

# **Lopatcong Athletic Association Bylaws**

## **April 2015**

### **Article I            Name**

The name of this organization is Lopatcong Athletic Association (LAA) of Lopatcong Township, Warren County, NJ. It is a local Athletic Association organized under the authority of the elected Council of the Township of Lopatcong. Lopatcong Township Ordinance 1997-03.

### **Article II           Purpose**

The Objectives of the Lopatcong Athletic Association (LAA), in common with those of the Township of Lopatcong are:

1. To promote the welfare of children and youth in the community, home and on the field of play.
2. To raise the standards of good sportsmanship, self-esteem, character, social skills.
3. To provide an environment where our children can develop positive relationships with other players, coaches, officials and parents.
4. To maximize each child's potential to build self-confidence for future success.
5. To impress upon young people the benefits of physical fitness within the concept of competitive team sports and the rules of the sport.
6. To be the governing body for all sanctioned sports. The LAA is charged with following the Council's intent for the youth in Lopatcong Township.

### **Article III          Basic Policies**

The following are basic policies of the Lopatcong Athletic Association (LAA), in common with the Township of Lopatcong:

1. The LAA will try to work with the Phillipsburg High School Athletic Department to help develop/provide quality athletic programs for all Lopatcong children and youth.
2. The LAA in its official capacities will not discriminate against any coach or participant because of age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality, religion or sex.
3. The organization in its official capacity shall not, directly or indirectly, participate or intervene (in any way, including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office; or devote more than an insubstantial part of its activities attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise.
4. Directors, coaches, assistant coaches and other volunteers shall accept no compensation for their efforts from the LAA. The LAA will not permit any funds spent from the general fund for non-League requirements and regulations.
5. All practices and games shall be held at public locations. No activity sponsored by the LAA will be held at a coach's private property and/or home.

6. Roster sign-ups will be held at designated times and places to be determined by the Director of each sport. The Director of each sport has the discretion to modify the sign up times and deadlines.
7. All bills must be submitted monthly to the treasurer and approved by the Board of Directors.
8. A petty cash account of \$100 will be provided to each sport on a credit card held by the Director. At each meeting, receipts must be handed in and the account reconciled.
9. Any person who wants to serve on the LAA can do so by inquiring about positions that are open or may soon be open due to an existing member leaving. All people who to apply will be considered. Preference will be given to Lopatcong residents.
10. The chain of command for complaints is as follows: coach, director, president, council liaison, mayor. A 24 hour waiting period should be observed to avoid unnecessary complaints.

## **Article IV                    Board of Directors**

The LAA Board of Directors will consist of a President, Treasurer, Secretary and a Director for each sanctioned sport. Individuals for the aforementioned positions are to be recommended by majority vote of the LAA Board of Directors to the Lopatcong Township Council for appointment by the governing body. Upon adoption of these bylaws, the President, Treasurer and Secretary shall each be appointed for a term of four (4) years. Three Directors shall be appointed for one (1) year; three Directors for two (2) years; and two Directors for three (3) years. Thereafter the term of each Director shall be three (3) years. The Duties of the Board of Directors are as follows:

1. To establish rules and policies for all participants in each sanctioned sport. These rules and policies shall include, but are not limited to:
  - a. A code of ethics for coaches
  - b. A code of ethics for athletes
  - c. A code of ethics for directors and assistant directors
  - d. A code of conduct for coaches (includes background checks)
  - e. A code of conduct for athletes
  - f. A code of conduct for parents.
2. To establish programs that enhance the development of all participants. Full participation will be emphasized for all youth in their sport.
3. To create standing committees and to elect/appoint chairpersons of the standing committees as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the LAA.
4. To create special committees as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the LAA\*.
5. To review violations and disciplinary action submitted by a Director. The coach, athlete or spectator subject to the proposed disciplinary action shall have the right to a full conference between the LAA and its President prior to the disciplinary action. The LAA and its President shall accept or modify the proposed action by majority vote. The LAA and its President will be the final arbiter on all violations. Specific forms will be available for reporting violations, disciplinary actions, and coach evaluations.
6. To attempt to work/network with the Phillipsburg High School Athletic Department for instruction/assistance on how to help develop/provide quality athletic programs for all Lopatcong children and youth.

