

Bylaws Of The
Illiana Beer Rackers Union (IBRU) Homebrew Club
v2.2 - 2025-10-02

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ARTICLE 1 - NAME

1.1 - Name

The name of this organization shall be the ILLIANA BEER RACKERS UNION, a.k.a. IBRU Homebrew Club, hereinafter referred to as "IBRU", or the "Club."

ARTICLE 2 - CHARTER

2.1 - Statement of Purpose

To encourage and promote the creation, appreciation and enjoyment of homebrewed beer, mead and cider while expanding the knowledge and practice of homebrewing throughout the Illiana region.

2.2 - Club Description

The Illiana Beer Rackers Union (IBRU) is a non for profit club that meets monthly to discuss a wide array of topics related to homebrewed beer, mead and cider, including information and education about brewing techniques, recipes, equipment, judging, evaluation and appreciation. IBRU also sponsors a number of events including internal competitions, field trips, collaborative brews, homebrew tastings, and the like. IBRU has served members located in Northwest Indiana and the Southeast Chicago suburbs since 2010, and is an American Homebrewers Association (AHA) registered club.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP

3.1 - Members

Membership in IBRU is open to any adult 21 years of age or older with an interest in homebrewing beer, mead and cider. Members in good standing are those who have paid their annual dues and have attended at least one Club meeting in the past year. A member in good standing shall hereinafter be referred to as a "Member."

The Board of Directors has the sole authority to accept or deny any application for membership. Denials may occur for any reason provided the reason for denial neither violates the guidelines contained within the Bylaws nor is capricious or arbitrary in nature.

3.2 - Individual Membership

The Individual Membership is the Club's membership offering for individuals. This

membership comes with all the rights and privileges accorded to Individual Members, including access to member resources and events. It also includes voting rights on all matters brought before the Membership. Individual Members are referred to as “Members”.

3.3 - Family Membership

The Family Membership is an option designed for a spouse or partner where one person is typically much more involved than the other. This option can only be “added on” to an existing Individual Membership, can be used for one (1) additional adult member, and only one person in the pair is considered a full member with the other being a non-voting member. This membership comes with all the rights and privileges accorded to Individual Members, including access to member resources and events, except that it DOES NOT include voting rights for the non-voting member. People with a Family Membership are referred to as “Members”.

3.4 - Membership Dues

The Club collects annual Membership Dues from its Members as a way to help fund the Club and as a means to identify official Members. In order for a person to be considered a Member of the Club the Board of Directors requires payment of the current Dues to the Treasurer (or other Officer, who may collect on behalf of the Treasurer in need) on an annual basis.

Current annual dues for the Individual Membership is \$25.

Current annual dues for the Family Membership Dues is \$15.

3.5 - Establishing Dues

Prior to the end of each fiscal year the Board of Directors will review and establish the amount of the Membership Dues, subject to approval by the Membership, for the following year. The amount of the upcoming year’s Membership Dues will be announced prior to the December Club meeting of the current year and will take effect on January 1 of the next year.

3.6 - Membership Period

The Membership Period is from January to December of each year and is aligned with the Fiscal Year of the club. Any person who becomes a member of the club at any time during the first half of the calendar year (defined as the beginning of January through the end of June) will pay \$25 for a Full Membership or \$15 for a Family Membership covering the entire annual membership period. Any person who becomes a member of the club at any time during the second half of the calendar year (defined as the beginning of July through the end of December) will pay the prorated amounts of \$15 for

a Full Membership or \$10 for a Family Membership.

In the situation where a Family Membership is added onto an Individual Membership, the membership period of the Family Membership will assume the same end date as the Individual Membership it is paired with, regardless of when the Family Membership began.

3.7 - Lapses in Membership

It is the expectation that existing Members will renew their membership prior to the expiration of their current membership period. To facilitate this process, reminders will be sent alerting the Member of their upcoming membership expiration date in order to help avoid any unnecessary or unexpected lapses in membership.

