

# STRATHAM RECREATION COMMISSION

*Revisions Adopted, 12/2/20*

## CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS



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## BASIC BELIEFS

Shall provide every resident, regardless of athletic or financial ability, an equal opportunity to participate in all programs sponsored by the Stratham Recreation Commission (SRC)

- Parental/adult involvement is essential to the success of each program.
- Programs will have specific goals that are appropriate for each age level and shall range from attitude development to skill acquisition.
- Programs will provide for growth and continuity (i.e. expectation of continued participation) through all age levels.
- Emphasis will be given to the promotion of strong recreation level programs, which will reach the most number of participants.
- Shall promote a wholesome environment that will help our youth learn positive sportsmanship values. Parents, coaches and recreation community members shall be held to the same standards.
- Guidelines for operation, evaluation, and modification shall be an integral part of each program.
- Competency of coaches and/or leaders will be enhanced however appropriate.
- Safety in every sense shall be of paramount importance in each program.

## RULES OF PROCEDURE

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Stratham Recreation Commission (hereafter referred to as the "SRC").

### ARTICLE II. AUTHORITY

These rules of procedure are adopted under the authority of New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, Chapter 35-B: 5.

### ARTICLE III. PURPOSES OF THE ORGANIZATION

To formulate policies, advise, recommend, promote, and maintain public recreation in the Town of Stratham in accordance with the laws governing public recreation in the State of New Hampshire.

1. To provide oversight to the Stratham Parks & Recreation Department (hereafter referred to as the "SPRD") in coordinating activities of a recreational nature in the

community and to obtain a maximum benefit for the citizens.

2. To conduct a public recreation program utilizing the local resources available in Stratham and our greater community.
3. To provide an adequate and balanced recreation program which meets the various needs and interests of every citizen.
4. To solicit the aid of existing organizations to accomplish these purposes.
5. To identify, develop and/or acquire additional programs or facilities that enhance the recreational offerings of the Town.
6. Other purposes consistent with RSA 35-8.

#### **ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP**

The SRC shall consist of no less than (5) and no more than (9) residents of Stratham who shall be appointed by the Stratham Select Board. Five members shall be voting members, there are four alternate positions on the SRC. Alternate members shall have voting privileges when a member of the voting body is not present. The Select Board Representative shall be a voting member of the SRC. Members shall be appointed for three-year terms. Vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority for the un-expired term. All members of the SRC shall serve without pay; however, they shall be reimbursed for approved out-of-pocket expenses.

#### **ARTICLE V. OFFICERS**

##### **Section 1 Members**

Annually the members of the SRC shall elect from its membership a Chair, Vice Chair,

Secretary and Treasurer to serve one year or until their successors are elected. A Stratham Recreation Commission member may serve as a non-voting member of a sub-committee of the Stratham Recreation Commission but may not serve as a liaison at the same time to that same Board. A new liaison will be appointed.

##### **Section 2 Replacing Members**

Any officer may be replaced at any time by a majority vote of the SRC members at an SRC meeting provided that the meeting notice specifies the proposed change. Alternates maybe utilized to replace members who are unable to attend meetings on a regular schedule. If members miss three meetings without an excuse, they are relieved of their duties as an SRC member. A letter of resignation will be requested of that member.

##### **Section 3 Chair Responsibilities**

The Chair shall officiate and preside over the SRC during its deliberations and shall see that the By-laws are properly enforced, and that the purposes of the Commission are accomplished. In addition, the Chair shall appoint committees as directed by the Commission and sign official documents on behalf of the Commission.

##### **Section 4 Vice Chair Responsibilities**

The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in the discharge of his/her duties, and in his/her absence shall preside over the meeting and assume all the responsibilities of the Chairs' office.

### **Section 5 Secretary Responsibilities**

The Secretary shall maintain a record of all meetings and decisions of the SRC and shall issue all notices of regular meetings of the Commission and special meetings called by the Chair. This position and these duties can be delegated by the Chair of the SRC to the staff of the Stratham Parks & Recreation Department.

### **Section 6 Select Board Representative**

The Select Board shall appoint a member of the Select Board to be an active voting member of the SRC. This member shall act as liaison between the SRC and the Stratham Select Board.

