

CONSTITUTION OF THE JABAT ISLAND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PART I. - PRELIMINARY

SECTION 1. Name of the Local Government

The name of the local government is Jabat Island Local Government.

SECTION 2. Local Government area.

The area of jurisdiction of the local government is Jabat Island and, in accordance with Article IX, Section 1(2) and (3) of the Constitution of the Marshall Islands, extends to the surrounding sea and seabed to a distance of 5 miles from the baselines from which the territorial sea of Jabat Island is measured, as more particularly described in Schedule 1.

SECTION 3. Capitol

The principal office of the local government shall be located at Jabat Island or at such other place in the local government area as the Council by resolution declares.

PART II. - THE LEGISLATURE.

SECTION 4. Establishment of the legislature.

A legislature, to be known as the Jabat Island Council, is hereby established for the local government, and in accordance with Section 13(1) of the Local Government Act 1980 the Ordinance - making, taxing and appropriation powers of the local government under Article IX, Section 2 of the Constitution of the Marshall Islands be vested in it.

SECTION 5. Membership and elections

- (1) The Council shall consist of 13 members, being -
  - (a) ten members elected at large from Jabat Island; and
  - (b) one Iroi member appointed by the Iroi clan of Jabat Island; and
  - (c) the Nitijela representative from Jabat Island.
  - (d) The Mayor.

(2) The at-large members referred to in Subsection (1)(a) shall be elected by ballot by eligible voters as provided for by Section 13 and 23 of the Local Government Act 1980.

(3) The first general election of at-large members referred to in Subsection (1)(a) shall be held on a date, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Constitution, fixed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

SECTION 6. Qualifications

The qualifications for election as an at-large member referred to in Section

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5(1)(a) are to -

- (a) be 18 years of age or over; and
- (b) be a citizen of the Marshall Islands; and
- (c) have resided on Jabat Island for one year immediately preceding the election; and
- (d) have land-rights on Jabat Island; and
- (e) not be mentally incompetent; and
- (f) not be under criminal sentence at the time of his election; and
- (g) be a registered voter of Jabat Island.

SECTION 7. Term of office.

(1) The term of office for at-large members referred to in Section 5(1)(a) is four years; however, the terms shall be staggered such that every two years there will be elections for five seats. In the first election under this Constitution, the five members receiving the highest number of votes shall serve a full four year term. The other five members will serve a term of two years. Thereafter elections for each seat shall be held every four years.

SECTION 8. Casual vacancies.

(1) If the seat of a member of the Council referred to in Section 5(1) becomes vacant otherwise than by the termination of his term of office in accordance with Section 7, the vacancy shall be filled as soon as practicable by a special election.

SECTION 9. Meetings.

(1) Meetings of the Council shall be held at least once in every month of the calendar, on such days and at such times as are fixed by the council, by resolution, or in default by the Mayor, by notice in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Council.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall, as soon as practicable after the declaration of the results of the first general election to the Council, by notice to all members call a meeting of the Council.

(3) The Mayor may at any time, and shall as soon as practicable after receipt of a petition of a majority of the members of the Council, stating the business to be dealt with, call a meeting of the Council, by notice in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Council stating the business to be dealt with.

(4) A special meeting shall deal only with the subjects stated in the notice calling the meeting.

(5) Meetings of the Council shall be held in public.

(6) The quorum for a meeting of the Council is a majority of the total number of the membership of the Council.

(7) The Mayor shall preside at all meetings of the Council at which he is present, and, subject to Section 17 and to the Rules of Procedure of the Council, during his

absence or during a vacancy in his office a member elected by the members present shall preside.

(8) Except as otherwise provided by the Local Government Act 1980, all questions before a meeting of the Council shall be determined in accordance with the majority of the votes of the members present and voting, but not question shall be decided on an evenly divided vote.

SECTION 10. Procedures.

(1) The Council shall keep and publish a journal of its proceedings.

(2) The Council shall make Rules of Procedure, not inconsistent with this Constitution, any Central Government law or any Ordinance of the local government, for the regulation and orderly conduct of its proceedings and the dispatch of its official business.

(3) Subject to this Constitution, any Central Government law or any Ordinance of the local government, the Council may regulate its own proceedings.

SECTION 11. Committees.

The Council may establish standing and other committees to deal with any matter that can in its opinion more properly or more conveniently be dealt with by a committee.

PART III. - THE HEAD OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SECTION 12. Office of the head of the local government.

An office of the head of the Jabat Local Government, who shall be known as the Mayor, is hereby established for the local government.

