GBL Membership Meeting MINUTES Guilford Room

Wednesday March 25h, 2015 7:45-9:45pm

In Attendance: Bruce Freeman, Scott Markovich, Kevin Lee, Damian Lynch, Thatcher Zuse, Enrique Rivera, Jamie Mikolay, Doug Danaher, Heather Grattan, Cliff Yerkes, Christian Appleman, Phil Goldberg, Alex Weekes, Marty Kellaher, Jeff Ulrich

Discussion topics:

Finances-Jeff Ulrich-current balance $40,000. Large uncollected unpaid registration fees~$6,500.

ACTION ITEMS

* Jeff will pursue uncollected money and by Aug 1st any uncollected fees will be written off.
* Damian will set up registration requiring payment at time of registration

Referees-Jeff Hahn(not in attendance) reported he will continue as coordinator and had no issues at this time

Minihoops-Jamie Mikolay will be coordinator for 2015-2016. Season was very successful, Biggest complaints were 8am start times, hoops too high for some kids and too short of season.

ACTION ITEMS

* Bruce/Jamie will investigate a hang on lower hoop
* Bruce/Jamie Next meeting will look at calendar for 2015-2106 season-possibly could extend season

Rec League-Heather Grattan-Overall successful season with robust numbers. Younger leagues went very well except 3GG parity issue. Also some teams with 8am start times every week due to coaching conflicts. 7/8 Girls worked out pretty well given teams so large(10-11). Friday night practices not well received. Suggest separate 7th and 8th grade girls into two subdrafts. 7/8 Boys combo did not work at all for variety of reasons. 8th grade class was only 38 boys. Discussed preserving integrity of blind draft-possibly with board member at draft or doing draft at a separate board meeting after evals. 3rd boys and 3rd and 4th girls works better with smaller teams and 4 on 4. Need to have 6-8 per team to accomplish that goal. More effort towards coach recruitment & coach education discussed. Heather will stay on for 2015-2016 but will phase out during the year to new volunteers.

ACTION ITEMS

* Bruce-Next meeting map out coach education/orientation schedule and gym times for 2015-2016

Travel Program-John Costanzo(out of town). Enrique Rivera taking over role for off season planning and 2015-2016season.. Season review-some challenges with CSBL-scheduling was inconsistent 2nd half of year and # of teams especially in the girls leagues was too low. Meeting with CSBL core group next week-East Haven, North Haven and Branford. Our biggest asset is Adams-lots of home gym time for Sunday games. B team for 6th grade had successful season but was a strain on practice scheduling and involved a lot of longer distance travel.

ACTION ITEMS

* Bruce/Enrique-attend meeting next week to discuss plans for CSBL going forward.

3rd Grade Travel-Enrique Rivera-Good season-many training sessions and games and still going for 1 more tournament.

Sunday 3 on 3-Phil Goldberg-Successful pilot with 4th and 5th graders.4 3 on 3 games at a time at Baldwin. Some behavioral challenges stood out given small sided nature of games.

High School Rec-John Suchy🡪Charlie Danaher will take over-possibly as a capstone project. Unclear if additional gym time will be available at new GHS. Games at JONES and COX are not good for this group-too big for gyms and strains other GBL practice times.

Registration Process & Website-Damian Lynch All stable-will promote summer options and do skillz and drillz registration again this year. Looking for a new registrar.

ACTION ITEM-Bruce/Damian recruit new volunteer for registration processing.

Scheduling-Mark Matlosz(not in attendance). Some issues with preseason setup but excellent communication throughout season.

ACTION ITEM-Mark-to begin to submit requests for next year season once calendar set.

Coach Education/Support-Christian Appleman. Worked with Marty Kellaher to give 3rd grade boys orientation which was very well received and entire season then flowed well. Suggest more of these types of orientations. Also video ideas include a more full practice video as well as maybe inviting coaches to preseason practices to observe.

ACTION ITEM-Bruce/Marty/Christian-next meeting look at calendar for scheduling plans for beginning of season.

Sponsorship-Thatcher Zuse-Pretty stable-lost a key supporter ZANE’s cycles. Will reach out to him to support league again this year.

Equipment/Facilities-Doug Danaher transitioning out. Has his responsibilities mapped out on calendar. Acknowledged for his superb dedication and efforts on behalf of GBL.

ACTION ITEM-Bruce-recruit new equipment person.

Secretary position-Christian Appleman volunteered for position effective next meeting to keep minutes maintain transparencey of proceedings as well as preserve large body of league experience and knowledge from former and current and departing board members.

