

THE GENESEE VALLEY HIKING CLUB

BYLAWS

Aug 2026

I. MISSION STATEMENT

This organization shall be known as the Genesee Valley Hiking Club (GVHC). Its purpose shall be the congenial association of those who enjoy both the physical and social aspects of hiking and the out-of-doors. It shall be non-political, non-partisan, and non-sectarian. We respect and protect our environment and have as a motto, "Take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but footprints".

II. MEMBERSHIP

A membership includes one or two adults plus any children living in the same household.

Membership is open to those who agree with and abide by the mission of the GVHC as stated in Article I above. All members present at the annual meeting may vote, except those under the age of eighteen.

III. GUESTS

Guests may attend hikes as often as desired. They are not required to be a member, but must agree with, and abide by, the purpose of the GVHC as stated in Article I above.

IV. DUES AND EXPENSES

Members of GVHC must pay annual dues. Dues shall become due in January of each year. The amount of the dues may be changed by majority vote at the annual meeting. The GVHC Executive Committee will try to contact anyone who has not paid by the middle of the year, just to remind them.

Expenses may be paid out of the treasury with approval of the Executive Committee. Hike expenses for food, transportation, or lodging, shall be paid by those attending the hike or event, work hikes excepted. There shall be no liability on the part of the members, as a whole, for hike expenses or the conduct of hikes. Expenses for gatherings of the whole membership may be drawn from the treasury or assessed on those attending; as the Executive Committee may decide.

There shall be no special assessments. No member is bound by any act of any officer or committee, or other member(s) beyond their dues for the time they are a member. There shall be no power in officers, or committees, or membership as a body, to incur indebtedness in the name of the GVHC, act for it, or expose it as a body to any liability whatsoever. Each member participating in GVHC activities does so wholly as an individual and in a voluntary capacity. The GVHC cannot employ others with the approval of the Executive Committee.

V. OFFICERS

- a. The four elected officers shall be elected for a term of two years at the annual meeting and take office immediately.
- b. The GVHC elected officers shall consist of a President, who shall guide the policy of the GVHC, preside at meetings, act as Chairman of the Executive Committee and perform such other duties as are specified in the Bylaws or imposed by the Executive Committee; a Vice President to act in the absence or incapacity of the President and other duties approved by the Executive Committee; a Secretary who shall keep minutes and records, attend to GVHC correspondence; and a Treasurer who shall receive dues and fees, assist the Membership Chair in matters related to the treasury, and disburse funds authorized by the Executive Committee,
- c. The President, or other person designated by the Executive Committee in the absence of the President, shall be authorized to sign checks in the absence or incapacity of the Treasurer. Checks over \$300.00 must have prior review and approval by the Executive Committee.
- d. In the absence or incapacity of both the President and Vice President, the Executive Committee will manage the GVHC.
- e. The immediate outgoing President shall be automatically appointed as an ex-officio voting member of the Executive Committee. The duties will be to audit and sign the Treasurer's books before they are turned over to a newly elected Treasurer, and to attend all Executive Committee meetings in that period.

- If the Executive Committee Immediate Past President decides to resign the position, or is incapable of serving - based on a 2/3 vote of the Exec Cmte, the President may offer the slot to a GVHC member to fill as an at-large member for the current term of the President with the majority approval of the Exec Cmte.

VI. COMMITTEES

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers as designated in Article V and the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees named below. It shall be the governing body of the GVHC and should meet at least three times each year in addition to the annual meeting. Chairpersons vote. Committees may have co-chairs where the workload justifies it; however, co-chairs do not vote on Executive Committee business.

The President, with approval of the Executive Committee, shall, appoint the following Standing Committees:

- a. Membership Committee shall maintain the GVHC membership list, and with the help of the Treasurer receive and record timely payment of dues.
- b. Hike Committee shall arrange for hikes and hike leaders, prepare hike schedules, and supervise hikes generally.

- c. Social Committee shall arrange for the annual meeting of the GVHC and arrange for social events.
- d. Trails Committee shall supervise the maintenance of the Finger Lakes Trail section(s) for which the GVHC is responsible. This will include appropriate liaison with the Finger Lakes Trail Conference.
- e. History Committee shall collect and preserve archival material depicting the history of the GVHC and its members and display materials at the appropriate GVHC events; and coordinate deposit of materials with the GVHC archives at the Rochester Museum and Science Center.
- f. Information Technology Committee shall maintain all websites, serve as the Meetup GVHC Group Organizer and take care of other electronic media. Roles of the Meetup GVHC Group Organizer are defined by Meetup on the Meetup website.
- g. In addition to the standing committees, the President with the approval of the Executive Committee, may appoint up to two members-at-large to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will vote on whether to accept/reject any/all nominations. A member-at-large is an individual who holds a general or non-specific position on the Executive Committee. Unlike appointees to specific committees, members-at-large contribute their expertise or input without being assigned to a particular department or function.