SECTION 13. Qualification

Qualification for the Mayor are as follows:

- (1) be 25 years of age or over; and
- (2) be a citizen of the Marshall Islands; and
- (3) have resided on Jabat Island for one year immediately preceding the election; and
- (4) have land rights on Jabat Island; and
- (5) not be mentally incompetent; and
- (6) not be under criminal sentence at the time of his election; and
- (7) be a registered voter of Jabat Island.

SECTION 14. Election

(1) The Mayor shall be elected by the eligible voters of Jabat Island.

(2) The first election for the Mayor shall be held with the general election for Council Members as provided for by Section 5(3) and the next election shall be held as prior as practicable after the fourth anniversary of the previous election for Mayor and Council Members.

(3) The term of office of the Mayor shall be 4 years and shall commence with

the announcement of his election and terminate at the time of election for a new Mayor.  
SECTION 15. Vacation of Office.

- (1) The office of the Mayor becomes vacant if, and only if -
  - (a) his term of office terminate in accordance with Section 14(3); or
  - (b) he ceases to possess the qualifications he was required to have under Section 13; or
  - (c) he dies; or
  - (d) he resigns his seat by notice in writing to the local government; or
  - (e) the Council may dismiss him by a 2/3 vote of the total membership of the Council.

(2) If the office of the Mayor becomes vacant for any reason other than the termination of his office in accordance with Section 14(3), this vacancy shall be filled as soon as possible by a special election.

SECTION 16. Acting Head of the Local Government

(1) In the event of the absence or incapacity of the Mayor, his functions shall be performed by a member of the Executive Committee appointed by him or, in default, the Executive Committee.

(2) For the purpose of the performance of any function of the Mayor that a member of the Executive Committee is authorized to perform by virtue of Subsection (1), the member shall be deemed to be the Mayor, and any reference in any law or in the Rules of Procedure of the Council to the Mayor shall be read as including a reference to that member accordingly.

SECTION 17. Functions of the head of the Local Government.

The Mayor has such powers, functions, duties and responsibilities as are conferred or imposed on him by this Constitution, an Ordinance of the local government, any Central Government law or the Rules of Procedure of the local government.

PART IV. - THE EXECUTIVE

SECTION 18. Establishment of the executive

(1) An executive committee of the local government, to be known as the Executive Committee of the Jabat Island Council, is hereby established, which shall, in accordance with Section 14(1) of the Local Government Act 1980, be the principal Executive arm of the local government.

(2) The Executive Committee is collectively responsible to the Council for the executive government of the local government area, and for the performance of the functions of the Executive Committee and the members of the Executive Committee under this Constitution, any Ordinance of the local government or a Central Government law.

SECTION 19. Composition

- (1) The Executive Committee shall consist of -
  - (a) the Mayor; and

- (b) the Iroi member referred to in Section 5(1)(b); and
- (c) the Nitijela representative as referred to in Section 5(1)(c); and
- (d) two members of the Council appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Council.

(2) The quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee is three.

SECTION 20. Vacation of office.

(1) The office of the Mayor becomes vacant in accordance with Section 16.

(2) The office of an Executive Member becomes vacant if, and only if -

- (a) his seat in the Council becomes vacant under Section 8; or
- (b) the office of the Mayor becomes vacant under Section 16; or
- (c) he is dismissed from office under Subsection (3); or
- (d) he resign his office by notice in writing to the Mayor.

(3) The Mayor may at any time, with or without cause, dismiss an Executive Member referred to in Section 19(1)(d) from office.

(4) If the office of the Mayor becomes vacant otherwise than by reason of his dismissal under Section 15(2), the Executive Members shall continue to perform their functions (including the function of appointing under Section 16 a member of the Executive Committee to perform the functions of the Mayor).

(5) If the office of an Executive becomes vacant by reason of the termination of the term of his office as a member of the Council under Section 7, he may continue to perform the functions of an Executive Member until a new Mayor is elected, but unless he becomes again a member of the Council he shall not vote or take part in its deliberations.

SECTION 21. Acting appointments.

In the event of the absence or incapacity of an Executive Member, the Mayor may:

- (a) appoint another Executive Member to perform some or all of his functions; or
- (b) appoint a member of the Council or act as an Executive member, or both, during the absence or incapacity.

SECTION 22. Allocation of responsibilities to Executive Members.

(1) Subject to this Constitution, any Ordinance of the Jabat Council or any Central Government law, the Mayor may from time to time allocate to an Executive Member responsibility for matters within the competence of the Executive Committee (including the responsibility for the administration of Ordinances of the local government).

