

# SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY, INC.

A Georgia Corporation

## OFFICIAL BYLAWS

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**SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY, INC.**  
**A Georgia Corporation**

**OFFICIAL BYLAWS**

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**ARTICLE 1**  
**NAME**

1.0 NAME

The Society shall be known as the Southeast Tourism Society, Inc. and shall be referred to as the Society.

**ARTICLE 2**  
**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

2.0 PURPOSE

The Society is organized as a non-profit Corporation pursuant to the laws of the State of Georgia, with all of the powers authorized by the Georgia Non-Profit Corporation Code.

2.1 OBJECTIVES:

The goals and objectives of the Society shall be:

- a) To develop services and programs that support tourism professionals and promote the travel and tourism industry within the southeastern states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.
- b) Advocacy: To ensure the highest level of governmental support, advocate and encourage advocacy for the tourism industry on issues of policy and legislation that affect the industry locally, regionally and at the national level.
- c) Networking: To ensure the highest level of tourism expertise and professionalism and maintaining a supportive system of networking opportunities among members for the purpose of sharing information and services of mutual benefit.
- d) Education: To ensure the highest level of tourism expertise and professionalism in the Southeast through continuing education by providing tourism curriculum and programs for its members and the tourism industry at large including but not limited to continuing education programs such as the annual Southeast Tourism Society Marketing College and the spring and fall membership meetings.

e) Recognition: To inspire the highest level of tourism expertise and professionalism with programs that recognize tourism businesses and professionals for outstanding achievement, expertise, service, professionalism and benefit to the travel & tourism industry.

### **ARTICLE 3 SOCIETY OFFICES**

#### **3.0 PRINCIPAL OFFICE**

The principal office of the Society shall be located at 555 Sun Valley Drive NE, Ste. 725; Roswell, Georgia, 30076-5624.

#### **3.1 REGISTERED OFFICE**

The registered office of the Society shall be designated by the Board of Directors.

#### **3.2 OTHER OFFICES**

The Society may also have offices at such other places, both within and without the State of Georgia, as the Board of Directors may from time to time designate as the activities of the Society may require.

### **ARTICLE 4 SEAL**

#### **4.0 CORPORATE SEAL**

The corporate seal of the Society shall be as follows: SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY, INC.-CORPORATE SEAL. Such seal may be used by causing it or a facsimile or reproduction thereof, to be affixed or placed upon the document to be sealed. The official seal is impressed herein.

### **ARTICLE 5 MEMBERSHIP**

#### **5.0 QUALIFICATONS**

Membership in the Society shall be open to any person, firm, corporation, association, organization or governmental group whose purpose is the promotion of tourism and/or serving the traveling public in or to the member states of the Society, to include all southeastern states which may be authorized by the Board of Directors.

Membership in the Society is available upon submission of the official application form and payment of the annual dues.

## 5.1 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

The Society recognizes the following categories of membership and their respective voting privileges on matters taken to the general membership:

- a) **Active Membership:** Any person, firm, corporation, association, organization or governmental body having its office or business in the member state and is otherwise qualified under this Section shall be an Active Member. Active members shall include, but not be limited to: convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, destination marketing organizations, attractions, hotels and resorts, restaurants, retailers, transportation companies, businesses providing products and services to the industry and any other related businesses and individuals whose purpose is the promotion of tourism and serving the traveling public. Such Active Members shall be entitled to all of the benefits and privileges of membership including, but not limited to, the right to vote at Society meetings and to hold elected offices within the Society.
- b) **State Sustaining Membership:** Sustaining Members shall include state travel Directors and each member shall be entitled to hold elected office in the Society and to vote at Society meetings and to hold elected offices within the Society.
- c) **Society Partnerships:** Any firm, organization, association or corporation which holds an exclusive (contractual) relationship with the Society and is further entitled to all the benefits and privileges of membership including, but not limited to, the right to vote at Society meetings and to hold elected offices within the Society.
- d) **Honorary Membership:** Honorary Members are individuals designated and approved by the Board of Directors in recognition of special and unique contribution to tourism. Such Honorary Members shall not pay dues nor hold elective office nor vote but shall receive all other benefits of the Society.