7. To review unsanctioned sports and determine whether the children and youth will benefit from them. Add them as deemed necessary.
8. Every Director shall be required to submit personal information needed in order to process a criminal background check. Background checks will be submitted by the Township to the New Jersey State Police every two years. **Results of the background checks are confidential and shall not be released to the Directors.** Background checks results will be received by the Township Clerk and reviewed by the Township Attorney. Background checks containing disqualifiable conviction(s) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 15A:3A-3 shall result in the director being disqualified. Any questions or concerns regarding disqualification will be referred to the Township Council.

## **Article V                    Individual Duties of the Board of Directors**

1. The **President** shall preside at all meetings of the Lopatcong Athletic Association and of the Board of Directors; and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed in these bylaws or assigned to him/her by the LAA or by the Board of Directors; and shall coordinate the work of the officers and committees of this LAA in order that the objectives may be promoted. The President shall not be a Director simultaneously, unless the President's position is vacant.
  - a. The **President** is to establish appropriate disciplinary action in the event that a Director, who may also be a coach, violates the code of conduct. The violation of the code of conduct shall be documented in writing by the President and presented to the Board of Directors for review. The President shall also propose the disciplinary action to be taken in response to the violation of the Code of Ethics and/or Conduct. The disciplinary action may consist of the following:
    - First Violation - will result in one game suspension.
    - Second Violation - will result in a season suspension and one year probation
    - Any violation by a coach during the probation period shall result in a permanent suspension.
    - This also applies to any spectator for any LAA/League violations of the specific sport.
    - The Directors, President, Treasurer and Secretary reserve the right to ask an individual/s to immediately leave an LAA sponsored event if he/she feels conduct/behavior jeopardizes the welfare of the children. An emergency LAA Board of Directors meeting will be scheduled immediately for review.
    - Any combination of the above may be implemented
2. The **Secretary** shall record the minutes of all meetings of the Lopatcong Athletic Association and of the Board of Directors, shall have a copy of the approved bylaws, shall have a list of Board of Directors available at every meeting and shall perform such other duties as may be delegated to him/her. The Secretary may also be a Director and will have voting privileges by virtue of his/her position as Director.

3. The **Treasurer** shall have custody of all funds of this LAA; shall keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures; shall pay out local funds in accordance with the approved budget as authorized by this LAA. The Treasurer may also be a Director and will have voting privileges by virtue of his/her position as Director.
  - a. The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for the maintenance of such books of accounts and records as confirmed to the requirement of Article XII, Section 2 of these bylaws.
  - b. The **Treasurer** will make disbursements as authorized by the President, Board of Directors or the LAA in accordance with the budget adopted by the LAA. Checks and vouchers shall be signed by the president and treasurer. In an emergency, the recording secretary may sign.
  - c. The **Treasurer** shall present a financial statement of accounts at every meeting of the organization and at other times when requested by the Board of Directors and shall make a full report at the annual reorganizational meeting.

**Note:** *For more information regarding the auditors' report please see Article XIII Section 2c. An audit of the treasurer's accounts is for the protection of the treasurer. It is the only means of assuring everyone that the accounts are accurate, and it relieves the treasurer of responsibility except in case of fraud. See Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (pp. 467-470).*
4. All directors shall deliver to their successors all official material no later than ten days following their official day.
5. A member of the Board of Directors who misses, without good cause, three (3) board meetings in one calendar year will be contacted by the President or Secretary regarding his/her intent to continue serving as a Director. The President and/or Secretary will report the findings back to the Board. If the Board shall determine that a Director has missed an excessive number of Board meetings, the Board by a majority vote can remove a Director.
  - a. Good cause does not include sports practices if a Director is also a coach of any sport.
  - b. A Director will lose voting rights after missing two consecutive meetings where no effort has been made to call in to vote.
  - c. A Director must attend two consecutive meetings to regain their voting rights at the third meeting following the loss of their voting rights.
  - d. If a Director misses three consecutive meetings without good cause or effort to call in to participate, the Board shall begin the removal process of the Director.
6. Board of Directors
  - a. Each **Director** will be responsible for all organizational functions such as:
    - Seasonal Sign-ups.
    - Recruitment of Coaches.
    - Uniform and Equipment purchases.
    - League meetings to their particular sport.
    - Completely aware of league rules, regulations and consequences.
    - Maintenance of facilities, when applicable.

