

# **ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF THE PITTSBURGH INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW ASSOCIATION (PIPLA)**

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this Association shall be the “PITTSBURGH INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW ASSOCIATION.”

## **ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission of PIPLA is to support Intellectual Property Professionals in the greater Pittsburgh area by:

1. Fostering and strengthening the Intellectual Property Community;
2. Educating Professionals on the ever-changing developments in the field;
3. Promoting relationship building by hosting enjoyable and engaging social activities;
4. Being a voice for the Membership for issues of importance related to the field; and
5. Showcasing the Intellectual Property Community in Pittsburgh.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** There shall be three classes of Membership in the Association – Honorary, Active, and Student.

### **Section 2. Honorary Members**

All judges of the District Court of the United States for the Western District of Pennsylvania shall be Honorary Members of the Association, subject to their acceptance, and shall be entitled to all privileges, except that of voting, and shall be exempt from payment of dues.

### **Section 3. Active Members**

Any person of good character who regularly practices in an area of Intellectual Property including patent, trademark, or copyright transactional or litigation matters or in support thereof, whether as a licensed attorney or other practicing professional with a nexus to the greater Pittsburgh region shall be eligible for election to active membership. A nexus can include bar admission to the Western District of Pennsylvania, employment in the greater Pittsburgh region, or having a client located in the greater Pittsburgh region. Previous membership in PIPLA as an Associate Member is a sufficient nexus to be eligible to become an Active Member. All Active Members who retire from active practice shall, upon approval by the Board, be eligible as Honorary Members of the Association and shall be entitled to all privileges, except that of voting, and shall be exempt from payment of dues.

### **Section 4. Student Members**

Any person who is or was enrolled in law school at any time during the present year and who intends to practice in an area of Intellectual Property shall be eligible for election to student membership, said membership entitling the person to all powers and privileges of Active Members except that of voting and holding office.

### **Section 5. Application for Membership**

Applications for membership shall be made in writing to the Board of Managers and delivered with the first year’s dues to the Secretary, which dues in the event the application is rejected will be returned to the applicant. Every application shall be signed by the applicant and submitted with the endorsement of one current member. Upon receipt of a completed application in proper form, the Secretary shall send a

notice to the President for approval. Should the President not approve an application, a final decision on membership shall be by majority vote by the Board of Managers.

**Section 6.** Any member of this Association who, after a full hearing by the Board of Managers, shall be found by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board to have conducted his/her profession in an unethical or unprofessional manner shall be expelled from this Association.

#### **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS AND BOARD OF MANAGERS**

**Section 1.** The Officers of this Association shall be a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary. These Officers shall constitute the Leadership. The Leadership shall hold their respective offices until their successors shall have been elected and shall have accepted such elected positions. The President, the Vice President, and the Secretary each shall be elected for a one (1) year term.

##### **Section 2. President**

The duties of the President include setting, in consultation with the Officers, the schedule of the Association for the programming year, identifying and recruiting new members, and guiding the organization to fulfill the Mission. To fulfill these duties, the President may establish Committees as necessary to accomplish specific objectives or enact specific procedures. The Committee Chairs shall be appointed by the President and approved by the other Officers as necessary for that year. Each of the Committee Chair positions will be a one (1) year term.

##### **Section 3. Vice President**

The duties of the Vice President are to assist the President in fulfilling the Mission Statement of the Association and perform any appointed tasks requested by the President.

##### **Section 4. Secretary**

The Secretary shall provide services associated with that of secretary, treasurer and librarian, including the issuing of notices of all meetings, hereinafter provided.

##### **Section 5. Board of Managers**

The Board of Managers shall have general charge of supporting the President and directing the Association to fulfill the Mission, when necessary, through consultation with one or more of the Committees.

The Board shall consist of seven (7) members, of whom, three (3) shall be the current officers of the Association, as provided in Section 1 of this Article. The remaining four (4) managers shall be elected on a staggered basis such that two (2) managers shall be elected every year to serve two (2) year terms. The Board of Managers shall have power to fill by appointment any vacancy which may occur in any office or in the membership of the Board, such appointment to be for a term not longer than until the next annual election and the acceptance of office by the person elected to fill such vacancy.

