

Gazehounds of New England Constitution
Revised 7-12-22

Article I Name and Objectives

Section 1: The Name of the Club shall be Gazehounds of New England (GONE)

Section 2: The objectives of the Club shall be:

- a) To encourage and promote the qualities of purebred Sighthounds and to strive to maintain and enhance their natural sighthound qualities.
- b) To urge members and breeders to acknowledge the individual breed standard approved by the American Kennel Club (AKC) as the only standard.
- c) To make every effort to protect and promote the interests of the sighthound breeds by encouraging sportsmanlike competition at field trials and other club-related events.
- d) To hold lure coursing events for sighthounds as a test of their coursing abilities within the guidelines provided by the American Sighthound Field Association (ASFA) and the AKC.
- e) To hold lure coursing practices whenever possible.
- f) To hold field trials at a variety of sites throughout the year.
- g) To promote and encourage educational programs related to the sport.
- h) To assist and support other sister clubs when able.

Article II Membership

Section 1: Eligibility – There shall be three types of membership

- a) Member - Open to all persons eighteen years of age and older who are in good standing in both the AKC and the ASFA and who subscribe to the objectives of this Club.
- b) Family Membership – Open to family members residing at the same address. They shall both be in good standing in ASFA and the AKC and who subscribe to the objectives of this Club. Each family has only one vote at club meetings. Members of the family may not vote separately.
- c) Pending Member – This individual or family member is eighteen years of age and older who has submitted a membership application form along with membership dues and endorsements. Said individuals or families will be listed in the GONE membership list with an asterisk. Furthermore, such individuals will not have the right to vote at Club meetings until they have been voted into membership by GONE's Board of Directors (Section 3b).
- d) Eligibility for membership will be predicated not only upon the member meeting criteria of Sections 1a (Member) and Section 2 (Dues). It is also encouraged that all members will show commitment to the club by attending (at least) 50% of all club-sponsored field trials within each calendar year to participate as a competitor and/or volunteer.

Section 2: Dues – Membership dues shall be \$20.00 per year per person or \$25.00 per family. All dues shall be payable on or before the 1st day of April each year. Dues paid by new members after the 1st day of October shall be good for the following year as well. During the month of January, the Treasurer shall notify all other members of their dues for the ensuing year.

Section 3: Election to membership – Each applicant for membership shall apply on a form as approved by the Board of Directors (Board) and which shall stipulate that the applicant agrees to abide by this Constitution, by-laws and the rules of the AKC and the ASFA.

- a) The membership application shall state the name, address, e-mail and phone number of the applicant and it shall carry the endorsement of one GONE member in good standing with ASFA or the AKC. Dues payment for the current year shall accompany the application.
- b) All applications are to be filed with the Club Secretary who will send any application(s) to the membership for review. The membership has 14 days by which any responses must be submitted to the Secretary, and the deadline for responses must be stated in the mailing to membership. The membership will be asked one question, “Do you agree that the Board should vote to approve the applications(s)? Yes or no?” The Board then has 30 days to vote via email to accept or deny membership. A majority vote of approval by the Board is required to accept an application.
- c) Applicants rejected for membership by the Club may re-apply again after a six-month waiting period. Any dues payment made with the membership application will be returned.

Section 4: Termination of the membership – Membership may be terminated by:

- a) Resignation – Any member in may resign from the Club upon written notice to the Secretary.
- b) Lapsing – A membership will be considered to have lapsed and will be automatically terminated if such Member’s dues remain unpaid 90 days after the first day of April. However, the Board may grant an additional 60 days of grace to such delinquent Members in meritorious cases.
- c) Expulsion – A Membership may be terminated by expulsion as provided in Article VII, Section 4 of this Constitution.

Article III Directors and Officers

Section 1: Officers – The Club’s officers consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall serve in their respective capacities both with regard to the Club and its meetings and the Board and its meetings.

- a) The President shall preside at all meetings of the Club and the Board and shall have the duties and powers normally appurtenant to the office of the President in addition to those particularly specified in these by-laws.

- b) The Vice-President shall have the duties and exercise the power of the President in the case of the President's death, absence, or incapacity to carry out the responsibilities of the office of President.
- c) The Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the Club and the Board and of all matters of which a record shall be ordered by the President or the Club. The Secretary shall have the charge of correspondence, notifying members of meetings, notifying new members of their election to membership, handling all communications around Nominations including the tallying of votes (Article V, Section 4), notifying officers and directors of their elections to office, keeping roll of the members of the Club with their addresses, and carrying out such other duties as are prescribed by this Constitution.
- d) The Treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys due or belonging to the Club. The Treasurer shall deposit the same in a banking institution designated by the Board in the name of the Club. The Treasurer shall receive a full and verifiable financial accounting of all income and expenses from the Field Trial Secretary or Chairman after each event. The Treasurer's books shall at all times be available for inspection by the Board and he/she shall report to the Board at every meeting upon the current condition of the Club's finances and of every item of receipt or payment not previously reported. At the annual meeting he/she shall render written account of all moneys received and expended during the previous fiscal year.
- e) The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person in which case the Board shall be comprised of the officers and five other persons. The additional person shall be appointed by the Board to serve a term concurrent with the office of Secretary/Treasurer. At no time shall a member of the Board of Directors be entitled to more than one vote.

