



NEW YORK STATE SAENGERBUND
MEMBER
DEUTSCHER CHORVERBUND
AND
COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
OF NEW YORK STATE



2008 Constitution and By-Laws

This amended constitution and by-laws was ratified by the delegates attending the General Business Meeting at the Annual Convention in Buffalo, New York on 19 October 2008.

The 2008 Constitution and By-Laws Committee was comprised of members of each of the active New York State Saengerbund member organizations. Also included were Carol Daley, president and member of the previous (1989) Constitution Committee, and Gail Miller, our Bundes Music Committee Chairperson.

Respectfully submitted:

Constitution and By-Laws Committee

Herman Koelmel , President	Kingston Männerchor & Damenchor
Leo Schwenzfeier , 1 st VP	Utica Männerchor
Monika Braun , 2 nd VP	Buffalo Schwaben Chor
Carol Daly , Honorary President	Utica Männerchor
George Kramer , Treasurer	Deutscher Gesangverein Syracuse
Patricia Lenga , Secretary	German Club of Binghamton
Debbie Thomas , Archivist & Librarian	Syracuse Liederverein
Gail Miller , BMC Chairperson	Utica Männerchor
Helga Nowak-Razey	Germania Singing Society Poughkeepsie
Walter Pohlmann	Troy Männerchor & Damenverein

NEW YORK STATE SAENGERBUND

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS



2008

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HISTORY

1897 - 2008

Immigrants from many lands contributed to the melting pot of American musical creativity. A specifically American form of musical culture emerged in the 19th century at a time when the German element in the United States was most active and effective in shaping musical tastes and traditions. German singing societies, the Saengerbunde, were formed to give testimony to the German-Americans' perennial love for music, sociability and conviviality.

Unfortunately, the Germans found it difficult to integrate in sizable organizations and had a tendency to dissipate their social energies in small groups. By 1881 in Cincinnati, where the **Nord-Amerikanischen Sängerbund** was formed in 1849, there were 18 major German clubs and six different choral societies. When new works by Richard Strauss demanded a larger scope of the choir, a recommendation was made to add female voices.

Singing societies in the cities of the Atlantic states felt the **Nord-Amerikanische Sängerbund** was too far west, so they formed their own **Nord-Östliche League** in 1850. In July of 1897, Karl Koch of Albany attended the Nord-Östliche Sängerkongress in Philadelphia and conceived the idea of forming a Sängerbund in Upstate New York. At an annual meeting of the editors of the German Newspapers Association, Koch, a poet and the editor of the *Albany Sonntags Journal*, wrote an article calling for the establishment of such an organization. He was supported by John C. Schreiber, editor of the *Utica Deutsche Zeitung*, and Jacob Birkmayer, editor of the *Troy Freie Presse*. The next month, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Troy Männerchor, a number of societies pledged themselves to this endeavor and in October of 1897, at its first convention in Albany, representatives of 22 societies signed the provisional constitution of the **Central New York Sängerbund** and elected its first officers.

Saengerfeste were held in 1898 in Utica, 1901 in Albany, 1903 in Syracuse, 1906 in Troy, 1908 in Utica, 1911 in Albany and 1913 in Syracuse. During World War I, the societies strictly adhered to singing and remained neutral following the precepts of their adopted country. In 1922, the Sängerbund celebrated its 25th anniversary at the Arion Hall in Syracuse and resumed the Saengerfeste in Troy, in 1925 in Buffalo, 1928 in Schenectady, 1931 in Poughkeepsie, 1934 in Rochester and 1937 in Utica.

For its first 41 years, the Sängerbund was restricted to male singers but various singing societies had already formed their own ladies' choruses. On October 30, 1938, Elsie Dossert of Syracuse organized these ladies' choruses into the **Vereinigte Frauenchöre of Central New York** (United Women's Choruses of Central New York). Since then, this organization has been extremely supportive of the Sängerbund and instrumental in its development.

The Saengerfeste were interrupted again during World War II and resumed in 1947 in Syracuse on the 50th anniversary of the **Central New York Sängerbund** at which time the United Women's Choruses of Central New York presented the Sängerbund with its first Bundesfahne. This flag was cherished and proudly displayed at official meetings of the Sängerbund for the next eleven years. Subsequent Saengerfeste were held in 1950 in Troy, 1953 in Buffalo and 1956 in Syracuse.