(2) The Mayor is responsible for any matter of responsibility for which is not for the time being allocated under Subsection (1).

(3) Nothing in this section affects the collective responsibility of the

SECTION 23. Functions of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has such powers, functions, duties and responsibilities as are conferred or imposed on it by this Constitution, an Ordinance of the local government or a Central Government law.

SECTION 24. Advice to the Council, etc., of certain matters.

(1) The Mayor shall promptly notify the Council and the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters of -

- (a) the appointment, dismissal or resignation of a member of the Executive Committee; or
- (b) the appointment, or the termination of the appointment of a member of the Council to act as an Executive Member under Section 21(b); or
- (c) the appointment by him of a member of the Executive Committee to perform the functions of the Mayor under Section 16(1); or
- (d) the allocation under Section 22(1) of responsibilities to Executive Members and the appointment under Section 21(a) of an Executive Member to perform functions of another Executive Member.

(2) The Executive Committee shall promptly notify the Council and the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters of the appointment by it of a member of the Executive Committee to perform the function of the Mayor under Section 16(1).

(3) The Clerk of the local government shall promptly notify the Council and Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters of the resignation of the Mayor under Section 15(1)(c), or of a dismissal of the Mayor under Section 15(2).

PART V. - FINANCE

SECTION 25. Control of revenue and expenditure.

(1) No taxes shall be imposed and no other revenue shall be raised, and no money of the local government shall be expended, unless authorized by law.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply to the acceptance of grants (other than loans) from the Government of the Marshall Islands, nor to expenditure from such grants for the purpose for which, and subject to the conditions on which, they are made.

(3) All money received by the local government shall, unless otherwise authorized by Ordinance of the local government or by or under Local Government Financial Memoranda issued under Section 41(2) of the Local Government Act 1980, be paid into a fund or account established in accordance with such an Ordinance or the Financial Memoranda.

SECTION 26. Financial responsibility of the Executive Committee.

(1) It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to make proposals

to the Council on all matters relating to the budget, and in particular the Executive Committee shall make recommendations to the Council for the raising of taxes and other revenues, and for the expenditure of money of the local government.

(2) The Executive Committee is accountable to the Council for all expenditure of money of the local government and for relating such expenditure to appropriations made by the Council or to other authority conferred by this Constitution, an ordinance of the local government or a Central Government law.

(3) Except on the recommendation or with the consent of the Executive Committee, signified by or on behalf of the Mayor, the Council shall not make or approve any Ordinance or other proceeding introduced by a member other than the Mayor or an Executive member if the Ordinance or proceeding would, in the opinion of the member of the Council presiding -

- (a) dispose of or charge any of the revenues of the local government;  
or
- (b) revoke or alter (otherwise than by way of reduction) any such disposition or charge; or
- (c) impose, alter or abolish any tax, rate, due, fee or fine.

#### SECTION 27. Budgets and appropriations.

(1) The Executive Committee shall cause to be introduced into the Council in respect of each financial year -

- (a) a set of budget estimates of revenue and expenditure; and
- (b) an Appropriation Ordinance to make appropriations for expenditure, and may introduce additional supplementary estimates and Supplementary Appropriation Ordinances.

(2) Subject to any Local Government Administrative Memoranda issued under Section 41(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1980 in relation to the format of Ordinances and to any Local Government Financial Memoranda issued under Section 41(2) of that Act, Appropriation Ordinances and Supplementary Appropriation Ordinances shall follow the general form of Central Government Appropriation Bills and Supplementary Appropriation Bills under Article VIII, Section 6 and 8 of the Constitution of the Marshall Islands.

(3) Subject to any Local Government Financial Memoranda issued under Section 41(2) of the Local Government Act 1980, an Ordinance of the local government may make provision, in accordance with the principles of Article VIII, Section 7 and 9 of the Constitution of the Marshall Islands, for anticipated and re-programmed expenditure and a Contingencies Fund.

(4) Nothing in this section prevents appropriations for specific purposes being included in an Ordinance of the local government other than an Appropriation Ordinance or a Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance.

(5) Appropriations lapse at the end of the financial year to which they respectively relate, unless, in relation to any particular head of appropriation, an Ordinance of the local government provides otherwise.

SECTION 28. Loans

The Local Government shall not accept loans, grant charges against its future revenue, or incur indebtedness chargeable to future revenue otherwise than in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Act 1980.