- Inventory/Accountability of Equipment.
  - Scheduling of practices.
  - Maintenance of procedure manuals.
  - Submit preliminary and final budgets by the deadlines set by the board for each sport
  - Adhere to annual budgets.
  - Make recommendations to board on how to improve sanctioned sport.
  - Develop supporting positions to help govern/manage sanctioned sport (Recruit personnel to fill these positions).
  - Establish, Identify and promote continuing education for coaches and athletes; such as clinics and seminars.
  - Develop a fair distribution of athletes among teams.
  - Complete duties in a timely fashion
  - Attend board meetings
  - Take part in community activities as a representative of sanctioned sport
- b. The **Board of Directors** is to establish appropriate disciplinary action in the event that a coach, assistant coach, athlete and/or spectator violates the code of conduct. The violation of the code of conduct shall be documented in writing by the Director of the sanctioned sport and presented to the Board of Directors for review. The Director shall also propose the disciplinary action to be taken in response to the violation of the Code of Ethics and/or Conduct. Implementation of the proposed disciplinary action shall be at the discretion of the Director of the given sport. The disciplinary action may consist of the following:
- First Violation - will result in one game suspension.
  - Second Violation - will result in a season suspension and one year probation
  - Any violation by a coach during the probation period shall result in a permanent suspension.
  - This also applies to any spectator for any LAA/League violations of the specific sport.
  - The Directors, President, Treasurer and Secretary reserve the right to ask an individual/s to immediately leave an LAA sponsored event if he/she feels conduct/behavior jeopardizes the welfare of the children. An emergency LAA Board of Directors meeting will be schedule immediately for review.
  - Any combination of the above may be implemented
- c. Each **Director** has the right to review all coaches and suggest to the LAA that a specific coach not be asked back. The President and Board will review this request and may ask the specific participant to appear before the board for a meeting.
- d. Each **Director** will be responsible to have each coach fill out a background check. Failure to fulfill this request will automatically deny that person the opportunity to coach. NO EXCEPTIONS! If a background check is found to

be in violation of the Township and State regulations by the Chief of Police that person will automatically be disqualified from coaching.

## **Article VI           Assistant Directors**

1. The Board recognizes that the roles of the Director are numerous and time consuming, and that the need for an Assistant Director(s) is great. Assistant Directors will be recommended by the Director of the sanctioned sport and appointed by the LAA Board of Directors. Assistant Directors have a tremendous responsibility to the program and the athletes and therefore are required to adhere to the Directors' code of ethics.
2. All sports may have one (1) Assistant Director, with the exception of Football, which may have two (2) Assistant Directors.
3. Assistant Directors will work with their sanctioned sport's Director to establish clear assignments and goals for the Assistant Director.
4. Assistant Directors should be in attendance at the monthly Board meetings, and at any meetings held for their sanctioned sport.
5. Assistant Directors can stand in and vote for a Director for no more than two meetings a year.
6. The presence of an Assistant Director at a meeting does not mitigate a Director of his duty to also be present at the Board meetings.
7. In the event that a sanctioned sport is without a Director, the Assistant Director will assume all duties of the Director until such time that a new Director can be appointed by the Mayor of Lopatcong.
8. Every Assistant Director shall be required to submit personal information needed in order to process a criminal background check. Background checks will be submitted by the Township to the New Jersey State Police every two years. **Results of the background checks are confidential and shall not be released to the Directors.** Background checks results will be received by the Township Clerk and reviewed by the Township Attorney. Background checks containing disqualifiable conviction(s) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 15A:3A-3 shall be disqualified. Any questions or concerns regarding disqualification will be referred to the Township Council.
9. In the event of vacancy of both the Director and Assistant Director(s) in any sanctioned sport, the President will appoint a temporary Director to oversee the sport until a permanent Director is appointed by the Mayor of Lopatcong.

## **Article VII           Coaches**

1. The LAA recognizes that the coaches are mentors and teachers to the youth athletes and have a tremendous responsibility to their athletes and therefore are required to adhere to the coaches' code of conduct and ethics, as well as the required background checks. No exceptions!
2. Coaches and assistants are required to complete the National Youth Sports Coaches Association Certificate program or equivalent. This provides instruction in coaching philosophies and methods. It also provides supplementary insurance coverage with a

minimum coverage value of \$500,000.00. The LAA will pay the cost of this certification.