Saengerfest 2009 Prize Singing Rules *continued*

Competitive Singing Categories

1. Competitive singing will be in three categories: **Men's Chorus**, **Women's Chorus**, and **Mixed Chorus**. Three-part songs are allowed in both the Men's and Women's competition.
2. **Men's Chorus** and **Women's Chorus** competition will have only one class. There will be NO restriction on the number of singers in the performing chorus.
3. Only male singers are allowed to perform in the Men's Chorus competition and conversely only female singers are allowed to perform in the Ladies' Chorus competition.
4. **Mixed Chorus** competition will have two classes. **First Class** will be for songs rated as more difficult; **Second Class** will be for songs rated as less difficult. The Verein music directors will continue to rate the songs prior to a Saengerfest, as they did in the past. Choruses may sing their two songs in the class they have chosen without regard to the number of singers performing.
5. A **Non-Competitive** category has been established for those choruses who would like to sing and be evaluated by the adjudicators without being involved in the competitive singing. The adjudicators' reports would not be used by the Bundes Music Committee for any purpose and will be given only to the participating chorus.
6. All **Kinderchöre** performances at a Saengerfest will be non-competitive.

Music Director

1. Directors may not sing along while conducting their chorus. Violation of this rule shall lead to disqualification of director and the chorus.
2. The director may give the following notes by piano at the beginning of each song: The first note for each voice part. These notes may be given twice. If all voice parts begin on the same note, the director may give that one note plus the tonic chord of the key in which the piece is written. This may be done twice. Non-conformance shall lead to disqualification.

Saengerfest 2009 Prize Singing Rules

Adjudicators

1. The adjudicators will not penalize nor reward a chorus because of the key chosen for their prize songs.
2. Adjudicators shall not calculate final grading until all the choruses in a particular category have completed their presentation.
3. Adjudicator Expenses: as implemented at the October 2006 meeting:
 - a. Honorarium stipend (includes travel expenses).
 - b. Hotel room paid by the NYSSB at the hotel designated by host verein (lodging only, no extra services).
 - c. Saengerfest badge is supplied to each adjudicator by the host verein.

Bundes Music Committee

1. The order of the competition for the 2009 Saengerfest is:
Ladies Chorus, Men's Chorus, Mixed Chorus 2nd Class, Mixed Chorus 1st Class.
2. Within each category, choruses will draw for the order in which they shall compete. This drawing will occur at the Bundes Music Committee meeting on Friday afternoon of the Saengerfest weekend.
3. Choruses shall determine for themselves the order of presentation of their two prize songs. The order of presentation shall be declared to the Bundes Music Committee at the Friday afternoon meeting.
4. Choruses may choose to sing any prize song in the key of their choice. Any key changes must also be announced to the Bundes Music Committee at the Friday afternoon meeting.

Chorus

1. Choruses singing competitively in any category will be required to sing one REQUIRED SONG and one song, chosen by them, from the list of approved songs distributed by the Bundes Music Committee. The two songs may be sung in any order; however, the Bundes Music Committee Chairperson must be notified prior to the performance.
2. Choruses may sing their songs in the keys chosen by their music director. The choice of key must be announced to the adjudicators before each song begins. The adjudicators will not penalize nor reward the chorus because of the key chosen.
3. A chorus shall be disqualified if the numbers of singers on stage exceeds the number of singers for whom head tax has been paid.
4. A singer may not participate in prize singing without displaying the Saengerfest Badge on his/her clothing.

On the occasion of the 1959 Sängerfest in Rochester, the **United Women's Chorus of Central New York** presented a new flag, based on an original design by Hans Brand of the Syracuse Liederkranz. This flag replaced the original, which had been consumed by a fire that destroyed Germania Hall of Poughkeepsie where it was being stored temporarily. This new flag was another masterpiece of the *Kunststickerei of Baden-Württemberg*, which had crafted the original flag.

The Saengerfeste continued in 1962 in Utica, 1965 in Albany, 1968 in Buffalo, 1971 in Troy, 1974 in Poughkeepsie, 1977 in Albany and, in 1980, the 25th and final Saengerfest of the **Central New York Sängerbund** was held in Utica. After almost 30 years of discussion, the Central New York Sängerbund merged with the United Women's Choruses of Central New York in September 1980 during the convention in Syracuse and both organizations were united under the name of the **New York State Saengerbund**. The event was commemorated by the attachment of two richly embroidered banners to the Bundesfahne. The office of president of the United Women's Choruses ceased after the merger and Carol Daly took office as the first vice-president of the New York Sängerbund. Karl Haeussel continued as president of the new organization until his death in 1984. He was succeeded by Carol Daly, elected in 1986 and re-elected in 1989. She was succeeded by Werner Franz, elected in 1992 and reelected in 1995 and 1997. In 2000 Herman Koelmel was elected President and reelected in 2003 and 2006.

With the uniting of the men's and ladies' choruses, the Saengerfeste continued with the additional competition of mixed and ladies' groups in 1983 in Troy, 1986 in Binghamton, 1989 in Utica, 1992 in Syracuse and 1995 in Binghamton.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the New York State Saengerbund, the 31st Saengerfest was advanced to 1997 and hosted by the Utica Maennerchor and Ladies Chorus. Thereafter, the triennial cycle was resumed with the 32nd Saengerfest in 2000 in Buffalo. The Saengerfest was hosted by the Buffalo Schwaben Choir and celebrated the end of the Twentieth Century.