Section 2: Board of Directors - The Board shall be comprised of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President (for one one-year term), and five additional persons serving as Directors, all of whom shall be members in good standing. One of those additional Directors shall be the ASFA Delegate. The Board shall be elected for two-year terms by mail-in ballot prior to the Club's annual meeting as provided in Article V, Sections 3-4, and shall serve until their successors are elected. General management of the Club's affairs shall be entrusted to the Board of Directors.

The office of the Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person in which case the Board shall be comprised of the officers and five additional persons. The fifth additional person shall be appointed by the Board to serve a term concurrent with the office of the Secretary/Treasurer. At no time shall a member of the Board of Directors be entitled to more than one vote.

Section 3: Vacancies – Any vacancies occurring on the Board or among the offices during the term shall be filled until the next election by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board at its first regular meeting following the creation of the vacancy, or at a Special meeting called for that purpose; except that a vacancy in the office of President shall be filled automatically by the Vice-President and the resulting vacancy in the office of the Vice Presidency shall be filled by the Board until the next election by a majority vote of the remaining members.

Article IV Meetings and Voting

Section 1: Club Meetings – Meetings of the Club shall be held at a minimum of once per year, at such a date, time, and place to be designated by the Board of Directors or the President. Such meetings may also be held remotely via the internet if the Board decides this is in the best interest of the membership.

- a) The Secretary shall notify each member in writing by mail or electronically of any meetings at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- b) The quorum for such meeting shall be a minimum of 25% of the members in good standing.

Section 2: Special Club Meetings – Special Club meetings may be called by the President, or by a majority vote of the members of the Board who are present and voting at any regular or special meetings of the Board. Such Special Club Meetings shall be held remotely via the internet as such a date and time to be designated by the Board of Directors or the President. The Secretary shall notify each member in writing by mail or electronically of these meetings at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting. Any such notice shall state the purpose of the meeting and no other Club business shall be transacted. A quorum for such meeting shall be a minimum of 25% of the members in good standing.

Section 3: Board Meetings – Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at a minimum of two times per year. One meeting shall be held in January preceding the Annual Meeting. A second meeting shall be held during the year to welcome new Board members and follow-up on the business of the Annual Meeting. Such meetings shall be held remotely via the internet and shall be convened at such a date and hour as may be designated by the President. Written notice of each meeting shall be mailed or sent electronically by the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting. The quorum for such meetings shall be a majority of the Board.

Section 4: Special Board Meetings – Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President; or shall be called by the Secretary upon receipt of a written request signed by at least three members of the Board. Such special meetings shall be held remotely by internet and shall be convened at such a date and hour as may be designated by the Board of Directors or the President. Written notice of such meeting shall be mailed or sent electronically by the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting. Any such notice shall state the

purpose of the meeting and no other business shall be transacted. A quorum of such meeting shall be the majority of the Board.

Section 5: Voting – Each member in good standing whose dues are paid for the current year shall be entitled to one vote at any meeting of the Club at which the member is present. Proxy voting will not be permitted at any Club meeting or election.

Article V The Club Year, Annual Meeting, Elections

Section 1: Club Year – The Club’s fiscal year shall begin on the 1st day of January and end on the 31st day of December. The Club’s official year shall begin immediately at the conclusion of the election at the annual meeting and shall continue through the succeeding annual meeting.

Section 2: Annual Meeting – The Annual Meeting shall be held in the month of January or February at which Officers and Directors voted in for the ensuing two years - in the November election prior to the Annual meeting (Section 4a) - shall take office immediately upon the conclusion of the Annual Meeting. Each retiring Officer shall turn over to his/her successor in office all properties and records relating to that office within 30 days after the election. The Officers of the Club shall be elected in the even numbered years and the Elected Directors in the odd numbered years.

Section 3: Nominations – No person may be a candidate in a Club election who has not been nominated.

- a) In October of each year, the Secretary shall send a letter (electronically or by mail) to the membership (except for Pending Members) requesting nominations for Officers or Board of Directors for the upcoming year (Article V, Section 2). Those nominations must be returned to the Secretary within 21 days of receipt. The Secretary shall contact all nominated members and ask if they will accept their nomination to a specific position. By November 1, the Secretary shall create a voting roster based on the responses of nominated members and send the voting roster to each Member and Family Member by mail. A stamped envelope with the secretary’s name and address shall be included with the voting roster. A cover letter, also included with the roster, shall state the date by which voting must be completed after which no additional votes will be accepted. All ballots must be returned by mail to ensure proper accuracy and transparency. The Secretary shall then tabulate the votes and keep voting roster hard copies for one year. The Secretary shall announce via email the voting results to the membership prior the Annual Meeting.
- b) Nominations cannot be made in any other manner than provided in this section.
- c) To be nominated as a candidate for Club election, the person must be a Club Member in good standing.

Section 4: Elections – The nominated candidate receiving the greatest number of votes for each position shall be declared elected.

