Bismehe Ta'ala

# Constitution of Az-Zahra Center, Inc.

## ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the corporation shall be Az-Zahra Center, Inc., hereinafter called Az-Zahra. It shall be incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Kansas.

## ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

The objectives shall be to establish and maintain a Shia Ithna Ashari organization based on the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah as practiced and explained by Prophet Muhammad (AS) and his Ahlul Bayt (AS) and to provide a facility to unite Shias, regardless of their ethnicity or national origin, into one cohesive group under the banner of Islam.

**Section 1:** The functions of Az-Zahra shall, as a minimum, be the following:

1. To conduct religious, educational, charitable, cultural, and recreational activities.
2. To arrange and hold congregational prayers and religious ceremonies.
3. To disseminate religious, educational, cultural, etc literature and information to increase the understanding of Islam.
4. To create, cultivate and maintain fellowship between Muslims and people of other faiths.
5. To promote goodwill and understanding with members of other faiths.
6. To accept dues, donations, gifts, legacies, bequests, etc. for use in promoting the objectives of Az-Zahra.
7. To promote activities conforming to Islamic code of conduct.

**Section 2:** Az-Zahra shall conform to the laws of the United States of America as they apply to a non-profit organization and shall comply with the guidelines under which it was chartered.

## ARTICLE III: STATEMENTS OF BELIEFS

Az-Zahra shall adopt the Statements of Beliefs as explained by Holy Prophet Muhammad (AS) and his Ahlul Bayt (AS). These are broadly classified as Osool-e-Deen and Furoo-e-Deen and are explained in detail in Appendix 1. No activities of Az-Zahra shall be contrary to these Statements of Beliefs.

***Article III in its entirety or any part thereof shall not be amended, repealed, abrogated or changed in any manner whatsoever.***

## ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1:** The membership of Az-Zahra is open to any person, 18 years of age or older, who agrees to abide by the Constitution of Az-Zahra. Each member shall affirm Article II, III, and Appendix 1 in writing. Failure to do so may result in termination of membership.

**Section 2:** There shall be two categories of membership.

**a) Regular Membership:** Such membership shall be available to individuals who agree to comply with the Constitution of Az-Zahra in its entirety and pay their annual dues and other applicable fees as outlined by the Board of Trustees (Board). Each member shall receive privileges as set forth by the Board. Member is entitled to one vote and is eligible to hold an office of Az-Zahra. Members must reside within 100 miles radius of Az-Zahra Center.

**b) Associate Membership:** An associate membership may be granted to any person recommended by at least two-thirds (2/3rd) of the Board for services that may benefit Az-Zahra. An associate member shall not be entitled to a vote or hold an elective office. They shall be required to pay their dues.

**Section 3:** Application for membership shall be made in writing to the Membership Committee or the Board of Trustees. A written recommendation of an existing member may be needed to complete the process. A majority vote of the Board is needed to finalize the acceptance. The forms must be signed and retained in file.

**Section 4:** A member may be suspended or expelled by a two-thirds (2/3rd) vote of the Board. No special meeting is necessary. A member may be suspended or expelled for any or all of the following reasons:

- Conduct which brings discredit to Islam or Az-Zahra
- Failure to pay dues and other financial obligations for a period of at least one year
- Engaged in activities that are offensive to Muslims in general and a member in particular
- Has been convicted of any criminal offense, except those relating to minor violations
- Has caused intentional bodily harm to a member or a visitor of Az-Zahra
- Has caused intentional physical damage to the property of Az-Zahra

**Section 5:** an exception to 2007 is due to a lapse in past membership. Current members may participate in election.

**ARTICLE V: GUIDANCE OF A MARJA**

**Section 1:** The Board, at its earliest convenience, shall adopt a resolution appointing a primary and two secondary marjas. A marja must be a) alive and b) a recognized authority in Islamic jurisprudence (Shari'ah).

**Section 2:** Guidance shall first be sought from the primary marja in resolving conflict(s) affecting religious, social, and community issues in the event the Board is either deadlocked or lack knowledge in resolving such issues.

**Section 3:** Second or third opinion may be sought from the other two marjas to clarify the opinion/verdict of the primary marja or when the primary marja was unable to give an opinion/verdict.

**Section 4:** Request for guidance and the opinion shall be in writing. Copies of the opinion must be posted and clearly publicized on bulletin boards, newsletter, and other acceptable media. A copy shall be filed appropriately for future reference.