SECTION 29. Accounts

(1) The Executive Committee shall cause to be kept full and proper accounts and records of revenue and expenditure of the local government, assets of or under the control of the local government and liabilities of the local government.

(2) The accounts and records shall comply with -

- (a) any Local Government Financial Memoranda issued under Section 41(2) of the Local Government Act 1980; and
- (b) subject to such memoranda, any directions of the Auditor-General; and
- (c) subject to such memoranda and directions, any Ordinance of the local government.

(3) The Executive Committee shall, as soon as practicable after the end of a financial year, lay before the Council accounts relating to all revenues and expenditures of the local government for that financial year, together with any report of the audit of the accounts under Section 32.

SECTION 30. Audit

(1) In addition to the audit provided for by Section 35 of the Local Government Act 1980, the Auditor-General or a person authorized by him may at any time audit the accounts and records of the local government, and any accounts laid or to be laid before the Council under Section 30(3).

(2) The Auditor-General or authorized person shall report to the Council and to the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters on the audit and shall, in his report, draw attention to any irregularities in the accounts and records, or in the accounts, as the case may be.

(3) For the purpose of an audit under subsection (1), the Auditor General or authorized person has the powers and rights referred to in Article VIII, Section 15 of the Constitution of the Marshall Islands.

SECTION 31. Financial

Subject to this Constitution, all persons concerned with the financial administration of the local government shall comply with any Local Government Financial Memoranda issued under Section 41(2) of the Local Government Act 1980.

PART VI. - STAFF

SECTION 32. Employment of staff

(1) The Mayor, on behalf of the local government, may appoint a Clerk of the local government, and such other officers and employees as he considers necessary for the effective operation of the local government.

(2) The local government is the employer of the Clerk and the other officers and employees.

(3) The terms and conditions of appointment and employment of the Clerk and the other officers and employees shall be determined by or under an Ordinance of the local government, and in the absence of such an Ordinance are, with the necessary modifications, those of members of the Public Service holding equivalent positions, for which purpose any reference in any Central government law to -

- (a) the Chief Secretary or a department head-shall be read as a reference to the Clerk; or
- (b) the Public Service Commission - shall be read as reference to the Executive Committee.

SECTION 33. Seconded, etc., public servants.

Subject to any arrangement made under Section 16(3) of the Local Government Act 1980, and to anything to the contrary in any Ordinance of the local government, a member of the Public Service who is seconded to the local government in accordance with that section, or whose services are made available to the local government in accordance with that section, shall be deemed to be an officer of the local government for the purposes of any Ordinance of the local government other than an Ordinance prescribing terms and conditions of employment by the local government.

PART VII - AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

SECTION 34. Method of amendment.

(1) This Constitution may be amended by Ordinance of the local government approved on two occasions by a two-thirds majority of the Council, provided that -

- (a) not less than 30 days, or such shorter period as is approved in any Ordinance on a special reason, by the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters, has elapsed between the first and second such occasion; and
- (b) before the second such occasion the Mayor has requested from that Minister and presented to the Council a report by the Attorney-General if received on the validity of the amendment.

(2) If the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters recommends to the local government amendments to this

Constitution, the Council shall consider those amendments, but need not adopt them, with or without modification.

PART VIII. - MISCELLANEOUS

SECTION 35. Central Government recommendations as to Ordinances, etc.

If the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters recommends to the local government that an ordinance be made, amended or repealed, the Mayor shall cause the recommendation to be presented to the Council together with the comments of the Executive Committee on it.

SECTION 36. Advice as to validity of Ordinance, etc.

(1) The Mayor may, and shall if so directed by the Council, request the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters for a report by the Attorney-General on the validity of an Ordinance or a proposed Ordinance of the local government, or of any action or proposed action by the local government.

(2) If the Minister furnishes a report as requested in accordance with Subsection (1), the Mayor shall present the report to the Council.

SECTION 37. Vacancies.

The validity of any thing done by the Council or the Executive Committee or subject to any Ordinance of the local government and to the Rules of Procedures of the Council, of a Committee of the Council is not affected by any vacancy in its membership, provided that the number necessary to form a quorum for a meeting remains.

SECTION 38. Service.

Where any document or thing is to be given to, served on or communicated to a local government at a time when -

- (a) there is a vacancy in the office of the Mayor or the Mayor is absent or incapacitated; and
- (b) there is no person appointed under section 16, it is sufficient if it is addressed to the Clerk of the local government.

SECTION 39. Effective date.

Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters.