

WINDHAM YOUTH FOOTBALL AND CHEERLEADING, Inc.



BY-LAWS

WINDHAM WHIPPETS



By-laws last revised: June 2011

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ARTICLE I – Name

Section 1. The name of this non-profit organization is Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading, Inc.

ARTICLE II – Vision and Mission Statements

Section 1. Vision

The Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading League offers the opportunity for participants to display the principle of good sportsmanship, fair play, and teamwork. The league's participants know that their own efforts determine the outcome of their lives. They compete hard, understanding that when the scoreboard reflects a win, it is only a victory because they gave their best. When the scoreboard shows a loss, they also understand that it is only a defeat when they look to others to assign blame or fail to recognize the quality of their opponent. Each graduate will be a better person for having been a part of this community effort.

Section 2. Mission

The mission of the Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading League is to use football and cheerleading to teach children the values of teamwork, good sportsmanship, and fair play. The League will accomplish this mission by always putting the children first, ahead of scoreboard success. All participants deserve adult assistance that is focused on the growth of the child as well as the athlete. It is therefore essential that the League provide a positive environment focused on learning that prepares the child for success at the next level.

ARTICLE III – Board of Directors

Section 1. Board of Directors

The Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading League shall be run by a Board of Directors.

Section 2. Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of six (6) Executive Officers as defined below. The Executive board shall also be responsible for oversight and consequences, including removal, of any volunteer or Board Member who fails to act according to the code of conduct (Appendix B).

Section 3. Board Composition

The Board of Directors ("Board") shall be composed of the following and must meet all requirements of the approved League By-Laws.

Executive Board shall consist of the following:

- President (does not vote unless there is a tie)
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Football Director
- Cheer Director

General Board (includes Executive Board members)

- Equipment Manager
- Concessions
- Fundraising Coordinator
- Sponsorship Coordinator
- Recruiting Coordinator
- Website
- Safety Officer
- Member at Large (3)

Section 4. Quorum

A minimum of six (6) Board members with at least two (2) non-Executive Board members is sufficient to establish a quorum for the purpose of conducting league business.

Section 5. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy of any position in Article III, Section 2, the board will fill the unexpired term at any official league meeting, following the written notice of special election to all eligible voting members. A quorum will be required for this vote.

Section 6. Attendance and Termination

- A. Eligible voters must attend 50% of the scheduled meetings in the six (6) months preceding the subject vote, or since instated as a board member during the calendar year. A member cannot miss any more than four (4) meetings in a year.
- B. A board members appointment on the Board of Directors will be terminated upon three (3) consecutive missed meetings without a legitimate excuse and notification of any member of the Executive Board.
- C. When a member of the Board of Directors is terminated, he or she must remain off the Board for a period of one (1) year from the date of occurrence unless unanimously voted back in by the Board of Directors.
- D. Any elected or appointed person may be removed from their position with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the board of Directors. This must be done at a specially scheduled meeting for this purpose.

Section 7. Grievance Committee

- A. The Grievance Committee shall consist of the members of the Executive board as listed in Article III, Section 2.
- B. The Executive Board, when presented with an accusation of improper behavior, shall compile a formal charge and appropriate penalty to be imposed. A Discipline Letter shall be delivered to the accused the day after the Grievance Committee meets.
- C. Until sanctions are imposed in the Discipline Letter, and affirmed by the General Board in case of appeal, none exist.

Section 8. Appeal Process

- A. The accused has three (3) business days from receipt of the Discipline Letter to respond or appeal the sanctions. This must be done in the form of a letter delivered to any member of the Executive Board.
- B. The members of the General Board as listed in Article III, Section 2 must then meet within three (3) business days to hear the charges, penalty imposed, and appeal of the charges. A two-thirds (2/3) quorum of the General board must attend this meeting.
- C. The General Board will hear from the accused, and discuss the sanctions imposed by the Executive Board. They will then vote to affirm penalty(s), to decrease penalty(s) or to dismiss penalty(s). They may not increase penalty(s).
- D. The Executive Board members may not vote during the appeal process.

Section 9. Responsibilities

Members of the Board of Directors responsibilities are to assist in the general league operation as directed by the Executive Board, some of which are as follows:

- A. Attend monthly meetings to keep abreast of league matters
- B. Serve on appointed committees
- C. Vote on league financial matters
- D. Serve on fundraising committees
- E. Vote on disciplinary matters
- F. Serve on work parties
- G. Offer suggestions for league operations
- H. Submit written reports or updates as required

Section 10. Voting

No member shall have more than one (1) vote.