**Section 5:** The Board shall be the sole authority to communicate with the respective marja(s) on behalf of Az-Zahra. No other person or persons shall represent the Board without prior and absolute agreement of the Board.

***{Article V in its entirety or any part thereof shall not be amended, repealed, abrogated or changed in any manner whatsoever.}*** [agreed to remove and revisit this section after some thoughts]

**ARTICLE VI: RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS**

**Section 1: Regular members shall have and enjoy the following rights and privileges:**

- To attend and participate in the activities of Az-Zahra
- To vote on any matter affecting the affairs of Az-Zahra
- To nominate, select, deselect, contest and hold an elective office, provided they have been a member in good standing for at least a year.
- Are permitted a proxy vote provided it is in writing and when unable to attend an election or special vote.
- To participate in religious services, subject to rules and regulations established by the Board.
- To request and receive funeral services, including ghusl, burial, and space in the cemetery, for a member of his/her household. Space in the cemetery shall be based upon availability and payment for the lot.
- To receive publications, communications, invitation, etc to meetings and gatherings
- To review annual reports, budgets, and expansion plans of Az-Zahra that has been made public

**Section 2**: **Associate Members shall have the following privileges**

- To participate in religious services, subject to rules and regulations established by the Board.
- To speak in a General or Special meeting, upon invitation by the Board.
- To receive publications, communications, etc to help broaden understanding of Az-Zahra.
- To assist with committee planning and organizing under the direction of a Board representative.

**ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS**

**Section 1:** There shall be at least one (1) General Body meeting in a calendar year. The purpose of such meeting is to publicize activities of Az-Zahra and to provide a venue to debate, discuss, and resolve, issues and concerns confronting members of Az-Zahra. The minutes of such meeting(s) shall be kept on file for at least one (1) year. Meetings shall be presided over by a member of the Board. The agenda must contain, but not limited to, the following items:

- Opening Du'a
- Reading of the minutes of the last General Body meeting
- Annual report, including accomplishments, status of projects, and future plans
- Report of the Treasurer, if applicable
- Reports of committees, if applicable
- Closing Du'a

**Section 2:** A special meeting may be called by the Board relating to activities other than those described in Section 1. It must be called at the written request of at least 10 members. Notice of a special meeting shall specify the business to be transacted in such meeting. No other business shall be transacted at this meeting.

**Section 3:** Notice of time and place of Special and General Body meetings shall be given by the Secretary (or his/her representative) of Az-Zahra to all members by regular mail. Email and the Az-Zahra website may only be used as a follow up methods of informing the members until such time as these may be acceptable means of communication.

**Section 4:** Notice of the General Body meeting shall be given at least 30 days prior to the meeting; and notice of a special meeting shall be given at least 10 days prior thereto.

**Section 5:** The quorum of the General Body and Special meetings shall be at least half (1/2) of the total current members in good standing. However, there shall be at least four members of the Board present for transacting any business. In the absence of these, the General Body meeting shall be postponed for at least thirty (30) days and the Special meeting shall be postponed by seven (7) days from the original date.

**Section 6:** At the subsequent meeting, there shall be at least 25% or 10 members (whichever is smaller), excluding the Board, constituting a quorum to transact business. Formal headcount of the members present shall be the criteria. Similar means of notification must be used.

**ARTICLE VIII: BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Section 1:** The Board of Trustees (Board) shall consist of not less than five (5) and not more than seven (7) members. The Board shall be the final arbiter of disputes of Az-Zahra except those pertaining to Shari'ah, in which case Article V shall be binding. The officers of the Board shall consist of, but not limited to, the following:

1. President
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. At-large members

**Section 2:** The Board shall be duly elected by the general body and serve as **unpaid volunteers** of Az-Zahra.

**Section 3:** Each term of office shall be of three (3) years. There shall be no term limits.

**Section 4:** Election shall be conducted annually and no later than the last day of the year. There shall be at least two (2) members up for election each year. Candidate(s) must be formally nominated by a member in good standing.