To start the new millennium, the Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor hosted the 33rd Saengerfest in 2003. The Bundes Music committee developed Prize Singing rules designed to promote and encourage more participation of choruses by adding a non-competitive category of performance for the Saengerfest. An integral part of this Saengerfest was the participation of the Kinderchore represented by the Buffalo Schwaben Spatzen, Utica Jugendchor, Poughkeepsie Germania, and the Engelchor from Kingston.

In a tribute to Gemütlichkeit, Freundschaft, and Kameradschaft each Saengerfest is dedicated to a weekend of German culture and tradition through music and song. The German American Club of Binghamton hosted the 34th Saengerfest in 2006. We are enthusiastically looking forward to the 35th Saengerfest hosted by the Utica Maennerchor in June of 2009.

Debbie Thomas, Archivist

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

New York State Saengerbund

ARTICLE I THE ORGANIZATION

The official name of the organization shall be **THE NEW YORK STATE SAENGERBUND**. Hereinafter noted as "NYSSB."

ARTICLE II MISSION AND PURPOSES

A. Mission

The mission of the NYSSB is to promote, cultivate, and preserve German customs, language, music and choral singing among its member organizations through Saengerfeste (Singing Festivals), annual conventions, and other activities.

Our activities are designed to help educate and enlighten our state-wide community in German cultural heritage and tradition. We encourage and maintain the highest principles of vocal harmony and good fellowship by active development of multiple chorus concerts and singing competitions.

B. Purposes

The principal purposes of the NYSSB shall be to support our Mission in the promotion and preservation of German music and German culture. These purposes include:

1. To support our statewide community in choral singing and musical traditions by being the standard bearer of German choral singing in New York State.
2. To advance German choral singing by encouraging live concerts and performances.
3. To promote good fellowship and friendship throughout our community.

Saengerfest 2006 Prize Singing Rules *continued*

Competitive Singing Categories

1. Competitive singing will be in three categories: *Men's Chorus*, *Women's Chorus*, and *Mixed Chorus*. Three-part songs are allowed in both the Men's and Women's competition.

2. *Men's Chorus* and *Women's Chorus* competition will have only one class. There will be NO restriction on the number of singers in the performing chorus.

3. *Mixed Chorus* competition will have two classes. *First Class* will be for songs rated as more difficult; *Second Class* will be for songs rated as less difficult. The verein music directors will continue to rate the songs prior to a Saengerfest, as they did in the past. Choruses may sing their two songs in the class they have chosen without regard to the number of singers performing.

4. A *Non-Competitive* category has been established for those choruses who would like to sing and be evaluated by the adjudicators without being involved in the competitive singing. The adjudicators' reports would not be used by the Bundes Music Committee for any purpose and will be given only to the participating chorus.

5. All *Kinderchore* performances at a Saengerfest will be non-competitive.

Music Director

1. The director of the chorus may not sing with his/her chorus. Violation of this rule shall lead to disqualification of the chorus.

2. The director may give the following notes by piano at the beginning of each song: The first note for each voice part. These notes may be given twice. If all voice parts begin on the same note, the director may give that one note plus the tonic chord of the key in which the piece is written. This may be done twice. Non-conformance shall lead to disqualification.

Much thought and discussion went into the form and substance of these guidelines. They were designed to promote and encourage more participation by all choruses of the Saengerbund. Please review these musical standards and see how they may apply to your chorus.

Saengerfest 2006 Prize Singing Rules

Adjudicators

1. The adjudicators will not penalize nor reward a chorus because of the key chosen for their prize songs
2. Adjudicators shall not calculate final grading until all the choruses in a particular category have completed their presentation.

Bundes Music Committee

1. The order of the competition for the 2006 Saengerfest is:

Ladies Chorus, Men's Chorus, Mixed Chorus 1st Class, Mixed Chorus 2nd Class

2. Within each category, choruses will draw for the order in which they shall compete. This drawing will occur at the Bundes Music Committee meeting on Friday afternoon of the Sangerfest weekend.
3. Choruses shall determine for themselves the order of presentation of their two prize songs. The order of presentation shall be declared to the Bundes Music Committee at the Friday afternoon meeting.
4. Choruses may choose to sing any prize song in the key of their choice. Any key changes must also be announced to the Bundes Music Committee at the Friday afternoon meeting.

Chorus

1. Choruses singing competitively in any category will be required to sing any two songs, chosen by them, from the list of approved songs distributed by the Bundes Music Committee. There will be NO REQUIRED SONG in any category. The two songs may be sung in any order; however, the Bundes Music Committee Chairperson must be notified prior to the performance.
2. Choruses may sing their songs in the keys chosen by their music director. The choice of key must be announced to the adjudicators before each song begins. The adjudicators will not penalize nor reward the chorus because of the key chosen.
3. A chorus shall be disqualified if the numbers of singers on stage exceeds the number of singers for whom head tax has been paid.
4. A singer may not participate in prize singing without displaying the Saengerfest Badge on his/her clothing.

