

# **BY-LAWS of the GULFCOAST HOMING CLUB Inc.**

As revised December 13, 2023

## **ARTICLE I, Organization and Purpose**

1. This organization shall be known as the Gulf Coast Homing Club, Inc. It is incorporated as a not for profit corporation under the laws of the State of Florida.
2. The primary purpose of the Club shall be to conduct pigeon races among its members. It shall also conduct social and fraternal events, and other activities related to the racing pigeon sport, as determined from time to time by the membership.

## **ARTICLE II, Membership, Dues and Fees**

1. The Club shall extend a social and fraternal invitation to honorable racing pigeon fanciers for membership who reside within the boundary of “a Line running East and West using Centralia Rd. (CR 476) as its latitude” from the Gulf of Mexico to a point that would meet US 41, west of US 41, north of SR 54 and east of the Gulf of Mexico.
2. All prospective members shall be sponsored for membership by a current member at a regular Club meeting, and must be present in person. A vote will then be taken for approval or rejection by the membership in attendance. The applicant will be on probation for one (1) year from the date of acceptance. Probation for a new member gives him/her all rights enjoyed by all members but will not be eligible to hold any office in the club. The Membership Committee will evaluate new member status after one (1) years. In the event that a quorum is not reached and a potential new member has traveled to comply with the GHC procedure, the Board of Directors shall have the right to issue a temporary membership approval to that applicant which will be in effect until the next general membership meeting when a full final vote can be taken. Said applicant need not be present for this second voting in process. Any member joining in the months of November and/or December shall have their dues applied to the oncoming year. Active membership will go into effect on January 1, of that year.
3. The yearly dues of the Club shall be determined by the membership at the annual December meeting and will be no less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00), due by February 28<sup>th</sup>, or at the time a new member is approved for membership. Members who are age 90 and above be given free membership dues for the remainder of their lives. They will only be required to pay AU dues and for their bands to fly with the GHC. Membership in the Gulf Coast Homing Club is a privilege that can be removed at anytime with a 2/3 vote of the members present at a general meeting. The membership may at the yearly meeting vote to not accept existing members’ dues for the following year or years. The GHC Inc. is not a politically affiliated organization, therefore it will not allow nor invite any politically motivated speakers to any regular club membership meeting.
4. Each new member shall pay an initiation fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00), and the first year's dues at the time of acceptance into the club.

5. Club bands are not to be sold or given to **Non-members**. Any transfer of club bands between members must be given to the band secretary in writing.
6. A \$1.00 trophy fee will be charged each member for each regular race shipped.
7. All dues, fees and any other indebtedness owed the Club, or any of its affiliates, must be paid before a member's dues will be accepted, or a member may enter a Club race, or may participate in any other Club activity. Members that do not abide by this rule will automatically be suspended from the club. All money race entries must be paid by September 1<sup>st</sup>, except for the GHC Classic Race, which is due June 30<sup>th</sup>.
8. Membership yearly dues are due by (February 28<sup>th</sup>. Dues not paid by February 28<sup>th</sup> will result in membership being dropped and a member must reapply for membership and must pay the two-hundred-dollar (\$200.00) initiation fee. A member may request in writing by the February 28<sup>th</sup> deadline, inactive status (leave of absence) for one year without paying the initiation fee. Exceptions due to severe illnesses shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors. During that 1-year period of absence the member may not fly with any other local organization.
9. The Club shall have available a Social Membership for persons who have an interest in the Club, but who are not currently racing pigeons, or live outside the Club boundaries. Social members shall pay annual dues of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). A Social member may participate in the non-racing activities of the Club, but cannot propose or vote on any Club business.
10. Fanciers under the age of eighteen years (18) may become Junior Members, if residing within the Club boundaries. There are no Club dues or initiation fee required of a Junior Member. A Junior Member must pay Concourse dues and truck fees, AU dues, and Concourse and Club race fees and shipping charges. A Junior Member competes for diplomas and trophies only, and is not eligible to receive prizes. A Junior Member may not propose or vote on any Club business.
11. A member may be reprimanded, penalized or placed on probation and/or expelled from the Club membership for dishonorable conduct only after a due process hearing by a grievance committee. No person placed on probation may serve as an officer or on any committee.
12. Any member who has been suspended for one or more years by the GHC or any other local or national racing pigeon organization may reapply for GHC membership and must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of members present. If reinstated, the member shall pay a new initiation fee and serve a five (5) year probationary period.
13. Only active racing members are eligible to vote on an organization's race related matters. An "Active Racing Member" is an organizational member in good standing, who has shipped, clocked and reported to knock off in a least 6 races of a regular race series per year, the previous year. A partnership, no matter how many members, is limited to one vote in race matters. Race matters are defined as: Race Schedules, Race Stations, Race Committees, Race Statistician, Race Secretary, Special Races, Liberation