**Section 5:** Any member of the Board absent for three (3) successive meetings, without due cause or excuse, may be declared ineligible to hold the office of the Board. A formal process of replacement shall ensue thereafter. These include:

- Contact by a Board member for explanation
- Send a formal written letter by the Board
- Review of the response by the Board members for appropriate action
- Request a formal letter of resignation or completion of the Resignation Form
- Request a replacement from the community

**Section 6:** A member of the Board shall resign for any of the following reasons, if:

- convicted of felony or misdemeanor crime(s)
- brings disgrace to Islam or Az-Zahra
- causes intentional bodily injury to a member or a visitor, or property damage to property of others or the center
- abuses the office of the Board for personal benefit

**He shall not serve in the Board until all charges are expunged or dropped.**

**Section 7:** In the event of resignation, removal, death, disability, etc, the vacant position shall be filled by one of the following formal methods:

a) Inviting the unsuccessful candidate who had the most votes in the last general election to serve the term
b) Nominating a respected member of Az-Zahra to serve out the remaining term
c) Holding a special election within 30 days of the vacancy

**Section 8:** No member of the Board shall hold more than one office of Az-Zahra; nor shall he/she be the head of more than one committee concurrently. He/She may, however, serve as a member of more than one committee or sub-committee at a time.

**Section 9:** No two members of the immediate family or a household shall serve in the Board at the same time.

## ARTICLE IX: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Section 1:** The Board of Trustees (Board) shall, as a minimum, have the following responsibilities and duties:

- Hold in trust the title and assets of Az-Zahra.
- Manage and administer the affairs of Az-Zahra.
- Adopt annual budgets of Az-Zahra's various committees.
- Determine, approve, review, and plan long- and short-term goals of Az-Zahra.
- Make contracts on behalf of Az-Zahra.
- Require independent audit of Az-Zahra's books, transactions, activities, etc at least annually.
- Conduct regular fundraising activities to obtain and fund the expenses of Az-Zahra.
- Suspend any and all activities and financial transactions on behalf of Az-Zahra.
- Preserve, secure, and be the custodian of Az-Zahra, its records, and bank accounts.
- Approve membership application and finalize its process.
- Suspend or expel a member, after due process, providing two-thirds of the Board approves such an action.
- Make and/or approve by-laws for the administration and regulation of the various committees and sub-committees.
- Mediate and resolve issues relating to Az-Zahra, its members, and other individuals and organizations.

**Section 2:** Members of Board shall attend regular planning and review meetings. The number and types of such meetings shall be agreed upon by a resolution at the beginning of each calendar year. There shall be no fewer than six (6) regular Board meetings any calendar year.

**Section 3:** All Board meetings, unless those detriment to decision making or the peaceful function of its body, shall be open to regular members. Meetings which may affect the privacy or honor of an individual shall be a closed meeting.

**Section 4:** The Board shall be the sole representative of Az-Zahra in all transactions and correspondences with individuals and outside organizations.

**Section 5:** No major decision(s), approval of plans, transaction(s), shall be completed without a quorum of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Board. A notice of a postponement shall be sent to all Board members for the earliest practicable date for such meetings.

**ARTICLE X: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD:**

**Section 1: The President of the Board shall: << whole thing need to be defined as by laws of BOT as bylaws >>**

* Preside all meetings of the Board.
* Represent the Board in the major meetings of various committees and sub-committees, as applicable.
* Appoint, with consultation with Board members, heads of committees and sub-committees.
* Appoint, with consultation with Board members, an independent auditor to audit Az-Zahra's books.
* Call special meetings as necessary.
* Make and approve Board's report and present to Az-Zahra at least annually.
* Sign off on all documents, correspondences, transactions, as necessary to complete the process.

**Section 2:** In the event of the death, resignation, absence, or inability of the President to serve, the Secretary shall assume the duties and obligations of the President. He may also appoint, with consultation with the Board, any Board or a qualified regular member, to serve out the term of the President until a special or annual election is completed.

**Section 3:** The term of the President shall be 3 years and is limited to two consecutive terms. Thereafter, there shall be at least one term or three years separation, whichever is longer, before the President may qualify for another term.

**Section 4:** All officers shall be elected by the members of the Board in internal Board elections. There shall be no formal oversight or an election committee to monitor such elections.

**Section 5:** No officer of the Board shall receive monetary compensation, special treatments, gifts, or other benefits.

**Section 6:** An **Acting President** shall be responsible for supervisory and oversight duties in managing the affairs of Az-Zahra in such areas as are assigned to him/her by the President and shall perform such other functions as may be delegated by the President or the Board. In the absence or death of the President or the Secretary, the Board may nominate a temporary replacement to serve out the term of these officers.

