

Handbags That Help

Bylaws

Original September 6, 2007

Revised April 2008

Approved April 24, 2008

Article I. Mission/Purpose

Handbags That Help (HTH) is a women's giving circle committed to improving lives throughout the greater Hancock County community by collectively funding significant grants to charitable projects and programs and increasing philanthropy in our community.

The purpose of HTH is to:

Cultivate women as informed philanthropic leaders,
Create a new and substantial pool of money from women,
Identify appropriate and timely opportunities
Allocate funds based on majority preference,
Accomplish change,
Celebrate impact, and
Attain recognition as a "difference maker", a valued and significant resource.

Section 1.01 Goals

The goals of HTH are to:

- (a) Increase women's philanthropic giving in our community,
- (b) Involve members in annual giving that is lasting, and
- (c) Serve as a catalyst for enduring change.

Article II. Name

Handbags That Help is the official name of the group.

Article III. Sponsor

HTH has established a **field of interest** fund at The Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation (TCF). TCF Board of Directors has authorized the voting members of HTH to approve distributions from the fund. HTH will communicate with TCF and solicit its input and advice as needed in connection with the efforts of the Grants Sub-Circle, pursuant to Article VIII.

Article IV. Membership

Membership in HTH is open to all women who wish to further the mission and goals of HTH through financial support. Voting Members shall be defined as those who annually complete a registration form and submit the annual contribution to be filed with HTH.

Section 4.01 Voting Member categories

All membership fees will be granted into the community. There are two voting member categories:

- (a) **Individual Voting Member** – Members who annually contribute \$500 to HTH
- (b) **Joint Membership** – 2-5 women split a membership and share a single vote for \$500.

Section 4.02 Responsibilities of membership

- 1) Act on matters submitted by HTH committees for vote at the scheduled meetings.
- 2) Help establish grant making criteria and priorities on an annual basis.
- 3) Attend the annual meeting to review reports of the year's work.

- 4) Encourage participation of any and all women that support the mission and goals.
- 5) Make annual financial commitment.

Section 4.03 Benefits of Membership

- (a) To make a real difference in the community with pooled monetary resources.
- (b) Participate in formulating annual goals and grant criteria.
- (c) Altruism accompanied by a sense of self-empowerment.
- (d) Feeling part of a larger community – an association that can improve the present and influence the future.
- (e) Friendships – the joy of meeting others who share your interests and values.
- (f) Being part of a process and holding a privileged position from which to watch a project unfold.
- (g) Attend the TCF Annual Meeting and other special programs.

Section 4.04 Contributions of Voting Members

- (a) Individual Voting Members shall contribute \$500 per year to be paid annually prior to the first members meeting.
- (b) Joint Memberships shall total \$500 paid annually prior to the first members meeting.
- (c) Joint Memberships and Individual Memberships will be given the power of one vote.

Article V. Organization/Structure

HTH will have an executive committee (called The Guiding Circle), defined in section 5.01 and committees (called Sub-circles) as defined in section 5.06.

Section 5.01 Members of the Guiding Circle

The Guiding Circle will consist of eight members of HTH, each of whom shall be an Individual Voting Member. The members shall include a Chair (C), Vice-Chair (VC), Treasurer (T), Secretary (S), Grants Chair (GC), Communications Chair (CC), Program Chair (PC), and at least one member at large. Guiding Circle Members may serve in more than one capacity. Initially, the Guiding Circle shall consist of some of the founding members of HTH. Thereafter, Guiding Circle members shall be elected in accordance with section 5.04.

Section 5.02 Responsibilities of the Guiding Circle

- (a) Support the mission and goals of HTH through community connections, personal financial support, and new membership development.
- (b) Call (C), Direct, and Attend meetings of HTH.
- (c) Act as Chair in her absence. (VC)
- (d) Accept contributions, approve expenses. (T)
- (e) Review and Report on financial statements from TCF. Work on budgeting from “Friends of” fund at TCF. (T)
- (f) Chair the Communications, Grants, and Programs Sub-circles, and appoint members to the Nominating Sub-circle.
- (g) Record meeting minutes. (S)
- (h) Review and amend bylaws and policies that reflect HTH’s mission, and present changes to the membership as needed.
- (i) Plan all programs and meetings for HTH (PC).
- (j) Coordinate with TCF on all forms of Public Relations including, but not limited to: External and Electronic Communications and all Internal Communications (CC).
- (k) Act as Archivist for HTH (CC).
- (l) Conduct all other business of HTH.