ARTICLE III FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the NYSSB is from October 1 to September 30.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to any German-American organization which follows the principles of this Constitution and is located in New York State.

A. Categories of Membership

1. Active

Organizations which participate in the Annual Conventions and Saengerfeste as scheduled, and maintain timely payment of their membership fees shall be active members and have full voting privileges.

2. Supporting

Organizations which are not able to participate in the activities of the NYSSB, but wish to support its purposes through financial contributions or other means, will be considered supporting members without voting privileges. Supporting members will not be assessed membership fees.

B. Membership Fees

1. An organization wishing to become an active member must submit an application with payment of an initiation fee at the annual convention for consideration. When membership is approved by vote of the convention delegates, the new member organization must comply with the Mission and Purposes of the NYSSB, will have voting rights in subsequent meetings, and may compete in following Saengerfeste.
2. Membership is maintained by payment of annual membership fees as determined by the annual Convention. In order to maintain voting rights, the member organization shall send the membership fees to the Financial Secretary one month before the Annual Convention.

3. Failure to pay the membership fees for two consecutive years shall cause removal from the Active Membership list. Active Membership may be reinstated by payment of all fees in arrears and the initiation fee. Approval for membership shall be automatic upon receipt of such payment.

C. Participation in Musical Activities

1. Organizations not having representation in two (2) consecutive Saengerfeste, without reasonable explanation, will automatically be changed from active to supporting membership status.

D. Participation in the Annual Convention

1. Each organization is entitled to one delegate for every five singers registered with the Financial Secretary one month prior to the Annual Convention.
2. Each organization shall determine whether their members who are officers of the NYSSB shall also serve as delegates from the society to the Annual Convention. NYSSB officers will retain full voting privileges at the Business Meeting without regard to their delegate status.
3. Voting rights at the Bundes Music Committee meeting immediately before Prize Singing shall be limited to two votes per member organization.

Appendix C

Saengerfest Prize Singing Rules

Note: Saengerfest Prize Singing Rules are the responsibility of the Bundes Music Committee and may change as part of their normal business and therefore do not require an update to the Constitution and By-Laws.

Prize Singing Rules 33rd Saengerfest 2003

1. Competitive singing will be in the three categories: *Men's Chorus*, *Women's Chorus*, and *Mixed Chorus*. Three-part songs are allowed in both the Men's and Women's competition.
2. Choruses singing competitively in any category will be required to sing any 2 songs, chosen by them, from the list of 8 approved songs distributed by the Bundes Music Committee. There will be NO REQUIRED SONG in any category. The two songs may be sung in any order; however, the Bundes Music Committee Chairperson must be notified prior to the performance.
3. Choruses may sing their songs in the keys chosen by their music director. The choice of key must be announced to the adjudicators before each song begins. The adjudicators will not penalize nor reward the chorus because of the key chosen.
4. **Men's Chorus** and **Women's Chorus** competition will have only one class. There will be NO restriction on the number of singers in the performing chorus.
5. **Mixed Chorus** competition will have two classes. *First Class* will be for songs rated as more difficult; *Second Class* will be for songs rated as less difficult. The verein music directors will continue to rate the songs prior to a Saengerfest, as they did in the past. Choruses may sing their two songs in the class they have chosen without regard to the number of singers performing.
6. A **Non-Competitive** category has been established for those choruses who would like to sing and be evaluated by the adjudicators without being involved in the competitive singing. The adjudicators' reports would not be used by the Bundes Music Committee for any purpose and will be given only to the participating chorus.
7. All **Kinderchor** performances at a Saengerfest will be non-competitive.

Appendix B

Annual Convention Standard Operating Procedure

When: Annually, the second or third weekend of October.

Process:

Registration: Saturday afternoon. Hours to be determined by the Host Organization. Other amenities are at the discretion of the Host Organization.

Board Of Officers/Executive Committee: Meets at the discretion of the President. President to notify the Host Organization of meeting time.

Bundes Music Committee: Meets on Saturday afternoon. BMC Chairperson to notify the Host Organization of meeting time. The BMC consists of two (2) delegates from each member organization .

General Meeting: Meets at 10:00 AM on Sunday. All delegates, one (1) for every five (5) singers of each member organization approved by the Mandate Committee.

Memorial Service: Held before the close of the convention. Host Organization provides the time, music, and the candleholders, the NYSSB Secretary provides the candles. The member organization will provide the Secretary with the names from their organization to be honored.

Host Organization:

The *Host Organization* makes lodging arrangements, blocking out rooms, and requesting an earlier check-in time or alternative arrangement, taking into consideration the arrival times of the delegates from around the state.

The *Host Organization* plans entertainment, meals, etc. at their discretion and determines the price of the Badge.