3. Every coach shall be required to submit personal information needed in order to process a criminal background check. Background checks will be submitted by the Township to the New Jersey State Police every two years. **Results of the background checks are confidential and shall not be released to the Directors.** Background checks results will be received by the Township Clerk and reviewed by the Township Attorney. Background checks containing disqualifiable conviction(s) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 15A:3A-3 shall result in the coaches being disqualified. Any questions or concerns regarding disqualification will be referred to the Township Council.

## **Article VIII          Participants**

1. All resident and non-resident athletes who participate must adhere to all codes of conduct and ethics set forth by the LAA. They must also follow all rules and regulations set forth by their league in that particular sport.
2. The fee for a child to participate in a seasonal sport shall be set annually by the Director. The Director can establish a higher fee for a non-resident to play if the Director deems it necessary to offset any additional costs. The non-resident fee can be no more than an additional \$25 over the resident fee.
3. Late registrations may be charge a late fee.
4. Refunds can be requested if an athlete chooses to no longer participate in a particular sport. There will be a deadline, varying by sport, by which an athlete can choose to quit and still receive a refund. No refunds will be issued after said dates except in the event of injury.

## **Article IX          Sanctioned Sports**

1. To add a new sanctioned sport, the Board of Directors must approve the request by a majority vote at a meeting of the LAA, provided a quorum is present.
2. Sanctioned Sports are:
  - a. Baseball
  - b. Basketball (boys and girls)
  - c. Cheerleading (fall and winter)
  - d. Football
  - e. Soccer (fall and spring)
  - f. Softball
  - g. Twirling
  - h. Wrestling
3. All sanctioned sports must have a Director and may have an Assistant Director and must adhere to Article V, Section 7.

## **Article X                    Meetings**

1. The presence of more than 50% or more of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in any general meeting of the LAA.
2. Twelve 12 general membership meetings of the Lopatcong Athletic Association shall be held during a calendar year January through December. Dates of meetings shall be determined by the Board of Directors and announced at the first general meeting of the year.
3. If there is an urgent issue that arises before the scheduled meeting, and the delay of waiting to the next scheduled meeting would likely result in substantial harm to the public interest, the LAA President may call a special meeting upon 48 hours' notice. Moreover, notice is to be provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
4. A closed meeting is never allowed unless it fits within the confines of the Open Public Meetings Act. See N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b).
5. Ten (10) days' notice shall be given of a change of date of general meetings.
6. The annual General Meeting for the purpose of the budget presentation and reorganization approval shall be the last general meeting of the calendar year.
7. The LAA encourages all residents to attend and express all thoughts, ideas and/or concerns for the youth of Lopatcong Township.

## **Article XI                    Standing Committees and Special Committees**

The President shall be ex-officio member of all committees.

### **Standing Committees:**

1. Only Lopatcong Township Residents of the Lopatcong Athletic Association shall be eligible to serve as chairperson or members of committee.
2. Standing committees shall be created by the Board of Directors as may be required to promote the objectives and interests of this LAA. The chairpersons of the standing committees shall be elected/appointed by the Board of Directors and their term shall for one (1) year.
3. The chairpersons of all standing committees shall present plans of work to the Board of Directors for approval, and no committee work shall be undertaken without the approval of the Board of Directors.
4. If a standing committee is for fundraising, see Article XI
5. To add a new standing committee the Board of Directors must approve by a majority vote at a meeting of the LAA provided a quorum is present.
6. LAA Standing Committees are:
  - Fall Sports Concession Stand
  - Fall Sports Program
  - Apparel
  - Winter Sports concession Stand
  - Winter Sports Program
  - Spring Sports Opening Day Ceremonies

- Spring Sports Program
- Sponsorships
- Golf Outing
- Executive Committee
- Bylaw Committee
- Website
- Field House

### **Special committees:**

1. Special committees shall be appointed by the President and Board of Directors as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the Lopatcong Athletic Association.
2. Since a special committee is created and appointed for a specific purpose, it automatically goes out of existence when its work is done and its final report is received.

