



January 31, 2013

Mr. Ian Bushfield, President
BC Humanist Association
PO Box 400 – 3495 Cambie St
Vancouver BC V5Z 4R3

Dear Mr. Bushfield:

This will acknowledge receipt of an application from the **BC Humanist Association** for recognition as a religious body under the *Marriage Act* of British Columbia for the purpose of seeking the registration of religious representatives for solemnizing marriage.

The discretion to register religious representatives as authorized to solemnize marriage is conferred upon me by section 2 of the *Marriage Act*, and constrained by section 3, both of which provide, in part, as follows:

- 2(1) On application, in the form required by the chief executive officer, the chief executive officer may register any religious representative as authorized to solemnize marriage.
- (2) The application on behalf of a religious representative must be made by the governing authority with jurisdiction in British Columbia over the religious body to which the religious representative belongs.
- 3(1) A person must not be registered as a religious representative unless the chief executive officer is satisfied as follows:
 - (d) that the religious body to which the person belongs is sufficiently well established, both as to continuity of existence and as to **recognized rites usages** respecting the solemnization of marriage, to warrant, in the opinion of the chief executive officer, the registration of its religious representatives as authorized to solemnize marriage.

After reviewing your application and supporting materials as well as the *Marriage Act*, I have concluded that I must deny the application of the BC Humanist Association for the registration of religious representatives to solemnize marriage.

The term “religious body” is defined in section 1 of the *Marriage Act* as follows:

“religious body” means any church, or any religious denomination, sect, congregation or society...

.../2


The constitution of the BC Humanist Association (the Association) explicitly states that the purpose of secular humanism is to provide a valid alternative to existing religions and that humanism has no official dogma. This statement is further supported in the constitution, by an acknowledgment that the Association is an educational institution involved with ethics and morals. Accordingly, the Association is not a religious body for the purposes of the *Marriage Act*. Therefore I cannot accept applications from the Association for the registration of religious representatives to solemnize marriage.

Upon further examination of the enclosed sample wedding ceremony, I have determined that for all intents and purposes the humanist wedding ceremony is a civil ceremony rather than a religious ceremony. I therefore recommend that members of your association make application under the *Marriage Act* to become marriage commissioners in the communities in which they reside. Vacancies are posted in local newspapers and on the Vital Statistics Agency website at www.vs.gov.bc.ca.

Section 5(1) of the *Marriage Act* provides for an appeal from my decision, on a question of law, to the Supreme Court of British Columbia within 3 months of the date on which this decision was issued.

Please feel free to contact me in Victoria at 250-952-9039 should you have any additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Jack Shewchuk
Chief Executive Officer
Vital Statistics Agency

BC Humanist Association



P.O. Box 400 – 3495 Cambie Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V5Z 4R3

Tel: (604) 565-3234
E-mail: info@bchumanist.ca
<http://bchumanist.ca>

16 March 2012

Ministry of Health
Health Sector IM/IT Division
Vital Statistics Agency
101 – 1475 Ellis Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2A3

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find enclosed an application from the British Columbia Humanist Association (BCHA) to become an authorised body to conduct marriage ceremonies within the province. The BCHA is an organization recognized under the Societies Act of BC.

Our application is based on the precedents set in Ontario by Humanist Canada in 1996 and the Ontario Humanist Society in 2009 and on the principle that residents of BC should have the opportunity to choose a marriage ceremony informed by humanist values.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours truly,

Ian Bushfield
President



DUPLICATE

APPENDIX "A"

CANADA
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

NUMBER

S-19412



Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs
REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES

SOCIETY ACT

Certificate of Incorporation

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT

H.A.C. HUMANIST ASSOCIATION OF GREATER VANCOUVER

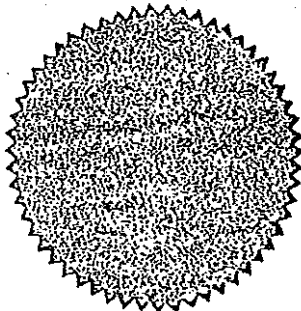
HAS THIS DAY BEEN INCORPORATED UNDER THE SOCIETY ACT

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE

AT VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA,

THIS 3RD DAY OF AUGUST, 1984

L. G. HUCK
DEPUTY REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES



CANADA
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

NUMBER

S-19412



Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations
REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES

SOCIETY ACT

CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT

H.A.C. HUMANIST ASSOCIATION OF GREATER VANCOUVER

HAS THIS DAY CHANGED ITS NAME TO THE NAME

BRITISH COLUMBIA HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

GIVEN, UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE

AT VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

THIS 28TH DAY OF JUNE, 1990

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David W. Boyd".