The *Host Organization* notifies the officers and each member organization by letter, of the schedule of the weekend events with times, the price of the badge, the lodging arrangements including price and the deadline by which to make reservations as well as any other information attendees will need to know.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS

A. Executive Board of Officers

1. An Executive Board of Officers will be elected by the delegates attending the Annual Convention after a Saengerfest.
2. A slate of candidates will be presented by a Nominating Committee appointed by the President at the previous Convention. Other candidates may be nominated from the floor. Nominees who are not able to attend the meeting must indicate acceptance of their nominations in writing.
3. Officers shall serve for a term of three years and may be re-elected to consecutive terms.
4. The Executive Board shall consist of: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Music Librarian, Archivist, Music Committee Chairperson, Music Committee Vice-Chairperson, and Music Committee Secretary.

B Responsibilities

1. President

- a. Conducts all meetings of the Executive Board and the Business Meeting at the Annual Convention.
- b. Communicates with all member organizations through periodic messages, personal visits, or other means.
- c. Represents the NYSSB at other German-American events as appropriate.
- d. Appoints members of standing committees or other committees as necessary.
- e. The President shall periodically visit member organizations to encourage and support them and to promote good-will. The NYSSB will provide a Visitation and Travel Stipend to help offset these expenses.
- f. Supports the BMC Chairperson at Saengerfeste.

2. *First Vice President*

- a. Carries out responsibilities as requested by the President.
- b. In the absence of the President, represents the NYSSB and presides at business meetings.

3. *Second Vice President*

- a. Carries out responsibilities as requested by the President.
- b. In the absence of the President and First Vice President, represents the NYSSB and presides at business meetings.

4. *Financial Secretary*

- a. Maintains membership records of the NYSSB.
- b. Notifies member organizations of payment due date for membership fees, and maintains records of payment and numbers of singing members as reported by each member organization.
- c. Presents a report to the Annual Convention and submits all records for auditing by a committee appointed by the President and drawn from delegates attending the Convention.

5. *Recording Secretary*

- a. Maintains minutes of all meetings of the Executive Board and the business meeting at the Annual Convention.
- b. Copies and distributes minutes to the officers and member organizations.
- c. Maintains records of contact persons, addresses, and other pertinent data for each member organization.

6. *Treasurer*

- a. Carries out financial transactions necessary to transmit the business of the NYSSB.
- b. Maintains all financial records of the NYSSB.
- c. Presents a report to the Annual Convention and submits all records for auditing by a committee appointed by the President and drawn from delegates attending the Convention.
- d. Acquires an insurance bond, in the required amount, underwritten by a reliable insurance company, to provide coverage for the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer. The bond shall be given to the President for safekeeping.

Appendix A FEES AND RATES

The money amounts presented here are the current rates of December 2008. They are subject to change during normal NYSSB business and therefore do not require an update to the Constitution and By-Laws.

Adjudicator Honorarium Stipend:

The Adjudicator Honorarium Stipend, as implemented at the October 2006 BMC meeting, is \$300.00; this includes travel expenses.

Initiation Fee:

The Initiation Fee is \$25.00

Insurance Bond:

The Financial Secretary and the Treasurer insurance bond is \$2000.

Membership Fee:

Membership Fee is determined by a Singer Head Tax of \$5.00 per singer in the member organization. In a Saengerfest year there is an additional surcharge of \$1.00 per singer to be applied to NYSSB Saengerfest expenses such as Adjudicators Stipend or housing.

President's Visitation and Travel Stipend:

This annual stipend is \$500.00.

APPENDICES

The information presented in these appendices and our history are for reference only. Specific details for any future course of action, process, or procedure are subject to change during normal NYSSB business and therefore do not require an update to the Constitution and By-Laws.

7. *Music Librarian*

- a. Maintains a file of all music owned by the NYSSB.
- b. Provides copies of specific music as required by the Music Committee or the member organizations.
- c. Maintains a record of the degree of difficulty grading of specific songs as determined by the music directors of the member organizations.

8. *Archivist*

- a. Maintains the historical records of the NYSSB.
- b. Notifies the member organizations of the requirements for ordering awards from Germany or from the NYSSB and distributes such awards in a timely fashion to the organizations.

9. *Music Committee Chairperson*

- a. Conducts all meetings of the Music Committee.
- b. Presides at the Prize Singing (competitive singing) at the Saengerfest.
- c. Meets with the adjudicators and music directors as necessary at the Saengerfest.

10. *Music Committee Vice Chairperson*

- a. Presides at meetings of the Music Committee in the absence of the Chairperson.
- b. Maintains records of adjudicators at previous Saengerfeste and potential adjudicators.
- c. Obtains adjudicators for each Saengerfest and maintains communication with them as necessary.
- d. Reports names and qualifications of each adjudicator to the Music Committee meeting prior to the Saengerfest.
- e. Carries out other responsibilities as requested by the Chairperson or the committee.