In situations where the membership is not renewed prior to the expiration date due to some minor inability to make payment (not able to attend a meeting for some reason, or some other unintentional delay, for example), the start of the Member's "renewed" membership period will be back-dated so that there is no lapse in the dates of the membership.

Members who do not renew their membership prior to the membership expiration date shall lose their Member status as of the end of the month in which the membership expires and will be placed on the Inactive Member List for so long as their membership is lapsed. Inactive Members who do not renew their membership for a period of four years shall be dropped from the list.

3.8 - Rights and Liabilities

In any case where an official matter is brought to a vote by the Board of Directors, everyone with an Individual Membership shall have the right to vote on said matter while in attendance at a Club meeting.

Members will receive access to any official Club online offering, including the IBRU Slack site, the IBRU Facebook site, the IBRU website, and other offerings as they become available. Members will receive access to any Club-sponsored events, including those identified as "member-only" events.

Individual Members shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the Club. No Member shall receive compensation for services rendered to the Club, although a Member may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred on behalf of the Club if approved by the Board of Directors IN ADVANCE of the expense being incurred, at the

sole discretion of the Board of Directors.

3.9 - Return of Club Property

Any and all elected Officers and Members, upon completion of their term in office, assignment, or lending period, shall return to the Club any and all documents, equipment, and other property belonging to the Club.

Failure to comply may result in expulsion from IBRU and civil action if deemed necessary.

3.10 - Guests

Members are encouraged to invite individuals who are current homebrewers or are interested in homebrewing as guests to Club meetings and other non-member-only functions. These guests are welcomed with the hope that they will eventually join the Club. Guests should not expect to be able to attend member-only events, and guests will be strongly encouraged to become members if they continue to attend Club meetings.

For the purposes of the Bylaws, former members, family members and other non-member participants are considered guests.

3.11 - Revocation or Suspension

Membership in the Club may be revoked or suspended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors for reasons including but not limited to the following:

1. Failure to abide by the Club Bylaws
2. Conduct that is detrimental or unbecoming of the Charter of the Club
3. Violation of the IBRU Code of Ethics
4. Failure to pay dues, which will result in a suspension of membership

Any person whose membership has been revoked will lose future IBRU-related privileges and shall not be allowed to participate in any future Club meetings or activities, at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE 4 - OFFICERS

4.1 - Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is composed of the individual Club Officers. Collectively, the Officers are referred to as the Board of Directors.

4.2 - Officer Roles

The elected Officers of the Club shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and other such Officers as the Board of Directors may determine, pending approval by the Membership. Such Officers shall hold office for one calendar year beginning in January and ending in December.

4.3 - Nomination and Election of Officers

Nominations for Officer positions will be collected annually as part of the process to identify Officers for the following year. Nominations will be collected via the IBRU website during the month of October, with nominees being announced at the November Club meeting and voting taking place at the December Club meeting.

Any person can nominate or be nominated for an officer position, but only a Member may accept a nomination. A Member may be nominated for more than one position and can accept any, all, or none of the nominations. Those nominees who have accepted at least one nomination will be announced at the November Club meeting.

Voting shall be by secret ballot for the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, one at a time and in that order using paper ballots at the December Club meeting. Tellers, who shall be Members not running for any office, will be appointed by the presiding officer to collect and record the votes. Members who may be unable to vote at the meeting may vote by proxy on a form provided by the Secretary. The Officers-Elect will be installed at the January Club meeting the following year.

4.4 - Officer Eligibility

Any person who has been a Member for at least twelve (12) months and is in good standing with the Club and has been nominated for office may run for an elected office. While the goal is to ensure that any nominee for an officer position has at least one full annual cycle's worth of experience, the Board of Directors may waive this requirement in extenuating circumstances.