### **Section 7 Recreation Director**

The Recreation Director will attend all SRC meetings. The Recreation Director shall act as an advisor to the SRC and not be a voting member.

### **Section 8 Financial Responsibility**

The Stratham Recreation Commission shall maintain oversight of all financial matters related to the programs and events of the Stratham Parks and Recreation Department.

Oversight of the Recreation Revolving Account will be guided by NH RSA 35-B:2 and the Stratham Recreation Revolving Fund Policy and Procedure.

## **ARTICLE VI. Membership**

### **Section 1 Sports Board Chairperson**

The Stratham Recreation Commission gives the approval of designating the Sports Board Chairperson to the Stratham Parks and Recreation Director with oversight provided by the Commission.

### **Section 2 Sports Board Chairperson Responsibility**

The Sports Board Chairperson, in conjunction with a program board, members of which shall be presented by the Program Coordinator and approved by the SRC, are responsible for the day-to-day operations of each program. They shall work together to schedule and conduct all necessary meetings, team selections, and other items related to successfully carry out the program. All members of sports boards need to be residents of Stratham.

### **Section 3 Sport Board Chairperson Removal**

A Sports Board Chairperson may be removed if necessary by a majority vote of the SRC at any regular or special meeting of the SRC.

## **ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 Schedule**

The SRC shall meet at a minimum of once every two months. Meetings during the summer months of June, July, and August may be waived by a majority vote of the

Commission members present at the previous meeting. The regular meetings shall be held at the Stratham Municipal Center at a day and time to be announced. Notice of all regular meetings shall

be provided to each member at least 24 hours prior to each meeting. Public notice shall be provided per RSA 91-A:2.

All sports boards shall follow a meeting schedule that is appropriate for their sport and approved by the Director of the SP&RD, however, at a minimum, an annual meeting with public notice as per RSA 91-A:2 shall be followed.

### **Section 2 Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or two members of the SRC at any time deemed necessary or desirable, provided public notice and notice to each member is given at least twenty-four (24) hours, excluding Sundays and legal holidays, prior to the meetings.

### **Section 3 Quorum necessary**

At all meetings of the SRC, the presence of a majority of the Commission members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum. The action of a majority of the Commission members present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the official act of the Commission.

### **Section 4 Meeting Format**

General parliamentary rules, as given in Robert Rules of Order, and as modified by the rules and regulations adopted by the Commission, shall be observed in conducting meetings.

The order of business for regular and special meetings shall be as follows:

Call to order

Roll call

Consideration of minutes of previous meeting

Treasures Report

Report of Stratham Parks & Recreation Director

Communications and Miscellaneous

Old Business

New Business

Adjournment

The Rules of Order may be suspended, and any matters considered or postponed, by action of the Stratham Recreation Commission.

## **ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES**

The SRC shall appoint standing and/or special committees as necessary or required.

## **ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS**

These rules of procedure may be amended at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the entire SRC. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing and read to the SRC at the regular meeting the month before being voted upon. Any amendment shall take effect on the next day following enactment unless otherwise specified in the amendment.

## **ARTICLE X RECORDS**

The records of the Commission shall be kept by the Town Administrator or their designee and made available for public inspection in accordance with RSA 91-A:4. Minutes of the meeting shall be posted on the Town of Stratham website. Minutes in draft form or an outline of the meeting discussion points shall be posted within 48 hours of meeting.

## **ARTICLE XI FINANCE AND BUDGET**

### **Section 1 Annual Budget**

The operating costs of programs sponsored by the SRC shall be met primarily through annual contributions from the Town of Stratham, and may be supplemented by participant fees and fundraising. Funds raised through program fees, donations and fundraising will be deposited into the Recreation Revolving Fund under RSA 35-B.

### **Section 2 Sports Boards Budget**

Treasurers for the Sports Boards shall submit a budget three months prior to the start of each sport season; the Sports Boards shall review their proposed budgets for final approval with the Program Coordinator. This shall be done prior to registration opening for the upcoming season.

### **Section 3 Town Budget**

The SPRD Director shall be designated by the Commission to present to the Stratham Select Board the SPRD operating budget request for the coming year as well as the Capital Improvement Budget; said request shall be prepared in time so as to be included in the Annual Town Report.