11. *Music Committee Secretary*

- a. Maintains minutes of all Music Committee meetings.
- b. Copies and distributes minutes to the officers and member organizations.
- c. Carries out other responsibilities as requested by the Chairperson or the Committee.

C. Duty of Loyalty

No officer, trustee or employee shall engage in, or condone, any conduct that is disloyal, disruptive, damaging or competes with the NYSSB. No officer, trustee or employee shall take any action, or establish any interest, that compromises his/her ability to represent the best interest of the NYSSB.

D. Conflict of Interest

1. **Definition.** A conflict of interest exists when a matter to be acted upon by the Executive Board confers a direct, substantial benefit to any Officer of the Board, or business or agency from which such an officer derives an income or has authority in governance.

2. **Abstention.** A member of the Executive Board shall abstain from voting or attempting to influence the vote on any matter before the Board that places him or her in a conflict of interest.

3. **Disclosure.** A member of the Board shall disclose the conflict or potential conflict as soon as he/she recognizes the conflict. If self-disclosure is not revealed, the President or any member of the Executive Board can, prior to voting on a specific matter in which a potential conflict of interest exists, inquire whether any member of the Board desires to abstain from voting because of a conflict of interest. If no conflict of interest is disclosed but the President or any other member of the Board states the opinion that such a conflict exists and the challenged Board member refuses to abstain from the deliberations or voting as requested, the President shall immediately call for a vote of the Board to determine whether the challenged Officer is in a conflict of interest. If a majority of the Board present votes to require the abstention of the challenged Officer, that Officer shall not be permitted to vote.

4. **Limitations.** The NYSSB is dedicated to the participation of representatives on its Executive Board that may personally qualify for services offered by the NYSSB. Participation as a member of the Board does not preclude an individual from receiving services that he/she may be eligible for and need. The receipt of services or the potential of receiving services may, however, constitute a conflict of interest from time to time as defined herein. In the event that such a conflict of interest is determined to compromise the individual's ability to represent the NYSSB's best interest regarding a specific issue or action before the Board, the procedures stated in section 3. *Disclosure* are in force.

ARTICLE X AMENDMENT of CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

A. Proposals to Change or Amend the Constitution and By-Laws

Proposals to change or amend the Constitution and By-Laws must be in writing, signed by an appropriate officer of the submitting member organization, and received by the NYSSB Recording Secretary no later than July 1 preceding the Annual Convention. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the proposals, the secretary will issue copies to the officers and member organizations for their consideration prior to the Annual Convention.

B. Approval of the Proposed Change(s)

Approval of the proposed change(s) shall be by a vote of two-thirds majority of delegates attending the Annual Convention.

ARTICLE XI DISSOLUTION of the NEW YORK STATE SAENGERBUND

A. Proposal to Disband

The proposal to disband shall be approved by a vote of four-fifths of the Executive Board and distributed to each member organization at least 30 calendar days before the Annual Convention.

B. Approval to Disband

1. Approval to disband the NYSSB shall be by four-fifths majority vote of delegates attending the Annual Convention.
2. In case of dissolution, those remaining active delegates shall have the power to properly dispose of the assets of the NYSSB that remain, if any, after payment of any and all obligations or debt of the NYSSB. Any remaining assets should only be sold to persons or organizations that will ensure the preservation of the historical meaning and value of those assets. Proceeds from the sale of the assets must be donated to not-for-profit or charitable organizations.

9. Archivist-Librarian Report.
10. Committee Reports.
 - a. Bundes Music Committee.
 - b. Grant Committee.
 - c. Constitution Committee.
 - d. Nomination Committee - Elections of Officers (Triennial).
 - e. Other.
11. Proposals from the Executive Board of Officers.
 1. Annual Funding
 - a. President's Visitation and Travel Stipend.
 - b. Treasurer and Financial Secretary's Insurance Bond.
 - c. Tapestry Insurance Fees.
 - d. CCSNYS Membership.
 - e. NYSSB Website Fees.
 - f. Saengerfest Expenses and Stipends (Triennial).
 - g. Other Funding Proposals
 2. Other Proposals.
12. Proposals from Member Organizations.
 - a. Application for Membership.
 - b. Other.
13. Unfinished Business.
14. New Business.
 - a. Accept proposals and select site/date of next Annual Convention.
 - b. Accept proposals and select site/date of next Saengerfest (*On Saengerfest Year*).
 - c. Other.
15. Announcements.
 - a. Site and Date of next BMC Meeting (*BMC Chairperson*).
 - b. Other.
16. Memorial Service.
17. Adjournment.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

All meetings will be conducted by the officers according to the Constitution and Robert's Rules of Order as stated in ARTICLE IX Parliamentary Authority.

A. Annual Convention

1. A general business meeting attended by all delegates shall be held at each Annual Convention.
2. A meeting of the Executive Board shall be held at each Annual Convention.