## 5.2 RESIGNATION

Members may resign in writing which shall be effective upon acceptance thereof by the Board of Directors.

## 5.3 DUES

All members shall pay, by membership classification, membership dues as determined from time to time and passed at a meeting of the Board of Directors. The payment of dues entitles members to one year membership in the Society. Non-payment of dues forfeits membership in the Society.

**ARTICLE 6  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**6.0 MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION**

The affairs of the Society shall be managed and administered by a Board of Directors, all of whom shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of Members.

**6.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors shall consist of the following members:

- a) Officers: Consisting of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, immediate past Chairperson, Marketing College Provost and any chair of a standing committee not already an officer of the Society..
- b) Two Members from each Member State: The two members from each member state shall serve a term of two years and at the conclusion of the two year term must rotate off the Board for one year before being considered for reelection to another term. Each class of directors shall be elected at each Annual Membership Meeting. Chairperson shall appoint one of these two members as vice-chairperson of his or her State.
- c) State Sustaining Members: The State Travel Directors from member States.
- d) Society Partners: Each Society partner may appoint one representative to the Board of Directors with all voting rights.

**6.2 MEETINGS**

The Directors shall meet at least two times annually. A special meeting may be called by either the Chairperson or the Secretary by request from 25% of the Directors

**6.3 NOTICE**

Notice of such meetings shall be communicated to each director not less than 48 hours before the meetings are to take place. The statutory declaration of the Secretary or Chairperson that notice, has been given pursuant to this by-law shall be sufficient and conclusive evidence of the giving of such notice. Two of the three annual Board meetings shall be held immediately prior to the Membership meetings of the Society.



#### 6.4 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Board members shall determine by simple majority vote, whether or not a Board member has a conflict of interest. A Board member who declares a conflict of interest of who has been declared so by the Board shall not enter into debate or vote concerning the matter.

#### 6.5 VACANCIES

A vacancy on the Board of Directors shall be filled for the remainder of the term by recommendation of the Chairperson and affirmative vote of majority of the directors present at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

#### 6.6 REMOVAL

Any director whose absence from three consecutive meetings without approved excuse shall forfeit his position as director and his position shall be declared vacant by the Board of Directors.

If, in the opinion of the Board, a member is not acting in the best interest of the Society, the Board may, by simple majority vote, call a special meeting of the Board to determine in the member concerned shall be dismissed from the Board. The members of the Society may, by resolution, passed by at least 2/3 of the votes cast at the meeting, remove any director before the expiration of his/her term of office, and may, by a majority of votes cast at that meeting, elect any person in his/her stead for the remainder of his/her term.

#### 6.7 QUORUM AND VOTING

A quorum for official business at a directors' meeting shall consist of 51% of the current directors present and entitled to vote. All issues arising at any meeting of the directors shall be decided by a majority of votes of those present.

#### 6.8 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

There shall be Executive Committee meetings called at any time by the Chairperson or President. The Executive Committee shall act on matters of the Society as needed between Board of Directors meetings.

### **ARTICLE 7 POWERS**

#### 7.0 CONTRACTS

The Directors of the Society shall administer the affairs of the Society in all things and make or cause to be made for the Society, in its name, any kind of contract which the Society may lawfully enter into and may exercise all such other powers and do all such other acts as the Society is by its charter or authorized to do so.

## 7.1 APPOINTMENTS

The Board may appoint any person or persons to perform any function for which they deem necessary to conduct efficiently the Society's business.

## 7.2 STANDING/TEMPORARY COMMITTEES

The Board shall set up such standing and temporary committees which they deem necessary to adequately serve the needs of the Society. Each standing or temporary committee shall consist of a Chairperson to be named by the Board and committee members recruited by the Chairperson. A temporary committee shall exist only so long as it serves a current, useful purpose. A temporary committee may be dissolved by the Board if in the Board's opinion it no longer serves the current, useful description above.

# **ARTICLE 8 REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS**

## 8.0 REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS

The Directors shall receive no remuneration for acting as such except repayment of reasonable expenses incurred by them in the normal course of their duties.