4.5 - Transition of Officers-Elect

Officer elections occur at the December Club Meeting and the newly elected Officers are installed at the January Club Meeting. During that interim month, the newly elected Officers are considered "Officers-Elect". Officers-Elect will have a one-month transition period during which time the Board of Directors and the out-going Officer(s) will assist with transitioning the Officer-Elects into their new roles. It is the expectation and understanding that outgoing officers will provide guidance and facilitate the transition of the role to the best of their ability in a timely and well-intentioned manner.

4.6 - Board of Director Meetings

Board of Directors meetings shall be at a time and place called by the President. The Board shall meet at least once per quarter and as necessary to discuss the direction and other matters related to the operation of the Club.

4.7 - Vacancy of Office

If a vacancy on the Board of Directors occurs during the year except as detailed in Section 4.10, such vacancy shall be filled by a Member in good standing by appointment of the President, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. In the event the President office becomes vacant, the Vice President shall immediately succeed into that office. In the event that both the President and Vice President offices become concurrently vacant, the Board of Directors shall appoint Members in good standing to fill said vacant offices, subject to approval of the Membership.

4.8 - Removal from Office

Any Officer missing two Board of Directors meetings and/or four Club meetings during their term of office, without reasonable excuse, shall be removed from office and replaced as soon as possible. The reasonable nature of the excuse shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

Any Officer found not performing their duties or functioning contrary to parameters of the Bylaws as determined by a majority of the Board of Directors may be removed from office, subject to the approval by a majority vote of the Membership at the next membership meeting following a report from the Board of Directors to the Membership.

4.9 - Membership Grant for Elected Officers

All Officers, determined by the Board of Directors to have completed a full active term in office and being in good standing, shall be granted a year's membership for the following calendar year in recognition of their service to the Club.

4.10 - No Officer Nominee Available to be Elected

In a situation where there is no person available to fill a role during the Officer election normally taking place at the December meeting, and assuming that the role in question is not the President role, the President-Elect shall identify a nominee, and if the nominee accepts the nomination, the club shall vote to approve that nomination at the January meeting. If a majority of the Membership attending that January meeting approve the nomination, that nominee becomes the new officer-elect.

ARTICLE 5 - CODE OF ETHICS

5.1 - Acknowledgement

All Members of the Club shall read, understand and acknowledge receipt of this Code of Ethics.

5.2 - Responsibilities

All IBRU Members are solely responsible for their own behavior and must adhere to and obey any and all Federal, State, and local laws regarding the distribution and consumption of alcohol. All Members are expected to portray the Club in a positive light and take care to not cause any disrepute or dishonor to the Club. Honesty, fairness and respect are values expected of all IBRU Members. No Member shall steal, be violent, habitually confrontational, or engage in behavior that is disrespectful to others, themselves, or the Club.

5.3 - Nondiscrimination

Membership shall not be denied to any individual on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or age.

5.4 - Harassment

Members of the Club are required to maintain a harassment free environment at all in-person gatherings, on all online forums, and in any and all communication relevant to the operations of the Club.

5.5 - Rules of Conduct

When the Club visits a location, be it a place of business, public space or private home, we are guests. As such, we want to avoid any situations that might reflect poorly on IBRU or create issues for the hosts. To that end, it's important that we follow some simple guidelines:

- Members will respect the property, rules and staff of the host site before, during and after IBRU events
- Members will maintain some semblance of decorum - don't get too intoxicated, too loud, or too unruly. These are the easiest ways to get the Club banned from a space.
- When meeting at a place of business, Members will not bring commercial beverages to the event. The business is supporting the Club by hosting us; the Club supports the business by eating/drinking their wares, so let's not undercut their sales.

- Not all meeting locations allow the Club to bring homebrew inside. The Board of Directors will try to limit the Club's visits to such places, but if there's any question about whether bringing homebrew is acceptable, please ask.
- Members are prohibited from selling homebrewed items at businesses we visit. Indiana Code IC 7.1-1-2-3 and Illinois Code 235 ILCS 5/6-36 prohibit the sale of homebrewed beverages. Not only is this illegal but it undercuts the sales of the businesses we visit.