B. Special Meetings

1. Special meetings of the Executive Board shall be scheduled as necessary by the President or upon request of four or more members of the Board. The meeting date and place shall be announced and the meeting held within 30 calendar days after the request has been made.
2. Upon request to the Executive Board by one-third of the member organizations, a special meeting can be called. The meeting date and place shall be announced and the meeting held within 30 calendar days after the request has been made.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

A. Standing Committees

1. Music Committee

- a. Each society shall select two delegates, a man and a woman whenever possible, to serve on the Music Committee. Hereinafter noted as "Bundes Music Committee", or "BMC."
- b. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary shall be elected by the delegates of the BMC meeting at the Annual Convention following each Saengerfest. The term of office shall be three years.

- c. The BMC shall meet at the Annual Convention and at a second time each year as determined by the committee members. BMC meetings are open to all delegates from each member organization except during Saengerfeste when only the designated two delegates from each member organization, the officers of the BMC, and the NYSSB President may attend and cast votes.

B. Ad-Hoc Committees

1. Grant Committee (Ammended 10/19/2014)

a. The Grant Committee administers grants provided by the NYSSB to the member organizations, when financially feasible. The criteria to determine consideration and distribution of the grants may change from time to time based on the Memorial Fund Operating Balance. Proposed changes to criteria or categories should be presented by the Grant Committee and approved by the delegates attending the Annual Convention. Changes are reflected in the following year grants. The criteria and categories will be defined on the Grant Application.

b. Responsibilities of the committee:

- (1) Receive grant applications by July 15 or as defined by the committee.
- (2) Review the applications and determine if the grant amount should be divided among multiple applicants.
- (3) Make a final recommendation for each category to the Executive Board of Officers to be brought forward and voted on by the delegates present at the Annual Convention.
- (4) Receive and review Final Disposition Reports of previous grants.

2. Nominating Committee

- a. The president shall appoint a nominating committee at the convention prior to a Saengerfest.
- b. Responsibilities of the committee:
 - (1) Develop a slate of candidates for the Executive Board and Music Committee positions.
 - (2) Present the slate of proposed candidates at the convention following a Saengerfest.
 - (3) Committee chairperson shall conduct the election of officers.
 - (4) Committee members shall act as tellers for the election.

3. Other Committees

Such other committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the president as it is deemed necessary to carry on the functions of the NYSSB and as defined in Robert's Rules of Order.

F. Prizes

1. The choruses receiving the highest points in their respective classes are awarded the first prize. Those choruses with lower points are awarded the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th prizes in descending order. Should a tie in points exist, double awards will be presented.
2. The prizes will be trophies or Honor Certificates with winners' names, date of Saengerfest, and signatures as appropriate. All trophies remain in the custody of the winning chorus until the next Saengerfest.
3. The host organization may award additional prizes at its discretion.
4. The "Traveling Trophy" is the permanent property of the NYSSB and is awarded to the participating chorus receiving the highest total points awarded in all three categories (Men's Chorus, Women's Chorus, and Mixed Chorus).
5. Any other trophy for a specific category which a chorus has won at three successive Saengerfeste shall become the property of that chorus. The BMC shall replace the trophy for the next Saengerfest.

ARTICLE IX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The meetings of the NYSSB shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

Order of Business Meetings:

1. Call to Order and Salute to the Flag.
2. President's Welcome to the Delegates.
3. Financial Secretary's Agenda.
 - a. Roll Call of Officers and Delegates.
 - b. Reading of Previous Convention Minutes.
 - c. Correspondence.
4. President's Annual Report.
5. Mandate Committee Report.
6. Financial Secretary's Annual Report.
7. Auditing Committee Report.
8. Treasurer's Annual Report.

D. Responsibilities of the Host Organization

1. The host organization shall determine the songs and director for the Mass Chorus Concert and schedule all Saengerfest events.
2. The host organization is responsible for the Saengerfest badges for the Adjudicators. All other expenses for the Adjudicators will be paid by the Saengerbund.
3. The host organization shall arrange for lodging, meals, meeting locations, and social events during the Saengerfest and notify each member society of the arrangements.
4. The host organization is required to furnish a tuned piano for Prize Singing.

E. Adjudicators

1. Adjudicators are contracted by the Bundes Music Committee. Whenever possible they should have prior experience with choral groups at the college level. Adjudicators may not serve at consecutive Saengerfeste.
2. Anyone who has had any connection with a member organization for ten years prior to a Saengerfest cannot be considered for a Saengerfest Prize Singing Adjudicator position.
3. The Adjudicators will be paid travel and lodging expenses, plus a fee recommended by the Bundes Music Committee and approved by the Saengerbund at the Annual Convention.
4. Adjudicators shall select their own seats in the auditorium used for Prize Singing.
5. Adjudicators will use the Performance Grading System as developed by the Bundes Music Committee and evaluate each performance immediately upon its completion. After all choral performances are concluded by a chorus, the completed grading forms are sealed in an envelope and given to the Bundes Music Committee officer responsible for Prize Singing.
6. Adjudicators are expected to attend the Bundes Music Committee meetings following Prize Singing to answer any questions that may arise.

