

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur



MUNICIPALITY OF CANTILAN

OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG BAYAN

11 May 2026

THE HONORABLE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN MEMBERS

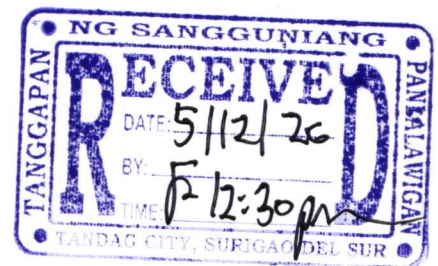
Tanggapan ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan
Tandag City

THRU: EDGAR G. PEREZ II, J.D.

Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan
Province of Surigao del Sur

Dear Hon. Members,

Greetings!



Submitting herewith are the copies of **ORDINANCE NO.07-2026** entitled; **“AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING THE CELEBRATION OF THE SIRONG FESTIVAL AS THE OFFICIAL ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF CANTILAN, PROMOTING MULTI-SECTORAL COORDINATION, SYNERGY, AND TRANSPARENCY IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”** for your review and confirmation.

Thank you and God Bless.

Respectfully yours,


ANDREW G. HUELMA, J.D.
Secretary to the Sanggunian

e. **NEMSU** - Northern Mindanao State University-Cantilan Campus

f. **Sirong Festival** - A week-long celebration of the rich culture and heritage of the municipality of Cantilan, held in honor of the Feast of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Cantilan's Patron Saint. It serves as an annual expression of thanksgiving and faith renewal, showcased through parades, dances, music, and diverse cultural performances and presentations.

g. **Sirong Street Dancing and Showdown** - A mardi gras-style cultural competition and the main highlight of the Sirong Festival. It features contingents from various barangays, schools, organizations, and invited municipalities or cities, performing vibrant street dances and theatrical presentations that depict the Christian-Moro conflict and the early Cantilangnons' defense of their faith, now re-imagined as a festive celebration of unity, resilience, and peace through dance, music, and performance.

h. **SMCCI** - Saint Michael College of Cantilan, Inc.

i. **Sustainability Community** - The collective system composed of the Sirong Festival Council (SFC), Executive Committee (ExeCom), and Technical Working Group (TWG), tasked to maintain continuity, documentation, research, and innovation of the festival.

j. **Research-Based Development** - The use of academic and community-based research to guide the documentation, enhancement, and innovation of the Sirong Festival, ensuring that it remains culturally accurate, inclusive, and meaningful.

k. **United Bardugs International Association of Cantilan (UBIAC), Inc.** - A duly organized and SEC-registered socio-civic organization of Cantilan recognized as the lead local and pioneering advocate of the Sirong Festival and a key partner in its preservation, promotion, and sustainability.

SECTION 4. OFFICIAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL. - The Sirong Festival is hereby declared as the Official Cultural Festival of the Municipality of Cantilan, to be celebrated **every second week of August** annually, unless otherwise modified by the Sirong Festival Council (SFC) for valid and meritorious reasons.

SECTION 5. MANDATORY FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES. - The Sirong Festival shall be celebrated as a **week-long cultural, historical, and community celebration** harmonized with the annual festival theme and guided by the values of faith, unity, and cultural pride.

The official festival activities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. **Opening Celebration and Cultural Program** - The formal opening rites of the Sirong Festival, featuring the presentation of the annual theme, cultural performances and recognition of outstanding heritage champions and advocates.

2. **Sirong Festival Street Parade and Grand Showdown** - The main highlight of the celebration, showcasing vibrant street dancing and a grand showdown that reenacts the valiant efforts of early Cantilangnons in defending their town from Moro raiders.

The Sirong Festival uniquely combines two fundamental elements: **eskrima** - dramatized hand-to-hand combat between early Christian settlers and Moro raiders and **alabacion** - a devotional soliloquy performed by dancers in honor of the Immaculate Conception.

3. **Sirong Festival Queen Pageant**- A cultural pageant promoting advocacy, grace, leadership, and cultural intelligence among the youth.

4. **Sirong Street Fair (Night Cafe)** - A lively street market featuring local crafts,

WHEREAS, there is a need to institutionalize the Sirong Festival to ensure its sustainability, cultural integrity, and protection from undue political or electoral influence;

WHEREAS, the United Bardugs International Association of Cantilan (UBIAC), Inc., a duly organized and SEC-registered socio-civic organization, has been the pioneering and forefront local advocate of the Sirong Festival, instrumental in its revival, promotion, and sustained celebration since 1986;

WHEREAS, consistent with the same Code, local government units are likewise mandated to cooperate with civil society organizations, peoples's organizations, business groups, the academe, and national government agencies through various mechanisms and capacity-building programs aimed at fostering transparent, participatory, and inclusive governance, leveraging the expertise and resources of all sectors to achieve shared development goals;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Sangguniang Bayan of Cantilan, Surigao del Sur, in session duly assembled, that:

SECTION 1. TITLE - This Ordinance shall be known as the "Sirong Festival Ordinance of Cantilan."