Failure to comply with the Rules of Conduct will initiate a review of membership by the Board of Directors and may result in temporary suspension of Membership privileges, revocation of Membership, or potentially restitution.

5.6 - Adherence to the Bylaws and Hold Harmless Statement

All Members shall acknowledge and agree to adhere to these Bylaws.

All Members shall acknowledge that their participation in IBRU is entirely voluntary and that participation in Club activities including but not limited to regular Club meetings, pouring events, AHA-sanctioned or other competitions, and other Club events may involve the consumption of alcoholic beverages and that this consumption may affect their perceptions, judgment and reactions.

Each Member accepts responsibility for their own conduct, behavior and actions as well as that of any of the Member's family members or guests that may be present at Club activities, wherever they may be held.

The individual Member and any guest of such Member will completely absolve the Club, its Officers and Members, individually or collectively, of responsibility for the Member's conduct, behavior and actions; likewise, for the conduct, behavior and actions of the Member's guests.

5.7 - Failure to Adhere to the Code of Ethics

Any Member, former member, guest or participant in any IBRU-sponsored activity who exhibits excessive or continual disregard for the IBRU Code of Ethics will have their membership revoked and/or lose future IBRU-related privileges, at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Any Member, former member, guest or participant, who exhibits discrimination in any form will have their membership revoked and/or lose future IBRU-related privileges, at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS

6.1 - Club Meetings

The Club shall hold one meeting per month on the first (1st) Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. unless a scheduling conflict or other extenuating circumstance exists as determined by the Board of Directors, in which case the meeting will be rescheduled for the most appropriate date.

Whenever possible, Club meetings will be held at local breweries or other local establishments within Northwest Indiana and the Southeast Chicago suburbs. All Club meetings will be conducted in accordance with an agenda previously developed and approved by the Board of Directors.

Club meetings are open to the public and all members, former members, guests and other interested parties are encouraged to attend these meetings.

6.2 - Activities

Besides the regular monthly meetings, the Club will strive to host a summer cookout/picnic and a winter holiday party; promote internal and external competitions; and encourage participation in beer sharing, barrel fills, collaboration brews with local breweries, and other social activities and outings as may be organized from time to time.

Activities that are specifically identified as “member only” are designed for Members of the Club and are not open to the public. Former members, guests or other participants should not expect to be invited to or participate in said events.

6.3 - Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President when deemed necessary for the best interest of the Club. Notice of such meetings shall be sent to all Members at least five (5) days before the scheduled date, and shall state the reason for the meeting being called, the business to be transacted, and by whom the meeting was called.

Additionally, special meetings may be called by a majority of the Members. At all times, where a regular Club Meeting will suffice, Special Meetings should not be called.

6.4 - Quorum

A quorum at any Club meeting shall be defined as at least one-third of the total current Members. A quorum at any Board of Director meeting shall be defined by at least one-half of the Board members plus one. For any measure before the Board of Directors requiring an Officer vote, Officers may vote via electronic communications.

ARTICLE 7 - DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

7.1 - General Duties of All Officers

- Support Members by maintaining a high level of activity, responsiveness, and availability to Members via in-person events, virtual gatherings, and digitally via Facebook and Slack and email
- Work to establish and nurture a friendly, enjoyable and educational environment within the Club, and maintain positive relationships with the Membership
- Work in good faith with the other Officers to schedule, organize, and manage Club events, participate in discussions regarding Club business, contribute to decision making on matters that will benefit the Club, and take the lead on projects that require guidance
- Introduce, promote, and represent the Club at formal and informal events
- Maintain outstanding attendance at Club functions, Club meetings and Board of Director meetings
- Encourage participation in homebrew competitions and Club activities; encourage membership in the AHA
- Focus on developing connections and new opportunities for the Club; liaise, foster, and nurture collaborative opportunities

