Friends of Goodwin Forest
Hampton, Connecticut
Bylaws

Article I – Name

This group, established in 2010, shall be known as the Friends of Goodwin Forest.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of the group shall be to advocate, enhance and support education, recreation, and conservation activities of the historic James L. Goodwin Forest and Conservation Center.

Article III – Membership and Dues

1. Membership is open to any residents of Connecticut and surrounding states. The Friends of Goodwin Forest do not discriminate based on race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnic background, age, or religion.
2. Membership year and fiscal year shall run from January 1 through December 31.
3. Members are encouraged to attend and participate in all meetings, to serve on committees, to represent the Friends during special events, and to participate in Goodwin Forest maintenance activities. Any member intending to discontinue membership should notify the Membership Committee Chairperson.
4. Annual dues shall be established by the Friends' Executive Board.
5. Dues are payable by the January meeting. Dues not received by the March meeting will result in termination of the individual's membership.

Article IV – Meetings

1. The Friends will meet bimonthly from January through December on the third Tuesday of the month at 1 PM unless otherwise specified.
2. Visitors are welcome at all meetings and may stay for the business meeting. Visitors cannot vote and will not be charged for attendance.

Article V – Officers and Executive Board

1. The President shall preside at general membership and Executive Board meetings and shall be responsible for compliance with these Bylaws. They shall appoint chairpersons for all committees, coordinate the work of the other officers and committees, and perform other duties as are incident to the office. The President may serve as an ex-officio member of all committees. They will publish notices of bi-monthly meetings and events.

2. The Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President. They will succeed, if willing, the current President.
3. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings and conduct correspondence, both business and social, as requested by the President.
4. The Treasurer shall make disbursements, keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures, and make bi-monthly reports to the membership.
    a) All receipts for expenditures shall be relinquished to the Treasurer at the time of reimbursement.
    b) Account records are to be audited annually by another member of the Executive Board and are subject to approval by the membership.
    c) They shall prepare an annual proposed budget for the subsequent fiscal year to be reviewed and approved by the Executive Board.
    d) They shall notify each member regarding payment of dues.
    e) They shall file IRS form 990-N electronically by April 15 of each year.
    f) Only the Treasurer, President or Vice President are authorized to sign checks on the Friends' account. One signature shall be required for valid check execution in the amount up to $500.00. Two signatures shall be required for valid check execution over $500.00. The Treasurer shall be custodian of the Friends' checkbook and financial records.
5. There shall be an Executive Board consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and any other members as designated by the President. Executive Board meetings will be called as needed by the President.
    a) The Executive Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Friends between meetings, fix the hours and place of such meetings, make recommendations to the membership, review and approve the annual budget, and perform other duties as appropriate.
    b) The Friends shall have the following standing committees to carry out its mission: Membership, Programs, Trail Maintenance, Trail Run, and Gardens. The Committees shall have written operating guidelines. The Committees shall review the guidelines annually and submit revisions to the Executive Board for approval.

Article VI- Nominating and Electing Officers

1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Executive Board members and shall be chaired by the President.
2. The past or out going President shall present the proposed slate of officers to the general membership at the January meeting, followed by elections.
3. The general membership may nominate other members for officer positions with the prior consent of those members.

4. If no other officer candidates are put forward, the entire slate of officers proposed by the Executive Board is voted upon as a unit. If a separate candidate is offered for one of the officer positions, then that position is voted upon separately. Officers are elected by a simple majority of the members present at the January meeting.
5. If circumstances warrant, elections may be held by mail or electronic mail. The majority of the ballots returned prior to the deadline established in the ballot shall determine the results.
6. All officers are elected for a period of two years. If officer vacancies occur, they may be filled by appointment of the Executive Board to serve until the next election.
7. Incoming officers will assume office immediately following their election.

Article VII – Amendments

The Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds vote of membership present at any meeting, provided that such proposed amendment shall have been discussed at the previous meeting and notice that action will be taken has been given to all the members, either by mail or electronic mail, for the meeting at which voting will take place.

Article VIII – General

No part of the net earnings of the Friends of Goodwin Forest shall benefit or be distributed to its members, officers, or other private people, except to make payments to further its purpose.

No part of the activities of the Friends should attempt to influence or participate in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Upon dissolution of the Friends for any reason, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the organization, the remaining assets shall be distributed to a charity, non-profit fund, or foundation, as voted by the members.