

## Special Meeting of Lower Merion Little League Members

Date: October 29, 2007

Location: Gladwyne Elementary School Cafeteria

**Purpose:** For Members to discuss, and for the Board of Directors to vote on, whether Lower Merion Little League should apply to Little League International (“LLI”) to merge into one league rather than operate as the two leagues (American and National) for which we are presently chartered.

**Board Members in Attendance:** Larry Bendesky, Jim Brodo, Mike Bershad, Eric Pearson, Mina Fader, Mike Berkowitz, Joel Bernbaum, Pete Anderson, Stuart Kurtz, Mark Kocent, Greg Costa, Steve Schain, Ana Horowitz, Charlie Schwab

**Little League District 27 representative in Attendance:** Joe Nartowicz.

**Little League Members in attendance** {furnished upon request}

At 7:07 p.m. Lower Merion Little League (“LMLL”) President Larry Bendesky commenced the meeting by announcing the limited agenda in which:

- After introducing the issue and Brian Rosenthal’s brief history of LMLL, the floor would be provided to LMLL members for feedback, comment, and discussion followed by a Board vote on a motion.
- As part of this process, President Bendesky would solicit feedback and allow Members the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of the meeting’s purpose.
- After announcing the special meeting’s sole issue, i.e., petitioning LLI so that the LMLL can move from two leagues to one, President Bendesky raised two concerns regarding the merger:
  1. Intramural Season Issue:
    - Although initially under the impression that by not merging LMLL’s Intramural program’s structure would be severely impacted by being split based upon some LLI criteria (i.e., name, birth date, town, etc. which LLI would rigidly monitor President Bendesky was informed by Joe Nartowicz that this would not happen and that LMLL intramural programs would continue to function as it had.
    - Change in the traditional “Open” and “Select” Major’s division structure. Having one League would only allow for 10 teams in the majors, thus potentially reducing the number of 11 years allowed to play “up” an age level. Having two leagues would allow for the same current structure of the Majors, except that new LLI rules state that all 12 year olds must play in the majors about which there is still some confusion.

2. District 27 Tournament Team Becoming one league would reduce the number of teams eligible to play in the District 27 tournaments - - but not the other post Intramural season tournaments - - from 2 to 1.

Former LMLL President Brian Rosenthal provided history of the league

- The league was started because of disparate leagues in Narberth, Gladwyne, and others. He wanted to play past the spring season and be able to participate in summer tournaments.
- The league was started with the goals on building competitive baseball at all levels and with a focus on helping kids learn, grow and profit from baseball
- Although starting as one league, LMLL was pressured to split into two leagues because Lower Merion's size presented a threat to LLI of an unfairly large drawing pool for tournament teams.
- Argument was that kids went away and we could not stack the teams. He faced many tournament team issues – camp, vacations, etc. and was never able to develop a strong team.

President Bendesky opened up the floor for discussion and issues discussed included:

- Major concerns regarding the fairness of District 27 tournament team selection and lack of communication in prior years. President Bendesky told everyone that John MacManus will be heading up a tournament committee.
- It was discovered that all divisions except the 12 years olds can enter two teams into the District 27 tournament
- Many felt that there was excessive much focus on the District 27 Tournament Teams and wanted to focus on the 95% of the kids that played Intramurals. The effects on the Intramural program was discussed and determined:
  - Only true effect is on Majors where there will be less opportunity for 11 year olds to play up. All other divisions would not have any effect.
- The benefits and challenges of fielding 1 versus 2 tournament teams was a major topic:
  - Most people wanted more competitive teams
  - Some people were concerned with less opportunity for players to experience tournament baseball because of the reduced teams
  - Many comments were made regarding the difficulties fielding teams and coaches due to commitment, vacations, and camp
  - LLI has opportunities for B player teams, i.e., Bob Jones, Joe Klein Tournaments

Following Steve Schain's remarking that 1 hour and 45 minutes of discussion had taken place, Mike Bershard motioned for LMLL to apply to LLI to become one league rather than the two leagues - - American and National - - for which it is presently chartered.

Steve Schain seconded the motion and moved to adjourn the Members' meeting which President Bendesky adjourned at 9:02 p.m..