## **PROGRAM POLICIES**

In accordance with the Basic Beliefs as stated in the introduction to the Constitution and By-laws, each Program will have developed policies which are to be incorporated in a Program Manual. The manual will provide information and guidance to program personnel, participants, parents and any other interested citizens.

The following items must be appropriately developed in the stated policies of each program:

1. Safety for participants, program personnel and spectators.
2. Program personnel -selection and qualification, duties, conduct, and participation in training sessions.
3. Objectives for program development, which will encompass:
  - a. Skill and attitude goals for each age level.
  - b. Equal opportunity for participation.
  - c. Program growth and continuity through the highest age level.
  - d. Promotion of maximum participation in all programs.
4. Program reviews which outline a representative procedure for community input.
5. Grievance Procedure that allows any issue to be reviewed formally.

6. Meetings and/or other means, which permit program personnel, parents  
(and others as appropriate) to share and resolve concerns.

## **PROGRAM ORGANIZATION**

### **(1) Minimum Interest for SRC Sponsorship**

Program Volunteers set guidelines outlining interest and commitment necessary to run a particular program in a particular age group, gender, or level (recreation or travel). The season of the program must be clearly outlined, start and end day of the season must be published at the time of registration. This may be important at the travel level if interest has increased or decreased and coordinators must decide SRC commitments to travel leagues. In such cases, coordinators must notify prospective players and their parents of said guidelines.

### **(2) Program Policies by Sport**

Program Volunteers of the various sports shall make available a program manual for coaches, parents, and players of that sport. The program manual will contain specific policies pertinent to that sport as well as any adaptations of playing rules. No policies may be contrary to general SRC policies as outlined in this manual. Such manuals may also include rules for player's behavior, descriptions of positions for parent volunteers, schedules, maps, rosters, or other pertinent information.

### **(3) Affirmative Action**

The SRC is committed to the goals and philosophy of affirmative action and equal opportunity for all.

### **(4) Registration**

Registration should be done using the current registration format approved by the Parks and Recreation Department. The Program Coordinator will create the individual age groups/ categories for each season. Individual activities may use additional forms or request additional information as necessary (i.e. tournaments).

### **(5) Travel Teams -Levels of Play**

Program Volunteers, in consultation with parents, coaches, and their respective boards, will decide on levels of play for travel teams in that sport. Such decisions will include league affiliations

If interest indicates that more than one travel team in a given age level could be formed, the Program Coordinator and board should consider whether qualified coaches and fields are available, and what impact the formation of an additional team will have on the existing recreational level program.

If a second team is formed they must also decide whether to enter teams of equal strength or teams divided by talent levels (e.g. A-B). Such decisions should consider both the rules of respective leagues and opportunities for meaningful competition for each team. Thus a "B" team should not be forced to play against a preponderance of "A" competitions, or be entered in a league where there is little chance of success.

## **(6) Program Evaluations**

Program Volunteers are expected to submit to the SRC an annual evaluation of their sport program. Such an evaluation should include input from involved coaches. The Sports Board Chairperson, or their designee, may also seek input from players and parents. Evaluations should consider the following:

- a. participating number of players; their age, and gender; number of teams; levels of play; number of games.
- b. coaching education programs
- c. fields/facilities particular improvement/problems in scheduling or maintenance
- d. sports medicine -injuries reported, emergency procedures developed or altered.
- e. equipment -changes in inventory, purchasing activities.
- f. special problems/recommendations.

## **PARTICIPATION**

### **(1) Basic Philosophy**

As outlined in the constitution, the SRC exists to provide recreational programs as a developmental medium for local youth. All decisions about team operations must stem from the objectives of physical, social, psychological, and moral development.

### **(2) Opportunity to Participate**

Whether on a recreation or travel team, every player must have the opportunity to practice and to play on an “equitable” basis with other players during every game. The SRC shall define Equitable as follows:

- a. Players participating on recreational level teams must participate in each game, and play a reasonable amount of the total amount of playing time available, with a reasonable amount of time as defined by their sport to mean innings, time played, etc.
- b. Players participating on travel teams shall play a sufficient amount of time so as to continue the meaningful development of their skills. Zero minutes or innings played in any game is not allowed. Special exceptions may be made when league; tournament, or national rules (e.g. ASA limited substitution rules) come into play.
- c. Coaches who do not adhere to this rule shall be subject to review by the SRC.

