

The North Harford Recreation Council By-Laws – Adopted 3-18-26

Article I	Identification
Article II	Purpose
Article III	Membership
Article IV	Dues and Fees
Article V	Meetings
Article VI	Qualifications for Holding Office
Article VII	Governing Body
Article VIII	Duties of Officers
Article IX	Program Chairperson Qualifications and Duties
Article X	Eligibility for Program Participation
Article XI	Committees
Article XII	Use of Facilities and Grounds
Article XIII	Financial Policies
Article XIV	Nomination of Board Members
Article XV	Elections
Article XVI	Parliamentary Authority
Article XVII	Legal Counsel
Article XVIII	Amendments
Article XXIV	Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

Article I – Identification

Section 1 - The name of this organization shall be called the North Harford Recreation Council, hereafter referred to as the NHRC.

Article II – Purpose

- Section 1 -** The purpose of the council is to:
- a. Formulate policies, advice, recommend, promote and maintain public recreation activities in the council area in cooperation with the Harford County Department of Parks & Recreation; hereafter referred to as P&R, in accordance with the laws and agreements governing public recreation and parks in Harford County and the State of MD.
 - b. Offer leadership in coordinating and correlating all recreational activities of a similar nature in the council area to obtain the maximum benefit for the citizens of this area.
 - c. Conduct a public recreation program for the residents within the council area through use of the physical properties available in that area.
 - d. Recommend to the P&R immediate and future developments required to administer the recreational needs in the council area.

Article III – Membership

- Section 1 -** Membership in this organization shall be open to everyone.
- Section 2 -** Membership may be obtained by attending any general membership meeting and membership affords the opportunity to speak on council issues.
- Section 3 -** Voting privileges are granted to recognized Program Chairpersons, Program Co-Chairpersons (one (1) vote per program), and the Board of Directors.
- Section 4 -** Credit for attendance at a council meeting is attained by signing the attendance roster and remaining present during the majority of the council business meeting. The presiding officer of the meeting prior to adjournment makes the determination on credited attendance.

Article IV Dues and Fees

- Section 1 -** There shall be no dues for membership.
- Section 2 -** Registration fees shall be established for program participation, with a goal towards each program being self-supporting. The program must be self-supporting within 2 years of establishment or the board can abolish the program.
- Section 3 -** Program registration fees will be established on an individual program basis.

- Section 4 -** An additional fee may be required for a person participating in a travel program. The exact amount is to be determined by the individual program and should reflect the expenses incurred by that travel program.
- Section 5-** A late registration fee may be charged at the discretion of the individual programs. This amount may not exceed 50% of the registration fee.
- Section 6-** A deposit may be required for uniforms and equipment issued. The program determines this amount. The deposit will be returned when the issued equipment and uniforms are returned.

Article V – Meetings

- Section 1-** The general membership meeting will be the 3RD Wednesday of each month excluding July and August throughout the entire year, unless otherwise directed. Meetings will be called to order at 6:00PM (unless otherwise advertised) and the first 30 minutes (six (6) – five (5) minute timeslots) of each meeting will be used to allow for open discussion from community members. Requests to speak at this time should be sent in advance to the Vice President via email correspondence. The general business of the council will be conducted starting at 6:30PM (unless otherwise advertised) or at the conclusion of the thirty (30) minute community input portion of the meeting.
- Section 2-** The order of business at these meetings must include:
- a. Call to order.
 - b. Introduction of guests/Community Input
 - c. Reading of the previous month’s minutes.
 - d. Report of the chairperson of the board.
 - e. Report of the president.
 - f. Correspondence.
 - g. Report of the treasurer.
 - h. Reports of standing committees.
 - i. Reports of temporary committees.
 - j. Report of the P&R community director.
 - k. Unfinished business.
 - l. New business.
 - m. Program reports.
 - n. Adjournment.
- Section 3-** The annual meeting shall be the May general membership meeting, unless otherwise directed.
- Section 4-** Special membership meetings may be called by the president or the vice-president in the absence of the president and community director at any time deemed desirable or necessary.
- Section 5-** For special membership meetings, the secretary will notify all voting members.
- Section 6-** For all general and special membership meetings, a quorum shall be at least 1/3 of all voting members.

- Section 7-** The board of directors of the NHRC will meet regularly on the 3RD Wednesday of each month excluding July and August throughout the entire year, unless otherwise directed, and at any other time called by the chairperson of the board.
- Section 8-** For special board meetings, the secretary will notify all directors.
- Section 9-** For all board of directors' meetings, a majority of the board shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 10-** Only members who meet the voting requirements stipulated in Article III, Section 3 shall vote on matters brought before a membership meeting. Passage will be by a simple majority.

