



# ZOLA’S PAW PROJECT

## Voluntary Association Constitution

*“Dedicated to making a difference, one paw at a time”*

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## 1 NAME & LEGAL STATUS

Zola’s Paw Project (hereinafter referred to as “the organization”) is hereby constituted as a **Voluntary Association**, existing in its own right, separately from its members. It is a **non-profit organisation (NPO)** operating according to its founding document (this Constitution).

The organization may:

- Own property and other assets.
- Sue and be sued in its own name.
- Continue existing even when its membership or office bearers change.

## 2 MISSION

At Zola’s Paw Project, our mission is to ensure every dog has consistent access to nutritious food, clean water, and basic healthcare—while fostering stronger bonds between pets and their communities through education, outreach, and collaborative partnerships.

## 3 PURPOSE & BENEFICIARIES

1) **Purpose** Zola’s Paw Project exists primarily to ensure that vulnerable and underserved canine populations have access to reliable nutrition, basic healthcare, and compassionate community support.

### 2) **Beneficiaries**

- Underserved dogs and other animals in low-income or township areas.
- Pet owners, foster families, and community members who receive education and support in caring for animals.

### 3) **Community & Stakeholders**

- Local residents, volunteers, and partner organizations collaborating to improve animal welfare.
- Donors, sponsors, and the broader public who share the organization’s vision of community empowerment.

## 4 OBJECTIVES

### Long-term Objectives

- Create and maintain communal feeding stations for dogs in areas where resources are scarce.
- Promote community education on animal welfare, responsible pet ownership, and basic veterinary health.
- Develop a network of foster caregivers for rescue cases, leading to successful adoptions.
- Collaborate with stakeholders (local vets, sponsors, civic bodies) to fund spay/neuter initiatives and vaccination drives.

### Secondary/Short-term Objectives

- Implement annual workshops for pet owners, covering topics like deworming and dog nutrition.
- Conduct monthly feeding-station evaluations to ensure consistent food supply.
- Host local adoption drives and fundraising events.

## 5 MEMBERSHIP

### 1) Open Membership

- Membership is open to any individual supportive of the organization's objectives, willing to abide by this Constitution, and approved by the Board.
- Membership is not restricted by race, gender, religion, or background.

### 2) Rights of Members

- Attend and vote at general meetings, including the AGM.
- Nominate and stand for election to the Board or other leadership roles.
- Propose initiatives or programmes that align with the organization's objectives.

### 3) Duties of Members

- Support the vision, mission, and core activities of the organization.
- Uphold the decisions made at properly constituted meetings.
- Pay any membership fees if and when such fees are introduced by a resolution at the AGM.

### 4) Termination of Membership

- A member may resign in writing.
- The Board may, with good cause (e.g., misconduct or breach of the Constitution), revoke membership after due process.
- Members whose membership is terminated have the right to appeal at the subsequent general meeting.

## 6 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### 1) Board of Governance

- The Office Bearers (collectively forming the Board) shall govern the organization.
- The Board shall consist of "5" elected members (e.g., Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and additional members as needed).

### 2) Term of Office

- Office Bearers serve "2" years, not exceeding three years per term.
- Re-elections are permitted indefinitely, contingent on membership support.

### 3) Vacancies & Resignation

- Vacancies arising during a term shall be filled by Board appointment until the next AGM.
- An Office Bearer may resign in writing; the Board will appoint a replacement if needed.

### 4) Removal of Office Bearers

- If an Office Bearer fails to attend three consecutive meetings without leave, or commits serious misconduct, the Board may recommend removal.
- Removal must be ratified by a majority vote at a Special General Meeting (SGM) or the AGM.

## 7 POWERS OF THE ORGANISATION

### 1) Authority & Responsibilities

- The Board oversees day-to-day operations, ensuring alignment with the objectives.
- The Board carries out members' resolutions from General Meetings.

### 2) Delegation & Sub-Committees

- The Board may form sub-committees for specific tasks (e.g., fundraising, feeding stations).