Coaches may, however, adjust playing times for both recreational and travel participants in the following cases:

- a) Player has consistently missed practices or games without contacting the coach

in advance to discuss the absence.

b) Player has been disruptive or unsportsmanlike in practices or games.

c) Players physical condition warrants less playing time

In all such cases, coaches should discuss the reasons for reduced playing time with affected players and their parents.

### **(3) Participation in Travel and Tournament Play**

The SRC strives to provide travel team opportunities for all players willing to make the commitment to the more rigorous practice, game and travel schedule. Program Volunteers should make every attempt to meet this objective. The following situations however, may preclude travel or tournament participation for all players.

a) The Program Coordinator, in consultation with their board, coaches and parents, decides that a player is not capable of playing safely at the available levels of travel or tournament competition.

b) The number of interested players exceeds the maximum number allowed under league or tournament rules. (In this case, player selection must be made as outlined in “Try-out” section below), When interest allows, coordinators and coaches shall include the maximum number of players allowed by league rules on their rosters. Players precluded from travel or tournament play must be placed in a suitable recreational program, unless an unsafe condition exists.

c) SRC sponsored travel teams may begin at the 3rd grade level. Age groups below this level may not participate in tournaments external to the program.

### **(4) Rotation of Positions**

In keeping with a developmental philosophy, coaches should strive to rotate players through different positions during the course of the season. Issues of safety or ability (e.g. baseball-softball pitching) may prevent rotation of all players through all positions, but coaches should rotate as much as possible.

### **(5) “Playing up” in Age Group**

Players shall not be allowed to “play up” in an older age group. On recreation level teams players shall play within their school grade or age groupings as defined by their sport. On a travel level team, a player must meet the age criteria for that team.

### **(6) Out of Town Players**

Out of town players will be allowed to participate in SRC sponsored programs on a space available basis when recreation programming is not provided in athletes' town of residence.

## TEAM SELECTION AND OPERATIONS

### (1) Definitions

- a) Recreation level teams shall be comprised of all children willing to participate in that sport, with talent equally distributed across all teams.
- b) Travel level teams shall be comprised of members selected, if necessary, by tryouts. Inclusion shall be based on talent, attitude, and commitment.

### (2) Tryouts, Talent Distribution, and Feedback

Recreation level -Program Volunteers and their boards shall develop a system to distribute talent equally across all teams.

Travel level -In any case where either 1) some players will be cut from travel, or 2) more than one team will be created, and at different levels of play (e.g. "A", "8", etc.) the following procedures must be followed:

-the Coordinator and/or the coaches should notify prospective players of tryouts at least two weeks in advance. Notification must be done through email notifications and social media posts.

-the Coordinator and coaches may devise the selection procedures and criteria they deem most appropriate. They are encouraged however, to use "neutral" judges whenever possible.

-Coordinators are encouraged to outline travel team assessment and selection systems in their program manuals.

### (3) Team Evaluations

Coordinators should have coaches evaluate their team and season. Such evaluations may be done orally or in writing. Coaches and Coordinators should seek the input of both parents and players in developing their evaluations. Reports may include the following:

- a) Number, sex, and residency of the players
- b) Players development (successes and failures).
- c) Successes or problems associated with equipment or facilities
- d) Any injuries that may have occurred during practices or games
- e) Quality of assistance from other coaches involved with the team
- f) Relations with parents (complaints, assistance)
- g) Identification of how the SRC may help in aiding the team's objectives for the next season.

## COACHING APPOINTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

### (1) Selection

(a) The Program Volunteers with the advice and assistance of their board shall have complete authority to appoint coaches for their sport, subject to any league or governing body requirements regarding coach certification.

(b) All SRC coaches should be at least twenty-one (21) years old. Coordinators may consider using younger coaches as assistant coaches or as head coaches working under direct adult supervision.

(c) In the event that the number of interested coaches exceeds the number of available positions, coordinators should assign head coaching positions on the basis of: service to the SRC, overall experience coaching the sport (including levels of certification or additional outside clinics or advanced seminars successfully completed), coordinators evaluations, and recommendations from others. Coordinators should then consider assigning the remainder as assistant coaches, with input from the head coaches already assigned.

