election of the Network Steering Committee;
  - ii) approval of an annual report, which shall include an audited financial statement and budget.

## **10. Funding**

The Network may accept monies from any source subject to the approval of the Steering Committee and may from time to time conduct fundraising activities unless the receipt of such monies places an obligation upon the Steering Committee, or any member group to take actions or make statements which are inconsistent with the Purpose of the Network.

## **11. Amendments**

- a.** this structure may be amended at a provincial membership meeting with the support of 2/3 of the members present.
- b.** members must be given twenty one (21) days written notice of any proposed amendment.

*Approved by AGM November 15, 1997*

*Amended at the November 20, 2004 AGM*

*Amended at the June 11, 2016 AGM*