- At least one Board member must serve on each sub-committee, which regularly reports back.
- Any sub-committee spending requires prior Board approval.

### 3) **Decision-Making**

- All decisions must support the long-term mission and public-benefit objectives.
- Decisions cannot contradict resolutions passed by the membership or South African law.

## 8 MEETINGS

### 8.1 Annual General Meetings (AGM)

#### 1) **Frequency & Purpose**

- The AGM is held yearly, near the end of the organization's financial year.
- It reviews the year's achievements, financial statements, and elects or re-elects leadership.

#### 2) **Agenda**

- Approval of the agenda and noting apologies.
- Reading and confirmation of previous AGM minutes.
- Chairperson's and Treasurer's reports.
- Proposed changes to the Constitution or major policies.
- Election of Office Bearers.
- General discussion.
- Close of meeting.

### 8.2 Special General Meetings (SGM)

#### 1) **Purpose**

- SGMs address urgent matters that cannot wait for the next AGM.
- They can handle constitutional amendments, leadership changes, or financial crises.

#### 2) **Convening an SGM**

- Called by the Board or by at least one-third of the members in writing.

- Must give at least fourteen (14) days' notice to all members, stating reason(s).

### **8.3 Ordinary Meetings**

#### **1) Regular Business**

- Ordinary members' meetings are held quarterly for routine updates.
- The Board meets at least once every quarter or as needed.

#### **2) Notice**

- At least seven (7) days' notice for all Board meetings.
- Emergency Board meetings may be convened with shorter notice if agreed by a majority of Board members.

### **8.4 Meeting Procedures**

#### **1) Quorum**

- At least 50% + 1 of relevant members form a quorum for standard meetings.
- Two-thirds (2/3) of members form a quorum for amending this Constitution or dissolving the organization.

#### **2) Decision Making**

- Strive for consensus. If not possible, a majority vote decides.
- In the event of a tie, the presiding Chairperson casts a second/deciding vote.

#### **3) Records of Meetings**

- Minutes and attendance records must be kept.
- The subsequent meeting approves these minutes as a true record.
- Records must be securely stored and accessible.

## **9 INCOME, PROPERTY & FINANCES**

#### **1) Not-for-Profit Character**

- No profits or assets may be distributed to members or Office Bearers, except as reasonable compensation for authorized services/work.

#### **2) Banking & Fiscal Responsibility**

- The Board opens a bank account in the name of the organization.
- Two authorized signatures (including the Chairperson or Treasurer) are required for withdrawals.
- The Treasurer oversees all income and expenditures, providing regular financial reports.

### 3) Financial Year-End & Audits

- The organization's financial year ends on December 31st each year.
- Within six months after year-end, an independent registered Accounting Officer or auditor must verify that financial statements align with accepted standards.

### 4) Investment of Funds

- Any surplus funds may only be invested with registered financial institutions or licensed stock exchanges, in line with applicable laws.

## 10 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

### 1) Long-Term Nature

- This Constitution contains foundational agreements that should remain in force for the lifetime of the organization.
- Amendments should be rare and necessitated by significant organizational changes.

### 2) Process

- At least two-thirds (2/3) of members present at a properly convened AGM or SGM must support any amendment.
- Proposals must be circulated to all members at least fourteen (14) days in advance.
- Any approved amendment is binding and must be publicized to members and relevant authorities if the organization is registered.

## 11 DISSOLUTION / CLOSING DOWN

### 1) Procedure

- The organization may be dissolved if two-thirds (2/3) of members at a duly convened meeting vote in favor.



- Members must receive sufficient notice of the dissolution proposal, including reasons and potential outcomes.

**2) Disposition of Assets**

- After settling all debts, any remaining assets must be donated to another non-profit organization with similar objectives.
- The meeting deciding upon dissolution shall determine which qualifying organization(s) receive these assets.

This Constitution is the founding document of Zola’s Paw Project. It was approved and accepted by members of Zola’s Paw Project at a general meeting held on 26 January 2025 (Day/Month/Year).

“Chairperson:”

“Secretary:”

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