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY It is hereby declared the policy of the Municipality of to:

- a) Preserve and promote the Sirong Festival as the official expression of Cantilan's cultural and historical identity;
- b) Recognize and strengthen the partnership of the Municipality with the United Bardugs International Association of Cantilan (UBIAC), Inc. as the lead local and pioneering advocate of the Sirong Festival;
- c) Safeguard the festival from political or partisan interference.
- d) Institutionalize sustainable and participatory systems ensuring the continuity of celebration beyond changes in political leadership;
- e) Integrate academic research, documentation, and innovation in the festival's continuing development and cultural authenticity; and
- f) Promote cultural tourism consistent with environmental protection, community participation, and economic inclusivity.

SECTION 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS. - For purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms are defined as follows:

- a. **Academe** - Refers to educational institutions in Cantilan, both public and private, including local colleges or partner universities, that engage in research, cultural studies, and community outreach related to the festival.
- b. **CSC-SMCCI** - Cantilan Studies Center - Saint Michael College of Cantilan, Inc.
- c. **Dep-Ed** - Department of Education
- d. **Institutionalization** - The process of establishing a permanent and sustainable framework that ensures annual celebration, proper management, and protection of the festival from political or administrative disruptions.

delicacies, and products. The fair serves as a venue for artisans, entrepreneurs, artists, and food vendors to showcase and promote their creations and cuisine.

5. Traditional Music and Folk Concert - An open-air concert highlighting traditional instruments, local bands, original compositions, and performances that celebrate Cantilan's rich musical heritage.

6. Cultural Heritage Competition - A series of contests in visual arts, indigenous crafts, literature, traditional games, and culinary arts that reflect Cantilan's cultural identity and history.

7. Cultural Workshop Series - Week-long training sessions and workshops on traditional dance, costume design, storytelling, and cultural research to enhance local creative skills and appreciation of heritage.

8. Heritage and Arts Exhibit- An exhibit showcasing artifacts, historical photographs, costumes, and visual artworks depicting the evolution of the Sirong tradition and Cantilan's cultural journey.

9. Sports and Wellness Fest - Friendly sports tournaments and wellness activities fostering unity, camaraderie, and physical fitness among participating communities.

10. Cultural Film Festival and Eco-Tour- Screenings of heritage-themed films and guided eco-cultural tours highlighting Cantilan's natural wonders and historical landmarks:

11. Youth Talent and Performing Arts Showcase - A platform for young Cantilangnons to express their creativity and talents in music, theater, and dance.

12. Cultural Dance Showdown - An inter-barangay or institutional dance competition interpreting the annual Sirong Festival theme, emphasizing creativity, faith, and community pride.

13. Community Service and Solidarity Day - A day dedicated to volunteerism, environmental conservation, and outreach programs reflecting the festival's spirit of faith in action and communal solidarity.

14. Grand Fireworks and Thanksgiving Night - The culminating celebration expressing collective gratitude, joy, and unity among the people of Cantilan, marking the close of the Sirong Festival.

Provided, That to ensure harmony with the annual theme and sustainability framework, the **Sirong Festival Council (SFC)**, upon the recommendation of the **Executive Committee (ExeCom)** and in consultation with the **Technical Working Group (TWG)**, may consider the inclusion, modification, or enhancement of activities deemed relevant to the cultural, historical, environmental, and socio-economic objectives of the festival

SECTION 6. CREATION OF THE SIRONG FESTIVAL COUNCIL (SFC). - There is hereby created a Sirong Festival Council (SFC) as the policy-making and oversight body responsible for the institutionalization, sustainability, and development of the *Sirong Festival*

- Chairperson** : Municipal Mayor or his / her duly authorized representative.
- Vice- Chairpersons:** Chairperson, SB committee on Tourism and Cultural Affairs.
: President, United Bardugs International Assoc. of Cantilan, Inc.
- Members** : IPMR Representative
: Municipal Tourism Officer (Secretariat)

- : Representatives from Academe (DepEd, SMC, SMCCI, and NEMSU)
- : Representative from the Federation of Civil Society Organization
- : President of the Cantilan Women's Club (a century-old organization and oldest organization of women in the Philippines)
- : Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator
- : Municipal Budget Officer
- : Municipal Treasurer
- : Municipal Accountant
- : Representative from the Business Community
- : Faith-based/Religious Sector Representative
- : ABC President
- : SK Federation President

SECTION 7. CREATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (ExeCom). - The Sirong Festival Executive Committee (ExeCom) shall serve as the implementation arm of the SFC. It shall execute approved plans, oversee event logistics, coordinate subcommittees, and ensure adherence to sustainability and non-partisan standards.