VII. MEETINGS

The annual meeting of the GVHC shall be held between September 1st and December 31st of each year at a place to be determined by the Executive Committee. The President or the Executive Committee will make a copy of these Bylaws available at the annual meeting.

Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be called by the President or by consensus of the Executive Committee as required.

Special meetings may be called by any two officers or any 6 members. At least five days' notice shall be given members of the time and place of all special GVHC meetings.

A quorum for the transaction of business at Executive Committee meetings and at the GVHC annual meeting shall be half of the Executive Committee.

For a motion to carry, there must be both a quorum and a majority of committee members present at the meeting to vote "Yes". The President does not vote unless there is a tie.

VIII. SOCIAL NETWORK AFFILIATES

GVHC began sponsoring GVHG (Genesee Valley Hiking Group) on meetup.com in 2009 and RMHG (Rochester Hiking Meetup Group) on meetup.com in 2011 to further our goals through electronic media.

IX. HIKES

Members and guests attending hikes must conform to the hike rules, and agree to abide by the purpose of the GVHC as stated in Article I. If the GVHC Executive Committee determines that the presence of a member or guest is having a negative impact on the congenial association of others enjoying the physical and social aspects of hiking with the GVHC, that person will not be allowed to participate in any future GVHC hikes or activities. The Executive Committee will arrange for that person to be notified, and, if a member, they will have their dues for the current year returned to them. The hike rules shall be published on our website and in the hike schedule.

The hike leader shall:

- a. Scout the hike and have necessary permissions if needed before the day of the hike.
- b. Be at the designated place and time of the hike, or, make the decision to cancel the hike, at least 1 hour before the hike start time, when there are safety issues. Possible safety issues might be dangerous weather conditions such as: Lightning strikes, Snow Squalls, Hazardous Driving Conditions, Icing, Flooding, Wind Storms, etc. A hike is automatically canceled, when the county where the hike will be conducted, declares a weather warning or Do-Not-Drive warning. (An official Weather Warning is issued by the local government when a hazardous weather or hydrologic event is occurring, imminent or likely. A warning means weather conditions pose a threat to life or property.) Be responsible for getting a substitute leader if necessary. To cancel a hike, hike leaders must complete the following two actions:
 - i. Post a hike cancellation comment for their hike using the Meetup.com Comments feature. This ensures that anyone who is registered for the hike will be able to view the cancellation notice.
 - ii. Contact a member of the GVHC Leadership Team (via phone, text, or email) so that a broadcast email can be sent to the entire club indicating the hike has been canceled. Club Members, intending to join a planned hike, should always check their email and the MeetUp.com Comments section for a possible hike cancellation notice whenever hazardous weather conditions exist.
- c. Be in charge of the hike and make all decisions concerning the route, rest stops, duration, etc.
- d. Arrange for or ask for a co-leader or trail sweep (aka sweep) who will be responsible for bringing up the rear and ensuring, with the hike leader, that hikes do not get too spread out and hikers do not get separated from the main group.
- e. Ensure that all participants have read and signed the GVHC Trip Leaders Report, agreeing to personally accept any and all risks of injury.
- f. Describe the hike difficulty, distance, duration and hike rules.

- g. Confirm that if anyone leaves the hike, they must notify the hike leader or Sweep before and do not leave the hike alone; no fewer than two hikers should go together.
- h. Confirm that the hike as announced shall not be departed from except as may be thought necessary by the hike leader.
- i. Be aware of the restrictions: No Pets. No Radios. No Smoking.
- j. Ensure that the rules of the GVHC are enforced, and report problems to the Hike Committee and/or the Executive Committee.
- k. Set a pace that can be maintained with reasonable effort by the group so that all members of the group remain with the leader. To prevent the group from becoming too dispersed, the leader should periodically check that everyone is together, and pause to form up the hiking group if necessary.
- l. Be able to account for all hike members at the end of the hike.
- m. Send a report of the hike to the Hike Committee chair within ten days, after the hike.

X. AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those attending the GVHC annual meeting or at a special GVHC meeting called for that purpose.

Amended:

September 22, 1937. January 15, 1938. October, 1939. October 14, 1942. October 7, 1953. October 11, 1954. October 11, 1956. January 25, 1958. January 25, 1964. September 22, 1966. September 23, 1971. October 7, 1982. October 1, 1987. October 3, 1991. October 5, 2008. October 27, 2013. October 22, 2023, August 23, 2026