ARTICLE IV – By-laws

Section 1. Amending the By-Laws

By-laws may be amended during the playing season, including post-season playoffs but only by a unanimously vote.

ARTICLE V – Officer’s Duties

All duties are at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Section 1. President

- A. Call and conduct meetings in accordance with League By-Laws.
- B. Appoint all committees necessary to efficiently conduct the entire league program.
- C. Preside over and execute policies approved by the Board of Directors and all legal matters.
- D. Review all budget necessary to operate the league with the aid of the Treasurer. Submit an operating budget to the Board of Directors at the April meeting for approval by the Board of Directors.
- E. Oversee the duties of all other League Officers and Committees.
- F. Appoint person to attend all outside meetings where by the league could be affected.
- G. Oversee duties and code of conduct of all coaches and playing personnel to insure compliance of playing rules.
- H. The President is prohibited from voting unless there is a tie.
- I. Point of contact for Referees during game day.

Section 2. Vice President

- A. In the absence of the President, the Vice President performs all Presidential duties as outlined.
- B. The Vice President is Chairman of the By-Laws Committee.
- C. Assists or substitutes for any other league officer as directed by the President.
- D. Handles all matters pertaining to insurance claims.
- E. Oversees duties and code of conduct of all coaches and playing rules as described in the league by-laws.

Section 3. Secretary

- A. Records and reports on minutes of all meetings. Submit meeting minutes in a timely manner after each meeting.
- B. Handle all correspondence of the league as directed by the Board of Directors.
- C. Notify the Board of Directors of all meetings whether monthly or special.
- D. Maintain Board of Directors roster and attendance records of all meetings.
- E. Create and maintain all league files, current or historical, as deemed necessary by the Executive Board.
- F. Handle all registration paperwork and materials, and maintain team/player rosters.
- G. Keeps Football and Cheer Directors abreast of missing/incomplete player information.

Section 4. Treasurer

- A. Responsible for financial records, bank deposits, and distribution of league funds as approved by the Board of Directors.
- B. Makes an annual report at the February league meeting.
- C. Makes monthly report at the monthly league meetings on current finances.
- D. Provide other financial reports, and file appropriate forms as requested by the Board of Directors.
- E. On purchases over two hundred dollars (\$200.00), the Treasurer will act as the purchasing agent.

Section 5. Football Director

- A. Responsible for all football coaches.
- B. Evaluates all football coaches.
- C. Responsible for coaching placement.
- D. Evaluates football players and team/position placement.
- E. Organizes practices.
- F. Organizes football clinics.
- G. Assists the Board of Directors as deemed necessary.
- H. Responsible for player sign-ups.
- I. Responsible for all draft proceedings.
- J. Responsible for player eligibility based on league and conference rules.
- K. Conducts weigh-ins in accordance with league and conference by-laws.
- L. Responsible for training of coaches including safety training.
- M. Responsible for attending conference coaches meetings.

Section 6. Cheer Director

- A. Responsible for all cheerleading coaches.
- B. Evaluates all cheerleading coaches.
- C. Responsible for coaching placement.
- D. Evaluates cheerleaders and squad placement.
- E. Organizes practices.
- F. Organizes cheer clinics.
- G. Assists the Board of Directors as deemed necessary.
- H. Responsible for player sign-ups.
- I. Responsible for squad placement.
- J. Responsible for player eligibility based on league and conference rules.
- K. Responsible for training of coaches including safety training.
- L. Responsible for attending conference cheerleading meetings.

ARTICLE VI – Elections

Section 1. Elections

Except otherwise provided, Board of Directors shall be elected by the majority of votes at the January meeting.

Section 2. Coaches

The majority of eligible voters shall elect head football and cheerleading coaches.

Section 3. Ballot

All elections shall be by secret ballot or by show of hands, decided at the elections meeting.

Section 4. Eligibility

Refer to Article III, Section 6 for voting eligibility.

Section 5. Nominations

The President shall appoint a nominating committee consisting of three (3) members of the Board of Directors no later than the November meeting. This committee will prepare a slate of officers and directors to be presented at the February meeting and presented for election at the March meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted.

ARTICLE VII – Meetings

Section 1. Oversight

The league President will conduct all board meetings, unless otherwise specified previous to the commencement of the meeting.

Section 2. Open to the public

Monthly meetings will be open to all adults associated with any part of the program. At the opening of each meeting an opportunity will be given to all adults for public comments limited to 5 minutes per speaker. Once public comments have concluded, all non-Board of Director personnel must leave the meeting.

