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BYLAWS

Article I. Membership

- 1.1 Board of Director membership are those individuals who have been elected as representatives from their local Recognized Chapter.
- 1.2 General membership shall be open to people who have a disability and who demonstrate interest in People First of New Hampshire. Members may vote on certain issues as decided by the Board.
- 1.3 Non-voting membership shall be open to people who support the goals of People First of New Hampshire and request participation as a non-voting member.

Article II. Chapter Recognition

- 2.1 Any self-advocacy group which organizes in New Hampshire can request recognition from the Board of Directors by writing a letter. The group must state how often it meets and whether the mission of the group is similar to People First of New Hampshire's mission. The group should also express its willingness to participate in the goals of People First of New Hampshire. If so recognized by a letter from the Board of Directors, the group shall become a Chapter of People First of New Hampshire and shall be entitled to elect two (2) representatives to the Board of Directors of People First of New Hampshire to represent that Chapter. Each Chapter and its two representatives must follow the People First of NH By-Laws.

Article III. Meetings

- 3.1 Meetings shall be of four kinds: board of director meetings, general membership meetings, an annual meeting, and special meetings.
- 3.2 Board of director meetings shall be held at a time and place designated by a majority of the board of directors.

3.3 Annual Meeting - The annual meeting shall take place at a time designated by the board. The annual meeting shall be waivable by a majority vote of the Board of Directors provided that the annual meeting cannot be waived two years in a row.

3.4 Special meetings may be called by a majority vote of the membership of People First of New Hampshire whose names shall be signed to the notice of such meeting. Such meeting notice shall be sent two (2) weeks prior to the holding of such meeting in a way decided by a majority of the members that will ensure notification of the meeting to at least ninety (90) percent of the membership.

Article IV. Board of Directors

4.1 The Board of Directors shall consist of not less than five (5) members as follows:

President

Vice-President

Treasurer

Secretary

Two (2) Representatives of each recognized local self-advocacy chapter. One or both of these representatives may also be elected as officer.

4.2 Duties of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall:

(A) Have all powers and duties of running People First of New Hampshire according to the priorities set by the board of directors at the annual meeting or a special meeting.

(B) Act to ensure that the policies for operation and administration of People First of New Hampshire are carried out including hiring and supervising the Executive Coordinator.

(C) Promote the goals and objectives of People First of New Hampshire.

(D) Maintain adequate funding sources and exercise necessary and reasonable control of organizational accounting and fund raising.

(E) Act in an advisory capacity to Local Self-Advocacy Groups and Chapters throughout the State of New Hampshire, upon request.

(F) All decisions made by the Board of Directors shall be by majority vote.

(G) A quorum of five (5) voting members of the Board of Directors shall be required for the transaction of business at a board of directors meeting, annual, and special meetings.

(H) President, Vice-President, Treasurer, or Secretary may be empowered by the Board of Directors to sign documents on behalf of People First of New Hampshire.

(I) Any member of People First of New Hampshire may attend any meeting of the Board of Directors.

(J) Any executive session may be called upon majority vote of the board. General members and non-voting members selected by the board of directors shall attend the executive session, as appropriate.

4.3 Meetings of the Board of Directors

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least one time a year at a time and place established by the Board.

4.4 Election of the Board of Directors

Prior to the elections, the President of People First of New Hampshire will send a letter to each Recognized Chapter to elect not more than two (2) representatives who then become board members of the Board of Directors of People First of NH. Before the election of officers, the Board of Directors shall nominate candidates from the current Board of Directors for the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. The membership of People First of New Hampshire shall vote for their officers by secret ballot at the annual or special meeting. The candidate for each office who receives the most votes shall be declared elected. The newly

elected representatives from each Recognized Chapter begin their term once the election for officers occurs.

4.5 Officers

President: The President has authority over business meetings and any other meeting of the general membership. The President leads the board of directors in establishing and following the mission, purpose, by-laws and goals of People First of NH.

Vice President: The Vice President will perform all duties and exercise all powers of the President when the President is absent or is otherwise unable to act. The Vice President will perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time-to-time by the Board of Directors.

Secretary: The Secretary shall ensure that a record of all proceedings of all meetings of the Board of Directors is maintained.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall ensure that a complete and accurate account of all funds received and disbursed is maintained.