Committee and Bird Limits. A separate ballot will be required for race related matters. Any "Non-Active Member" who votes or attempts to vote as an "Active Member," shall be subject to having his/her meeting privileges revoked for 12 months. A person or partnership may request in writing inactive status for a period of one year.

14. Any person or partnership that is suspended or expelled from the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc. shall have their loft location or any location owned and any birds they own banned from participation in any Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc. scheduled race. No other person shall be allowed to fly from that location or any location owned until the suspension is lifted. No exceptions. Existing members in good standing that rented a property owned by the suspended or expelled member prior to said members suspension or expulsion are exempt from being banned as long as they have no affiliation with the suspended member or his birds and there is no interruption in their rental agreement.

### **ARTICLE III, Management**

1. The officers of the Club shall be President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Race Secretary, Race Statistician, Facilities Manager and Publicity Director and they shall be designated as the Board of Directors specified in the Articles of Incorporation. The Board of Directors shall consist of all of the officers and trustees. Term of office for officers shall be from adjournment of the yearly meeting until adjournment of the yearly meeting the following year effective at the 2011 yearly meeting. However, effective with the 2010 term year and thereafter the Treasurer's term will run for one year from February 1 thru January 31 to facilitate the closing of the books including the Classic race payouts, etc. Also, the outgoing Treasurer is to make a complete financial report at the June Club meeting. The incoming Treasurer will work closely with the outgoing Treasurer to facilitate a smooth transfer of responsibilities during the months of December and January. The incoming Treasurer's pay period starts Feb 1 and runs through January 31 of the following year. The new Treasurer shall be the only voting member of the two on the current Board of Directors Term.

2. Other positions elected by the membership are the Band Secretary and Chairpersons of all special Club races, along with fifteen (15) members to serve on the Race Committee, The Liberating committee shall consist of a Chairman and 3 additional members, along with 3 alternates, all for one-year terms. There shall also be elected four Trustees who shall serve staggered three (3) year terms. A Trustee may not serve in any other office or as Standing Committee Chairman or in any position that requires audit by the Trustees. The 4 Trustees shall be designated as members of the Board of Directors, with voting privileges. New members shall not serve on any committee during their one year probation period.

3. Elections shall be held at the December annual meeting. The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee, which shall report a slate of candidates at the October meeting. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor, and must be seconded. The Slate of Candidates will close at the October meeting.

4. The Board of Directors shall discuss and recommend business to be presented at Club meetings, and perform other duties as provided for in these By-Laws, or designated by

vote of the membership. A 2/3 majority vote of the members present on all issues before the BOD shall be required for passage of any issue. All motions submitted to the Board of Directors to go on the next meeting agenda must be presented to the general membership for a vote at the next meeting, with or without the recommendation of the Board. All motions must be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors 14 days before the meeting in which they are to be considered.

5. Any member who has a grievance, against another member, or members, Club business, or affairs, must submit in writing the grievance, with supporting facts and names of witnesses within ninety (90) days of the action. The written complaint must be turned in to the President, who in turn will give the complainant a dated receipt. Any and all grievances presented to the President must be acknowledged and presented to a Trustee within 72 hours of it being received by the President. A five member committee appointed by the majority of the Trustees will investigate the grievance and bring back their findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors. Final judgment will be made jointly by the Board of Directors and the grievance committee on any and all grievances within a 45day period from receipt.

6. The official and only electric band scanning system (EBSS) for the G.H.C. will be the Benzing models (ATIS, M1, M2, M3, G2 and the ATIS Express version 1.2 or higher). No other systems will be allowed to be used in the G.H.C. regular and special races.

