

# 2024 BY-LAWS & GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

## OF

### ST. LOUIS BASEBALL FOREVER LEAGUE

#### I. ARTICLE 1: NAME & PURPOSE

- A. This league shall be known as *St. Louis Baseball Forever League* (STLBFL).
- B. The purpose of the league shall be to:
- To provide older adults with the opportunity to play organized baseball in a competitive environment that promotes fairness and good sportsmanship among its players; and
  - To supervise and regulate the activities of league members and others participating in STLBFL sponsored functions; and
  - To enter into contracts with vendors in order to obtain facilities, goods and services necessary for carrying out STLBFL business; and
  - To collect, raise and expend funds in an efficient and responsible manner that furthers STLBFL activities.

## II. ARTICLE 2: MEMBERSHIP, DUES & FINANCES

- A. Membership in this league shall be available to invited teams that agree to abide by the regulations of STLBFLL and whose individual members meet league eligibility standards.
- B. **Teams requesting admittance must complete a written application provided by the Executive Council (EC) and pay all applicable fees.** These fees include a one-time, nonrefundable Team Participation License (TPL) fee of \$250. These fees and documents must be submitted within time periods established by the EC. Managers of prospective teams shall meet with the EC prior to admittance. Prospective teams will be approved for admittance by a vote as established by the EC.
- C. **Any existing team which undergoes a managerial change must notify the EC. New prospective managers must meet with the EC and receive approval prior to assuming managerial duties**
- D. Existing teams within the league which move into a new age division and do not leave a team behind in the previous division thus leaving the league with the same number of teams do not owe an additional TPL. Any team which moves into an older age division while leaving an existing team in a younger division shall pay a TPL. Any team which splits from an existing team creating an additional team within the league shall pay a TPL. Any reorganizing by a team with the net result being an increase in the number of teams in the league shall pay a TPL. The EC will determine if a TPL is owed by any “new” team as a result of reorganization even if the net result does not increase the number of teams in the league.
- E. Any new team shall be subject to a one-year probationary period. During that period, teams will refrain from any conduct detrimental to the integrity of the league. Team and player conduct will be subject to review by the EC.
- F. The EC shall set team membership dues and the deadline for paying the dues. All total team fees are due no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season. Teams’ delinquent in full payment are prohibited from league play until full payment is satisfied. Any missed games shall be recorded as a forfeit.
- G. The STLBFLL expects that annual team fees, minus rebates provided, will virtually reflect the costs of running the league for that season. The intent is to keep league fees at a minimum. The carryover amount from one season to the next shall not exceed the total of all TPL (Team Participation Licenses) ever collected by the league. At the year-end meeting, the league will receive a final expenditure report from the treasurer for approval by the EC. Any unexpended funds in excess of the collective TPL funds (not counting funds obligated but not yet paid) will be provided to teams in good standing as rebates.