# **ARTICLE 9 OFFICERS OF SOCIETY**

## 9.0 DEFINITION OF OFFICERS

The officers of the Society shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, immediate past Chairperson and Marketing College Provost. These officers plus the resident President & CEO shall constitute the Executive Committee. All newly elected officers shall take office the day following the adjournment of the annual meeting.

## 9.1 ELECTION/TERM

The officers of the Society shall be elected by the Membership at their annual meeting. All officers shall be elected for a two (2) year term. No officer may serve in the same position for more than two (2) consecutive terms. Each officer shall hold office until his/her death, disability, removal or until his successor shall have been selected. All newly elected officers shall take office the day following the adjournment of the annual meeting.

## 9.2 REMOVAL

Any officer or agent elected or appointed by the Board of Directors may be removed by the Board of Directors with or without cause, whenever, in the judgment of the Board of Directors, the best interest of the Society will be served thereby. Any vacancy occurring in any office of the Society shall be filled by the Board of Directors.

### 9.3 DELEGATION/AUTHORITY

The Board of Directors may delegate to any officer or agent any duties or authority hereinafter assigned to any officer or may enlarge or restrict temporarily or permanently the duty and authority of any officer.

## DUTIES OF CHAIRPERSON

### 9.4 PRESIDING AT MEETINGS

The Chairperson shall, when present, preside at all meetings of members of the Society. During the absence or inability of the Chairperson, and if the Vice chairperson, or such other Director as the Board may from time to time appoint for the purpose, exercise any such duty or power, absence or inability of the Chairperson shall be presumed with reference there to.

### 9.5 CHAIRPERSON OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Chairperson of the Society shall also serve as Chairperson of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors and shall preside at all annual meetings of the membership. He or She shall serve as a member, ex-officio with the right to vote on all committees except the nominating committee. He or she shall make all necessary committee appointments and perform such other duties as may be designated by the Board of Directors.

### 9.6 OFFICIAL SPOKESPERSON FOR POLICY

The Chairperson or the Society's President & CEO shall be the official spokesperson for releasing to the public only such information as is authorized from time to time as official policy.

## DUTIES OF THE VICE CHAIR

### 9.7 VICE CHAIRPERSON

The Vice Chairperson shall, in the absence or incapacity of the Chairperson, preside at meetings of the executive committee and the Board of Directors. The Vice Chairperson shall perform such duties as designated by the Chairperson and/or Board of Directors.

## DUTIES OF STATE VICE CHAIRPERSON OF MEMBER STATES

### 9.8 VICE CHAIRPERSON OF MEMBER STATES

The State Vice Chairpersons will be responsible for: 1) Membership in his or her state; 2) Governmental relations and other duties that may be assigned them by the Board of Directors. State Vice Chair's shall be appointed by the Society's board chairperson.

## DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

### 9.9 SECRETARY

The Secretary shall be responsible for all minutes and official documents of the Society. The Board of Directors may designate any of the secretarial duties to the executive staff of the Society.

## DUTIES OF THE TREASURER

### 9.10 TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial records of the Society and prompt filing of all required financial documents and forms. The Board of Directors may designate any of the Treasurers duties to the executive staff of the Society. He/she shall report on the financial condition of the Society to the Board of Directors and shall serve as Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

## DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT & CEO

### 9.11 PRESIDENT & CEO

The position of President & CEO shall be appointed by the Executive Committee subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The President and CEO shall be a salaried employee of the Society and he/she shall not be an officer or voting director. The President & CEO shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

The President & CEO shall be responsible for the administration and management of the Society and shall direct all the activities, affairs, annual meetings and functions as authorized by the Board of Directors.

The President & CEO shall be responsible for a staff necessary to carry on the work of the Society. Duties of the President & CEO and staff shall be delegated by the Executive Committee. The president & CEO shall have sole responsibility for the performance of such staff.

## **ARTICLE 10 ANNUAL & SPECIAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

### 10.0 GENERAL MEETING LOCATION

The annual meeting of the members of the Society shall be held each calendar year at such time and location as the Board of Directors shall designate and will be rotated throughout the member states as possible.