(d) All coaches and assistant coaches must complete an annual background screening. Details of the criteria and process can be found on the Town of Stratham website.  
*Effective April 9th, 2014.*

### (2) Education

Each Program Volunteer in conjunction with their respective boards shall develop an education program for their coaches. Travel team coaches shall be encouraged to obtain more advanced levels of certification as they progress through older age groups in their sport.

### (3) SRC Training

The SRC shall provide copies of all pertinent SRC rules and regulations, and/or any changes thereto, to each sports board for distribution to all new and returning coaches on an annual basis as required.

### (4) Evaluation

All Sports Board Chairperson are encouraged to develop a system whereby they can regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their coaches. Such evaluations should be organized and implemented in a spirit of developing better coaches to meet the objectives of the SRC. Therefore, coordinators are encouraged to provide as much positive and constructive feedback as possible to coaches. Suggested areas of evaluation include:

- i. Technical knowledge of the sport
- ii. Organization of practices
- iii. Interaction with players, fellow coaches, officials, and parents
- iv. Administrative performance (e.g. equipment, scheduling)

## **PARENTS, TEAM & SRC RELATIONS**

### **(1) Parent Responsibilities**

Parents are urged to participate in SRC operations. The volunteer nature of the SRC makes parent involvement necessary. Parents are expected to work with the SRC in fostering responsibility and commitment among the players. This includes:

- i. Communicating with coaches about absences from practices or games
- ii. Adhering to league and team rules.
- iii. Traveling safely to practices and games.

### **(3) Transportation**

Parents are responsible for their child's transportation. It is especially important that parents be on time to pick up their child after a practice or game. SRC coaches responsibilities DO NOT include supervision before or after designated times for practices or games. However, coaches should not leave the facility until all the children have been picked up by their parents or responsible persons. Parents should set up their own car pools.

### **(4) Grievance Procedure**

Each coordinator must operate a grievance procedure whereby players or parents may seek resolution of disputes with other participants, parents, or SRC personnel. The approved chain of resolution is as follows:

- 1st -Coach
- 2<sup>nd</sup> -Appropriate sports board/ Stratham Parks and Recreation Department
- 3rd- Stratham Recreation Commission

It is hoped that grievances can be resolved at the level of coach or sports board. Parents should follow the sequence of appeals as outlined above. The SRC board is the final level of appeal for any grievance.

## **SPORTS MEDICINE**

### **(1) First Aid seminar and First Aid Kits**

Each sports program shall make efforts to provide a first aid seminar at the beginning of the season for all participating coaches. It is strongly recommended that each participating coach attend. All coaches shall have access to a first aid kit at every practice and game. The contents of the kit shall be replenished as required by the Program Coordinator when requested by the coach. Each kit shall be restocked at the beginning of each season.

### **(2) Emergency Procedures**

The SRC shall provide a written document to each coach at the beginning of the season, which outlines in detail, procedures to follow in the event of a medical emergency at

practices or games.

### **(3) Liability Waiver**

Parents/Guardians of children participating on SRC programs shall complete a liability waiver at the time of registration. The waiver shall release the SRC of any responsibility for accidents that are involved with children participating on sports teams. Children will not be allowed to actively take part in practices or games until the liability waiver has been completed by the parent/guardian.

### **4) Injury Report**

Coaches shall report all injuries suffered by a child at any practice or game as soon as possible to the child's parent/guardian. Injuries requiring administration of first aid shall be noted in a written report to the Program Coordinator, along with an explanation of what steps were taken to care for the child. All injuries requiring attention by a medical professional shall be reported to the Parks and Recreation office within 24 hours.

### **(5) Substance Abuse Policies**

The presence or use of behavior affecting substances at SRC sponsored youth sporting activities is strictly prohibited except as prescribed by a doctor. Behavior affecting substances include alcohol, marijuana, and other controlled drugs.

- (a) Upon reasonable evidence of drugs or alcohol use, the coach, coordinator, or other responsible person at the event shall remove the affected participant and notify the parent/guardian at the first opportunity.
- (b) A report shall be made to the SRC at the next Commission meeting.
- (c) Repeated offenses may result in prohibition of further participation of the affected individual in any SRC sponsored activities.

**THIS DOCUMENT SHALL TAKE EFFECT ON December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020**