DAVID W. BOYD
REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES



An application for recognition of a religious body under the "Marriage Act"

Submitted by Ian Bushfield, President BC Humanist Association

1. What is the official name of your religious body?

British Columbia Humanist Association

2. What other religious bodies are affiliated with your group? Give their name and location. Describe the nature of the affiliation with regards to any financial, administrative, and disciplinary control.

Victoria Secular Humanist Association (Victoria, BC) – affiliate organization with no lines of control

Humanist Canada (national, based in Ottawa, ON) – affiliate organization with no lines of control

Atheist Alliance International (International, based in Washington, DC) – affiliate organization that provides administrative advice upon request

International Humanist and Ethical Union (International, based in London, UK) – affiliate organization with no lines of control

3. Provide the origins and the present national or international organization of the religious body. Identify specifically the governing office in this province and their relationship to officials outside the province, if applicable. Describe the procedure by which they are appointed and relieved of jurisdictional authority.

Humanism, as an organized movement, arose in the 1920s and 30s at the University of Chicago, and is informed by various philosophical traditions. In 1933, the first Humanist Manifesto, outlining a philosophy and value system not dependent upon belief in a higher power, was published and the American Humanist Association was founded in 1943. Humanist Canada was formed in 1968, and a Vancouver branch was founded in 1984, which later became the BC Humanist Association.

The BCHA is governed as a democratic society, with a board of directors elected annually from its membership. The board has the ability to remove directors from their position by majority vote.

4. How long has your religious body been continuously functioning within the province? State the date and place of incorporation.

The HAC Humanist Association of Greater Vancouver was incorporated on August 3rd, 1984 and changed its name to the British Columbia Humanist Association on June 28th, 1990.

5. If applicable, how long has your religious body been continuously functioning within Canada? State the date and place of incorporation.

The first official Humanist group in Canada was the Humanist Fellowship of Montreal. It was founded in 1954. Humanist Canada, which was founded in 1968 as the Humanist Association of Canada, has been functioning continuously since then.

6. Provide a summary of statement of the tenets of your religious beliefs, their history and/or source.

Humanists consider secular humanism as a valid alternative to the existing religions and provide certain services traditionally provided by religious institutions. While humanism has no official dogma, humanists generally agree with the principles laid out by the various Humanist Manifestos:

- Humanism aims at the fullest development of every human being.
- It strives towards the broadest application of democratic principles in all human relationships.
- It advocates the use of the scientific method as a guide to distinguish between fact and fiction, and wishes to see technology used creatively not destructively.
- Humanism affirms the dignity of humankind and the right of the individual to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others.
- It acknowledges the interdependence of human and non-human life, the need for mutual respect among the peoples of the world, and the value of universal solidarity in solving global problems.
- It calls for continuous improvement of society so that no person be deprived of the basic necessities of life, and for institutions and conditions which will provide every person with opportunities to develop full human potential.
- It calls for the development, support, and refinement of fundamental human freedoms in such areas as speech and expression, religious and non-religious belief, conscience, association, election of representative governments, and equality of opportunity and justice regardless of colour, creed, ethnic origin, language, gender, or sexual orientation.
- It calls for peaceful resolutions of conflicts between individuals, communities, nations, or blocs.
- Humanist ethics accept no outside absolute standards; encourage development of the positive potentialities in human nature; and approve conduct based on a sense of responsibility to oneself and others.
- Humanism rejects the concept of the supernatural and considers that human problems have to be solved by human means.

The BC Humanist Association also accepts The Amsterdam Declaration issued in 2002 by the International Humanist and Ethical Union (I.H.E.U.). The ten-point elaboration of principles in the Declaration are incorporated in the preceding outline of principles.

7. If applicable, is your religious body recognized for the purposes of solemnizing marriage in at least one other province? State the date and place of registration.

Humanist Canada has been recognized in the province of Ontario to solemnize marriages since 1996 and the Ontario Humanist Society has been similarly recognized since 2010.

8. Document the name, location, size, make-up and constitution of your church(es) or congregation(s) in British Columbia.

The official BCHA membership is approximately 100 people across the province, with another 50-100 supporters, of which about 20-30 attend weekly meetings on Sunday morning at the Oakridge Seniors' Centre in Vancouver.

9. How many marriages do you estimate will be performed in a year on behalf of this group?

Based on the number of humanist marriages in other districts, we can estimate the number of weddings we will expect to perform, despite the relatively small number of official BCHA members.

Scotland has a population of just over 5 million of which 27.5% claim to hold "no religion," while BC has just under 4 million people, of whom 36% claim no religious affiliation (more than any other category). Between January and September 2010, the Humanist Society of Scotland performed over 1700 humanist weddings and has been performing weddings since 2005. Humanist weddings in Scotland outnumbered all other categories except civil ceremonies and Church of Scotland weddings (which they are expected to overtake by 2015). In Ontario, Humanist Canada performed 467 weddings in 2010 with 27 active officiants. The Ontario Humanist Society has another 21 officiants, but statistics are not yet available.