### **III. ARTICLE 3: GOVERNMENT AND MEETINGS**

- A. Control of the league shall be entrusted to an eight-person Executive Council. These are unpaid volunteer positions. The eight-person EC shall consist of a President, Treasurer, Chairman of Fields and Scheduling, (CFS); Chairman of Umpires and Rules (CUR); Chairman of Communications (CC); Managers Liaison (ML) and any other positions as dictated by the EC.
- B. The President and EC for the upcoming baseball season will be selected annually by the EC of the just-completed season. To initiate the process, the current ML or ML's will survey their managers to receive nominations for positions on the EC and submit in writing those nominations to the full EC no later than October 1. In order to be eligible to serve as president, CFS, CC, (or) ML or CUR, a nominee must have been a player or manager during the inaugural season of the age division in which he now participates or have met STLBFLL postseason eligibility requirements for at least two seasons. All nominations will be given due consideration. The current EC will select the incoming EC by consensus, or if no consensus is reached, by a majority vote. Prior to November 1st, the sitting CC will present the names of candidates for the position of President and EC to the managers for a ratification vote. Each manager in good standing from the preceding season, will be provided with an opportunity to vote separately on each candidate. The managers will vote whether to ratify each candidate's membership on the EC or selection as President. The manager will be given two choices: either to vote "yes to ratify the recommended candidate or to vote that he has "no confidence" in the proposed candidate. If a proposed candidate receives a vote of "no confidence" from 50% or more of the managers eligible to vote, then that candidate will not be eligible to hold the position on the EC or as President for the upcoming season. In such circumstances, the outgoing EC will propose an alternative candidate to the managers for ratification. This process will continue until the President and all EC positions are filled and ratified by the managers. The President and EC are permitted to succeed themselves in office.
- C. All meetings by the EC in which a vote is required by the members must consist of a quorum. A quorum is defined as more than 50% of the voting members in attendance. Decisions by the EC will be determined by majority vote. The EC will work to attain consensus (i.e., a resolution that all members of the EC can live with, even if the decision is not one in which all members agree is optimal). In cases in which consensus is not reached, majority vote will rule. In the case of a tie vote, the President will decide the matter at issue unless provisions of these By Laws explicitly describe a different process. League managers have the option to vote on any decision by the EC by calling for a vote at a manager's meeting.
- D. Regularly scheduled meetings of the EC are open to all members of the league. The EC will hold at least one preseason meeting, one seasonal meeting and one year-end meeting per year on dates set by the President after conferring with the EC. Timely notice of regular meetings will be provided to all members of the EC and published on the league website. EC members who do not attend regular meetings in person or by telephone may not object to matters decided at the meeting. In addition, any member may call special meetings or emergency meetings when the need exists, however, reasonable notice of such meeting shall be provided to each EC member. Meetings may be conducted telephonically or by other electronic means.
- E. All meetings of the EC shall have a designated facilitator. The President or a member of the EC designated by the President shall act as facilitator.
- F. During all votes by league managers, the voting manager must be the manager of record of a team which has paid a TPL, is in good standing with the league and is participating in the current season or most recent season immediately preceding the voting meeting. A league member who is the manager of record of multiple teams is allowed a vote for each team he represents.
- G. A manager of record may elect to be represented at league meetings by a person other than himself. In such instances, the EC shall be notified prior to the meeting that a team will be represented by a person other than the manager of record. During the meeting, the representative shall have full voting rights as the manager of record.

#### **IV. ARTICLE 4: DUTIES OF THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT**

The league President shall be the chief executive officer of the league. The President will generally oversee league operations and facilitate procedural efficacy of the EC. He shall execute contracts in writing on behalf of the league. He shall enforce the provisions of these by-laws, and perform such additional duties as are incidental to his power as the executive officer of this league. The President or an individual acting as the President's designee will chair league meetings. The President will decide matters about which the EC is unable to reach a consensus unless these by-laws dictate otherwise.

#### **V. ARTICLE 5: DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

The Executive Council will be responsible for overseeing the activities of designated workgroups and the handling the day-to-day operations of the league. The EC will recommend vendors and whether the terms and conditions of contracts under consideration are in the best interests of the league. The EC shall enforce the provisions of this governance agreement and perform such additional duties as are appropriately incidental to the responsibilities falling under the EC scope of responsibility. The EC retains the right to provide corrective action to any situation not specifically covered by the By Laws.