**Section 7: The Treasurer shall:**

* Supervise, draft, and present the annual budget of Az-Zahra no later than March 31st, for approval by Board.
* Present an annual financial report to the General Body meeting.
* Report receipts, collections, and disbursements, etc to the Board and at all General Body meetings.
* Maintain and preserve books, ledgers, past years' bank statements, and all valid documents as required by law.
* Disburse petty cash and other expenses approved by the Board..
* Participate in fundraising and related activities as may be delegated by the Board.

**Section 8: The Secretary shall:**

* Attend all meetings of the Board, keep an accurate record of all proceedings, and read the minutes of meetings.
* Supervise the issuance of all notices of Board, General Body and Special meetings.
* Be the custodian of the seal of Az-Zahra, and affix it with signature, to all documents which require signature.
* Perform such other duties as may be delegated by the Board.

**Section 9:** Members at-large shall be responsible for duties other than those described above. They shall perform such other duties as may be delegated by the Board for a specific duration.

**Section 10:** There shall be two signatures on any financial transaction exceeding One thousand dollars ($1,000). The name(s) of such officers shall be mutually agreed and published at the beginning of each calendar year. **The Treasurer shall not be one of the signatory to such transactions**.

**ARTICLE XI: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The main purpose of the Executive Committee is to administer the day-to-day activities of Az-Zahra. It shall be the eyes and ears of the Board and execute the policies and visions of the Board.

**Section 1: Composition shall be completed in the future << exec committee should be appointed for one year by BOT >> << BOT will assign duties and supervise the activities of Exec committee. Exec committee members may be reappointed for another one year term>>**

**Section 2: Duties and responsibilities shall be completed in the future**

**Section 3: Quorum shall be completed in the future**

## ARTICLE XII: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

**Section 1(a):** The President, in consultation with the Board, shall appoint a Nomination Committee comprising of a chairman and at least three (3) other members to administer the nomination and election process. The committee shall be formed at least twenty (30) days prior to an election.

**(b)** Election shall be conducted annually for the Board and Executive Committee when applicable.
**(c)** Election shall be completed no later than the last day of the calendar year.
**(d)** No election shall be conducted on a major Muslim holy day occasion, especially on Eids.

**Section 2:** The Nomination Committee shall gather names of candidates to fill a vacancy or compete for a seat. They shall verify that the information provided is accurate and complete.

**Section 3:** A qualified candidate shall meet, as a minimum, the following requirements to contest a position:

- Has been legally permitted to be in the United States.
- Be a member of Az-Zahra for at least three consecutive years.
- Has not openly engaged in activities that are un-Islamic.
- Has not willfully caused harm to the honor or property of another member.
- Has not been convicted of any criminal offense, except those relating to minor violations.

**Section 4:** The Secretary of the Board shall notify the members in writing at least 10 days prior to the General Body meeting the names of the nominees/candidates.

**Section 5:** The ballot forms or cards with name(s) of nominees shall be provided to all members on the day of the election.

**Section 6:** An absentee vote may be cast by a member who is unable to attend or vote on the Election Day. Absentee vote shall be on a prescribed form or card and so stated. It shall be post-marked and arrive no later than the day of the election.

**Section 7:** A proxy vote may be cast by a member who has received a written permission of a member unable to vote on the Election Day. There shall be a formal process, including completing a Proxy Form with signature of the member giving his/her permission to cast his/her vote.

**Section 8:** There shall be only one (1) vote per member.

**Section 9:** Vote shall be closed ballot and shall be counted by the members of the Nomination Committee. The nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. The name of the successful candidate shall be announced on the day of the election. It shall also be publicized in newsletter or bulletin board or website, etc.

**Section 10:** In case of a tie, all nominees, other than the nominees receiving the highest votes, shall be eliminated, and a new voice vote taken on the day of election. Announcement shall be same as described in Section 9 above.

**Section 11:** The successful candidate shall take the oath of the office immediately upon election on the same day.

**ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1:** Amendments to the constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Board at least thirty (30) days prior to the General Body meeting.

**Section 2:** The Board, after approving the proposed amendment by a two-third (2/3rd) majority vote, shall present it to the General Body or to a special meeting, whichever comes first, for the final vote. A two-third (2/3rd) vote of the full membership shall be necessary to approve or amend, **except those relating to Articles III, and Appendix 1**, in which case there shall be no amendments or deviations, whatsoever.

**Section 3:** Notification of proposed amendment(s) shall be done at least 20 days in advance of a vote. The results of the vote shall be widely circulated and published by the Secretary of the Board.