4.6 Criteria for Nominating and Electing Board Members and Board Officers

In order to insure the right person for the right position the following key points regarding personal and professional qualities and skills must be considered when making nominations and voting for people:

- The person understands the requirements of the Board position as indicated in Article III, 3.3 Duties of the Board of Directors.
- The person is considered to be fair, honest, patient, understanding, respectful, organized, a good listener, and motivated.

The person considered:

- Is able to take the charge as needed in the position.
- Is able to give direction to the organization.
- Has a positive attitude and comes up with ideas and suggestions.
- Has a general awareness of disability issues and other societal issues and events.
- Knows when to ask for help and will do so.

- Will make sure everyone is heard in meetings.
- Likes a challenge and wants to learn.
- Is believed to understand the mission statement of People First of New Hampshire and has a vision for the organization's future.

4.7 Initial Establishment of Board of Directors

The incorporators shall establish the initial Board of Directors.

4.8 Conflict of Interest

The Board will comply with all requirements of New Hampshire law where conflicts of interest are involved, including but not limited to the requirements of a two-thirds vote where the financial benefit to the director or trustee is between \$500 and \$5000 in a fiscal year, and to the requirement of a two-thirds vote and publication in the required newspaper where the financial benefit exceeds \$5000 in a fiscal year. The New Hampshire statutory requirements are incorporated into and made a part of this conflict policy.

Article V. Terms of Office

5.1 Each member of the Board of Directors shall serve a two (2) year term of office or until a successor is selected or appointed.

5.2 No officer shall be elected to the same office on the Board of Directors for more than two (2) two (2) year terms consecutively. If a person is appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors, he or she is entitled to be a candidate for that position at the next regularly scheduled election.

5.3 Vacancies

Any vacancies occurring on the Board of Directors shall be filled by appointment of the majority of the Board of Directors. The person appointed shall serve until the next regularly scheduled election for that position.

Article VI. Removal or Suspension

6.1 A member of the Board of Directors may be suspended or removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors for any of the following reasons:

(A) Failure to perform the duties of a Board member and/or failure to follow the mission and goals of the organization.

A board member or any voting or non-voting member can be suspended or removed from participation if the other members agree that he or she has engaged in any of the following:

- Conduct that reflects negatively on the organization (picking fights, yelling, spitting, taking or damaging property, cursing, being drunk or using illegal drugs during meetings).
- Physically hurting others.
- If board member, having three unexcused absences. Excused absences would include personal illness, death or illness in the family, employer refusal to permit attendance.
- Not following the bylaws intentionally on a regular basis
- Continually being in trouble with the law.
- Suspension and removal:

Sexual misconduct, verbal and/or physical abuse: should any member of People First be involved in sexual harassment, sexual abuse, verbal or physical abuse, 1 warning will be given to the member by 2/3 vote of the board that he/she will be suspended for 12 consecutive meetings or other self-advocacy related events. After 12 meetings or events, the member may return with the condition that he/she has an advisor or other support person with them at all times. Repeated action after return will result in removal by 2/3 vote of the board.

Other disruptive conduct: should any member of People First act with any degree of unruly conduct, the board may suspend the member, upon 2/3 vote of the board after 3 warnings are given within any one meeting. The member will be requested to leave the meeting and will not be able to return to the next meeting. If unruly conduct is repeated, the board may rule by 2/3 vote to suspend the member for the next three meetings.

(B) An officer may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the President or Vice-President.

Article VII. Decisions

Decisions to be made by Board versus general membership other than those indicated in by-laws are with regard to: Membership Minutes (general membership), Board Minutes (Board), Goals (Board first, then general membership), Committee (Board), Representation of People First (Board), Political Action on behalf of People First (Board and general membership), and Fundraising (Board).

Article VIII. Amendments to the By-Laws

The power to alter, amend, or repeal these By-Laws or adopt new By-Laws shall be vested in the voting members. The Board of Directors shall submit any proposed changes to these By-Laws to the voting members at least thirty days prior to any annual or special meeting at which such proposed changes shall be considered. The Board of Directors shall submit any proposed change which is requested by petition of twenty voting members. Changes shall be adopted upon two thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present and voting at a duly called meeting.