## 10.1 NOTICE

Notice of the annual meeting shall be communicated to each member in good standing at least sixty (60) days prior to said meeting.

## 10.2 BUSINESS SESSION

At every annual general meeting, a business session shall be held. In addition to any other business that may be transacted, the report of the directors, the financial statement, the report of the Nominating Committee shall be presented.

## 10.3 QUORUM

A majority of the registered members appearing in person at the annual meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any membership meeting.

## 10.4 SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the members of the Society may be called by the Chairperson, one third (1/3) of the Board of Directors, or upon written request of 10% of the members entitled to vote at the particular meeting. The request for special meeting shall be communicated to the Secretary of the Society, and the request shall state the purpose of the special meeting.

Upon receipt of a proper request for special meeting, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to call a special meeting of the members of the Society. Such notice shall be communicated to each member not less than ten (10) days prior to said meeting and shall state the date, time, place and purpose of such special meeting.

## 10.5 VOTING

All members in good standing and in attendance shall have the right to vote. The vote of the majority of those members present shall decide any question brought before such meeting, unless a different number is required by these bylaws.

## 10.6 ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER

Roberts Rules of Order shall govern all membership meetings unless such rules are in conflict with the bylaws of the Society. The order of business of meeting may be altered or suspended by majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote.

**ARTICLE 11  
COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES**

11.0 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Society shall have an Executive Committee composed of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, immediate Past Chairperson, and Marketing College Provost and the President & CEO and shall act on all matters of the Society as needed between Board of Directors meetings. Subject to approval by the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall delegate the day to day operations of the Society to the President & CEO.

11.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Society shall have a Finance Committee composed of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Marketing College Provost.. The Finance Committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer and shall oversee the finances of the Society and render reports to the Board of Directors and Membership.

11.2 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

During each calendar year the Chairperson shall appoint a Nominating Committee of five members in good standing at least sixty (60) days prior to the annual membership meeting which shall present the slate of nominees at such meeting.

11.3 MISCELLANEOUS COMMITTEES

The Chairperson shall be authorized to appoint such other committees, from time to time, with such duties and responsibilities as deemed in the best interest of the Society. All such committees shall be responsible to the Vice Chairperson unless otherwise designated by the Chairperson. All Committee Chairs are appointed for a two year term and may serve consecutive terms at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board.

Miscellaneous Committees include:

- a) EDUCATION COMMITTEE – Shall oversee the general membership meeting programming and structure and make recommendations for other member education opportunities through the Society. The Marketing College Provost will be part of the education committee, and will be appointed by the Society’s board chairperson. The Provost will provide guidance and advice for the overall management of the Society’s Marketing College, with the advice and assistance of select committee members. Education Committee members will be appointed from the Board of Directors and active membership, and will be chaired by a current board member. A majority of those members present in person or by proxy shall constitute a quorum.

- b) **ADVOCACY COMMITTEE** - Shall provide leadership to ensure broad representation of tourism interests in the southeast, encourage partnerships between the public and private sectors of tourism and advocates for sustainable economic growth. Additionally the committee shall identify and analyze travel and tourism issues and serve as a forum to affect public policy and legislation for the industry in the southeast. Advocacy Committee members will be appointed from the Board of Directors and active membership, and will be chaired by a current board member. A majority of those members present in person or by proxy shall constitute a quorum.
- c) **RECOGNITION COMMITTEE** – Shall oversee Society recognition programs, create new programs for recognition of Society members, *identify new ways to offer professional recognition* and identify ways to create a permanent philosophy of recognition within the Society. Recognition Committee members will be appointed from the Board of Directors and active membership, and will be chaired by a current board member. A majority of those members present in person or by proxy shall constitute a quorum.
- d) **NETWORKING COMMITTEE** - Shall oversee Society social and professional networking events and activities at Society events, particularly Marketing College and general membership meetings. They shall encourage development of valuable peer networks among members in both social and professional environments as a unique member benefit, and as a means of sharing insight and building collaboration. Networking Committee members will be appointed from the Board of Directors and active membership, and will be chaired by a current board member. A majority of those members present in person or by proxy shall constitute a quorum.