- A. The Treasurer shall execute contracts in writing on behalf of the league and be responsible for keeping an account of all league revenue and expenditures. He shall submit a financial report at each meeting of the EC. The treasurer shall have authority to make disbursements of funds, not to exceed \$ 5,000.00 in any single disbursement. Any disbursement over \$5,000.00 must have prior approval of the EC. The treasurer shall have custody of all of the funds of the league and shall keep full and accurate records of the receipts and disbursements.
- B. The Chairman of Communications (CC) shall recruit league members, as needed, to assist the Chairman in carrying out his duties. The CC shall monitor and oversee all external communications of the league and ensure that the league brand is protected. The CC will ensure that a website for the league is maintained. The CC shall ensure that minutes are kept at each meeting of the EC and all EC minutes are published on the website. The CC will work with the EC to develop marketing strategies.
- C. The Chairman of Umpires and Rules (CUR) shall recruit league members, as needed, to assist the Chairman in carrying out his duties. The CUR will supervise the process for evaluating umpires and will make recommendations to the EC about league contracts for umpiring services. The CUR will develop a process for filing and reviewing protests. The process will be approved by the EC and published on the league website. In addition, the CUR will work with the ML to solicit managers input about proposed rules changes and shall propose to the EC for approval the "STLBFL Addendum of Superseding Exceptions" that will govern league play for the upcoming season. The approved set or rules will be published or linked at the league website. Due to the contract between the STLBFL and the Umpires Association, a conflict of interest would exist if an umpire were to serve as the CUR, therefore no umpire can serve as the CUR.
- D. The Chairman of Fields and Scheduling (CFS) shall recruit league members, as needed, to assist the Chairman in carrying out his duties. The CFS chairman will develop contracts for playing fields and propose to the EC for their approval a playing schedule for each upcoming season. The CFS will coordinate field maintenance activities. The CFS will submit to the EC a plan for the post-season league championship tournament, the league all-star game and, if applicable, any national tournament sponsored by STLBFL. The CFS will serve as Tournament Director for these events.
- E. The Manager's Liaisons (ML) shall serve as the managers' advocate and voice of the managers in matters under consideration by the EC. The ML will survey managers' opinions on game-related matters and communicate those positions to the EC. The ML is also responsible for bringing concerns expressed by managers to the attention of the EC for appropriate action.

## **VI. ARTICLE 6: SCHEDULE AND POSTSEASON PLAY**

By March 15 of each year, the CFS shall submit to the EC for approval, a proposed regular season schedule of league games. After the schedule is approved, no changes may be made without approval of the EC. By July 15 of each year, the CFS shall submit for approval, a proposed post-season playoff format and schedule.

## **VII. ARTICLE 7: TEAM ROSTERS & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

A. STLBFLL team rosters must consist of players that meet the following criteria:

1. Age Limitations

**For participation in the 43+ Division**, players must be at least 43 years old or have their 43rd birthday on or before December 31st of the year in question.

**For participation in the 53+ Division**, players must be at least 53 years old or have their 53rd birthday on or before December 31st of the year in question.

**For participation in the 60+ Division**, players must be at least 60 years old or have their 60th birthday on or before December 31, of the year in question.

**For participation in the Senior Division**, players must be at least 60 years old or have their 60th birthday on or before December 31, of the year in question.

The Senior Division is a draft league. Teams are formed yearly upon the assignment of individual players by a committee of division managers and the EC. Players are assigned teams in an effort to promote parity. There are no guarantees players will be assigned a specific team as parity is the first priority. There are no set teams within this division. Managers of the current season will decide the method to distribute players before the beginning of the season and new players who sign up during the season. This method may change each season and is solely at the discretion of the current managers. Managers have the right to “move” players between teams in season to help maintain parity. There will be at least 1 member of the EC who will act as an arbiter for the managers/players and represent the interests of the division to the league council. The division will follow the current playing rules and league by-laws with the exception of any special rules which are only applicable only to the senior division. There is no post season in the senior division.

2. Contract Status

Players must sign a league approved contract and insurance waiver form and provide age identification per means established by the EC prior to competing. The EC requires that each player provide the league a photocopy of their driver’s license or some other government issued photo I.D.

3. Good Standing

E. The EC by a consensus of its members or majority vote and ratification by the President if consensus is not reached shall have the authority to discipline, suspend or terminate the eligibility of any team, manager, player or EC member who compromises the principles and purpose of the league.

F. Players must be in good standing with the league in order to be eligible to compete. In good standing includes substantial compliance with the STLBFLL Code of Ethics for players and managers. (Rule 10.00 of the Addendum of Superseding Exceptions). Players sanctioned by the EC for transgressions must satisfy corrective actions meted out by the EC (e.g., serving suspensions for ejections, paying outstanding debts to former teams, etc.) before being in good standing with the league.