Section 3. Schedule

The schedule of the meetings of the Board of Directors will be published no later than the January monthly meeting. All meetings will follow this calendar for the calendar year.

Section 4. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Executive Board or by written request of three (3) members of the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Special Meeting Agenda

No other business shall be conducted at a special meeting except that for which is published in the agenda for which the meeting was called.

Section 6. Day of Meeting

Meetings are to be held the second Monday of the month unless otherwise specified.

ARTICLE VIII – Eligibility

Section 1. Residency

Players shall be accepted by this league if they reside in the following towns:

- A. Windham/ Willimantic
- B. Mansfield
- C. Lebanon
- D. Chaplin
- E. Hampton
- F. Scotland
- G. Columbia

Section 2. Football Age Requirements

Age restrictions (*=Southern New England Youth Football Conference (SNEYFC) By-laws)

- A. Ages six (6) – fourteen (14).
- B. Senior Division* players must not have achieved their fifteenth (15th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- C. Junior Division* players must not have achieved their fourteenth (14th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- D. Micro Division* players must not have achieved their twelfth (12th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- E. Internal Division players must not have achieved their tenth (10th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- F. All players must have achieved their sixth (6th) birthday prior to August 1st of the current calendar year.
- G. All players must be in eight (8th) grade or lower to participate.

Section 3. Cheer Age Requirements

Age restrictions (*=Southern New England Youth Football Conference (SNEYFC) By-laws)

- A. Ages six (6) – fourteen (14).
- B. Senior Division* cheerleaders must not have achieved their fifteenth (15th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- C. Junior Division* cheerleaders must not have achieved their thirteenth (13th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- D. Micro Division* cheerleaders must not have achieved their eleventh (11th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- E. Internal Division cheerleaders must not have achieved their tenth (10th) birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year.
- F. All players must have achieved their sixth (6th) birthday prior to August 1st of the current calendar year.
- G. All players must be in eight (8th) grade or lower to participate.

Section 4. Weights and Division/Squad Classification

*All league rules are superseded by SNEYFC By-laws.

- A. Senior Division* players cannot exceed 180 pounds. Position maximums as follows:
 - 1) Offensive ends and backs – 150 pounds.
 - 2) Offensive tackles, guards and center – 180 pounds.
 - 3) Defensive line end to end – 180 pounds.
 - 4) No player over 150 pounds will be allowed to play linebacker or in the defensive backfield.
 - 5) No player over 150 pounds will be allowed to punt, kick extra points, or hold for extra point attempts.
- B. Junior Division* players cannot exceed 120 pounds (or 125 pounds** if that player has not achieved their 12th birthday prior to December 31st of the current calendar year). Position maximums as follows:
 - 1) Offensive ends and backs – 110 pounds.
 - 2) Offensive tackles, guards and center – 120 pounds**.
 - 3) Defensive line end to end – 120 pounds**.
 - 4) No player over 110 pounds will be allowed to play linebacker or in the defensive backfield.
 - 5) No player over 110 pounds will be allowed to punt, kick extra points, or hold for extra point attempts.

- C. Micro Division* players cannot exceed 100 pounds.
 - 1) There are no position maximums for the Micro Division.
 - 2) Players who are league age 10 – 11 and are under 100 pounds must try out for the conference Micro team.
- D. Internal Division players cannot exceed 100 pounds.
 - 1) Any player over 90 pounds will be line restricted on offense and defense and must play in a three (3) or four (4) point stance within two (2) yards of the line of scrimmage.
 - 2) No player over 90 pounds will be allowed to punt, kick extra points, or hold for extra point attempts.
 - 3) In the event that a line restricted player recovers a turnover, the play is considered dead and the ball cannot be advanced.
 - 4) All 6 – 9 years old (league age) players that exceeds 100 pounds are required to try out for the conference Micro, Junior or Senior teams.

Section 5. Team Size

- A. The Senior team shall consist of not less than sixteen (16) players. The Board of Directors shall decide the annual number of players. The Senior roster shall be established prior to any other roster in the current season.
- B. The Junior team shall consist of not less than sixteen (16) players. The Board of Directors shall decide the annual number of players. The Junior roster shall be established second after the Senior roster is completed.

Section 6. Adherence to the age and weight restrictions is the responsibility of the Football Director. All decisions are final.

Section 7. No player shall be allowed to participate in physical contact or play until a current SNEYFC Conference Medical form is on file with the league. All players are required to have a current season physical on file. All paperwork must be on file with the League Secretary by the Friday, one week prior to Conference weigh-ins.