ARTICLE VIII SAENGERFEST

A. Description

1. The New York State Saengerbund Saengerfest is a triennial competitive singing festival and convention held in one of the member cities. It has evolved into a three-day event, typically comprised of a Mass Chorus Concert, Welcome Dance, Prize Singing Competition, Banquet and Dance, Analysis of Competitive Performance, Picnic, Award Ceremonies.
2. The NYSSB is the exclusive sponsor of a Saengerfest, which is hosted by a duly selected member organization.
3. The BMC is solely responsible to administer and supervise the prize-singing competition.
4. On rare occasions, the Saengerfest may be held on a different cycle by vote of the membership at the annual convention. For example, the 100th Anniversary celebration of the New York State Saengerbund fell on a year between Saengerfeste. To commemorate this auspicious occasion, the 31st Saengerfest was advanced to 1997 and hosted by the Utica Männerchor. Thereafter, the triennial cycle was resumed with the 32nd Saengerfest in 2000 in Buffalo.

B. Responsibilities of the Bundes Music Committee

1. Rules and regulations for Prize Singing at the Saengerfest will be determined by the Bundes Music Committee. All decisions made will be final as of the BMC meeting prior to the Saengerfest and must be adhered to by all member organizations until after the Saengerfest.
2. The BMC shall be responsible for the following activities:
 - a. Polling the member organizations for recommendation of prize songs two years prior to the scheduled Saengerfest.
 - b. Distributing copies of the tentative prize songs and polling the member organizations' music directors to grade these potential prize songs for degree of difficulty eighteen months prior to the scheduled Saengerfest.
 - c. Selecting the final prize songs one year prior to the scheduled Saengerfest.

- d. Distributing a copy of each selected prize song to the member organizations at least nine months prior to the scheduled Saengerfest.
 - e. Maintaining a record of the current holders of the prize trophies awarded at each Saengerfest and replace any trophy which has become the property of a member organization.
 - f. Ensuring the timely return of the prize trophies prior to the next Saengerfest, usually by the Spring BMC meeting.
3. The BMC shall maintain the NYSSB Music Library comprised of sheet music, records of performance grading, and history of songs selected for prize singing.
 4. The BMC shall contract for the Saengerfest Prize Singing Adjudicators, music, and awards for prize singing. Payment for these expenses will be made by the Treasurer as approved by the Executive Board. Adjudicators may not serve at consecutive Saengerfeste.
 5. The officers of the BMC are responsible for conducting the Prize Singing at each Saengerfest.
 6. The BMC shall collect the completed performance grading forms from the Adjudicators at the conclusion of Prize Singing and give them to the President of the NYSSB for safekeeping until the BMC meeting on the following day.
 7. The BMC shall meet on the day after Prize Singing to hear and record the Adjudicators' grading of each performance sung by each chorus. Winners of the various awards shall be determined at this meeting.
 8. The BMC shall see that each member organization has a copy of its performance grading by each Adjudicator.
 9. The BMC shall cooperate with the Host Society in the preparation and presentation of the Mass Chorus concert at the Saengerfest.
 10. The BMC shall be responsible for reviewing any charges of inappropriate behavior brought upon any member organization individually or as a group. The penalty for any infraction will be determined by the BMC based on the nature and severity of the infraction and may include deduction of prize singing points or disqualification from the competition.

C. Responsibilities of the Member Organizations

1. Choruses participating in Prize Singing must have met their financial obligations, indicated their chosen categories for Prize Singing, and be prepared for Mass Chorus and Prize Singing.
2. All participating member organizations are expected to attend the Mass Chorus rehearsal and the Mass Chorus Concert.
3. Singers who are members of two or more member organizations may participate in Prize Singing with each member chorus if they have been members of each for a minimum of two years.
4. Each member organization may choose to compete in any category of Prize Singing.
5. A member organization may not change its stated categories of Prize Singing after the Bundes Music Committee meeting prior to the Saengerfest.
6. Only active singers of the member organization shall be included in the number of singers registered at the Bundes Music Committee meeting prior to the Saengerfest. This number cannot be exceeded in the Prize Singing competition.
7. A member organization may not include paid singers in their chorus for Prize Singing.
8. Music Directors may not sing along with their chorus while conducting during Prize Singing. If a violation is noted, both the director and chorus will be immediately disqualified by the Bundes Music Committee.
9. Each member organization is responsible to ensure the appropriate behavior of its membership and director. Verbal harassment, intimidation, threats or other behaviors deemed inappropriate by the supervising Bundes Music Committee are not allowed.