Finally, the BCHA receives several unsolicited requests per month for humanist weddings in BC, despite no advertising or promotion. We therefore estimate that we will perform as many as 50 weddings in our first year, and will eventually reach 200 humanist weddings per year across the province.

Sources:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-12517893>

2001 Canadian Census

10. How many active members are associated with your religious body in this province? Briefly outline the growth of your membership.

The number of paid members of the BCHA is around 100; however, nearly 1.4 million people (36%) in BC claimed 'no religious affiliation' on the 2001 census. The Victoria Secular Humanist Association has an active membership of another 50 people, and other secular or free thought groups across the province account for dozens more active members.

Humanism has grown greatly in popularity since the release of a number of books critical of traditional religions. We are seeing, however, that this Richard Dawkins-style attack on religion is failing to fill the social needs that traditional religions formerly filled. This is in part why a large number of freethought groups have begun to form, and why interest in the BCHA has been growing.

Over the next few years, the BCHA hopes to expand both its Vancouver community and to reach out to other communities across the province.

11. State the name and official title of the person who would be given the "Signing Authority" to request the registration and cancellation of the religious representatives. What is this person's term of office?

The "signing authority" of the BCHA shall be the Governing Official who is appointed annually by the Board of the BCHA.

12. Provide a copy of the bylaws or rules of the religious body relating to the appointment and dismissal of officers of the religious body in this province.

See the attached "Charter of the Officiants Committee."

13. Provide a copy of the bylaws or rules of the religious body relating to the appointment and dismissal of religious representatives in this province.

See the attached "Charter of the Officiants Committee" and "Officiants Code of Ethics."

SOCIETY ACT

CONSTITUTION

1. The name of the Society is H.A.C. Humanist Association of Greater Vancouver.
2. The purposes of the Society are:
 - (a) to promote the ideas and philosophy of secular humanism by all available means of education and communication.
 - (b) to serve the educational needs of its members and others of humanistic, scientific and naturalistic outlook, in a democratic, non-dogmatic manner free from authoritarian doctrine.
 - (c) to provide opportunities for fellowship, study and service at all levels of humanistic endeavour, and to advance the values and welfare of men in dedication to the continuing enhancement of human life through human effort and understanding.
 - (d) to offer and provide meaningful ceremonies to members and non-members at significant times such as marriage and death; such ceremonies to be free from supernatural implications and to be dignified.
 - (e) to elaborate and to express publicly Humanist positions on issues of concern to people, including values, morality and ethics.

Note: There is a stamp on the first page showing "FILED AND REGISTERED, E0670 July 18/84, AUG 3 - 1984, M.A. Jorre de St. Jorre, Registrar of Companies"

3. Declaration of Principles

The H.A.C. Humanist Association of Greater Vancouver is a non-partisan body. It considers secular humanism as a valid alternative to the existing religions and is willing to provide certain services traditionally provided by religious institutions. It is an educational institution involved with ethics and morals, as outlined in the following:

- (i) Humanism aims at the fullest development of every human being.
- (ii) It strives towards the broadest application of democratic principles in all human relationships.
- (iii) It advocates the use of the scientific method as a guide to distinguish between fact and fiction, and wishes to see technology used creatively not destructively.
- (iv) Humanism affirms the dignity of man and the right of the individual to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others.
- (v) It acknowledges interdependence, the need for mutual respect, and believes in the brotherhood of all people.
- (vi) It calls for continuous improvement of society so that no person be deprived of the basic necessities of life and for institutions and conditions which will provide every person with opportunities to develop full human potential
- (vii) It calls for the development, support and refinement of fundamental human freedoms such as freedom of speech and expression, freedom of religion and non-religion, freedom of conscience, freedom of association, of electing representative governments, equality of opportunity and justice regardless of colour, creed, ethnic origin, language or sex.
- (viii) It calls for peaceful resolutions of conflicts between individuals, communities, nations or blocs.
- (ix) Humanist ethics accept no outside absolute standards; encourage development of the positive potentialities in human nature; and approve conduct based on a sense of responsibility to ones-self and others.
- (x) Humanism rejects the concept of the supernatural and considers that human problems have to be solved by human means.

The H.A.C Humanist Association of Greater Vancouver accepts the declaration of Amsterdam, and the

ten-point elaboration of principles issued by the International Humanist and Ethical Union (I.H.E.U.) are incorporated in the above Declaration of Principles.