#### **ARTICLE IV, Duties of Officers**

1. The President shall preside at all Club and Board of Directors meetings, must approve all Club checks written over \$1000.00, for other than routine day to day operations/bills or to a vendor in a 180 day period, sign approved minutes of Club meetings, appoint non-standing committee chairpersons, and serve as an ex-officio member of all committees. The President has no approval authority over the Classic Committee Chairman or the Special Races Chairman. He shall not vote at any time, except in the event of a tie vote to break the tie.

All interim appointments shall be made by the President and approved by 2/3 of the BOD present. All Officers, Trustees, Standing Committee Chairpersons interim appointments will be temporary until the annual election in December. At that time, nominations for the position(s) open will be received from the floor and voted upon at that meeting.

2. The 1st Vice President shall, in the absence of the President, or in the case of his Inability to act, assume the duties of the President.

3. The 2nd Vice President shall, in the absence of the 1st Vice President, or in the case of his inability to act; assume the duties of the 1st Vice President.

4. The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Club and Board of Directors meetings, handle the general correspondence of the Club, send out meeting notices, and keep the official copy of the By-Laws and Race Rules and an updated copy of the AU By-Laws and Race Rules. The Recording Secretary shall keep a current membership list as provided by the Treasurer, and keep the Club records updated to include all motions passed at meetings throughout the year.

There shall be a permanent record book categorized by year for access by the membership of all motions passed.

5. The Treasurer shall handle the financial matters related to the conduct of the business of the Club, and keep record of same, sign Club checks, present a report at each meeting stating all expenses and income since the previous meeting, and the current financial balance. The Treasurer shall also present an annual financial report for the previous year at the June meeting, with copies to be made available to all members. The Treasurer shall keep a record of all members of the Club and have fiduciary responsibility to the

GHC Board of Directors and the GHC membership, and receive a yearly salary of \$6000.00. Any disputes will be referred to the membership for resolution. All checks written over \$1000.00 shall be approved by the President. Any checks totaling over \$1000.00 written to a Vendor in a 180 day period must also be approved by the President. The Treasurer along with the Trustees shall **do a quarterly audit** of all accounts and report any discrepancies to the BOD.

6. The Race Secretary shall be responsible for the conduct of the Club races, and serve as Chairperson of the Race Committee. The Race Secretary will officiate all aspects of the race, including but not limited to shipping, reporting, & transportation. The Race Secretary will ensure all race rules are enforced and carry out his duties according to these guidelines.

7. The Race Statistician shall handle any race prizes, issue race reports, prepare Club race diplomas and purchase Club trophies as authorized by the Board of Directors.

8. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be a position of trust assigned by the Board of Directors, and shall assist the President in keeping order at Club meetings.

9. The Publicity Director shall be a position of trust assigned by the Board of Directors and shall be authorized to conduct the publicity of the Club races and other activities. No member shall write any article pertaining to Club business, subject to possible suspension.

10. The Band Secretary shall keep the stock of Club bands, issue and/or sell these bands to the members, keep a band number record and handle reports of lost pigeons.

11. The Trustees shall have access to review the Treasurer's records at any reasonable time, audit the records annually and report their findings at the June meeting. They shall also serve with the Treasurer as a Financial Committee to oversee the financial activities of the Club and to make recommendations on same to the Club.

12. Liberating Committee will be responsible for the liberation of the club races regular and special. In the event a member of the Liberating Committee is not participating in the race, the Chairman will appoint a replacement from alternate list. If the alternates are not participating, the President will appoint the replacement (s).

13. Any club member who willfully or intentionally engages in action or conduct, including but not limited to dishonest acts, interference with or the disruption of club

business can be initially investigated by a grievance committee consisting of five club members appointed by the majority of the trustees. The grievance committee will bring their findings to the Board of Directors. If the Board of Directors and grievance committee concludes that he or she is guilty of misfeasance, malfeasance, nonfeasance, or is in violation the GHC bylaws, or their conduct is detrimental or harmful to the GHC or to the sport, may be suspended or expelled by a 2/3 vote of the club membership at the next general meeting or at a special meeting requested by twenty-five percent of the membership.

