

# AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB

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PRIVATIZATION - 2009

# AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB

## REASONS FOR PRIVATIZATION

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- The Amherst Baseball Club is and has been a registered non profit organization with its own board of directors and its own by-laws.
  - The Recreation Commissions definitions of a private vs. a recreation program which allows the Recreation director to administer any funds raised by the ABC. We would like the control of any funds we raise as a private non-profit organization.
  - The ability to set our own fee structure. We believe we will be better able to control our costs. We feel we can offer baseball services for less money than the past.
  - The lack of agreement between the ABC and the recreation director on the definition of a liaison between the Recreation Director and the Amherst Baseball Club.
  - The ability to implement a standardized program of skill sets and coaches training to improve the experience of players, coaches and parents who are involved in the baseball program. These are spelled out later in the presentation.
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## **AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB LOCAL TOWNS WITH PRIVATE BASEBALL CLUBS.**

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- ❑ OTHER LOCAL TOWNS THAT RUN TOWNWIDE, INCLUSIVE, PRIVATE BASEBALL PROGRAMS INCLUDE:
  - ❑ BROOKLINE, MILFORD, HOLLIS, BEDFORD, NASHUA AND MERRIMACK.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY THE CLUB

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- ❑ Organize, plan and coordinate spring screenings for the entire baseball program. We utilize roughly 25 volunteers to register, screen players, run the drills and organize groupings. This takes around 3 hours to complete.
  - ❑ Run a second screening for those who miss the initial screening. This takes 14 -15 volunteers another couple of hours to complete.
  - ❑ Organize a fair and equitable screening process for all players. The scores of 12 judges are tabulated to come up with a players score.
  - ❑ Recruit and assign coaches for all teams, t-ball through Babe Ruth. The goal is 3 coaches per team. Last season there were 28 teams from t-ball through Babe Ruth. Several hours are consumed in this endeavor.
  - ❑ Coordinate the game and practice schedules for all 28 teams. T-ball through Babe Ruth.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY THE CLUB

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- ❑ Solicited donations for team sponsorships. Last year we had two ABC volunteers spearhead the effort which raised \$4,200.00 which was paid to the Amherst Recreation Department. This money was specifically solicited to finish the dugouts at Bean Field. Nancy drafted a letter soliciting donations from sponsors on behalf of the Recreation Department and the Amherst Baseball Club. Barb Nelson and Kim Batchelder were instrumental in the success of this endeavor.
  - ❑ Coordinate Fall Ball. Coordinated the scheduling of fall ball games for our minor league and major league teams with surrounding towns we compete against.
  - ❑ Coordinate and assigned umpires for all home fall ball games.
  - ❑ Found a league for our Babe Ruth Step up players to play in during the fall season.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY THE CLUB

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- ❑ Organize and coordinate the major and minor league playoffs. Standings are not kept during the season. All teams make the playoffs, pairings are drawn from a hat.
  - ❑ Purchase and provide trophies for all finalists.
  
  - ❑ Organize and coordinate a fair and equitable screening process for the summer travel baseball season. Some other towns have coaches select the teams. We will continue to hold tryouts for the travel season as we always have. We Hold 4 separate 3 hour screenings employing 8 -10 volunteer screeners and drill instructors.
  
  - ❑ Coordinate and organize summer schedules. We schedule 3-4 tournaments for teams ages 9,10, 11 & 12.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY THE CLUB

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- ❑ Organize and coordinate the screening of Babe Ruth players. This required 12 volunteers for 2 hours.
  - ❑ Coordinate the tabulation and scoring of all Babe Ruth players. Ran the draft process for Babe Ruth teams.
  - ❑ Coordinated and organized the scheduling of Babe Ruth league teams, with the participating teams in the Souhegan Valley League.
  - ❑ Organize and coordinate the recruitment and scheduling of youth umpires for spring and fall baseball. Rookie, minor league and major leagues. This process is very labor intensive.
  - ❑ Sponsor and pay for an annual umpires training session.
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## **AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB**

### **FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY THE CLUB**

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- Attend the annual meeting of the NH Cal Ripken Baseball organization. The meeting is held in Concord, NH. This meeting is a requirement of the Cal Ripken Organization. We have been attending this meeting for years.
  - Organize, coordinate and pay for player and coaches clinics.
  - Maintain an updated website that provides Amherst Residents with baseball News and information. The website was built free of charge by a Amherst Baseball Club Volunteer.
  - Filled out and submitted the necessary paper work for keeping Amherst Baseball a member in good standing with Cal Ripken Baseball. We have been doing this for years.
  - Drag, rake and line fields. Apply speedy-dry and prep fields for games.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY AMHERST RECREATION

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- ❑ SET FEES FOR THE PROGRAM
  - ❑ COLLECT FEES FROM REGISTRATION
  - ❑ ORDER UNIFORMS (**NO REDSOX ALLOWED**)
  - ❑ ORGANIZE AND HAND OUT EQUIPMENT (**THE ABC DID THIS UNTIL TWO YEARS AGO**)
  - ❑ MAINTAIN FIELDS (**WE DO RAKE AND GROOM INFIELD AS WELL AS PUT DOWN FOUL LINES AND BATTERS BOXES FOR ALL GAMES**)
  - ❑ **We feel we are well equipped to make a seamless transition to take over the setting of fees, setting up registration, ordering uniforms and providing equipment.**
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB

### THE AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB PHILOSOPHY

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- ❑ We have observed all Amherst recreation rules for playing time and positional play. We have enforced rules requiring all players to bat in a continuous batting order. We have done this for years and we will continue to enforce the same rules as a private organization.
  - ❑ We are an inclusive organization that has worked to provide baseball for all the children of Amherst. Our program will be designed to teach good sportsmanship, teamwork and baseball skills in a recreational and rewarding atmosphere. This will not be a change.
  - ❑ Travel teams are self funding and will continue to operate this way. Our travel teams had a \$400.00 surplus last summer.
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# AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB HISTORY

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The Amherst Baseball Club has provided baseball services to all the youth of Amherst for years, when the recreation department did little more than give us the combination to the shed. During those years we could have taken the baseball program in another direction. We could have ignored recreation rules and made the program an elitist program for only the most talented players. Instead we have adopted additional rules such as a rule that requires a 10 year old to be better than 50% of the players in the Majors. This rule leaves space open for an 11 or 12 year old players who are less talented. This is not the type of rule that an Elitist program would adopt.