7.2 - Duties of the President

- Uphold the Bylaws of the Club
- Interpret the Bylaws of the Club when necessary
- Assume the role of Chairperson of the Board of Directors
- Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and Membership
- Call regular and special meetings of the Membership and Board of Directors in accordance with these bylaws
- Function as the Club spokesperson, master of ceremonies at events, and primary contact for the Club
- Function as a member of all committees by default
- Lead the development of Club and Officer meeting agendas
- Propose to the Members the issues and topics to be voted on by the membership
- Oversee the tracking of the IBRU inventory of equipment and supplies
- Make sure events are staffed, and tasks are assigned and completed
- Manage the IBRU Recognition Awards process
- Call and Organize Special Committees as deemed necessary

7.3 - Duties of the Vice-President

- Work closely with the President and other Officers to plan and coordinate activities
- Function as the leader at Club meetings when the President is unavailable
- Focus on developing connections and new opportunities for the Club; liaise, foster, and nurture collaborative opportunities
- Manage the Officer nomination and voting process
- Secure (or delegate someone to secure) a meeting place for each monthly business meeting
- Create monthly meeting reminders on Facebook and via email
- Work with the President and other Officers to recommend, determine and implement policy decisions made by the Board of Directors

7.4 - Duties of the Secretary

- Generate the official monthly Club meeting minutes; post them on the IBRU Facebook page and IBRU Slack channels
- Provide agendas for meetings and events as required
- Take notes at Officers' meetings and generate the official Officer meeting minutes
- Take notes at committee meetings at which the Secretary plays a part, and provide the notes to the committee Members for reference and further use
- Facilitate and coordinate ribbon and medal procurement for Club competitions, and present them to the winners
- Record and disseminate guidelines and/or rules for Club competitions
- Provide printed ballots for the election of Officers
- Maintain these Bylaws
- Work with the President and other Officers to recommend, determine and implement policy decisions made by the Board of Directors

7.5 - Duties of the Treasurer

- Keep correct books of account of all its business and transactions and such other books of account as the Board of Directors may require
- Maintain the official Club treasury account and provide records to the Board of Directors upon request
- Manage the annual Club dues collection process and deposit in the Club account
- Maintain the official list of Members
- Manage Club merchandise
- Manage and maintain the AHA Club Insurance Program enrollment on behalf of the Club
- Reimburse expenses incurred by members on behalf of the Club

- Render a statement of the condition of the finances of the Club at each meeting of the Board of Directors and general meetings or at such other times as required
- Work with the President and other Officers to recommend, determine and implement policy decisions made by the Board of Directors

ARTICLE 8 - VOTING

8.1 - Voting at Meetings

All Individual Members shall have the right to vote on matters brought before the Membership. At all meetings, except for the election of Officers and the IBRU Recognition Awards, all votes shall be via voice vote or a count of raised hands unless otherwise determined. Ballots shall be provided for the election of Officers by the Secretary as detailed in Article 4.3 (Nomination and Election of Officers).

ARTICLE 9 - COMMITTEES

9.1 - Special Committees

Special committees shall be appointed by the President for a specific purpose, as the need may arise, and may be disbanded when no longer needed.

Each committee will assign a Committee Lead and a Committee Secretary to help direct and manage the work of the committee.

Committees serve an advisory function and report to the Board of Directors, which has the authority to approve any or all committee findings.

9.2 - Authorization to Incur or Satisfy Debts

No committee of this body, or any officer or member thereof shall contract any debts in its behalf, which shall in any manner render the Club liable for the payment of the same, unless approved in advance by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE 10 - FINANCES

10.1 - Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Club shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December in each calendar year.

10.2 - Expenditure Limits

In fulfilling its mission, the Board of Directors may, at its discretion, authorize such funds as it deems necessary for any normal, operational costs necessary for a club function. Normal operational costs may include beer, food, fees, insurance, miscellaneous printing, contest awards and raffle prizes. In addition, the Board of Directors have the ability to authorize the use of club funds for expenses that are incidental to a club function or event. Expenditures that are non-operational, as well as capital purchases in excess of \$200.00 will require approval of the club as a whole.