14. Recall. Any officer or Director may be recalled and removed from office by action of the members of the GHC. In the event a petition requesting an election for the purpose of recalling an officer, signed by at least twenty five percent (25%) of the current GHC members, is presented to the Secretary and is certified within 3 days by the Trustees, to contain the requisite number of signatures of members, the Secretary shall notify each member of the Board of Directors of the necessity for conducting a recall election, and the Board of Directors shall schedule such an election and notify the membership of that election. The election shall be held not later than twenty (20) days after certification of the petition, and all provisions relating to elections shall be applicable. The sole issue on the ballot regarding the subject of recall of an Officer shall be "Whether (the identified Officer or Director) should be removed from his office with the GHC, Inc.". An Officer removed from office as a result of a recall election of the membership shall never again be eligible to serve in any office or official position of the GHC. Furthermore any person removed by recall shall face automatic disciplinary action by a committee consisting of the Officers, Trustees, and a five member panel appointed by the trustees from the body of membership. Punishment shall be probation, suspension, and or monetary fine not to exceed \$1000.00, or expulsion from the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc., plus reimbursement of expenses incurred by GHC due to their actions. Punishment shall be ratified by the membership at the next general meeting. Any person who accepts an elected office in the Gulf Coast Homing Club, Inc. agrees not to pursue legal action against any officer, member, or the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc., as a result of any later recall or removal from office.

## **ARTICLE V, Standing Committee**

1. A Building and Grounds Committee shall be established and be responsible for the maintenance of the Club buildings, grounds, shipping crates and other equipment. Expenses incurred or projected shall be approved by the Board of Directors.
2. The Race Committee shall aid the Race Secretary in the conduct of the Club races, take measurements for airlines of new lofts and decide any dispute that may arise during any Club race.
3. The Chairman of the Gulf Coast Classic Race Committee or any other such type futurity race committee shall have the right to select a co-chairman and committee members, and shall not vote at committee meetings except in the case of a tie vote. The Committee will be empowered to conduct its own advertising and publicity without conflict with Article IV, 7 of these By-Laws. The Committee will also be empowered to

have a separate bank account(s) for the race funds and must provide financial statements with documentation on a monthly basis to the club treasurer.

The Trustees shall have oversight on all finances of the Classic and Special Races and will do a yearly audit of these races in addition to the quarterly audits with the Treasurer.

4. The Chairman of the Gulf Coast Classic Race Committee for the following year is to be elected during the June Meeting.

5. The GHC Ladies Auxiliary is an independent standing committee of the GHC. The GHCLA will maintain its own bylaws, rules, procedures and operate in agreement and conjunction with the GHC.

## **ARTICLE VI, Meetings**

1. The regular meetings of the Club shall be on the second Wednesday of January, February, May, June, August, October and December at 7:00 p.m. at the Club building. The September meeting will be held on the first Wednesday. The December meeting shall be designated as the Annual Meeting. The October meeting No monthly meeting will be cancelled, but may be postponed in the event of an emergency, but no longer than 20 days. An agenda will be email and mailed to the ones that do not have email no later than 6 days before any scheduled regular or special meeting.

2. A quorum shall be at least twenty five percent (25%) of the annual race participates. A quorum has authority to pass motions binding on the absent members.

3. Order of business:

Call to order

Introduction of Guests

Minutes and Communications

Treasurer's Report

Committee Reports

Concourse Report

Old Business

Vote on New Members

Elections of Officers at the December meeting

New Business

Adjournment

4. The President shall call a meeting of the Board of Directors prior to each Club meeting to discuss and recommend business to come before the Club meeting. New business and new members to come before the Club meeting must first be presented to the Board of Directors for discussion and recommendation, except for emergencies, which will be determined by the President. A quorum of 2/3 of the Board of Directors must be present to vote on any motions. All Board of Directors' meetings shall be held at the clubhouse and shall be open meetings except when personnel matters are discussed

5. The President may call a special meeting of the Club, or change a regular meeting date in case of emergency only, with the approval of or at the request of a 2/3 majority of the  
GHC

Board of Directors. All currently paid members shall be notified of a special meeting or change of meeting date by mail or email at least six days before the date set for such meetings

6. There will be no recording of any type (audio, video, or stenographic) allowed at any GHC meeting without 100% approval by the members present with the exception of the Recording Secretary.