Section 8. If a physical injury occurs during the playing season, the President with either the Vice-President, Football Director or Cheer Director shall decide if a physicians certificate is needed before the injured child re-enters play.

Section 9. No player can participate in the Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading league if he/she has been issued a game uniform in any other organized football program.

Section 10. In the event a player does not make weight, the coach is to be notified first, the coach will then notify the player and the parent in question.

ARTICLE IX - Draft

Section 1. Internal League Draft

- A. A coach who has an eligible child has the option of drafting this child prior to the first draft choice.
- B. Equity of returning players and the Football Director shall apply to player selection.
- C. Upon completion of the third (3rd) week of practice the Internal Player Draft will be conducted from a pool of evaluated players.
- D. A request to have children placed on the same team is restricted to siblings that reside in the same household. Proof of address is required.

ARTICLE X - Coaching Personnel

Section 1. Head Coaches

- A. Each Head Coach is responsible for all personnel, players and fans of their respective team. This includes all assistant coaches, players, etc. that have been assigned to their team.
- B. Each Head Coach must insure proper conduct of said personnel at all times and they must insure that proper instructions are conveyed that are within the playing rules as defined in the League or Conference By-Laws.
- C. Each team shall be supervised by one (1) Head Coach with no maximum of assistant coaches during practice. A maximum of five (5) coaches will be permitted on the sidelines during games (this includes the Head Coach).
- D. The Football Director must select the assistant coaches by written application, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. Such coaching personnel must be selected on the basis of their character, their ability to work with children in the league, teach the objectives of this organization and have reasonable knowledge of football.
- E. Each Head Coach must select a First Assistant Coach. The First Assistant Coach will assume all of the responsibilities of the head Coach in the absence of the Head Coach.
- F. Each head Coach will have the authority to release any assistant coach not acting in the best interest of the program.
- G. All Head Coaches or the appointed representatives are expected to attend clinic, training sessions, and talks sponsored by the league that are concerned with football organization or play.
- H. The teams in the Internal Football program will work together to insure that all players across all teams are taught the same offensive and defensive skills and schemes so that they will be better prepared to play effectively when they join together on the travel conference teams. Internal coaches will meet and agree during the preseason on specific guidelines to comply with the by-law.
- I. Any individual that would like to become a Head Coach must complete a volunteer application with background check.

Section 2. Head Coach Appointments

The following procedure must be adhered to when a Head Coaching position becomes available.

- A. The Football Director must notify the Board of Directors that a Head Coaching position is open and the reason for that opening.
- B. Upon notification, the Board of Directors will notify all registered assistant coaches and Directors of this vacancy.
- C. All assistant coaches or Directors who are interested must apply with a letter of application not later than two (2) weeks after notification of the vacancy.
- D. If vacancy occurs during the playing season, the First Assistant Coach of the team in which the vacancy occurs will assume the duties until one is appointed officially by the Board of Directors.
- E. Head Coach cannot be appointed from outside the ranks of all registered assistants or Directors unless none make application or are deemed unqualified by the Board of Directors.

- F. Considerations for the position of Head Coach will be as follows, but not limited to:
 - 1. The candidates must be willing to conform to all rules and regulations as defined in the League By-Laws.
 - 2. Has an adequate knowledge of football.
 - 3. Seniority.

Section 3. Assistant Coach Appointments

- A. Assistant Coaches are appointed by the Football Director as outlined in Article X, Section 1 (D).
- B. Any individual that would like to become a coach must approach the head Coach, who at their discretion, will then submit an application on the individuals behalf, to the Board of Directors for approval in accordance with Article X, Section 1 (D).
- C. Any individual that would like to become a coach must complete a volunteer application with background check.

ARTICLE XI - Rules of Play

Section 1. Federation Rules

The official Federation Rules as amended by the League By-Laws shall be accepted as the official League rules for the Internal League.

Section 1A. Conference By-Laws

The official By-Laws of the Conference that the League participates in shall be accepted as the official rules for the Travel Teams.

Section 2. Game Protests

Decisions of the Field Referee shall be final. No protest will be permitted.

Section 3. Postponements

In cases of multiple postponements, the first postponed game will be the first rescheduled.

Section 4. Coaching Area

No coach will be allowed beyond the twenty-five (25) yard line during any game in which they are coaching.

Section 5. Football Formations

All legal football formations under Federation Rules are allowed.

Section 6. Playing Area

Only coaching personnel and players of teams scheduled shall be allowed in the playing area.