Article VI – Qualifications for holding office

- Section 1-** Eligibility for election or appointment to an office, other than chairperson, shall be granted to any member of the NHRC who has had a least 1-year of involvement in a North Harford recreation program.
- Section 2-** No NHRC board member shall hold more than 1 office at any given time.

Article VII – Board of Directors of the NHRC

- Section 1-** The Board of Directors shall consist of a President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, and Program Chairperson Representative
- Section 2-** Together, these officers shall constitute the board of directors.
- Section 4-** The main business of the council shall be conducted by the board of directors and shall report to the membership.
- Section 5-** The board of directors shall be empowered to appoint and discharge any committee considered useful in conducting the affairs of the board.
- Section 6-** Vacancies in the board may be filled through appointment by the President of the board, if confirmed by a majority of the board in order to serve the remaining portion on an unexpected term. For eligibility see Article VI, section 1.
- Section 7-** Any member of the board of directors not attending 3 consecutive meetings without just cause may be removed from the board by a majority vote of the board.
- Section 8-** Upon leaving office, the board member shall turn over all council material to the secretary.

Article VIII – Duties of Officers

- Section 1-** The President shall:
- a. Preside at all general and special membership meetings.
 - b. Call these meetings to order at the appointed time and announce the business in its' proper order.
 - c. State all questions, and after putting them to a vote, announce the results of every vote before proceeding to the next business in order.
 - d. Attend the P&R president's recreation council meeting and report the results at the next general membership meeting.

- e. Maintain impartiality in assigning the floor to protect the rights of each member.
- f. Appoint program chairpersons, with confirmation by the board of directors, for vacancies that occur, or call and preside at the meeting of the program to elect the board of that program, if the recreation board deems it necessary.
- g. Provide council to program chairpersons and council officers, as required.
- i. The president or presiding officer shall cast his/her vote, but it will be used only to break a tie vote.

Section 2- The Vice-President shall:

- a. Serve as the general program chairperson in charge of all programs.
- b. Preside at all membership meetings in the absence of the president.
- c. Assist the president in any way necessary.
- d. Serve as president for the un-expired term, should the president vacate the office.
- e. Maintain the master delinquent equipment list and provide the list to chairpersons prior to program registration.

Section 3- The Secretary shall:

- a. Record the minutes of all general and special membership meetings.
- b. Provide copies of these minutes to the board of directors and to P&R before the next meeting.
- c. Record the minutes of all regular and special meetings of the board of directors.
- d. Maintain records of all membership and board of directors' meetings and final program reports.
- e. Maintain the official register or roll of members and their attendance at all membership and board meetings.
- f. Carry on all correspondence as directed.
- g. Notify all voting members of special membership meetings.
- h. Notify all board members of special board meetings.
- i. Furnish committees with all correspondence referred to them.
- j. Furnish board members with additional notice of special actions voted at the previous board meeting.

Section 4- The Treasurer shall:

- a. Maintain and preserve accounts of all financial transactions of the council through a double-entry bookkeeping system consisting of a journal and individual program accounts.
- b. Collect, deposit, and upon proper authorization, disburse funds by check only, while maintaining a fiscal record of receipts supporting all disbursements. Programs will be given deposit tickets to deposit their own funds and shall furnish to the treasurer the copy of the deposit ticket and deposit form.
- c. Prepare and present at general membership meetings a written report of all income and expenses for each program covering the prior calendar month and the fiscal year to date to include the current program balance. This

report will be completed and available 3 days prior to the monthly recreation meeting.

- d. Administer all financial accounts of the council under one banking system.
- e. Obtain binding in an amount deemed necessary by the board of directors to protect council accounts.
- f. Submit the treasurer's books for annual audit (to be completed prior to installation of new officers) on June 3rd to a committee of a maximum of five (5), which will include the succeeding treasurer and president, the retiring treasurer and president, and one (1) qualified person who is not a voting member of the council.
- g. Be paid a fee to be determined by the general membership at the April meeting.
- h. The president must authorize any check that is written that will put a program into a negative balance; in the event the president is not available the vice-president will have the authority.