## **Article XII            Fundraising**

1. Starting with the Fall 2014 sports season, a \$5 fee per player, per sport will be assessed as a yearly contribution to the general fund. How this fee is raised is up to the individual director of the sanctioned sport. The fees will be due 30 days from the end of the sanctioned sport's sign-up period, and a full roster shall be provided to the Treasurer so that the total due can be calculated.
2. The LAA recognizes that fundraising is an activity that may done at the discretion of the Director of each sport. The LAA also recognizes that fundraising is an activity that certain sports must do in order to thrive and remain sustainable. The LAA further recognizes that a sport that engages in fundraising should benefit from its efforts. However, the LAA also recognizes that the sources for fundraising are finite.
3. Based on the foregoing fundraising realities, if a sport is going to engage in fundraising, the fundraising activity should be identified in the sport's annual budget. If the fundraising activity is established after the sport's budget is submitted to the LAA then the fundraising activity is to be announced to the LAA during the next regular meeting by the sport's Director. The sport engaging in a fundraising activity should keep a profit and loss statement for the fundraising activity.
4. The LAA also recognizes that the LAA as an organization also has a need to raise funds for the LAA general fund or for other specific needs the purpose for which must be clearly communicated. Any such LAA organization fundraising activity may be established upon a majority vote of the LAA Board of Directors. If an LAA fundraising activity is approved then a committee shall be established. LAA authorized fundraisers shall keep a profit and loss statement for the fundraising activity. Funds raised are to be distributed to the correct accounts.

## **Article XIII            Handling of Monetary Funds**

1. The handling of monetary funds by the Directors, the Assistants, the Coaches and all volunteers will be closely monitored and managed to assure adherence to all audit recommendations and guidelines.
2. The Board will determine key controls to be used to validate monies received from any sporting event, including but not limited to, registrations, fundraisers, and concession stand sales.

## **Article XIV            Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the Lopatcong Athletic Association shall begin on January 1st and end December 31st.

## **Article XV            Removal of Board Members**

1. The need to remove a Board Director or Assistant Director, as well as Board President, Secretary or Treasurer, may arise if any person is found to be derelict in their duties, to be in violation of the bylaws or is engaging in practices that are deemed to be detrimental to the athletes, the Lopatcong Athletic Association and/or the Township.
2. If a Director, Assistant Director, Secretary or Treasurer is thought to be in need of removal, a formal request shall be made to the President, who will review the request with the Township Council Liaison and the Mayor of Lopatcong. If the reasons for the request are found to be valid in accordance with Article XV, Section 1 of the bylaws, the President will make a motion to the Board, and the Board can vote to remove the Director with a majority vote.
3. If the President is thought to be in need of removal, a formal request shall be made to the Township Council Liaison and the Mayor of Lopatcong. If the reasons for the request are found to be valid in accordance with Article XV, Section 1 of the bylaws, the Mayor of Lopatcong will make a motion to remove the President at the next Township Council meeting.

## **Article XVI            Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Lopatcong Athletic Association and in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with Lopatcong Township ordinances.

*Note: A copy of the bylaws of the Lopatcong Athletic Association should be available at every meeting.*

## **Articles XVII        Amendments**

1. These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Lopatcong Athletic Association by a majority vote of the members present and voting, provided a quorum is present and provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given at least 25 days prior to the meeting at which action is to be taken, and

provided that the amendment is not in conflict with the ordinance prescribed by the Lopatcong Town Council.

2. There will be no amendments to the bylaws without final approval by the Lopatcong Township Council. The adoption of an amendment to any provision of the Lopatcong Athletic Association bylaws shall be identified by a double star (\*\*).
3. A committee may be appointed to submit an amendment to the bylaws and can only be put into place by a majority vote at a meeting of the LAA by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, provided a quorum is present. The requirements for adoption of a revised set of bylaws shall be the same as in the case of an amendment.
4. After approval by a majority vote at a meeting of the LAA, provided a quorum is present, six (6) copies of all amendments/revised bylaws shall be sent to the Lopatcong Town Council for approval or disapproval.

### **Articles XVIII    Dissolution of the LAA**

Upon the dissolution of this organization, the assets may pass to a successor entity provided the entity is a 501(c)(3) or similar tax exempt entity governed by a Board of Directors consisting of one representative of each sport organized thereunder to provide for the sports and recreation activities of Lopatcong Township's youth. If there is no successor, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the organization, remaining assets shall be absorbed by the Township of Lopatcong.

**LAA adopted: February 2014**

**Township Council approved: March 2014**

**LAA revised: February 2015**

**Township Council approved: March 2015**

**LAA revised: April 2015**

**Township Council approved: May 2015**