4. In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Society funds and assets of the Society remaining after the satisfaction of its debts and liabilities, shall be given or transferred to such organization or organizations concerned with the social problems or organizations promoting the same purposes of this Society, as may be determined by the members of the Society at the time of winding up or dissolution, and if effect cannot be given to the aforesaid provisions, then such funds shall be given or transferred to some other organizations, provided however that such organization referred in this paragraph shall be a charitable organization, a charitable corporation, or a charitable trust recognized by the Department of National Revenue of Canada as being qualified as such under the provisions of the Income Tax Act of Canada from time to time in effect.
5. The purposes of the Society shall be carried out without purpose of gain for its members and any profits or other accretions to the Society shall be used for promoting its purposes.
6. No Director or Officer shall be remunerated for being or acting as a Director or Officer but a Director or Officer may be reimbursed for all expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred by him while engaged in the affairs of the Society.
7. Paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the Constitution are alterable in accordance with the Society Act.

BY-LAWS

Here set forth, in numbered clauses, are the By-laws providing for the matters referred to in Section 6(1) of the Society Act and any other By-laws.

Part 1 - Interpretation

1. (1) In these By-laws, unless the context otherwise requires,
 - (a) "directors" means the directors of the Society for the time being;
 - (b) "Society Act" means the Society Act of the Province of British Columbia from time to time in force and all amendments to it;
 - (c) "registered address" of a member means his address as recorded in the register of members;
 - (d) "term" means the time between the annual general meeting and the immediate next annual general meeting;
 - (e) "officer term" has the same meaning as "term".(2) The definitions in the Society Act on the date these By-laws become effective apply to these By-laws.
2. Words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa; and words importing a male person include a female person and a corporation.

Part 2 - Membership

3. The members of the Society are the applicants for incorporation of the Society, and those persons who subsequently have become members, in accordance with these By-laws and, in either case, have not ceased to be members.
4. A person may apply to the Directors or their designate and upon acceptance by the Directors or their designate, the person becomes a member.
5. Every member shall uphold the constitution and comply with these By-laws.
6. The Directors may determine the membership dues, if any.
7. A person shall cease to be a member of the Society
 - (a) by delivering his resignation in writing to the Secretary of the Society or by mailing or delivering it to the address of the Society, or
 - (b) on his death or in the case of a corporation on dissolution, or
 - (c) on being expelled, or
 - (d) on having been a member not in good standing for a period of time prescribed by the Directors.
8. (1) A member may be expelled by a special resolution of the members passed at a general meeting.
(2) The notice of special resolution for expulsion shall be accompanied by a brief statement of the reason or reasons for the proposed expulsion.

(3) The person who is the subject of the proposed resolution for expulsion shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the general meeting before the special resolution is put to a vote.
9. All members are in good standing except a member who has failed to pay his current annual membership fee or other subscription or debt due and owing by him to the Society. -

PART 3 - Meetings of Members-

10. General meetings of the Society shall be held at such time and place, in accordance with the Society Act, as the directors decide.

11. Every general meeting, other than an annual general meeting, is an extraordinary general meeting.
12. The Directors may, whenever they think fit, convene an extraordinary general meeting.
13. (1) Notice of a general meeting shall specify the place, the day and the hour of meeting, and, in case of special business, the general nature of that business.
(2) The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of a notice by, any of the members entitled to receive notice does not invalidate proceedings at that meeting.
14. The first annual general meeting of the Society shall be held not more than 15 months after the date of incorporation and thereafter an annual general meeting shall be held at least once every calendar year and not more than 15 months after holding the last preceding annual general meeting.

PART 4 - Proceedings at General Meetings

15. Special business is
 - (a) all business at an extraordinary general meeting except the adoption of rules of order, and
 - (b) all business that is transacted at an annual general meeting, except,
 - (i) the adoption of rules of order,
 - (ii) the consideration of the financial statements
 - (iii) the report of the directors
 - (iv) the report of the auditor, if any,
 - (v) the election of directors,
 - (vi) the appointment of the auditor, if required, and
 - (vii) such other business as, under these by-laws, ought to be transacted at an annual general meeting, or business which is brought under consideration by the report of the directors issued with the notice convening the meeting.
16. (1) No business, other than the election of a chairman and the adjournment or termination of the meeting, shall be conducted at a general meeting at a time when a quorum is not present.
(2) If at any time during a general meeting there cease to be a quorum present, business then in progress shall be suspended until there is a quorum present or until the meeting is adjourned or terminated.
(3) A quorum is 3 members present or such greater number as the members may determine at a general meeting.
17. If within 30 minutes for the time appointed for a members' meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week, at the same time and place, and if, at the adjourned meeting, a quorum is not present within 30 minutes from the time appointed for the meeting, the members present constitute a quorum, provided there is at least 3 members present.
18. Subject to By-law 19, the president of the Society, the vice-president, or in the absence of both, one of the other directors present shall preside as chairman of a general meeting.
19. If at a general meeting
 - (a) there is no president, vice-president, or other director present within 15 minutes after the time appointed for holding the meeting, or
 - (b) the president and all the other directors present are unwilling to act as chairman, the members present shall choose one of their number to be chairman.
20. (1) A general meeting may be adjourned from time to time and from place to place, but no business shall be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place.
(2) When a meeting is adjourned for 10 days or more, notice of the adjourned meeting shall be-