Section 5- The Program Chairperson Representative shall:

- a. Hold the position of a recognized Chairperson or Co-Chairperson of an active NHRC Program for a minimum of one (1) year (at the time the position is filled)
- b. Act as a liaison, representative, and spokesperson for all program Chairpersons or Co-Chairpersons within NHRC
- c. Serve as an Ambassador of the Board to the NHRC Program Chairpersons
- d. Serve in this role for a one (1) year term (unlimited terms)

Article IX – Program Chairperson Qualifications and Duties

Section 1- To be eligible for a program chairperson, the member must meet 1 of the following criteria: #1 – He/she must be a member of the NHRC who has had a least 2 years involvement in the program he/she is being nominated for; or #2 - have the approval of the NHRC. The chairperson will be elected by a simple majority vote of all eligible voting members within that program.

Section 2- A program chairperson shall:

- a. Attend 5 of 10 general membership meetings per year, or have a representative of the program attend, and present a verbal status report of the program. Present a verbal report to the general membership on the plans for conducting the program.
- b. Prepare a program-operating budget and submit it through the vice president to the board of directors, before registration, for approval.
- c. Establish the program registration fee, based on the budget, which permits the program to be self-supporting and provide for a \$15.00 assessment per participant as a head tax to cover insurance, future enhancements and general cost associated with the NHRC.
- d. Submit a request for use of required facilities for the program to the Parks and Recreation liaison.

- e. Upon budget approval, establish a registration day(s), secure a building permit, (allow 4 weeks), for the registration from the Parks and Recreation liaison if necessary, and prepare or assist the community director in the preparation of an announcement flyer for the program if desired.
- f. Conduct or supervise conducting the program registration.
- g. Submit all registrations funds and the registration receipt log to the treasurer, along with deposit tickets and deposit forms.
- h. Establish the format and schedules for conducting the program.
- i. Procure equipment for the program as identified in the operating budget and submit itemized invoices of purchases to the treasurer for payment.
- j. During the time period when the program is active:
 - 1 Submit a monthly report to the Parks and Recreation liaison director covering registration and attendance, and program problems and future plans, if appropriate.
 - 2 Approve monthly time and attendance sheets for paid instructors and/or game officials, and forward for payment to the Parks and Recreation liaison or the council treasurer, as appropriate.
 - 3 Accept responsibility for equipment and facilities used by the program.
 - 4 Report loss or damage of program equipment and facilities to the board of directors and the Parks and Recreation liaison immediately.
- k. Report a delinquent equipment list, by program participant, for equipment that was not returned, (or reimbursement provided), to the NHRC, including the approximate replacement cost of the item. These shall be provided to the VP of the recreation council.
- l. Mail to all travel participants the approved coaches evaluation form and to report to the board any problems the program cannot handle.
- o. The program chairperson, unless a board has been established and approved by the NHRC, shall make all decisions regarding their program.
- p. Require a background check through the NHRC Protect Youth Sports System for all coaches, team moms, managers etc.

Article X – Eligibility for program participation

- Section 1-** Eligibility for participation in a council program requires that an individual:
- a. Meet the requirements of the program.
 - b. Register at the announced time and place (limited registrations must be previously announced), to include the payment of established fees. (Waiver of fees for hardship cases will be determined by the program chairperson with notification of total numbers to the president on a confidential basis). The acceptance of late registration shall be at the discretion of the program chairperson.
 - c. Be free of debt (including reimbursement for lost or damaged equipment), for past participation in any council program or activity.

Article XI – Committees

Section 1- The president shall appoint and discharge all necessary committees to conduct the business of the council as the needs arise.

Article XII – Use of facilities and grounds

Section 1- Council programs have priority over non-council programs for the use of facilities and grounds under council control.

Section 2- Conflicts between programs shall be resolved by a decision of the Parks and Recreation liaison, Board of Directors. This will also include extension of the use of facilities to any person/persons or groups provided that such use does not interfere with council programs.

Section 3- Those person/persons or groups to whom the use of the council facilities is extended shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the facilities as set by P&R.

Section 4- Field schedules for fall usage must be submitted by the August 1st. Field schedules for spring usage must be submitted by March 1st. The master field schedule and permits will be issued in the fall by 8/25 and in the spring by 3/15.

Section 5- Try-out/evaluation dates for out-of-season programs shall be submitted to the NHRC board for approval prior to their implementation. Any conflicts with an in-season program's games/practices shall be resolved by the chairpersons of the programs involved. If a resolution cannot be reached, the NHRC board will intervene.