Five (5) members of the Board of Managers shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The President, or the Vice President during the absence of the President, or any two (2) members of the Board of Managers, may call a meeting of the Board.

#### **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS**

**Section 1.** Annual meetings of the Association shall be held at such time during the month of April of each year as may be selected by the President in consultation with the Officers, and notice thereof shall

be mailed to each member at least fourteen (14) days prior to such meeting. Other meetings and events of the Association may be held at such times as may be determined by the Board of Managers. Abbreviated oral meeting reports from Officers and Committee Chairs may be given to the Membership at meetings or optionally written reports given to the Membership. Special meetings may be called by ten (10) members of the Association, upon reasonable notice.

**Section 2.** At the annual meeting of the Association, officers shall be elected by ballot of Active Members. Nominators for such offices shall be made as follows:

The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee to consist of three (3) members. One member is to be the Immediate Past President, and the two other members are to not include the President, Vice President, or Secretary. The Committee shall be selected at least sixty (60) days before the annual meeting. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to select and prepare a list of candidates for the Officers and the two (2) Non-Officer Members of the Board of Managers to be filled at the annual election. In selecting candidates, the Nominating Committee should consider experience a candidate may have with the Association including meeting attendance and positions held in the Association.

The Committee shall report its nominations to the Secretary, and notice of such nominations shall be transmitted to the members of the Association at least thirty days (30) before the annual meeting. Candidates other than those presented by the Nominating Committee may be nominated from the floor and full opportunity shall be given for this purpose. In case more than one candidate shall be nominated for any office, the election shall be by ballot.

**Section 3.** The Active Members of the membership present at any regularly called meeting of the Association shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

#### **ARTICLE VI – INDEBTEDNESS DUES AND MEMBERSHIP FEES**

The Association shall not incur indebtedness in excess of the actual funds in the treasury at any time.

The annual dues shall be payable on or before September 15<sup>th</sup> of current programming year as follows:

- (a) Active Members, Seventy-five (\$75.00) Dollars
- (b) Student Members, Twenty (\$20.00) Dollars

Membership renewal notification shall be given by the Association no later than July 15<sup>th</sup> before the upcoming programming year. If a member does not pay their annual dues by September 15<sup>th</sup> of the current programming year, a late fee of \$20.00 shall be assessed when that member renews their annual membership.

Any member whose dues are in arrears for a period of more than 3 months and who fails to pay them within thirty (30) days after being notified by mail of such deficiency by the Secretary shall be dropped from the roll of members, but such members shall have the right to appeal to the Board of Managers for reinstatement. One condition of reinstatement is that the dropped member will be required to come current with past and current dues.

If a member is experiencing a financial hardship, he/she may request, in confidence, a waiver from the Secretary and the President for the dues of the current programming year. Upon approval, the requesting member will be relieved of their obligation to pay dues for the current programming year. For those members who register for a Continuing Legal Education course provided by the Association, and who are not financially able to pay the CLE registration fee, a waiver may be requested in confidence from the

President and the Secretary. Upon approval, a 50% discount will be applied to the registration fee. If the discounted fee is still a financial burden on the member, the registration fee may be waived entirely. These discounts are available for live programs only.

#### **ARTICLE VII – NOTICES**

The Secretary shall transmit notices via email to each member of the Association of all regularly called business meetings of the Association at least fourteen (14) days in advance thereof and for special meetings of the Association five (5) days in advance thereof. At the discretion of the Board, certain notices may be sent by regular mail to individuals who may not have access to email.

#### **ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENT**

Amendments to these Articles may be made at any regularly called business meeting of the Association by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present. PROVIDED that the proposed amendment shall have been approved by a majority vote of the Board of Managers or by ten (10) members in writing, but not otherwise. Notice of the proposed amendment and copy of the same shall be transmitted to each member at least thirty (30) days before such meeting.