- the treasurer,
- (e) have custody of the common seal of the Society, and
 - (f) maintain the register of members.
42. The treasurer shall
- (a) keep such financial records, including books of account, as are necessary to comply with the Society Act, and
 - (b) render financial statements to the Directors, members and others when required.
43. (1) The offices of secretary and treasurer may be held by one person who shall be known as the secretary-treasurer.
- (2) Other officers, if any, shall perform such duties as the members decide.
- (3) The Directors or members may add additional duties to any Director or officer or transfer duties among Directors or officers.
44. In the absence of the secretary from a meeting, the Directors shall appoint another person to act as secretary at the meeting.
45. A member of the Directors shall:
- (a) act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the Society;
 - (b) exercise the care, diligence and skill of a reasonable and prudent person, in exercising power and performing functions as a member of the Directors.
46. A member of the Directors who is directly or indirectly interested in a proposed contract or transaction with the Society shall disclose fully and promptly the nature and extent of his/her interest to each member of the Directors and otherwise comply with the requirements of the Society Act.
47. The Directors shall enter in the register the names of Applicants for incorporation and the name of every other person admitted as a member of the Society together with the following particulars of each:
- (a) the full name and residence address;
 - (b) the date on which a person is admitted as a member;
 - (c) the date on which a person ceases to be a member.
48. The Directors shall prepare all reports including financial reports required by law to be prepared by the Society for the Annual Meeting.
49. The Directors shall on behalf of the Society file all financial and other reports that have to be filed after the Annual Meeting as required by the Society Act and Income Tax Act or other law.
50. The Directors shall ensure the Society has at least one account with a chartered bank, credit union or trust company for the deposit of funds.
51. The Directors, on behalf of the Society, shall keep proper accounting records in respect of all financial or other transactions and, without limiting the foregoing, shall keep records of:
- (a) all money received and disbursed by the Society and the matter in respect of which the receipt and disbursement took place;
 - (b) every asset and liability of the Society;
 - (c) every other transaction affecting the financial position of the Society.

Part 8 - Seal

52. The directors may provide a common seal for the Society and they shall have power from time to time to destroy it and substitute a new seal in place of the seal destroyed.
53. The common seal shall be affixed only when authorized by a resolution of the directors and then only in the presence of the persons prescribed in the resolution or if no persons are prescribed, in the presence of the, president and secretary or president and secretary-treasurer.

- given as in the case of the original meeting.
- (3) Except as provided in this by-law, it is not necessary to give notice of adjournment or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned general meeting.
21. (1) No resolution proposed at a meeting need be. Seconded and the chairman of a meeting may move or propose a resolution.
- (2) In case of an equality of votes the chairman shall not have a casting or second vote in addition to the vote to which he may be entitled as a member and the proposed resolution shall not pass.
22. (1) A member in good standing present at a meeting of members is entitled to one vote.
- (2) Voting is by show of hands, unless the members otherwise decide.
- (3) Voting by proxy is permitted as provided in Part 13.
23. A corporate member may vote by its authorized representative, who is entitled to speak and vote, and in all other respects exercise the rights of a member and that representative shall be reckoned as a member for all purposes with respect to a meeting of the Society.

Part 5 - Directors and Officers

24. (1) The directors may exercise all such powers and do all such acts and things as the Society may exercise and do, and which are not by these by-laws or by statute or otherwise lawfully directed or required to be exercised or done by the Society in general meeting, but subject, nevertheless, to the provisions of
- (a) all laws affecting the Society
- (b) these by-laws, and
- (c) rules, not being inconsistent with these by-laws, which are made from time to time by the Society in general meeting..
- (2) No rule, made by the Society in general meeting, invalidates a prior act of the directors that would have been valid if that rule had not been made.
25. (1) The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and one or more appointed upon incorporation or as determined by the members shall officers of the Society.
- (2) An officer must be a Director and ceases to be an officer when he ceases to be a Director.
- (3) There shall be 5 Directors or such other number as determined by the members or appointed upon incorporation.
26. (1) The first Directors shall retire at the annual meeting.
- (2) The Directors shall retire at the expiration of their term, when their successors will be elected.
- (3) A Director shall be elected at the annual general meeting for one term.
- (4) Officers shall be elected at Annual Meetings.
- (5) Election procedures at the annual general meeting shall be determined by the members present.
- (6) Officers shall serve for one officer term, upon election.
27. (1) The Directors may at any time appoint a member as a Director to fill a vacancy in the Directors.
- (2) The Directors may at any time appoint a Director to fill any officer vacancy.
- (3) A Director so appointed holds office until the next annual general meeting.
- (4) Any officer appointed by By-laws 27(2) shall serve the unexpired officer term of the officer he is replacing.
28. (1) If a Director or officer ceases to hold office, the remaining Directors shall appoint a replacement in accordance with these By-laws.
- (2) No act or proceeding of the Directors is invalid only by reason of there being less than the prescribed number of Directors in office.