**ARTICLE XV: DISSOLUTION**

**Section 1:** Az-Zahra shall be deemed to have dissolved in the event if either Article III cannot be maintained or enforced.

**Section 2:** Upon dissolution of Az-Zahra, the Board shall, after paying off or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of Az-Zahra, dispose of all assets of Az-Zahra exclusively for the purposes that meet the aims and objectives of Az-Zahra as outlined in this Constitution.

**Section 3:** The assets shall be disposed of in such manner or to such organization or organizations, organized and operated for the purposes as those of Az-Zahra. Such organization or organizations **must** conform to the beliefs as outlined in Articles III and V of this Constitution, and be involved in promoting religious activities.

**Section 4:** If no such organization is found in a timely manner, then the entire assets shall be handled by one of the following method:

a) Send to an organization recommended by one or all of the Marjas listed in Article V
b) Send to: **Alavi Foundation, Inc.**
500 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10110

**Section 5:** Any donation to Az-Zahra shall not be refunded to donor in any condition

The Constitution of Az-Zahra Center, Inc was reviewed and passed by the entire Board of Trustees on

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Secretary of Board of Trustees

## Appendix 1

**Fundamentals of Beliefs are described as follows:**

A. Belief in the Fundamental Principles of Islam ("Usool-e-Deen[1]"). These are:

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|---|---|
| 1. Tawheed | Belief in the Oneness of Allah (SWT), in His essence and attributes (such as: All Knowing, All Powerful and All Wise), and His actions (like: Creation, giving sustenance). |
| 2. Adl | Belief that Allah (SWT) is Just and that all His Creations are governed by His Justice. |
| 3. Nabuwwat | Belief in all the prophets (messengers) sent by Allah to this world. The first Prophets was Adam (A.S.[i]) and the last was Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.[ii]). Furthermore, belief in the infallibility of all Prophets (messengers). |
| 4. Imamat | Belief in the twelve Infallible Holy Imams[iii] after Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), appointed by Allah (S.W.T.) as divine guides for mankind. The first of these twelve Imams was Ali Ibn Abi Talib (A.S.), the immediate successor of Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.) and last one is the twelfth Holy Imam, (Hadhrat Hujjat ibn Al Hassan Al-Mahdi (A.S.). who is in the major occultation, known as (Ghaibat-e-Kubra[iv]) and he is the Awaited Savior. During his absence, the followers are obligated to seek guidance from the most pious Islamic erudite (Marja[v]) of their own time as instructed by the Twelfth Imam himself. |
| 5. Ma'aad | Belief in the Day of Judgment. |

B. Practical Principles: (Furoo-e-deen[2]). Consists of the following obligatory acts:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Salaat | The five daily obligatory prayers |
| 2. Sawm | Fasting from dawn to dusk in the month of Ramadan |
| 3. Hajj | Performance of pilgrimage to Mecca during the month of Zilhajj |
| 4. Zakaat | Obligation to pay Zakat (religious tax on goods, grains and animals.) |
| 5. Khums | Obligation to pay one-fifth of annual net savings |
| 6. Jehad | To struggle (an internal and external effort to create harmony, balance, peace and justice in the world.) |
| 7. Amr-Bil-Maroof | To promote virtue |
| 8. Nahi-Anil-Munkir | To prevent reprehensible |
| 9. Tawalla | Adherence to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and his progeny which consists of his immaculate daughter Fatima (A.S.), and the twelve Infallible Imams |
| 10. Tabarra | To dissociate, and express displeasure, from those who are hostile to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and his Holy Progeny (S.A.). |

[1] The definition of Usool-e-Deen has been kept very brief. Detail explanations of items relating to the principles of Islam are found in various publications of Marja. Reference should be made to these publications for any clarification.
[2] The definition of Furoo-e-deen has been kept very brief. Detail explanations of items relating to practice of Islam are found in various publications of Marja. Reference should be made to these publications for any clarification.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms used in this Constitution shall bear the meaning as provided in the endnotes of this document. Each term has been referenced to the main body of the document as and when the term first appeared in the document.

[1] Fiqh-e-Jafari is the jurisprudence of Islam followed by the believers of the Twelve Holy Infallible Imams and are also known as Shia Ithna Ashari

[1] Shia Ithna Ashari refers to the branch of Shia School of Thought that believes in the divinely appointed Twelve Holy Infallible Imams after Prophet Muhammad (S.A.)

