

CONSTITUTION OF THE UJAE ATOLL
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PART I. PRELIMINARY

SECTION 1. Name of the local government.

The name of the local government is the Ujae Atoll Local Government.

SECTION 2. Local government area.

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

SECTION 3. Capitol

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

PART II. - WARDS

SECTION 4. Division of the local government area into wards.

In accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act 1980, the local government area is divided into the following wards, as more particularly described in Schedule 2, each electing the number of members of the council set out against its name: -

- (a) Ujae election ward, returning 6 members; and
- (b) Jabonwor election ward, returning 6 members.

PART III. - THE LEGISLATURE

SECTION 5. Establishment of the legislature.

A legislature, to be known as the Ujae Atoll 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 are vested in it.

SECTION 6. Membership and elections.

- (1) The Council shall consist of 13 members, being:

qualifications:

- (a) be a resident of Ujae Atoll; and
- (b) have land rights in Ujae Atoll; and
- (c) be a voter in the election ward from which he is seeking election.

(2) The qualifications for the iroi j seat referred to in Section 6(1)(b) is recognition pursuant to customary law and traditional practice that the person has iroi j rights.

SECTION 8. Term of office.

(1) The term of office as a member referred to in Section 6(1)(a) shall be four years; and

- (a) commences on the day after his election is announced; and
- (b) terminates on the day before the next general election to the council.

(2) The term of office for the iroi j member referred to in Section 6(1)(b) shall be four years; and

- (a) commences upon announcement of his selection; and
- (b) terminates on the day before the next general election for the other Council members.

SECTION 9. Vacation of seats.

(1) The seat of a member of the Council becomes vacant if, and only if -

- (a) his term of office terminates in accordance with Section 8; or
- (b) he ceases to possess the qualifications for election that he was required, under Section 7, to have at the time of his election or appointment; or
- (c) he dies; or
- (d) he resigns his seat by notice in writing to the local government; or
- (e) he is removed from office under Subsection (2).

(2) The Council may, by the affirmative vote of not less than 3/4 of the total membership of the Council, remove a member from office, for cause.

SECTION 10. Casual vacancies.

(1) If the seat of a member of the Council referred to in Section 6(1)(a) becomes vacant otherwise than by the termination of his term of office in accordance with Section 8, the vacancy shall be filled as soon as practicable by a special election in the ward or area that he represented.

SECTION 11. 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 an election...

(7) The Mayor shall preside at all meetings of the Council at which he is present and, subject to Section 18 and to the Rules of Procedure of the Council, in 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 no question shall be decided on an evenly-divided vote.

SECTION 12. 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 Ujae local government, the Council may regulate its own meetings and its works.

SECTION 13. 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 IV. - THE HEAD OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SECTION 14. Office of the head of the local government.

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

SECTION 15. Qualifications.

The Mayor must be a member of the Council who is 25 years of age or more.

SECTION 16. Election

(1) The Mayor shall be elected by the Council by the affirmative vote of majority of the total number of the membership of the Council.

(2) If on a ballot no member receives the votes of a majority of the total number of the membership of the Council, the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes (or if there be more than one such candidate, one of them selected by lot) shall be excluded and a fresh ballot taken, and so on until one candidate has received the votes of a majority of the total number of the membership.

(3) If at the end of that procedure no candidate has received a majority of the total membership of the Council, the election is void and a fresh election shall be held on the next sitting day of the Council, and so on until a member is elected Mayor.

SECTION 17. Vacation of office.

(1) The office of the Mayor becomes vacant if, and only if -

(a) his seat in the Council becomes vacant under Section 18.

SECTION 18. 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 the member accordingly.

SECTION 19. Functions of the head of the Ujae 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, a Central Government law or the Rules of Procedure of the local government.

PART V. - THE EXECUTIVE

SECTION 20. Establishment of the executive.

(1) An executive committee of the Ujae Atoll 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 Ujae local government.

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

SECTION 21. Composition.

(1) The Executive Committee shall consist of -

- (a) the Mayor; and
- (b) five members of the Council appointed by the Mayor in writing with the approval of the Council, to be known as Executive Members.

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

SECTION 22. Vacation of office.

(1) The office of the Mayor becomes vacant in accordance with Section 17.

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

- (a) his seat in the Council becomes vacant under Section 9; or
- (b) the office of the Mayor becomes vacant under Section 17; or
- (c) he is dismissed from office under Subsection (3); or
- (d) he resigns his office by notice in writing to the Mayor.

(3) The Mayor may at any time, with cause, dismiss an Executive Member from office.

(4) If the office of the Mayor becomes vacant otherwise than by reason of his dismissal under Section 17(2), the Executive Members shall continue to perform their

- (b) appoint a member of the Council to act as an Executive Member, or both, during the absence or incapacity.

SECTION 24. Allocation of responsibilities to Executive Members.

(1) Subject to this Constitution, any Ordinance of the Ujae Council and 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 responsibility for the administration of Ordinances of the Ujae local government).

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

(3) Nothing in this section affects the collective responsibility of the Executive Committee under Section 20(2).

SECTION 25. 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 26. Advice to the Council, etc., or 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 23(b); or
- (c) the appointment by him of a member of the Executive Committee to perform the functions of the Mayor under Section 18(1); or
- (d) the allocation under Section 24(1) of responsibilities to Executive Members and the appointment under Section 23(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 functions of the Mayor under Section 18(1).

(3) The Clerk of the Ujae local government shall promptly notify the Council and the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters of the resignation of the Mayor under Section 17(1)(c), or of the dismissal of the Mayor under Section 17(2).

PART VI. - FINANCE

SECTION 27. 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.

shall make recommendations to the Council for the raising of taxes and other revenue, 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 29. 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, Sections 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.

- (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 32. 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 31(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 19 of the Constitution of the Marshall Islands.

SECTION 33. Financial Memoranda.

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 VII. - STAFF

SECTION 34. 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

SECTION 36. Method of Amendment.

(1) This Constitution may be amended by Ordinance of the local government approved by a two-thirds majority of the total membership of the council and ratified by referendum of all eligible voters in the local government area, provided that before the referendum the Mayor has obtained from the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters and presented to the council a report by the attorney general 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.

SECTION 37. 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 38. 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 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 39. 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 Procedure 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 40. 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 18, it is sufficient if it is addressed to the local government.

SECTION 41. Effective date.

This Constitution shall be effective on a date fixed by the Minister of the Government of the Marshall Islands responsible for local government matters.