Article VI Committees

Section 1: Appointment - The Board may each year appoint standing committees to advance the work of the Club in such matters as specialty shows, obedience trials, field trials, trophies, annual prizes, membership, and other areas that may well be served by committees. Such committees shall always be subject to the final authority of the Board. Special committees may also be appointed by the Board to aid it on specific projects.

Section 2: Termination - Any committee appointee may be terminated by a majority vote of the full membership of the Board upon written notice to the appointee and the Board may appoint successors to those persons whose services have been terminated.

Article VII Discipline

Section 1: AKC and ASFA Suspension – Any member who is suspended from the privileges of the AKC or ASFA shall automatically be suspended from the privileges of this Club for a like period.

Section 2: Charges – Any member may bring charges against another member for alleged misconduct that is prejudicial to the best interests of the Club, the sighthound breeds and/or the sport of lure coursing. Written charges containing specific allegations must be filed in duplicate with the Secretary together with a deposit of \$10, which sum shall be forfeited if the charges are not upheld by the Board. The Secretary shall promptly send a copy of the charges to each member of the Board or shall present them at a Board Meeting and the Board shall initially consider whether the actions in the charges, if proven, might constitute conduct prejudicial to the best interests of the Club and sighthound breeds. If the Board considers that the charges do not allege conduct which would be prejudicial to the best interests of the Club or sighthound breeds it may refuse to entertain jurisdiction. If the Board entertains jurisdiction of the charges, it shall fix a date of a hearing by the Board not less than three (3) weeks nor more than six (6) weeks from the receipt of the charges. The Secretary shall promptly send one copy of the charges to the accused member by certified mail together with a notice of the hearing and an assurance that the defendant may personally appear in his/her own defense and bring witnesses if he/she so wishes.

Section 3: Board Hearing – The Board shall have complete authority to decide whether counsel may attend the hearing but, both complainant and defendant shall be treated uniformly in that regard. Should the charges be sustained after hearing all the evidence and testimony presented by complainant and defendant, the Board may by a majority vote of those present, suspend the defendant from

all privileges of the Club for not more than six months from the date of the hearing. If the Board deems that punishment insufficient, it may also recommend to the membership that the penalty be expulsion from the Club. In such case the suspension shall not restrict the defendant's right to appear before his fellow members at the ensuing Club meeting which considers the Board's recommendation. Immediately after the Board has reached a decision, its findings shall be put in written form and filed with the Secretary. The Secretary, in turn, shall notify each of the parties of the Board's decision and penalty, if any.

Section 4: Expulsion – Expulsion of a Member from the Club may be accomplished only at a meeting of the Club following a Board Hearing and upon the Board's recommendation as provided in Section 3 of this Article. Such proceedings may occur at a regular or special meeting of the Club to be held within 60 days but not earlier than 30 days after the date of the Board's recommendation of expulsion. The defendant shall have the opportunity of appearing in his own behalf although no evidence shall be taken at this meeting. The President shall read the charges and the Board's findings and recommendations and shall invite the defendant, if present, to speak in his/her own behalf if he/she wishes. The meeting shall then vote by secret written ballot on the proposed expulsion. A two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of those present and voting at the meeting shall be necessary for expulsion. If expulsion is not so voted, suspension, as defined in Section 3, shall stand.

Article VIII Amendments to the Constitution

Section 1: Amendments – Amendments to the Constitution and by-laws may be proposed by the Board of Directors or by written petition, addressed to the Secretary and signed by twenty (20) percent of the Members, in good standing. Amendments proposed by such a petition shall be promptly considered by the Board of Directors. The Board's response and any recommendation must be forwarded to the membership for a vote within three months of the date that the petition was received by the Secretary.

Section 2: Ratification - The Constitution and by-laws may be amended by a two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the Members present and voting at any regular or special meeting called for this purpose, provided that the proposed amendments have been included in the notice of the meeting and mailed to each Member at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting.

Article IX Dissolution of the Club

Section 1: The Club may be dissolved at any time by the written consent of not less than two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the Club's membership in good standing. In the event of the dissolution of the Club, other than for the purposes of reorganization whether voluntary or involuntary or by operation of law, none of the property, proceeds thereof, nor any assets of the Club shall be distributed to

any members of the Club. After payments of the debts of the Club, all property and assets shall be donated to a charitable organization for the benefit of dogs or to another lure coursing club selected by the Board of Directors.

Article X Order of Business

Section 1: Club Meetings - At meetings of the Club the Order of Business so far as the character and nature of the meeting may permit shall be as follows:

Roll Call
Approval of the minutes of the last meeting
Report of the President
Report of the Secretary
Report of the Treasurer
Report of the ASFA Delegate
Report of Committees
Election of Officers (in even number years)
Election of Directors (in odd number years)
Election of new members
Unfinished Business
New Business
Adjournment

Section 2: Board Meetings - At meetings of the Board the Order of Business unless otherwise directed by majority vote of those present shall be as follows:

Approval of the minutes of the last meeting
Report of the Secretary
Report of the Treasurer
Report of Committees
Unfinished Business
New Business
Adjournment

NOTE: This Constitution guides GONE's governance as a member of the American Sighthound and Field Association.