[1] A.S. is an abbreviation for Alaihis Salaam. It means peace be upon him. Conversely, Alaiha Salaam is for a female.

[1] S.A.W. is an abbreviation for Sallalaho alihey wa alahey wa sallam. This means peace be upon him and his progeny. This statement is reserved only to address Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

[1] Imam refers to the twelve Holy and Infallible Imams who succeeded the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.). They are as follows:

1. Ali Al-Murtaza son of Abu Talib, cousin of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.) and the husband of Fatimah (A.S.), the daughter of Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.)
2. Hasan Al-Mujtaba son of Ali (A.S.) and Fatimah (A.S.)
3. Husain Al-Shaheed son of Ali (A.S.) and Fatimah (A.S.)
4. Ali Zainul Abedin (A.S.) son of Husain (A.S.)
5. Muhammad Al-Baqar (A.S.) son of Ali Zainul Abedin (A.S.)
6. Jafar As-Sadiq (A.S.) son of Muhammad Al-Baqar (A.S.)
7. Musa Al-Kazim (A.S.) son of Jafar As-Sadiq (A.S.)
8. Ali Ar-Reza (A.S.) son of Musa Al-Kazim (A.S.)
9. Muhammad Al-Taqi (A.S.) son of Ali Ar-Reza (A.S.)
10. Ali Un-Naqi (A.S.) son of Muhammad Al-Taqi (A.S.)
11. Hasan Al-Askari (A.S.) son of Ali Un-Naqi (A.S.)
12. Muhammad Al-Mahdi (A.S.) son of Hasan Al-Askari (A.S.)

[1] Ghaibath-e-Kubra refers to the fact that the twelfth Imam had two period of occultation. The first occultation was the minor occultation known as Ghaibath-e-Sughra. During this period he provided guidance through his appointed deputies. After the passing away of his fourth deputy, the Twelfth Imam, by order of Allah, went into major occultation, which continues to this day. This current period of major occultation is known as Ghaibath-e-Kubra. During this period of major occultation he has instructed his followers to seek guidance from scholars who are highly knowledgeable about Islamic jurisprudence. Such scholars are also referred to as a Marja.

[1] Marja is a term that refers to a Shia Ithna Ashari Islamic scholar who by his research and piety has attained a very high degree of knowledge about jurisprudence of Islam. He generally publishes his edicts know as Tauzihil Masail (i.e., various issues affecting practical life and their solutions under Islamic jurisprudence). Such person is generally recognized among the Shia Ithna Ashari school of thought as a person of high learning and piety and is referred to as a Marja. Example of a past Marja is Mohsin-ul-Hakim Tabatabai (now deceased).

[1] Ahle Bayt specifically refers to the Holy and infallible members of the household of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.) and consists of Fatimah, daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.), Ali son of Abu Talib (A.S.), Hasan son of Ali (A.S.) and Husain son of Ali (A.S.). Generally, this term also includes the remaining nine Holy Infallible Imams.

[1] Members in good standing refer to those members who are up to date on their membership dues, not in violation of the Constitution of Az-Zahra, (e.g., who have not been convicted of crime in the U.S.) and have not been suspended by the Board as prescribed under the Constitution.

[1] The term family with reference to family membership includes husband, wife and their dependent children.

Extended family is defined as family members including siblings (brothers, sisters), parents, parent-in-laws, uncles, aunts, and children.

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[ decided the following should be added as amendment to by laws]

**ARTICLE XIII: EDUCATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

Az-Zahra shall have an Education Program Committee (EPC) whose main goal is to establish Islamic educational programs and curricula for children, youth, and adults. The program(s) shall be open to anyone, regardless of membership, who is interested and willing to participate in the program. Programs may be offered on daily, weekend or special occasions or for a specific duration.

**Section 1:** The Board shall hire the most qualified candidate to administer the program(s). There shall be no program(s) that is/are deemed contrary to Islam or Muslims.

**Section 2:** The EPC shall report to and seek guidance of the Board.

**Section 3:** The budget of the EPC must be approved by the Board on an annual basis. No expenses, other than those relating to petty cash, shall be disbursed without approval of the Board.

**Section 4:** There shall be an annual audit of the EPC books by an independent auditor approved by the Board. The report of the auditor shall be included in the annual report of the Board.

**Section 5:** Other guidelines may be added or modified as and when a regular school is in place.