7. Only active racing members are eligible to vote on race related matters. See Article II

**8. All race schedules will be produced by the elected race committee under the direction of the elected Race Secretary and then presented to the general membership for approval.** At the Jan. and May meetings. During the Jan. meeting the Young Bird Schedules for the next year will be voted on. During the May meeting the Old Bird Schedules for the next year will be voted on. No race should ever be scheduled, rescheduled, or flown on Easter Sunday in any year.

#### **ARTICLE VII, Affiliation**

1. The Club shall be affiliated with the American Racing Pigeon Union. Each member shall pay the dues and fees required by these organizations through the Club Treasurer.

#### **ARTICLE VIII, Rules Definitions**

1. The Gulf Coast Homing Club, Inc. (GHC) will abide by the American Racing Pigeon Union (AU) suggested Race Rules. Any omission in the Gulf Coast Homing Club, Inc. By-laws shall be covered by Florida Statutes for Not-for-Profit corporations. Florida Statutes will be used when GHC by-laws do not cover the issue.

#### **ARTICLE IX, Race Awards**

The GHC will give the following awards for all regular races, including the regular Saturday race and the Sprint series:

Old Birds: Average Speed, Champion Loft, Champion Bird for the middle, long distance And overall champion.

Young Birds: Average Speed, Champion Loft, Champion Bird overall The GHC will have 2 sections (north, south) with the boundary line of County Line Road dividing the sections. There will be awards for overall and first opposite section for all the awards. For all special races, the committee handling each race will decide the awards for each race.”

Trophies: Cost will be \$1.00 per loft per race. Trophies will be awarded for the approximate value of the race or championship (regular race approximately twice the value of a Sprint Race)

#### **Article X, Legal Assistance**

1. The Membership shall approve any and all situations that require legal assistance



prior to the hiring of a Law Firm to represent the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc. or any of its members. Any Officer, Director, Trustee or Member who employs the services of a Law firm or legal assistance without membership approval shall be responsible for any and all costs involved in doing so and will be subject to disciplinary action by the membership if they convey that they have authority to hire a Law Firm without membership approval. This bylaw serves as notice to all that without membership approval the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc. will not be responsible for any costs involved in any legal matter whatsoever.

2. Any member, who instigates or joins litigation as a plaintiff or plaintiffs naming the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc., its officers, directors, or current membership as co-defendants, shall be suspended by the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc. from all club-related activities until the completion of the litigation. After litigation is complete, if the suspension is longer than one-year, the member must reapply and be voted in by a 2/3 vote of the membership. If the litigant is unsuccessful, he or she must pay all legal costs the Gulf Coast Homing Club Inc. incurred in defending itself or co-defendants and will be suspended for a period of not less than five (5) years or expelled for life as decided by the membership.

#### **FINAL ARTICLE, Amendments and Changes**

1. Amendments and Changes to these By-Laws and Race Rules and the Articles of Incorporation must be proposed and passed at a regular Club meeting and then voted on for final passage at the next December Annual Club meeting. At the final vote they must be approved by a 2/3 majority of those members present. A motion to resend a New By-Law can only be made and passed at the December Annual Club Meeting and must be approved by a 2/3 majority of the those members present.

2. ARTICLE X as published prior to this amendment hereafter be known as the FINAL ARTICLE.

These revised By-Laws were passed by vote of the majority of the current paid membership at the December Annual Meeting to be in effect as of January 1.

Updated with Changes voted at the 12/07/1992 Annual meeting.  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/06/1993 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/06/1999 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/10/2003 Annual meeting.  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/15/2004 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/14/2005 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/13/2006 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/12/2007 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/10/2008 Annual meeting.  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/09/2009 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/08/2010 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/14/2011 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/12/2012 Annual meeting

Updated with Changes voted at the 12/11/2013 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/10/2014 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/10/2018 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/11/2019 Annual meeting  
Updated with Changes voted at the 12/13/2023 Annual meeting