Composition:

- Municipal Tourism Officer - Chairperson
- Representative from the United Bardugs International Association of Cantilan, Inc. Co-Chairperson
- Cultural Affairs Officer (or equivalent) - member
- Representatives from the Academe, Performing Groups, Private Sector, and Civic Organizations - Members

SECTION 8. CREATION OF THE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG). - A Sirong Festival Technical Working Group (TWG) is hereby constituted to provide research, documentation, and technical support to the SFC and ExeCom.

The TWG shall:

- a. Conduct research and documentation on the history, cultural symbols, rituals, and evolution of the Sirong tradition;
- b. Develop a Sirong Cultural Research and Development Framework in collaboration with academic institutions;
- c. Maintain a digital and physical archive of festival materials, music, costumes, and choreographic Interpretations;
- d. Provide technical guidance on heritage authenticity, environmental management, and inclusivity and
- e. Submit annual policy and research recommendations to the SFC.

Composition:

- Representative from Local Colleges/Universities - Chair
- Municipal Tourism Officer- Co-Chair
- DepEd Cultural Coordinator - Member
- Local Historian/Researcher- Member



- Artist's Guild Representative - Member
- Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer - Member

SECTION 9. ROLE OF THE ACADEME, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT. - The academe shall serve as the the Municipality's **research and development partner** in ensuring that the *Sirong Festival* remains authentic, historically grounded, and responsive to contemporary cultural dynamics.

They shall:

- Conduct continuous cultural mapping, oral history collection, and ethnographic studies;
- Document festival outcomes and propose innovations;
- Publish academic outputs that enrich public understanding of *Sirong* traditions; and
- Engage students and faculty in community-based projects related to the festival.

SECTION 10. FUNDING AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION. - An annual allocation shall be included in the **Municipal Annual Budget** under the Tourism and Cultural Affairs Program to support festival implementation.

The SFC may also seek **external funding, grants, and sponsorships**, provided these comply with government accounting and auditing rules and remain non-partisan in nature.

SECTION 11. POLITICAL NON-INTERFERENCE. - To preserve the non-partisan and cultural nature of the festival:

- No elected official or political entity shall claim ownership, credit, or publicity advantage in relation to the festival;
- The names or images of incumbent officials shall not appear on official festival materials, stages, or streamers; and
- All official communications shall bear only the **Municipal Seal and the Official Sirong Festival Logo**.

SECTION 12. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND CONTINUITY. - The Committee on Tourism and Culture of the Sangguniang Bayan, in the exercise of its oversight function, shall monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Ordinance annually.

The SFC shall submit an **Annual Festival Report** to the Sangguniang Bayan, including financial statements, research findings, and sustainability assessments.

SECTION 13. REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT BY THE SANGGUNANG BAYAN. - All policies, rules, regulations, and other official actions issued or adopted by the **Sirong Festival Council or Executive Committee** shall be subject to the review, confirmation, and oversight of the Sangguniang Bayan.

The Sangguniang Bayan shall ensure that such actions are consistent with existing laws, municipal ordinances, and policies, and that they promote the general welfare and cultural development of the Municipality of Cantilan.

This provision is in accordance with the legislative authority of the Sangguniang Bayan under Section 16 (General Welfare Clause) and other pertinent provisions of the Local Government Code.

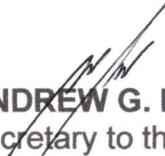
SECTION 14. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. If, for any reason, any provision, section or part of this Ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected, thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 15. REPEALING CLAUSE. All ordinances, resolutions, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE. This ordinance shall take effect fifteen (15) days after posting in conspicuous places within the Municipality and publication in a newspaper of local circulation.

ENACTED this 9th day of March 2026 at the Sangguniang Bayan Session Hall, Cantilan, Surigao del Sur.

I HEREBY ATTEST to the correctness of the foregoing ordinance that was duly enacted by the Sangguniang Bayan during its regular session held on the 9th day of March 2026.


ANDREW G. HUELMA, J.D.
Secretary to the Sanggunian


**ATTESTED AND CERTIFIED
TO BE DULY ENACTED:**


RODRIGO L. ELEAZAR
Municipal Vice Mayor/Presiding Officer

APPROVED: _____


PHILIP A. PICHAY
Municipal Mayor