Section 6- All buildings, sheds, storage buildings, scoreboards, sound systems, fields, equipment etc. purchased by or donated to any program becomes property of North Harford Recreation Council and Harford County Parks & Recreation. The use of these purchased or donated items will be determined by the North Harford Recreation Council.

Section 7. Facility Modifications are not permitted without the approval of the Program Chairperson, the NHRC BOD, and P and R. Once the NHRC BOD approves the modification request, the P and R Recreational Specialist will be consulted and the appropriate documents will be completed and approval gained BEFORE any work commences.

Section 8 Temporary Field Lights may be used after P and R approvals are received. The approval notification should be noted on the UOF application.

Article XIII – Financial policies

Section 1- The council fiscal year shall be from July 1st of a given year through June 30th of the following year.

Section 2- All contributions to other organizations or parties, and all solicitors and solicitations of gifts, money, and/or property from the council shall first be approved by the membership.

- Section 3-** All contributions to the council, other than sponsor fees, shall first be approved by the board of directors prior to deposit into either the intended account or to the general fund if no account is specified.
- Section 4-** All funds derived from council programs shall be forwarded to the treasurer for deposit and proper accounting.
- Section 6-** All invoices shall be forwarded to the treasurer.
- Section 7-** All invoices shall be paid by check, ACH, or NHRC Credit Card
- Section 8-** Checks must be signed by TWO (2) members of the Board of Directors.
- Section 9-** Fundraising events at the Program Level can be conducted to offset the overall costs of that program. In advance of the event, the BOD must provide its approval and all appropriate permits must be obtained and then properly executed/closed.

Article XIV – Nomination of board members

- Section 1-** A nominating committee of at least THREE (3) council members will be appointed by the president at the April general membership meeting or earlier at the discretion of the president.
- Section 2-** The nominating committee shall present a slate of all candidates nominated at the May meeting.
- Section 3-** Any council member may submit to the chairperson of the nominating committee, in writing prior to the call to order of the annual meeting, the name of any member for nomination.
- Section 4-** All nominees must give prior consent for having their names placed in nomination.
- Section 5-** Nominations from the floor are not permitted after the call to order of the annual meeting.

Article XV – Elections

- Section 1-** All members of the board shall be elected by ballot at the June meeting and shall continue in office for TWO (2) years.
- Section 2-** The officers of the board shall be voted on individually. The new officers shall be the nominees receiving the highest number of votes cast for the particular office.
- Section 5-** Voting can be by secret ballot or a yea or na verbal vote..
- Section 6-** Each voting member present shall be entitled to one vote. There shall be no provision for voting by absentee ballot.
- Section 7-** The president or presiding officer shall cast his vote, but it will be used only to break a tie vote.
- Section 8-** The counting of the votes shall be done by the community director and the president at the annual meeting.
- Section 9-** The results shall be given immediately following the voting.

Article XVI – Parliamentary authority

- Section 1-** The rules contained in “Robert’s rules of order revised” shall govern the council in all cases except where they are not consistent with the council by-laws or special rules of order.
- Section 2-** Questions concerning the interpretation of these by-laws shall be resolved by the board of directors.

Article XVII – Legal Counsel

- Section 1-** NHRC shall contract with legal counsel to assist with all matters related to its programs. Upon authorization and approval, access to NHRC legal counsel shall be available to NHRC Programs, NHRC Program Chairpersons and Co-Chairpersons, and the NHRC Board of Directors for support in decision making and in addressing any issues or claims brought against NHRC. All costs and fees associated with legal counsel shall be included in and funded through the participant head tax collected by NHRC.

Article XVIII – Amendments

- Section 1-** The by-laws may be amended at any membership meeting by a majority vote of all the eligible voting members, as described in Article III, section 3, in attendance; provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and read at the membership meeting at least 1 month prior to the meeting at which the vote is taken.
- Section 2-** All alterations to these by-laws may be added as amendments under Article XVIII.

Article XXIV – Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

- Section 1-** It should be understood that the game official has full authority from the time he/she enters the field until the time he/she leaves it. This includes both pre-game and post-game activities. If an official determines that a person, whether coach, player, or fan is behaving in an abusive manner he/she may request that this person to cease such action. If the person does not comply with this request, that person may then be ordered to leave the playing field if the person does not leave, the official may stop the game at this point and declare the game a forfeit. In the event the game is forfeited, the coaches should report the incident to their program chairperson. The program chairperson is to write a letter to the abusive person informing him/her that his/her presence at future games is prohibited for a period to be decided by the council’s board of directors. A copy of the letter should be sent to the board and the vice-president is to be notified immediately.
- Section 2-** Objectives of the program:
- a. To promote wholesome recreation interests.
 - b. To develop skills that will carry over into adult life.

