

The Constitution of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities

We, the Federation, are a union of egalitarian communities which have joined together in our common struggle to create a lifestyle based on equality, cooperation, and harmony with the earth. We believe that this is a fundamentally different approach than that offered by most cultures throughout the world, and one that holds the promise of realizing the human potential lost through the unequal distribution of wealth, power, and opportunity. Our communities affirm the right of all people to equal access to knowledge, resources, and decision-making.

It is the Federation's goal to reach the point where egalitarian communities are a well-known and accepted lifestyle, and readily available to all who seek it. The Federation intends to do this through forming, supporting, developing and promoting egalitarian communities to the greatest extent possible.

Article I Name

The name of the organization will be the Federation of Egalitarian Communities.

Article II Purpose

The purpose of the Federation is to facilitate intercommunity cooperation and assistance, to support other cooperative structures, and to educate ourselves and the general public about the social and economic advantages of egalitarian communities. The Federation intends to achieve this purpose by:

1. Promoting a better understanding of and recruitment into community through joint publication, advertising, conferences, and other outreach efforts.
2. Establishing a cooperative economic network for such things as purchasing, financing, marketing, and the development of community industries.
3. Coordinating education research, cultural, and other community support systems, as may be feasible and desirable.
4. Celebrating our collective spirit, both through special events and in all that we do.

Article III Membership

A. Acceptance

The Assembly will establish an explicit procedure for considering prospective communities which apply for membership. A necessary condition for membership will be that the prospective community, in the judgement of the Assembly, meets the following basic requirements:

1. Holds its land, labor, and other resources in common;
2. Assumes responsibility for the needs of its members, receiving the products of their labor and distributing these and all other goods equally or according to need;
3. Practices non-violence;
4. Uses a form of decision making in which members have an equal opportunity to participate, either through consensus, direct vote or right of appeal or overrule;
5. Works to establish the equality of all people and does not permit discrimination on the basis of race, class, creed, ethnic origin, age, sex, or sexual orientation.
6. Acts to conserve natural resources for present and future generations while striving to continually improve ecological awareness and practice;
7. Creates processes for group communication and participation and provides an environment which supports people's development.

B. Expulsion

The Assembly will establish an explicit expulsion procedure, which will include an opportunity for the community in question to answer the charges against it and an opportunity for the community to change its objectionable behavior(s). Possible grounds for expulsion will include a purposeful or continued violation of any of the basic Federation principles listed above, and repeated failures to pay labor or money taxes to the Federation, providing there exist sufficient opportunities to do so.

Article IV Decision-making

A. The Assembly

1. Definitions and process

- a. Each community shall select its own Federation delegates and shall be represented by up to two delegates, with one additional delegate possible for every 100 supported members of the community.
- b. The delegates as a group is the Assembly.
- c. Meetings of the Assembly may occur by assembled or non-assembled means.
- d. An assembly may be called by agreement of the Assembly or by the agreement of 3/5 of the member communities.
- e. Each member community must be notified of an assembly's dates and location at least four weeks ahead of time, unless there is a unanimous agreement to assemble on shorter notice.
- f. In assembled meetings of the Assembly, a quorum is constituted when 2/3 or more of the total votes is represented, with a minimum of 1/2 the total votes represented in person.
- g. In non-assembled meetings all votes must be represented for decision-making to occur.

2. Decision-making

a. Consensus

In the spirit of cooperation the Assembly should make a serious effort to encourage a full discussion of all views and to reach consensus where a decision is required, where consensus does not appear likely the voting process outlined below shall be used.

b. Voting

- 1) Every member community shall have a number of votes equal to the average number of supported members at the community during the twelve months previous, plus a number equal to the total twelve month average supported membership of all the Federation communities divided by the number of communities. Symbolically the following equation could be used to calculate the votes;

$$V_a = M_a + TM/N,$$

where:

V_a = the number of votes available to the community “a”;

M_a = the average number of supported members of community “a” during the preceding twelve months;

TM = the average number of supported members of all Federation communities during the preceding twelve months; and

N = the number of Federation communities

- 2) Votes may be cast only by delegates or their proxies.
- 3) Where a community is represented by two or more delegates that community’s votes will be divided evenly among its delegates.

c. Decisions made in assembled meetings

- 1) Absentee and proxy votes are allowed
- 2) A majority greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the votes cast is necessary for decision to be made, except for proposed amendments to this constitution, accepting communities into the Federation, and expelling communities from the Federation, all of which require at least $\frac{3}{5}$ of the votes cast.

d. Decisions made by non-assembled means

- 1) Absentee and proxy votes are allowed.
- 2) Consensus is required for decisions to be made.

3. Duties of the Assembly

- a. Accepting communities into the Federation, and establishing a procedure for doing so.
- b. Expelling communities from the Federation, and establishing a procedure for doing so.
- c. Allocating Federation resources.
- d. Accepting donations, investing and approving loans and otherwise arranging financing for the activities of the Federation.
- e. Appointing and recalling officers and committees.
- f. Appointing, recalling, and replacing the members of the Executive Committee; defining the Executive Committee’s authority, and; amending the Executive Committee’s decisions as necessary.
- g. Proposing levels and structures of money and labor taxation of member communities.
- h. Setting dates and sites for assemblies.
- i. Proposing amendments to this constitution.
- j. Recording and maintaining as a permanent public record information about all its decisions and transactions;
 - 1) A written summary of decisions and responsibilities will be disseminated to the member communities within 72 hours of the close of the assembly, or, in the case of non-assembled decisions, within 72 hours of when the decision is made.

- 2) A full set of assembly minutes, including all decisions and votes and as much pertinent discussion as possible, will be disseminated to the member communities within eight weeks after the assembly.

B. Executive Committee

1. Among its duties, the Executive Committee is expected to:

- a. Oversee the implementation of Assembly decisions and the progress of assigned projects, coordinating and trouble-shooting as necessary.
- b. Make between-assembly decisions for the Assembly where there is need and authority to do so.
- c. Facilitate non-assembled decision-making.
- d. Coordinate the dissemination of information relevant to Federation Communities between assemblies.
- e. Prepare tentative agendas for assemblies.
- f. Record and maintain as a permanent public record information about its decisions and transactions. A report on Executive Committee decisions will be made to the assembly at the subsequent assembly.

2. It is to be composed of at least three members.

3. Terms of office.

- a. For the three positions mandated by this constitution at the terms of office will be for two years, with one beginning March 1 of odd years, one beginning November 1 of odd years, and one beginning July 1 of even years.
- b. Terms for additional members of the Executive Committee shall be determined by the Assembly.
- c. No individual can serve more than two consecutive terms.

C. Member Communities

1. By approval of 3/5 of the member communities, they have the power to:

- a. Call an assembly of the Assembly.
- b. Ratify levels and structures of taxation as proposed by the Assembly.
- c. Ratify proposals by the Assembly for amendment to this constitution.

2. Member communities have control over the selection of their delegates, in accordance with section A.1.a. of this article.

Article V. Amendments

This constitution can be amended by a proposal requiring 3/5 vote in an assembled meeting and a subsequent ratification by 3/5 of the member communities.