- B. STLBFL is open to players who meet the age eligibility requirements as defined in these provisions. Players may participate in other adult baseball leagues. No player shall be on the roster of more than one STLBFL team in a designated age division at the same time.
- C. Any player who violates the eligibility regulations shall be expelled from STLBFL for at least one season and for as long beyond that term as may be determined to be appropriate by the EC. In addition, any manager who willfully uses an ineligible player shall be expelled from STLBFL at least one season and for as long as is determined to be appropriate by the EC. All games in which the ineligible player participated will be forfeited.
- D. Players participating in the 43, 53 and 60 Divisions must be on the roster and have appeared (*Appeared being defined as completing at least 1 plate appearance or playing 1 defensive inning in the field. An inning being defined as 3 defensive put outs*) in at least 25% of the regular season games played for the team with which they finish the season in order to be eligible to participate in STLBFL league playoffs. A player that does not officially appear in a game may be credited for an appearance if they are present for at least 3 innings, in uniform (at a minimum, must wear his team jersey) and listed on the lineup card.
- E. Team rosters shall consist of at least 15 players and not more than 25 players. If a team has players that play on more than one team, it must have a sufficient number of core players exclusively or primarily dedicated to the team so that no forfeit will occur if dual-involved teams play on the same date. Opening Day team rosters along with proof of date of birth shall be submitted to the EC by a date determined by the EC. Rosters will be published on the league website. Rosters may be modified after the first league game as long as the roster remains at or below 25 players. During the season, the EC will send a notification to all managers within a respective age division when a team's roster within that division has been modified. All players must complete the League Liability Waiver to be added to the on-line roster and be eligible for league play. Any player added to a roster will be ineligible for game play until all appropriate paperwork is filed with the EC.

### **VIII. ARTICLE 8: INDIVIDUAL PLAYER WAIVER POLICY**

The St. Louis Baseball Forever League has adopted a "Waiver" policy which allows individual players who have not reached the proper minimum age for a specific age division to obtain an individual waiver and participate in game play prior to reaching the required minimum age.

The purpose of the policy is to assist newly formed expansion teams, teams which historically underperform the average teams within a division and teams which have experienced extraordinary circumstances. The Executive Council (EC), along with input from league managers, will identify teams which continually under perform.

Managers of underperforming teams or newly formed expansion teams, must submit to the EC, a completed copy of the league "Individual Player Waiver Request" form when requesting to place an underage player onto their roster. The EC will consider all requests and either approve or deny each request. The EC will attempt to consider all known factors such as the players abilities, age and the projected effect on the requesting team and the other teams within the division.

There is no minimum age requirement for a player to obtain a waiver and there is no restriction on the number of players with waivers per team. The approval or denial of any waiver request will be the sole discretion of the EC. Approved waivers may contain restrictions prohibiting the use of a player as a catcher or pitcher.

Players who have received a waiver will be prohibited from playing with any other team within the specific division prior to reaching the proper minimum age. All players with approved waivers will have the word "Waiver" placed next to their name on the team's online roster until the season in which the player reaches the proper minimum age.