- a. To educate the community in the social value of recreational activities.
- d. To stimulate interest in the entire program.

These objectives are sufficient to challenge the abilities of the professional staff to merit the interest and support of the volunteer staff and to command respect of civic-minded citizens.

The recreation council affirms a strong belief in the value of competition for youth and adults, recognizing that values derived from such a program are in direct proportion to the acceptance of and adherence to a worthy set of standards toward which we must continually strive.

Section 3- Sportsmanship and Ethics:

The volunteer coach and leader bear the greatest burden of responsibility for sportsmanship. The influence of a coach upon the attitudes and behavior of the players and the community are unequalled. In order for good sportsmanship to become a reality, it is essential that the coach subscribes to the values of sportsmanship and teaches its principles through word and deed.

Section 4- Responsibilities of the coach:

- a. Always set a good example for others to follow.
- b. Instruct the players in their sportsmanship responsibilities.
- c. Discipline those players who display unsportsmanlike behavior and if necessary, forfeit their privilege of representing the team.
- d. Be a good host and treat opponents as guests.
- d. Provide opportunities for social interaction among coaches and players of both teams before and after contest.
- e. Be cognizant of each player's health and welfare and avoid all practices which would be detrimental to the player's well being.
- g. Respect the official's judgment and interpretation of the rules, particularly the inexperienced official.
- h. If, in the opinion of the coach, inexperienced or poor officiating could result in plat detrimental to the health or well being of the players, then his team should withdraw from the field and the match forfeited.
- i. Publicly shake hands with the officials and opposing coach before and after the contest.
- i. Encourage fans and spectators to view the game for what it is and not a life and death struggle.

Section 5- Code of ethics for coaches:

It is most significant that coaches must embrace such ideals with total sincerity if they are to be influential in the development of those youth entrusted to them. To insure these values, the National Code of Ethics for High School Coaches serves as our standard:

- a. Exemplify the highest moral character, behavior, and leadership.
- b. Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete.
- c. Abide by the rules of the game in letter and spirit.
- d. Respect the integrity and judgment of sport's officials.
- f. Demonstrate a mastery of and continuing interest in coaching principles and techniques through self-improvement.

- g. Encourage a respect for all athletes and their values.
- h. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- i. Promote ethical relationships among coaches.
- j. Fulfill responsibilities to provide an environment free of safety hazards.
- k. Encourage the highest standards of conduct and scholastic achievement among all athletes.
- l. Seek to instill good health habits, including the establishment of sound training rules.
- m. Strive to develop in each athlete the qualities of leadership, initiative, and good judgment.

Section 6- Responsibilities of the Participants:
Participants must follow the principles of sportsmanship set by the coach or leader and must follow the same code of personal conduct as outlined for the coaches in the two preceding sections.

Section 7- Responsibilities of the Program Chairperson:
The chairperson of each program in the recreation council is responsible for ensuring the “Responsibilities of the Coach” and “Code of Ethics” is maintained by each person coaching in the program and that all participants follow these principles of sportsmanship. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the program chairperson shall have the power to determine the extent and degree of discipline required. Such action may range from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the activity for whatever time deemed necessary. The program chairperson should consult with the recreation council president or vice-president in making a decision on disciplinary action.

Section 8- Responsibility of the Recreation Council Board of Directors:
Each officer and board member has a responsibility to ensure that the “Code of Responsibilities and Conduct” is adhered to. If any officer or board member should observe any coach, volunteer, participant, and/or parent not abiding by these principals, he/she shall recommend to the program chairperson that disciplinary action be taken.

Section 9- The Board of Directors reserves the right to dismiss any Chairperson, Coach, Volunteer, Participant, and/or Parent at its discretion if their conduct not in compliance with these bylaws and/or is deemed detrimental to the overall well-being of the council. The length of this dismissal will be determined by the BOD and communicated to the appropriate parties.

Section 10- Should any Chairperson, Coach, Volunteer, Participant, and/or Parent disciplined for violation of this code feel that the action taken by the program chairperson and/or the BOD be extreme or unwarranted, an appeal may be made to an Appeal Committee made up of 5 current Chairpersons (who are Not involved in the current issue). In such case, the Appeal Committee shall hold a hearing with all concerned parties to determine if such action was reasonable and justified.