Toad Lane Cooperative Constitution

Preamble:

Toad Lane Co-op was established for the purpose of teaching, learning, and living in cooperation with each other and the community. Toad Lane is guided by these cooperative principles:

1. **1.** Membership is open to all, without social, political, gender, ethnic, or sexual orientation discrimination.
1. **2.** Democratic decision making, one person = one vote.
1. **3.** Limited interest, if any, on capital placed with the house.
1. **4.** Savings distributed equally, or placed for the further development of the house.
1. **5.** Constant education of members in co-op principles and methods.
1. **6.** Cooperation with other cooperatives.

ARTICLE 1. NAME AND PURPOSE

1. **1.** This cooperation shall be known as Toad Lane Cooperative. Toad Lane is also the name of the street in Rochdale, England where the first cooperative was located.
1. **2.** The purpose of this organization shall be to create a close bond of friendship through working together to provide living facilities at moderate cost.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

1. **1.** Membership shall consist of residents who have met requirements outlined in the SHC Code of Operations and Membership Contract.
1. **2.** Membership shall be open to anyone who desires to live in and promote the cooperative environment and is able to meet the financial requirements.
1. **3.** The House shall vote on any prospective members. A single “no vote” may block the prospective member. After a meeting to discuss the “no” concerns, there may be a revote. Unanimous consent must be reached to approve a prospective member.
1. **4.** Prior Relationship Clause: If any prospective member has a prior relationship with a current housemate or another prospective member who will be signing their contract for the same year as the prospective member, the house holds the right to deny this potential member on the basis of the prior relationship clause. Additionally, if two or more prospective members have a prior relationship, the house holds the right to approve membership to the prospective member who contacted the membership officer first, and then deny the other potential members. Prior

relationship is determined by the house and these situations will be voted on a case by case basis. This is to preserve the community style culture cultivated in Toad Lane, and to prevent “house take-overs”.

ARTICLE III. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **1. Rights**
2. Security in your home, access to house and SHC financial records, vote and voice opinions, a clean house, improve and change the house, be heard and listened to, your own privacy and space, capable officers, critique problems in house, independence.

1. **2. Responsibilities**
2. Lock doors and windows, pay member charges, attend meetings, contribute labor, be open to other members ideas, hear and listen to others, respect other's privacy and space, talk to and support officers, work for creative solutions, encourage personal responsibility within the house.

1. **3.** All members have equal rights and responsibilities regardless of seniority.

ARTICLE IV. WORK REQUIREMENTS AND JOBS

1. **1.** The house jobs and officer positions will be divided as evenly as possible among the members at the first house meeting of each MSU semester. Officer positions must be elected by a simple majority of all members present.

1. **2.** House officer positions consist of: Board of Directors representative, Treasurer, Education officer, Membership officer, Maintenance officer, Students of Color Committee representative. (Job descriptions can be found in the SHC Code of Operations)

1. **3.** All house duties such as cleaning bathrooms, taking out the garbage, yard work, etc. for each member shall be voted and agreed upon in a house meeting. All members may bring up in a meeting if they think another member is doing their duty incorrectly and/or untimely. If it is deemed untimely and/or incorrect then a vote will determine if they get another chance, if the duties should change, or if a fine should be placed.

ARTICLE V. GOVERNANCE

1. **1.** A house meeting must be held every Sunday at 8 unless voted otherwise. New dates will be chosen at the first house meeting which will be held within one week of the move-in date/new semester.

1. **2.** At the start of each meeting, members may decide amongst themselves who will be the facilitator for that meeting.

1. **3.** At least 51% of all current house members must be present at a meeting for it to be considered valid. All votes must have at least 51% of all members in favor to pass.

1. **4.** Special house meetings -may be called in cases of extreme emergency or lack of house attendance at a regular house meeting by any Toad Lane member. At these meetings, votes can be passed by 50% of members present at the meeting, (Proxy votes accepted) Special meeting agenda must be posted at least 48 hours prior to meeting.

1. **5. Impeachment** -any house officer can be removed from position for non performance or poor performance of duties. A 3/5 vote is necessary and charges must be posted on meeting agenda for at least 48 hours before meeting.

1. **6. Fines and Penalties** -will be decided on by the members of the house at the first house meeting or with a quorum approval (quorum is equal to 50% plus one of current membership) Members may decide to fine each other for late payments of rent, incomplete house jobs or responsibilities, etc.

Article VI. MISCELLANEOUS

1. **1. Work Holiday** -Every semester the maintenance coordinator will organize a work holiday to be completed by a date set by the house Each member must complete one three to five hour project.

1. **2. Meal Plan** -Toad Lane will not offer a meal plan; however, those desiring a meal plan can request to be a part of New Community's

1. **3. Smoking** -Smoking rules will be made at the beginning of each contract period at the first house meeting. No incoming member will be guaranteed a smoking or non-smoking atmosphere until after the vote at the first house meeting.

1. **4. Guest Policy** -Guests may only stay at Toad Lane with consent of all members. If a guest stays more than fourteen days or nights in a given semester, he/she will be charged an amount to be decided by the house to help pay for costs. Guest parking is not guaranteed but will be based on a first come, first serve basis.

1. **5. Drug Policy** -There will be no illegal drugs permitted on property of Toad Lane.

1. **6. Pet Policy** -will be decided by the members of the house at the first house meeting. No incoming member will be promised the right to house a pet in Toad Lane, or to live pet free until after the first house meeting.

1. **7. Party Policy** -See SHC Code of Operations

1. **8. House Meeting Policy** -If a member were to or planned to miss a house meeting, member must give 24 hours notice before said meeting. If late notice is received after 24 hours but received at least 12 hours before the meeting start time, member shall be only fined $5. If late notice is received after 12 hours but received at least an hour before the meeting start time, member shall be only fined $10. If member does not show without notice or gives late notice within an hour of the meeting start time, member shall be fined $15. Fine must be approved at the following house meeting in case the absence was due to an emergency.

1. **9. Parking Policy** -Toad Lane has four parking spots, and parking spots will be chosen based on seniority. There is no guarantee that members with a car will have a house parking spot.

1. **10. Room Policy** - There are three bedrooms in Toad Lane, two doubles and one single. Seniority and gender identity are prioritized in room selection, but there is no guarantee of same parts in a room assignment. No member shall be removed from the room they have previously lived in.

1. **Harassment Policy** -See SHC Code of Operations

1. **Expulsion Policy** -See SHC Code of Operations

Article VII. AMENDMENTS

1. This constitution may be amended by a 2/3 vote during a house meeting which has quorum present. (quorum is equal to 50% plus one of current membership).

2. Any amendments which pass shall be changed in the document immediately and brought to the attention of the SHC Vice president of Education.

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