10.3 - Club Approval

For any purchase requiring approval of the club as a whole, the issue being decided must be announced and included on the official Club Meeting Agenda prior to the meeting at which the vote on the matter will occur. A quorum being met, discussion at the Club Meeting must take place and shall minimally include a presentation of the proposal and a Treasurer's report regarding the financial implications (pros and cons) of the proposal. A majority of members voting in favor of the proposal is required to consider the purchase approved.

ARTICLE 11 - AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

11.1 - Manner of Amendment

These Bylaws may be amended by the following procedure:

- Any Member or the Board of Directors may petition for a change in the Bylaws in writing. The written notice of a proposed amendment must be presented to the Board of Directors at least two (2) weeks prior to the next Club meeting.
- The written notice shall include the reason for the change, the article, the section, the paragraph, etc., where the change will occur, and what the change will be.
- At a Club meeting having an agenda item for that purpose, the proposed amendment shall be presented to the Membership, followed by discussion as needed.
- After presentation the Membership present shall vote on whether or not to accept the proposed amendment for consideration.
- If the resolution to consider the proposed amendment is approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the ballots cast at the Club meeting, the proposed amendment shall be

included in the meeting minutes for presentation to the entirety of the Membership.

- At the next Club meeting having an agenda item for that purpose, the resolution will be voted on by the Membership. The resolution will be considered adopted if approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the Membership.
- A vote on proposed amendments may be by proxy on a form provided by the Secretary.
- Said changes will be recorded in **Article 14.1 - Amendments** and will be announced to the Membership at the next Club meeting.

11.2 - Minor Edit Stipulation

The Board of Directors may make necessary corrections (grammatical, spelling, formatting, or changes to the Board titles or responsibilities) at any time with the consensus of the majority of the Officers. Said changes will be recorded in **Article 14.2 - Minor Edits** and will be announced to the Membership at the next Club meeting.

ARTICLE 12 - DISSOLUTION

12.1 - Dissolution of the Club

The Club shall use its funds only to accomplish the objectives and purposes specified and no part of said funds shall be distributed to the members of the Club. Upon dissolution, the Board of Directors will collect the physical assets of the club and make recommendations on how to distribute, donate or sell those assets.

Any funds as a result of the sale of physical assets, as well as any other funds maintained by the Club or held within the Treasury, shall be distributed to one or more regularly organized and qualified charitable, educational, scientific or philanthropic organizations to be selected by the Board of Directors, subject to approval by the Membership.

ARTICLE 13 - ADOPTION

13.1 - Adoption

- These Bylaws are adopted as of June 1, 2023.
- Bylaws 2.1 are adopted as of January 4, 2024.
- Bylaws 2.1 are adopted as of October 2, 2025

ARTICLE 14 - AMENDMENTS AND MINOR EDITS

14.1 - Amendments

Amendments to the Bylaws approved by the Membership will be detailed here as provided for in **Article 11.1 - Manner of Amendment**.

- Version 2.1
 - 3.2 & 3.3 - Created distinction between Individual Membership and Family Memberships
 - 3.4 - Established the 2024 Individual Dues as \$25; Family Membership Dues as \$15
 - 3.6 - Provided clarification on the definition of “Membership Period” and how the Family Membership aligns with the Individual Membership it is paired with
 - 3.7 - Clarifies loss of membership status due to membership expiration
 - 4.7 - Clarifies a “vacancy of office”
 - 4.10 - a new section detailing the scenario when there is no Officer nominee available to be elected
 - 9.1 - Details committee leadership and advisory status
- Version 2.2
 - 3.6 - Changed the language to reflect that the Membership Period will align with the calendar year (Jan to Dec) regardless of when the person begins their membership. It also creates a half-year proration plan.

14.2 - Minor Edits

Minor edits to the Bylaws approved by the Board of Directors will be detailed here as provided for in **Article 11.2 - Minor Edits Stipulation** will be detailed here.

- n/a