#### 11.4 PAST CHAIR'S COUNCIL

The Society shall have a Past Chair's Council. The Past Chair's Council shall be composed of any active past STS chair's from the Society's member states and shall be chaired by the Society's immediate past Chairperson of the Board of Directors. The Past Chair's Council shall serve to advise the Society's Executive Committee and from time to time direct special projects designated by the Society's Chairperson.

## **ARTICLE 12 FINANCIAL**

### **12.0 FISCAL YEAR**

Unless otherwise ordered by the Board of Directors, the fiscal year of the Society shall terminate on the 31st day of December in each year.

### **12.1 AUDIT**

The financial records and transactions of the Society shall be audited annually by the certified public accountant as designated by the Board of Directors. Copies of such audit shall be transmitted to each member of the Board of Directors and other members of the Society upon their written request.

### **12.2 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET**

The Board of Directors shall approve an annual operating budget for the Society.

## **ARTICLE 13 EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS**

### **13.0 DEEDS, TRANSFERS, LICENSES, CONTRACTS**

Deeds, transfers, licenses, contracts and engagements on behalf of the Society shall be signed by either the Chairperson or Secretary/Treasurer, and the Secretary/Treasurer shall affix the seal of the Society to such instruments as require the same.

### **13.1 CONTRACTS/ORDINARY COURSE**

Contracts and agreements for the ordinary course of the Society's operations may be entered into on behalf of the Society by the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or Secretary/Treasurer or by any person authorized by the Board. The President & CEO shall have the authority to enter into such contracts and agreements, and shall have sole responsibility to delegate that authority to staff as necessary to carry on the work of the Society.

### **13.2 EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS BY RESOLUTION**

Notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary contained in the by-laws of the Society, the Board of Directors may at any time by resolution direct the manner in which, and the person or persons by whom any particular instrument, contract or obligations of the Society may or shall be executed.



**ARTICLE 14**  
**BOOKS AND RECORDS**

14.0 BOOKS AND RECORDS

The Directors shall see that all necessary books and records of the Society required by the by-laws of the Society or by any applicable statute or law are regularly and properly kept.

**ARTICLE 15**  
**AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

15.0 AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors at any regular meeting of the Board of Directors. Written notice of the proposed amendment shall be transmitted to the Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days in advance of any meeting at which such an amendment shall be considered.

**ARTICLE 16**  
**INDEMNIFICATION**

16.0 DIRECTOR AND OFFICER INDEMNIFICATION

Every Director and every officer of the Society and heirs, executors, administrators and other legal personal representatives shall, from time to time and at all times, be indemnified and saved harmless by the Society from and against any and all claims and liabilities to which he/she shall become subject by reason of serving in such capacity, or by reason of any action alleged to have been taken, omitted or neglected by him/her as a director or officer. In addition, the Society shall reimburse such person for all legal expenses reasonably incurred by him/her in connection with any such claim or liability, except those arising out of his/her own willful misconduct or gross negligence.

16.1 AUDITORS STATEMENT/LIABILITY

Directors may rely upon the accuracy of any statement or report prepared by the Corporation's auditors and shall not be responsible or held liable for any loss or damage resulting from acting upon such statement or report.

16.2 DIRECTORS LIABILITY INSURANCE

The Society shall provide directors liability insurance for every Director and officer of the Society.

**ARTICLE 17  
DISSOLUTION**

17.0 DISSOLUTION

The Society shall use the funds collected only to accomplish the objectives and goals of the Society and no part of said funds shall insure, or be distributed, to the members of the Society. In the event of dissolution of the Society, any funds remaining shall be distributed to one or more regularly organized and qualified tax-exempt organizations with similar objectives selected by the Board of Directors.

PASSED by the Board of Directors:

DATE: September 8, 2016

CHAIRPERSON: Shelley Johnson  
Southwest Louisiana CVB

VICE CHAIRPERSON: Monica Smith  
Visit Jacksonville

TREASURER: Tim Todd  
Discover Upcountry Carolina Association

SECRETARY: Donna Carpenter  
Cabarrus County CVB