- In the spring of 2008 I sat down with Nancy McMillan at Amherst Recreation. We discussed how screenings would be performed as well as how scores were tabulated. We carried out this process exactly as the ABC has done it in the past, with the approval of the Amherst Recreation Director. Nancy was in attendance at our screenings. We also discussed how scores were tabulated and how the drafts were carried out in the past, Nancy also approved of this process. The draft was carried out at the recreation department with recreation employees observing the draft. After the process was completed, I asked Nancy what she thought. She indicated that she thought it was a fair and equitable process. This screening and team selection is no different from what the ABC has done in the past or will continue to do in the future as a private organization.
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# AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB HISTORY

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- In February of 2008 the Amherst Baseball Club held an open meeting specifically to discuss the new Recreation Commissions definitions of a “private” vs. a “recreation program”. This meeting was held primarily to discuss whether to go private or to remain a recreation program. We invited the recreation department and the Recreation Director was in attendance. An open vote was held and an overwhelming majority of the citizens in attendance voted to privatize. The Amherst Baseball Club board met and we decided that going private that close to the start of the spring would create too much confusion and would only hurt youth baseball in town.
  - Recently the ABC board of directors met and voted to privatize for the upcoming 2009 season. We informed the Amherst Recreation Director Via e-mail letter. This was done per the ARC’s ruling from their December 2007 meeting. We did not anticipate that the Amherst recreation Department would immediately announce that they would run a parallel baseball program. We feel that the ABC has been a good steward of the youth baseball program in town, over the many years we have been involved. We feel that we have demonstrated that we will run an inclusive program that promotes fair play, teamwork, skill development and good sportsmanship. We will continue with this same philosophy. Once again, we had little oversight from Amherst Recreation for many years and we never tried to change the inclusive nature of the baseball program in Amherst.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB FUTURE PLANS

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- ❑ We will continue to operate an inclusive baseball program for the baseball community in Amherst, whether we run half a program or an entire program.
  - ❑ We will offer a variety of instructional clinics utilizing professional instructors as well as veteran ABC coaches available to all the players within the program.
  - ❑ We will institute a coach the coaches program where we not only offer professional instructional clinics for all coaches, we will assign a veteran coach to help novice coaches with organizing and running their first few practices. The veteran coach will be in attendance.
  - ❑ We will give coaches the necessary tools, ideas and structure to help them to run effective fun and rewarding practices. We will continue to invest in equipment such as L screens, pop up nets etc. so that multiple coaches will be able to run multiple coaching stations and multiple drills to more effectively utilize the limited practice time teams have.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB

### FUTURE PLANS

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- ❑ We will implement a specific set of throwing progression drills that will teach players from day one the proper grip and proper warm up techniques. This will build confidence and arm strength.
  - ❑ We will implement a specific proven batting techniques throughout the program to help all players build their confidence and assuring that all players receive similar instruction.
  - ❑ We will implement a set of specific drills to teach all players the five links of proper pitching mechanics. Learning the proper mechanics from the beginning accomplishes a couple of important things. 1) it helps to develop more pitchers within the program but more importantly, 2) It will remove stress that can build up on players shoulders and elbows causing injuries such as Little League elbow.
  - ❑ We will implement a specific set of infield and outfield drills that teach specific skill sets such as the ready position, fielding ground balls, the cross over step, staying down on the ball, throwing after the catch as well as many other skills and techniques not mentioned.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB FUTURE PLANS

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- ❑ The Amherst Baseball Club recognizes that not all coaches have the same skill level or the same life experience. We want to encourage a novice coach to enter the program as a coach knowing that they will have the proper training and techniques to run a productive, instructional, exciting and fun practice for all participants.
  - ❑ By implementing these specific set of skills and training techniques across the baseball program, we will be better able to assure that all players are able to experience proper instruction, in a productive, exciting and fun atmosphere.
  - ❑ There are many different drills that can be used to keep practices fresh and exciting so they do not grow stale. Our goal is to teach baseball skills and sportsmanship in an exciting, rewarding and comfortable atmosphere for all players, coaches and parents associated with the program.
  - ❑ We will consider future fund raising activities to help and improve our town baseball facilities, provided the money raised is spent on the specific project that it is earmarked for.
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## AMHERST BASEBALL CLUB SUMMARIZATION

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- We believe, that giving the fiscal issues facing the town of Amherst, That the town should consider the Amherst Baseball Club taking over some or all of the Town baseball Program.
  
  - From organizing and running screenings and team selections, sponsoring clinics for players, coaches and umpires. To umpiring assignments, making practice and game schedules, fund raising and registrations. To Website creation and management and filling out the appropriate administrative paperwork. The Amherst Baseball Club provides hundreds of volunteer hours of manpower per year. We are in position to provide hundreds of volunteer hours of service to the town at no charge in the future.
  
  - Once again, we believe we have proven to be an inclusive organization that has operated with the best interest of all the youth of Amherst at heart. We are proud of our past service to the community. We do not believe that running two parallel baseball programs in a small town like Amherst, is in the best interest of the players or the parents of Amherst. We hope the town will be able to meet us in the middle.
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