## **IX. ARTICLE 9: PLAYER MOVEMENT - PLAYERS POOL - DRAFT PROCEDURE**

- A. For the purposes of the article, the "Season" for the Forever League is defined as that calendar time period between the league's first regular season game and the final game of the post season. Also, all players are free agents after the last game of the post season until opening day of the following season.
- B. Any player desiring to change teams within the same age division during the season must apply for a general release and transfer. In this situation, the player would obtain from his current manager a "general release and transfer". Managers shall grant requests for a general release as long as the player is in good standing. A player may appeal to the Chairman of Umpires and Rules (CUR) a decision of a manager to deny a request for general release and transfer. Upon the approval of a player's general release and transfer, the player is placed in the league player pool and may be drafted by another team under the provisions of Article 9, paragraph F. A player is restricted to 1 "General Release and Transfer" per season.
- C. In the event a team disbands during the course of a season, all players wishing to continue league play for the season in question will be placed into a special draft. The remaining teams within the division will have the right to select these players using the reverse order of the current season standings. The Executive Council (EC) will determine the date of the standings and any tie breakers which may be applied in determining the order of the draft. Any player not selected in this draft will be placed into the league players pool and will be subject to the procedures set forth in this article. Players which are selected in the special draft are obligated to play for the selecting team for the remainder of the season.
- D. Individuals who respond to league sponsored tryouts or league sponsored marketing events will be subject to the following draft procedure. The teams from the preceding season will be ranked in reverse order from last to first. The EC will decide the draft position of new teams in the division which do not have a record from the previous season. Each team has the right to select a player from the tryout or event in this order until all desired players are selected. Any player who is not selected will be placed in the league players pool and may be drafted by another team under the provisions of Article 8, paragraph F.
- E. Players recruited by individual teams outside of league tryouts or league sponsored marketing events do not have to be placed into the league players pool and are not subject to league draft procedures. These players have the right to play with any team in the league.
- F. Players placed into the league players pool or players who fill out the on-line registration form will be subject to the following procedure.
  - 1. An automated email notification will be sent out to all members of the EC when a player is registered in the players' pool.
  - 2. The EC will direct players to those teams the EC has determined as most in need.
  - 3. Managers shall notify the EC when a prospective player has been added to their team.
  - 4. Players who are not accepted onto an existing team will be placed into the general pool and will be available to all teams.
  - 5. The EC will email updated copies of the players pool upon a manager's request.
  - 6. Division managers, through their Manager's Liaison, will have the right to modify this procedure during the season if agreed to by the majority of managers in their respective division.
- G. During the time period outside the calendar "season", all league players are considered free agents. Players are free to move between teams and are not subject to the general release and transfer provisions of this article.
- H. During the "season", any player who is dropped from a roster will be prohibited from playing for the team from which he was dropped for a period of 45 days. If a dropped player wishes to play for a different team within the same age division, the player will be entered into the players pool and will subject to the provisions of Article 8, paragraph F.

## **X. ARTICLE 10: EQUIPMENT**

- A. All STLBFL players are required to wear appropriate safety-related baseball equipment while participating in STLBFL league games. Batters and runners are required to wear helmets. Catchers are required to wear a skullcap or helmet when catching.
- B. All STLBFL participating players and managers must wear baseball uniforms consisting of caps, jerseys, baseball pants, socks and baseball footwear. Each player's uniform must be of similar design to his teammates' uniforms. Managers who are not players shall not be required to wear uniforms while within the confines of the field of play. Metal spiked baseball shoes are allowed.
- C. The EC shall declare and report to team managers the type and brand of baseball that will be the official baseball used in all STLBFL games.
- D. The EC shall establish guidelines to determine the types of bats that may be used in league games. These guidelines will be specifically addressed in the STLBFL Addendum to Superseding Exceptions (League Rules).

## **XI. ARTICLE 11: LEAGUE RULES**

The Official Rules of Major League Baseball plus the "STLBFL Addendum of Superseding Exceptions" will be the code of rules governing the playing of baseball games by teams of STLBFL. The EC will ensure that the "STLBFL Addendum of Superseding Exceptions" is posted on the league web page.

## **XII. ARTICLE 12: MODIFICATION OF GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT**

These provisions may be amended by the EC at any regular or special EC meeting.

## **XIII. ARTICLE 13: EXCESSIVE HEAT POLICY**

It is the policy of the STLBFL to consider excessive heat in potentially canceling games. In the event an Excessive Heat Warning is issued by the National Weather Service, STLBFL will cancel all games with start times between 12:00 PM and 7:00 PM. Games with start times outside this time frame may also be cancelled at the discretion of the league.

## **XIV. ARTICLE 14: MANAGER'S PLAYER REPORT**

League managers have the right to report to the EC players who are **not** considered to be in good standing. (Possible reasons for players being reported to the EC are non-payment of player fees, threatened violence against teammates, any conduct displayed at a league game or event which could be considered unfavorable to the image of the league) Players who have been reported to the EC shall be ineligible to participate in any league game until the EC has reviewed the individual report and elects to reinstate the player.