29. The members may by special resolution remove a director before the expiration of his office, and may elect a successor to serve to the next annual meeting.
30. In accordance with Paragraph 6 (Note: 5 is crossed out in the original document) of the Constitution, no Director or officer shall be remunerated for being or acting as a Director or officer but a Director may be reimbursed for all expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred by him while engaged in the affairs of the Society.

Part 6 - Proceedings of Directors

31. (1) The directors may meet together at such places as they think fit for the dispatch of business, adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings and proceedings, as they see fit.
(2) The directors may from time to time fix the quorum necessary for the transaction of business and, unless so fixed the quorum shall be a majority of the directors then in office.
(3) The president shall be chairman of all meetings of the Directors, unless the Directors otherwise decide.
(4) A Director may at any time, and the secretary, on the request of a Director, shall, convene a meeting of the Directors.
32. (1) The Directors may delegate any, but not all, of their powers to committees consisting of such persons as they think fit and may name the committee.
(2) A committee so formed in the exercise of the powers so delegated shall conform to any rules that may from time to time be imposed on it by the Directors, and shall report every act or thing done in exercise of those powers to the Directors.
33. Subject to directions of the Directors, the committee shall determine its own procedure.
34. The members of a committee may meet and adjourn as they think proper.
35. A Director who may be absent temporarily from British Columbia may send or deliver to the address of the Society a waiver of notice, which may be by letter, telegram, telex, or cable, of any meeting of the Directors and may, at any time, withdraw the waiver, and until the waiver is withdrawn,
(a) no notice of meetings of Directors shall be sent to that Director, and
(h) any and all meetings of the Directors of the Society; notice of which has not been given to that Director shall, if a quorum of the Directors- is present, be valid and effective.
36. (1) Questions arising at any meeting of the Directors and committee of Directors shall be decided by a majority of votes.
(2) In case of an equality of votes-the chairman does not have a second or casting vote.
37. No resolution proposed at a meeting of Directors or committee of Directors need be seconded and the chairman of a meeting may move or propose a resolution.
38. A resolution in writing, signed by all the Directors and placed with the minutes of the Directors is as- valid, and effective as if regularly passed at a meeting of Directors.

Part 7 - Duties of Officers

39. (1) The president shall preside at all meetings of the Society and of the Directors, unless the members or Directors otherwise decide. -
(2) The president is the chief executive officer of the Society.
40. The vice-president shall carry out the duties of the president during his absence.
41. The secretary shall
(a) conduct the correspondence of the Society',
(b) issue notice of meetings of the Society and Directors,
(c) keep minutes of all meetings of the Society and Directors,
(d) have custody of all records and documents of the Society except those required to be kept by

71. Unless, in the circumstances, the Society Act requires any other form of proxy, an instrument appointing a proxyholder, whether for a specified meeting or otherwise shall be in the form following or in any other form, that the Directors shall approve:

(Name of Society)

The undersigned hereby appoints _____, of _____

(or failing her/him _____, of _____)

as proxy for the undersigned to attend at and vote for and on behalf of the undersigned at the general meeting of the society to be held on the ____ day of _____, 19__.

Signed this ____ day of _____, 19__.

(Signature of member)

72. A proxy is valid for only one meeting or any adjournment thereof.

DATED this 9th day of July, 1984.

Applicants for incorporation (names, signatures and addresses):

Gordon Rogers, Rufus Ashley, Polly Ashley, Jan Fellendorf and Glen Hardie

Witnessed by Goldie Rogers

Part 9 - Borrowing

- 54. In order to carry out the purposes of the Society the directors may, on behalf of and in the name of the Society, raise or secure the payment or repayment of money in such manner as they decide and in particular but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, by the issue of debentures.
- 55. No debenture shall be issued without the sanction of a special resolution.
- 56. The members may by special resolution restrict the borrowing powers of the directors but a restriction so imposed expires at the next annual general meeting.

Part 10 - Auditor

- 57. This part applies only where the Society is required or has resolved to have an auditor.
- 58. The first auditor shall be appointed by the directors who shall also fill all vacancies occurring in the office of auditor.
- 59. At each annual general meeting the Society shall appoint an auditor to hold office until his is re-elected or his successor is elected at the next annual general meeting.
- 60. An auditor may be, removed by ordinary resolution.
- 61. An auditor shall be informed forthwith in writing of appointment or removal.
- 62. No director and no employee of the Society shall be auditor.
- 63. The auditor may attend general meetings.