Section 7. Parking

No parking on the field with the exception of Medical Personnel, equipment coordinators, or vehicles designated by the League President.

Section 8. Field Conditions and Setup

The first two (2) teams playing will check the field for glass, stones and any other dangerous debris, as well as preparing the field for the days games. The last two (2) teams playing will assist in field cleanup, and storage of all equipment. This is the responsibility of the respective Head Coaches.

Section 9. Ties

Any game during the regular scheduled season that ends in a tie shall remain a tie.

Section 10. Playing Time

Minimum playing time per player per game will be as follows:

- A. Internal Teams, a player shall be required to participate in sixteen (16) plays minimum per game with no less than two (2) consecutive plays per quarter.
- B. Travel Teams, there is no requirement on playing time due to the high level completion of the SNEYFC, equal playing time in the Travel teams is not guaranteed.
- C. Players must participate in two (2) of the three (3) practices preceding the game in question.

Section 11. Play calling

Players who bring plays in the huddle from the side line must remain in the game for a minimum of one (1) play.

Section 12. Weigh-Ins

- A. The Football Director shall conduct an official weigh-in during the week preceding the first game. Each team shall be allowed one (1) member of the coaching staff to be present.
- B. Internal football players will be weighed-in two (2) weeks after the commencement of practice to determine which Division they will participate in. If they are not on weight at this time, they will be moved up to the next Division to allow appropriate time to work with their new Team.

Section 13. Scoring – Internal League

When any team reaches an eighteen (18) point lead over their opponent, that team will no longer kick off after any subsequent score. The losing team will have the option to receive the ball on the forty (40) yard line.

ARTICLE XII – Financial Policy

Section 1. Minor Purchases

Purchases under two hundred dollars (\$200.00) may be made with a simple majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 2. Major Purchases

Purchases over two hundred dollars (\$200.00), with the approval of the Board of Directors, must have a minimum of two (2) competitive bids. Consideration should be give to delivery dates, and other variables and all bids should be made on a equal basis when possible. The Board of Directors may waive the bid procedure.

Section 3. Expenses

All expenses shall be in accord with the League financial policy.

Section 4. Deposits

All monies are to be promptly deposited in the league checking or savings accounts.

Section 5. Gifts

No funds or merchandise (not approved by the League) may be accepted by an individual or individual team. All contributions must go to the League.

Section 6. Internal Trophies

Trophies for the Internal League Championship team players will not be furnished by the League.

Section 7. Travel Trophies

Trophies for the Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading graduates will be furnished by the League with the year of graduation inscribed on the body of the trophy.

Section 8. Banquet

The League will furnish banquet expenses for all players.

ARTICLE XIII – Appendix

- Section 1. The League reserves the right to include any appendices as deemed necessary to conduct any and all League activities.
- Section 2. Any, and all appendices will carry the same validity as the Leagues By-Laws.
- Section 3. Any, and all appendices are created for the operational function of the League and cannot contradict or supersede the League By-Laws.
- Section 4. The Board of Directors has the power to approve, remove or modify any and all appendices by a simple majority vote of those eligible.

APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND CHECK

All volunteers associated with the Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading League, Inc. will be subject to a background check prior to commencing service with the League.

APPENDIX B

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Refrain from smoking and chewing tobacco on the field.
2. Do not criticize players in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for private, or in the presence of the team players if other might benefit.
3. Accept decisions of the game officials on the field as being fair and called to the best ability of said official.
4. Do not criticize an opposing team, its players, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or gesture.
5. Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.
6. Strive to make every football/cheerleading activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
7. Emphasize that winning is the result of good teamwork.
8. Refrain from using abusive and profane language before anyone.
9. Abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages on both the game and practice fields.
10. Do not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
11. Refrain from excessive sideline coaching.
12. Together with the game officials, you are jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators.
13. Be honest and fair to all players. Remember they are young people taking your directions.
14. Make no promises you cannot or do not intend to keep.
15. The main objective of coaching is to teach the fundamentals of football and cheerleading. Winning is not the most important thing, especially at our level of competition.
16. uphold all rules and regulations of the Windham Youth Football and Cheerleading League and any other adopted by our organization.
17. Refrain from running up the score as the phrase is used. When a commanding lead is obvious, every effort shall be made to let all players play.
18. Coaches do not make team or league policy, they carry it out. However on the playing fields, the coaching staff is in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rules violations and any other conduct deemed by higher authority to be inimical to the welfare of the players or the League.