



Minutes for Executive Board Meeting

October 27, 2016

Bill Beckert
Vin Bergin
Kristi Brouker
Chris Caccamo
Scott DeGrandi
Byron Frank
Jim Glaspey
Steve Guglietta

Mike Gulino
Chris Hoheb
Aaron Jainchill
Larry LaDuke
Mike Magnifico
Dave McCullough
Mike Mihalek
Jamie Moses

John Truhan
Jon Wolf
Kathy Wolkner
Tom Wolkner

- 1) **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 7:35 PM at Cugino's Restaurant in Farmington, CT.

- 2) **Executive Board Positions:** The following officers were elected at the Executive Board Meeting:
 - President – Mike Gulino
 - Vice Presidents –
 - Baseball – Mike Mihalek
 - Baseball Operations – Byron Frank
 - Softball – Tom Wolkner
 - Big Diamond – Open
 - Secretary – Dave McCullough
 - Treasurer – Jamie Moses
 - Player Agents –
 - Big Diamond – Kristi Brouker
 - Little League – Jamie Martin
 - Softball – Kathy Wolkner
 - Safety Officer – Kristi Brouker
 - League Information Officer – Byron Frank
 - Clinics and Coaching Coordinator – Chris Caccamo

Candidates for the Big Diamond Vice President include John Calcavecchia and Alex Kaminski. It was agreed that Larry LaDuke would assist Jamie Martin as Little League Player Agent. It was agreed that Dave McCullough and Larry LaDuke would assist Byron Frank as League Information Officer. It was agreed that John Kelly and Steve Guglietta would assist Chris Caccamo as Clinics and Coaching Coordinator. Last but not least, the signup sheet was circulated and the committee volunteers are published below as Exhibit 1 to these minutes.

3) **Directional Discussions**

- a) Concessions – A sweeping discussion of the possibilities and risks entailed the following key points:
 - FYBL could run the concession stand for the spring season but the ability and desire of parents to adequately staff it remains a concern; regardless, we will definitely run it again for the Lindquist Tournament based on the 2015 result.

- We could also consider a pilot in the spring season, perhaps only on Saturdays or running it once it is Memorial Day Weekend (given that schools start to wind down and parents with kids may have more ability to then staff). The staffing would need to be parents but split up by levels and games (for example, Minors parents working 4 hour shifts for Majors games or vice versa). However, this does raise the concern about the potential burden on the lower levels where parents are new to FYBL, along with their team managers. Another resource option is opening it up to Farmington High students in order to fulfill voluntary hour requirements.
 - There remains considerable support for (and corresponding reluctance against) potentially installing vending machines for drinks or possibly snacks to offer an option when the stand is not open, regardless of how we staff it in 2017. The two issues that would need to be solved for this option are the security needs (cameras?) and the cost versus revenue considerations.
 - It is agreed that Bill Beckert, Kristi Brouker, Scott DeGrandi, Byron Frank and Jim Glaspey will be the key members of the committee to consider the concession options in more detail and bring a recommendation to a future Board meeting. Additionally, this committee will develop a plan to get ahead of the communications and solicitations for more volunteers leading up to the January Registration weekend.
- b) Big Diamond – Despite progress, the player retention hurdles after Little League play continue to be a challenge:
- The loss of players from ages 12 to 13 is largely due to a combination of no longer wanting to play, not knowing that they can play, and/or not having the financial means to play on pay for play teams. The local options are:
 - Farmington Youth Baseball League
 - Farmington Amateur Athletic Club
 - Connecticut Blue Jays or the Diamond King Knights
 - Vantis League (summer)
 - Despite substantial communication with the 12 year old players towards the end of the season and at the Awards Banquet, more can be done to educate players and parents about the options after Little League. Additionally, the recently graduated managers such as Bill Collins and Alex Kaminski could be key to getting a stronger pipeline and structure in place for future years.
- c) Softball – A new vice president with a fresh but experienced perspective could be the first step towards a turnaround:
- The softball interest and retention issues in recent years are well known but a combination of new leadership, better trained managers and coaches, and continued over-communication and outreach could help drive new growth and participation by girls at all ages and levels. We need to encourage girls in other sports, even lacrosse and soccer, but baseball as well to consider softball.
 - Mike Mihalek has a contact (Jen) who is setting up developmental clinics and other opportunities in conjunction with Southington/Cheshire, she would be willing to help Farmington. While we technically cannot pay coaches to coach the players, we have gotten around that issue by exchanging donations or gifts for volunteer support and by assisting in marketing clinics, similar to the relationship with FHS Coach Mac.
 - Additionally, the lack of softball options other than pay-for-play AAU teams after majors significantly impacts retention after the 12 year old season and contributes to the relative weakness of the FHS softball program. Regardless though, as with baseball, we will always find a spot for kids who want to play, even if it is an arrangement with an out-of-town league.
- d) Fall Baseball for District – FYBL has coordinated the fall season for the district for two years running:
- The majority of the effort is in the last two weeks of August, facilitating the setup of the divisions, the registration of teams, and the scheduling of games. Once the season is set and games begin, the effort to manage even in the commissioner roles is minimal. The recommendation is to keep doing it for the district going forward.
 - On a semi-related note, unfortunately, Mary Ellen Holden will be stepping down from her role and replaced by Su Clauss (sp?). Fortunately, the district will not miss a beat even though Mary Ellen will be sorely missed by many.
- e) Capital Expenditures – FYBL made approximately \$23 K worth of capital improvements in 2015-2016:

- The Board approved and understands that the expenditures were all needed and have increased the overall value of our facilities and our league. However, it does beg the question of a longer-term plan to govern the periodic investments necessary to maintain a healthy league.
- The number one tenant is to invest in the kids but we need a committee to oversee the investment prioritization above and beyond an annual budget view. Ideally, the committee would develop investment plans that project out a 3 to 5 year horizon.
- It is agreed that Vin Bergin, Alex Kaminski, Mike Mihalek, and Jamie Moses will be key members of the committee to develop a draft of the plan and present it to the full Board at a future meeting.

4) **Open Discussion:** The following topics were covered at a high-level to guide the committee work for 2016-2017:

- Umpires-In-Chief and Training – Kyle MacArella (sp?), Chris Temple, and Marie Patrick served ably in 2016 and it is recommended that they continue in their roles for 2017. We do need to overhaul the umpire training to raise the quality of umpiring, particularly across the younger umpires.
- Numbers for Baseball and Softball – 2016 saw a slight downturn for the first time in a few years but this trend was confirmed across the district. That said, we need to make every effort to reverse it, starting with registration.
- Fundraising – Vin Bergin has done a fine job but is looking for some new blood to assist with his divide and conquer approach with the sponsorships, the raffle, and other opportunities.
- Marketing – We need to do more in 2017, direct mailers are under consideration and any other ideas are welcome.
- Uniforms and Equipment – Mike and Chris need another volunteer so a succession plan can be ready for the future.
- Bylaws – We need to make updates to the Minors draft language to align the approach for coaches kids with the Majors approach. Aaron Jainchill has volunteered to take point on this effort.
- Lindquist Tournament – Chris Clay is willing to help and play a leadership role but will need assistance and a capable co-chair, with insight on how to divide up the divisions and teams.
- Fields and Facilities – Tabled due to Alex Kaminski being ill.
- Budget/Audit – In addition to conducting an annual audit (Kara Sardilli has done it in the past, but we could consider Pat Kelly since he does that type of work as a career), the need for a Capital Planning Committee is clear.
- Minors – Given some of the challenges associated with the transition from Machine Pitch to Minors, particularly with pitcher and catcher development, we should consider splitting Minors into upper and lower divisions. Additionally, we need to figure out how to make the play in Machine Pitch better, so players and parents do not feel the need to jump to Minors before they are really ready to play at that level.
- Special Needs Players – We as a league need to formulate a policy for players with special needs, be they developmental, physical, mental, or emotional handicaps.
- Pitch Counts – Do we need to develop additional pitch count limits for Majors, above and beyond what is specified by Little League? For example, in the first two weeks of the season, are there additional restrictions on pitchers?

5) **Calendar Items:** These are the key dates for the 2017 season, as it stands today:

- Registration – January 20 and 21, 2017
- Tryouts – Late February or early March 2017, remember to book FSA early or contact CCSU as a fallback option
- Drafts – March 2017
- Cleanup Day – April 1, 2017
- Season Start of Games – April 19, 2017 for Majors
- Appreciation Day and 12 Year Old Spotlight – Early June 2017
- Playoffs – June 12, 14, and 16, 2017
- 10 Year Old Clinic – June 2017
- Lindquist Tournament – July 5 or July 8, 2017 (July 4 is a Tuesday next year)

6) Meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM. The next meeting will be the monthly Board Meeting on November 6, 2016.

Exhibit 1: 2017 Committees

Clinics and Coaching – Chris Caccamo (chair), Eric Brouker, John Kelly, John Truhan

Concessions – Kristi Brouker (chair), Bill Beckert, Scott DeGrandi, Byron Frank, Jim Glaspey

Fields and Facilities – Alex Kaminski (chair), Jim Glaspey

Fundraising – Vin Bergin (chair), Byron Frank, Chris Hoheb, Mike Mihalek, Jim Glaspey

Spring Program – Kathy Wolkner (chair), Tom Wolkner

Registration and Tryouts – Byron Frank / Jamie Martin (co-chairs), Vin Bergin, Kristi Brouker, Steve Guglietta, Aaron Jainchill, Larry LaDuke, Dave McCullough, John Truhan

Scheduling – Byron Frank (chair), Kristi Brouker

Softball – Tom Wolkner (chair), Kristi Brouker, Jon Wolf, Kathy Wolkner

Special Events – Kristi Brouker, Dave McCullough

Summer Tournament – Kristi Brouker, Chris Clay, Aaron Jainchill

Umpires and Rules – Dave McCullough

Picture Day – Chris Caccamo (chair)

Uniforms and Equipment – Mike Mihalek (chair), Chris Caccamo, Jim Glaspey, Dave McCullough

Marketing – Steve Guglietta (chair), Chris Hoheb, John Truhan, Kathy Wolkner

Big Diamond – Kristi Brouker

Capital Planning – Jamie Moses (chair), Bill Beckert, Vin Bergin, Steve Guglietta, Chris Hoheb, Mike Mihalek