Part 11 - Notices to Members

- 64. A notice may be given to a member, either personally or by mail to him at his registered address.
- 65. A notice sent by mail shall be deemed to have been given on the second day following that on which the notice is posted, and in proving that notice has been given it is sufficient to prove that the notice was properly addressed and put, in a Canadian post office receptacle.
- 66. (1) Notice of a general meeting shall be given to
 - (a) every member shown on the register of members on the day notice is given, and
 - (b) the auditor, if Part 10 applies.(2) No other person is entitled to receive a notice of general meeting.

Part 12 - By-laws

- 67. After being admitted a member is entitled to a copy of the Constitution and By-laws upon paying the sum of \$1.00.
- 68. These By-laws shall not be altered or added to except by special resolution.

Part 13 - Proxy Voting

- 69. Unless the Directors otherwise determine, the instrument appointing a proxyholder, and the power of attorney or other authority, if any, under which it is signed or, a notarially certified copy thereof shall be deposited at a place specified for that purpose in that notice convening the meeting not less than forty- eight (48) hours before the time for holding the meeting of which the proxyholder proposes to vote, or shall be deposited with the chair of the meeting prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- 70. A vote given in accordance with the terms of an instrument of proxy is valid notwithstanding the previous death or incapacity of the members or revocation of the proxy or of the authority under which the proxy was executed, provided no intimation in writing of the death, incapability, or revocation has been received at the registered office of the society or by the chair of the meeting before the vote was given.

Sample humanist wedding ceremony

Note: Humanist weddings are very personal and may reflect any number of themes. The following ceremony is a basic template, which can be modified by the individual Officiant and couple.

Good morning and welcome to the ceremony that will unite PARTNER A and PARTNER B in marriage.

There is assumed to be a desire for a life-long companionship, and a generous sharing of the help and comfort that a couple ought to have from each other, through whatever circumstances of sickness or health, joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, these two may experience.

In marriage, we give ourselves freely and generously into the hands of the one we love, and in doing so, each of us receives the love and trust of the other as our most precious gift. But even as that gift is shared by two people who are in love, it also touches friends and family members who support and contribute to that relationship.

PARTNER A and PARTNER B believe that we are only given this one life, and it should be lived to the fullest. They believe that always having good intentions is the key to living a great life, and that by always having that belief, this will help them live their best life.

PARTNER A and PARTNER B, we are here to celebrate your love and acknowledge your lifelong commitment to one another, and also to be reminded that it is love that guides us on our path.

Let PARTNER A repeat after me:

I solemnly declare that I do not know of any reason why I, PARTNER A, may not be joined in matrimony to PARTNER B.

Let PARTNER B repeat after me:

I solemnly declare that I do not know of any reason why I, PARTNER B, may not be joined in matrimony to PARTNER A.

Do you PARTNER A undertake to afford to PARTNER B the love of your person, the comfort of your companionship, and the patience of your understanding; and to share equally of the necessities of life?

Answer: I do

Do you PARTNER B undertake to afford to PARTNER A the love of your person, the comfort of your companionship, and the patience of your understanding; and to share equally of the necessities of life?

Answer: I do

{{If vows prepared}} And now, before family and friends, PARTNER A and PARTNER B would like to read vows that they have prepared themselves.

Let the couple join their hands and let PARTNER A repeat after me:

I call on those present to witness that I, PARTNER A take PARTNER B to be my partner to have and to hold, from this day forward, in whatever circumstances or experience life may hold for us.

Let PARTNER B repeat after me:

I call on those present to witness that I, PARTNER B take PARTNER A to be my partner to have and to hold, from this day forward, in whatever circumstances or experience life may hold for us.

The couple will now exchange rings as a symbol of their love and commitment. These rings will be used as a seal and a confirmation of the vows you have made.

Let PARTNER A place the ring on the third finger of PARTNER B's left hand, repeating after me:

With this ring, as the token and pledge of the vow and covenant of my word, I call upon those persons present to witness that I, PARTNER A do take thee, PARTNER B to be my partner.

Let PARTNER B place the ring on the third finger of PARTNER A's left hand, repeating after me:

With this ring, as the token and pledge of the vow and covenant of my word, I call upon those persons present to witness that I, PARTNER B do take thee, PARTNER A to be my partner.

Before these witnesses, and in my presence, PARTNER A and PARTNER B have exchanged these rings as the pledge of their vows to each other; now upon the authority vested in me by the Province of British Columbia, I now pronounce you as duly married.