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OPEN DISCUSSION:

Coach Cliff Yerkes raised question about why GBL has a requirement for travel players to play Rec. Other towns do not all do this-some allow an option and some entirely separate the travel players and rec players. Discussion ensued-GBL is first a REC program aiming to introduce an accessible basketball program to as many youth in Guilford as we can given our resources as a volunteer organization. The rec program has enjoyed a strong reputation and strong enrollment numbers with nearly 1,000 players participating from KG-HS in 2014-2015 season. GBL is committed to preserving the rec program. Bruce Freeman stated his opinion that league needs to prioritze PARTICIPATION first, then DEVELOPMENT, then PERFORMANCE of players. Players who have gone through GBL consistently view their rec experience as a highlight when questioned about it after they have moved on from GBL. Concern about separating 2 leagues(NOT allowing travel players to play rec) would severely diminish the rec experience-making it literally second rate. Concern about allowing an option for travel players to not play rec-if players exercised that option, we would potentially lose some key coaches. As of now-rec league needs about 60 coaches per year for 72 rec teams. The rec program provides a significant social benefit to players-both through teammates that otherwise would not get to know each other, in addition to older players hanging around at Baldwin and Adams on Saturdays to watch their friends play. The key to a continued successful program lies in the attitude and approach the travel players take in rec games. Successful rec divisions generally have travel players (and coaches) who share the ball with teammates and do not attempt to dominate the game themselves. When those travel players play in that manner-the experience is elevated for all involved.

Unsuccessful rec divisions generally have one of 2 problems.

1)travel players who don’t show up despite being on the roster-resulting in teams being mismatched.

2)travel players who go all out including scoring as much as possible and double teaming/stealing ball from much weaker players.

Travel coaches and league guidance will need to be more direct in future about how impactful the travel players are on the experience. Suggestion that GBL demand more out of players and commissioners and coaches in future regarding this central GBL policy and the importance of honoring it.

Discussion of penalty for travel players who basically ‘don’t show up’. Discussed having those players benched for all or part of subsequent travel game. NO decision made on this particular question.

ACTION ITEM-Bruce/Enrique Come up with a clear policy for travel players who miss rec games. Example-on 2nd unexcused absence(i.e no communication to coach explaining an injury or conflict)-player will be asked to sit for first half of next travel game.

Coach Yerkes also asked for consideration of having 2 travel teams(not A/B) at some levels. Some grades have more interested and skilled players and might have enough talent to allow 2 teams. Practice could be academy style so as not to require more gym time. Sunday court time seems ample. Question raised about ability of a team with top players split(ball handlers, rebounders etc) to be competitive with teams we currently play in CSBL-Hamden Fathers, Branford, East Haven, Madison etc. As is we are generally on par with those programs-taking talent OFF each team might diminish our ability to compete. No definitive conclusion on this discussion-it would be only done on a case by case basis with approval of board and coach involved if at all.

Survey summary-Bruce Freeman included brief summary of post season survey results. Those are included below. We did not have time to discuss these in depth. The ‘issues raised’ should be further discussed at subsequent meetings. The positive feedback was included as a way of reminding the Board members of the value of and appreciation for their hard volunteer work for organization.

**Some positive feedback!**

Guilford basketball league is; by far; the best of the leagues run in town. It's about the kids; the development of their game and not about the results.It was a great season...

I wish that all youth sports in town would run like GBL. Over the course of the season I watched my son learn; improve and become a really good basketball player. Instead of being relegated to the bench; the league requirement for equal playing time allowed this to happen for him. He had his best season yet and; more importantly; really enjoyed himself.

daughter lived for Sat. mornings. Great friendships made. Thrived on the competition.

We loved how positive the coaches were this year. There were cheers from coaches of opposing teams to praise players when they stood out. We also appreciated the emphasis on passing that noticeable throughout the league.

A very positive learning experience. First year playing and she enjoyed it very much.Having been involved as coach and administrator in other sport leagues; I can say that I really like this model; the way the rec and travel programs are integrated.

I think the season should go longer...more games. Its such a great league and the girls have so much fun. The championship game should definitely be on a weekend. Its tough to get to a 6pm game during the work week sometimes. It’s a shame that after 8 or 9 Saturdays of seeing your kid play that you cant make the final game because its on a weekday.

Thank you to all the volunteers that make GBL work for the kids. It is greatly appreciated and I know you don't hear that enough.

This has been the best sports experience we have had so far out of any of the activities our son has participated. Coaching is outstanding and the whole experience has been extremely positive.

**Issues raised**

ALL-Coaching consistency with skill instruction(curriculum)

ALL-FACILITIES-BALDWIN and LAKES, maybe have durable mats at entryways

REC-PARITY of TEAMS(especially older ages)

REC and MNIHOOPS-Season TOO short

REC-More practices, thumbs down on Friday night practices

REC-Clarifying and enforcing ROTATION SCHEDULE RULES

REC-Officiating-progression through season

REC and TRAVEL-Travel and rec requirement

REC and TRAVEL-Travel and rec commitment-?consequences

TRAVEL-2 teams per league not A/B

TRAVEL-COACH-how many years?

TRAVEL-Playing time rules at travel level not clear and not enforced

TRAVEL-B team scheduling and long travel to their games

Minihoops-OLDER SIBS got in way and made it dangerous

Minihoops-transition on the hour

Minihoops-8 am set times and some teams like variation in competition