Section 5.03 Organization of the Guiding Circle Meetings

- a) The Guiding Circle will meet at least four times a year, to most effectively carry out its responsibilities for HTH.
- b) The Chair of HTH will serve as Chair of the Guiding Circle.

Section 5.04 Election of Guiding Circle Members and Officers

- a) Candidates for officers of the Guiding Circle will be presented by the Nominating Sub-Circle and voted on by the entire membership by proxy prior to the first meeting.
- b) Sub-circle Chairs will be appointed by the previous year Guiding Circle Chair after the membership deadline date.
- c) Those elected will begin serving their term upon approval by membership.
- d) If a vacancy in the Guiding Circle occurs mid-term, an interim member may be appointed by the remaining Guiding Circle members to serve until the following election.

Section 5.05 Terms of Service

- a) Officers and Chairs will serve one-year terms and may serve up to two consecutive terms.

Section 5.06 Sub-circles (Committees)

Sub-circle will include a minimum of five volunteer members and their responsibilities include:

- 1) **Grants Sub-circle** – Award grants in accordance with Article VIII. (See Section 8.01 for Responsibilities.)
- 2) **Communications Sub-circle** – Work with TCF on maintenance of website, write and distribute newsletters, issue press releases, answer inquiries, and record/photograph events.
- 3) **Program Sub-circle** – Plan programs and meetings and make all meeting arrangements.
- 4) **Nominating Sub-circle** – is a two to three member committee from the Guiding Circle that will nominate and run elections.
- 5) **Other Sub-circles** as needed annually.

Article VI. Meetings

HTH will meet at least four times a year, at such times as the Guiding Circle shall determine.

Article VII. Administrative Expenses

The Guiding Circle will work with TCF and may incur costs for supplies and services necessary to the operation of HTH. The expenses may include, but are not limited to, website design/services, paper, printing, postage, room rental, and refreshments. Funds for administrative and extraordinary expenses will be obtained by “Friends of HTH” donations and interest and income from the grant fund held by TCF. No direct membership dollars will be used for administrative expenses.

Article VIII. Awarding of Grants

Voting on grants will take place at the third meeting. Grant applications must be received by the established deadline to be considered for the grant cycle.

Section 8.01 Organization and Responsibilities of the Grant Sub-circle

The Grant Sub-circle will carry out procedures for awarding grants.

Section 8.02 Procedure for awarding grants

- (a) The Grant Sub-circle will take an Interest Inventory of the members at the beginning of each grant cycle to determine the focus(es) of the group. These focuses will be used by the Grants Sub-circle to determine funding.
- (b) The Grant Sub-circle shall solicit grant applications which will be returned to the TCF office for consideration by HTH members.
- (c) The Grant Sub-circle will prepare a one-page summary of the top applicants prior to the March meeting.

- (d) The Grant Sub-circle will introduce the top grant applicants at the March meeting of HTH for presentations prior to voting on the grant applications.
- (e) Ballot will list the top applicants.
- (f) Grants Sub-circle may recommend a portion of the donations be used to support permanent HTH program endowment. Any such recommendations will be presented on the grant ballot.
- (g) Grants may be awarded in an amount up to the balance of the HTH account.

Section 8.03 Criteria for awarding grants

- (a) Applicant organization must be a non-profit tax-exempt organization pursuant to IRS section 501(c)3 or 509(a)(1) serving the greater Hancock County area.
- (b) Management of the agency and project should be in the hands of reliable, ethical, and experienced personnel.
- (c) Project plans should demonstrate the ability to achieve results and should supply sufficient rationale to warrant the given amount of risk.
- (d) Organizations that discriminate on the basis of age, race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religious belief and organizations that serve an exclusively sectarian purpose will not be considered for funding.
- (e) Organizations that show collaboration and cooperation will receive priority.

Article IX. Voting

The following guidelines will be used for all issues voted on by the entire membership:

- a) A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of voting members.
- b) A quorum must be represented to hold a valid vote.
- c) Vote will be by secret ballot.
- d) Voting members not able to attend may vote by proxy.
- e) All ballots will be counted by a member of the Guiding Circle, preferably the Vice-Chair, and the TCF staff member assigned to HTH.