**SSIPS CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is for the Salt Spring Printmakers Society (SSIPS) to have a process to address conflicts or disagreements that may arise between members or between a member(s) and the society.

**OBJECTIVE**

The policy aims to achieve fair, timely and satisfactory outcomes of issues relating to conflict or disagreement. Also, its purpose includes preventing the escalation of situations and intending to reduce their recurrence.

**SCOPE**

**This policy applies to all members of SSIPS.**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The SSIPS views conflict as a normal aspect of human interaction and an opportunity to promote debate and herald change. We value the attempt to resolve conflict and disagreements in ways that protect human dignity, foster effective communication, enhance trust for our members and community and are respectful, collaborative and kind.

A clearly defined policy for addressing conflicts or disagreements as they arise, ensures that a considered process is set in motion in a timely manner. This policy will signal to existing and potential members that, if a situation were to arise, there is a policy and process in place to help resolve it. In the long term this supports the stability of our organization.

This policy is a nonbinding and voluntary process to address conflicts and disagreements involving one or more of the members of SSIPS. It will be used only when the individuals’ attempt to resolve it among/between themselves has failed to resolve the conflict or disagreement. Consensus is the goal of the conflict resolution process.

The process ensures that people have the opportunity to speak openly, have others hear them with respect and, if necessary, have a mediator

 guide the conversation and agreements.

**Definitions:**

**Conflict resolution** is a process that people use to find a peaceful solution to their disagreement, misunderstanding or other disputes**. The people involved determine the so**lutions with the aid of a facilitator or mediator. Conflict is an opportunity to clarify norms, support people involved, benefit from the wisdom, experience and perspectives of each participant and renew our organization.

**Restorative practices**  aim to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities. They involve identifying and addressing harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible. They don’t include blaming, stigmatizing, shaming, excusing or rescuing. People in conflict often experience themselves as having been harmed by another person and may view their situation as having elements of “injustice.” In these situations the philosophy and language of restorative justice may provide a way to address issues such as accountability, healing and repair.

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS**

If the people involved have not been able to resolve their conflict/disagreement themselves, they ask the chair of the SSIPS Board to assign an impartial mediator(s) to apply the Conflict Resolution Policy. If the conflict/disagreement is between a member and the Society, the chair of the Board will represent the Society and assign an impartial mediator.

The mediator will inform the affected people and the board chair that the process has started. The mediator will meet with the affected people individually to hear their perspectives.

Suggested open-ended questions for the mediator to ask each person:

What happened? When did it begin? When did you begin to feel upset? How has this affected you? What has been the hardest thing for you? How are you doing?

What are your concerns, hopes and fears? What would you like the other person to understand? Do you have ideas for an agreement? Any bottom lines? What needs to happen to make things better?

Allow the person to ‘tell their story.’ Acknowledge thoughts and feelings. Show impartiality. Prepare the person for the meeting when everyone comes together e.g. seating arrangement, how the meeting will proceed.

The mediator will document their comments. After meeting with the affected people individually, the mediator will determine a meeting time where everyone comes together.

The mediator will facilitate that combined meeting.

Suggest a circle format where everyone listens attentively, without interrupting others, taking turns speaking.

Support, model and encourage clear communication.

Review the facts without interpreting or judging them.

Allow each person to speak focusing on past, present and future.

Summarize and reframe when necessary.

Then, focus on setting an agreement. What needs to happen next? Listen for an acceptable agreement. Record all ideas then go through each idea, ask for feedback.

If a consensus is not obtained, make suggestions - Have you thought about….? Would you consider….? Include, what action plans will you both put in place to prevent conflicts from arising in the future? What will you do if problems arise in the future? Do you need a contact person to assist you to follow the agreement?

Goal is for a negotiated agreement, consensus.

Assign people to any action items.

Plan another meeting if consensus not attained at first combined meeting.

Have the involved members sign the agreement.

Document the agreement and have the board members review it to ensure that the resolution process has been followed, the agreement is in line with current SSIPS policies and procedures, and the wording of the agreement is fair, neutral, respectful and collaborative.

If a member does not adhere to the agreement, the process will start between that member and the Society.