May you enjoy length of days, fulfillment of hopes, and peace and contentment of mind, as you day by day live and fulfill the terms of this covenant you have made with one another.

Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX

From: Shewchuk, Jack VSA:EX
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 7:41 PM
To: Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX
Subject: Re: BC Humanist Association Recognition Denial

You really didn't need to work on this tonight.

From: Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 07:36 PM Pacific Standard Time
To: Shewchuk, Jack VSA:EX
Subject: BC Humanist Association Recognition Denial

For your review...

<<BC Humanist Association.doc>>

Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX

From: Shewchuk, Jack VSA:EX
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 2:11 PM
To: Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX; Begon, Stacey VSA:EX
Subject: BC Humanist Association.doc



BC Humanist
Association.doc

Looooks good.



January 28, 2013

Mr. Ian Bushfield, President
BC Humanist Association
PO Box 400 – 3495 Cambie St
Vancouver BC V5Z 4R3

Dear Mr. Bushfield:

This will acknowledge receipt of an application from the **BC Humanist Association** for recognition as a religious body under the *Marriage Act* of British Columbia for the purpose of seeking the registration of religious representatives for solemnizing marriage.

The discretion to register religious representatives as authorized to solemnize marriage is conferred upon me by section 2 of the *Marriage Act*, and constrained by section 3, both of which provide, in part, as follows:

- 2(1) On application, in the form required by the chief executive officer, the chief executive officer may register any religious representative as authorized to solemnize marriage.
- (2) The application on behalf of a religious representative must be made by the governing authority with jurisdiction in British Columbia over the religious body to which the religious representative belongs.
- 3(1) A person must not be registered as a religious representative unless the chief executive officer is satisfied as follows:
 - (d) that the religious body to which the person belongs is sufficiently well established, both as to continuity of existence and as to **recognized rites usages** respecting the solemnization of marriage, to warrant, in the opinion of the chief executive officer, the registration of its religious representatives as authorized to solemnize marriage.

After reviewing your application and supporting materials as well as the *Marriage Act*, I have concluded that I must deny the application of the BC Humanist Association for the registration of religious representatives to solemnize marriage.

The term “religious body” is defined in section 1 of the *Marriage Act* as follows:

“**religious body**” means any church, or any religious denomination, sect, congregation or society...

.../2

The constitution of the BC Humanist Association (the Association) explicitly states that the purpose of secular humanism is to provide a valid alternative to existing religions and that humanism has no official dogma. This statement is further supported in the constitution, by an acknowledgment that the Association is an educational institution involved with ethics and morals. Accordingly, the Association is not a religious body for the purposes of the *Marriage Act*. Therefore I cannot accept applications from the Association for the registration of religious representatives to solemnize marriage.

Upon further examination of the enclosed sample wedding ceremony, I have determined that for all intents and purposes the humanist wedding ceremony is a civil ceremony rather than a religious ceremony. I therefore recommend that members of your association make application under the *Marriage Act* to become marriage commissioners in the communities in which they reside. Vacancies are posted in local newspapers and on the Vital Statistics Agency website at www.vs.gov.bc.ca.

Section 5(1) of the *Marriage Act* provides for an appeal from my decision, on a question of law, to the Supreme Court of British Columbia within 3 months of the date on which this decision was issued.

Please feel free to contact me in Victoria at 250-952-9039 should you have any additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Jack Shewchuk
Chief Executive Officer
Vital Statistics Agency

Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX

From: Begon, Stacey VSA:EX
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 2:23 PM
To: Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX
Subject: FW: BC Humanist Association.doc

From: Shewchuk, Jack VSA:EX
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 2:11 PM
To: Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX; Begon, Stacey VSA:EX
Subject: BC Humanist Association.doc



BC Humanist
Association.doc

Looooooks good.



January 31, 2013

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BC Humanist Association
PO Box 400 – 3495 Cambie St
Vancouver BC V5Z 4R3

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.../2

Ministry of Health
Health Sector IM/IT Division
VITAL STATISTICS AGENCY

VSA 415A REV 2004/02/24

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9657 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9P3

Telephone: 250 952-2681
Facsimile: 250 952-9074

Location:
818 Fort Street
Victoria BC

website:
<http://www.vs.gov.bc.ca>


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Sincerely,



Jack Shewchuk
Chief Executive Officer
Vital Statistics Agency

Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX

From: Begon, Stacey VSA:EX
Sent: Friday, February 1, 2013 4:14 PM
To: Bloomfield, Ingrid VSA:EX
Subject: BC humanist letter
Attachments: 20130201161305.pdf

Do you also want a photocopy mailed to you?

From: Stacey.Begon@gov.bc.ca [<mailto:Stacey.Begon@gov.bc.ca>]
Sent: Friday, February 1, 2013 4:13 PM
To: Begon, Stacey VSA:EX
Subject: