



Board Meeting

February 6, 2020

Board Members Present: Rob Freytag, Lucy Campbell, Cesar Garcia, Kurt Fleugge, Alan W., Soren Llanes, Derek Roth, Jennifer A, Darcey Teets, Steve W, Fred Clarke, Elisabeth Carroll Note: Larry Holden is absent because he is representing our league at the D-9 meeting scheduled simultaneously.

Meeting Start Time: 7:00

Meeting End Time: 8:23

Business Items

- The number of families requesting scholarships increased by 500% this year. There seems to be an increased financial need in our community. It would be great to assist needy players with free equipment. We could disperse gear in our storage unit and our personal garages. Lucy C. encouraged families on our Facebook page to post free gear that is no longer needed. There was a lot of enthusiasm for the idea, but so far no one has offered any free gear yet other than Lucy C.
- December Board Meeting Minutes were approved.
- Lucy is reorganizing our open board positions. Jennifer, Derek, Ryan are teaming to take manage fundraising, marketing outreach, and the Opening Day Ceremony. They will work together on all three efforts.
- District 9 approved two fundraisers we are planning. The Hit-a-Thon and Car Wash Fundraising Tickets are planned.
- All coaches need to be voted on and approved by the board. Teams should be cognizant of who their active volunteer parents are so they can be brought up to the board for approval.
- Soren is going to send a \$500 donation to the Softball World Series. It is hosted here and historically has received Thunderbird support.

- Our annual safety Plan Meeting is March 7 in Newport HS auditorium. Ideally this would match the high school clinic day. Fingers crossed that it works. Each team needs either a Coach or a Manager present. Lots of people should attend this year since the training is required every two years and turnout was low last year. We have paid for coaches to attend Big Al Training. Our safety plan is currently in the process of being approved by Little League International.
- Jennifer plans to shadow Chris at Opening Day. He does a tremendous amount of work very early in the morning and has a relationship with a church that lets us borrow tables, tents, etc. He also coordinates the announcer, schedule, EVERYTHING. Jennifer will reach out to Chris to try to get information.
- Derek and Jennifer's husband are planning to shadow Ryan. Ryan will pass along a list of duties...
- Kurt would like to follow up on our plan for Friday Night team practices. It might work well at Newport Hills Field on Friday Nights. He envisions stations we could run for an hour and a half or so.
- Soren reports that registration is currently at 326. We budgeted for 385. If we get a late surge, we may be at 347. This will put us 20% behind with our budget. The registration cut off is Feb 15. Hopefully we will have more t-ball players soon.
- Elisabeth will post messages that registration is STILL OPEN for A, AA, and t-ball.
- Alan has reported that the balls we ordered have arrived.

Umpires/Rules

- Cesar reports that we have 10 volunteer umpires. Umpire training will be held on March 1st and 15th. The training will be a combined effort with Bellevue East staffed by Wes and Cesar.
- The green book is now blue.
- This year Little League has a phone app that works on iOS and Android, it costs two dollars. It would make sense for all volunteers to have access to this on their phone. There are even videos that demonstrate the rule's intention.
- Volunteer umpires should be age 12 or older.

Cesar sent out a link to a presentation with suggestions on rules to change...

- New approach - the players make the game rules, not the umpires.
- Teams could have the opportunity to play against other leagues prior to All-Stars.
- Every inning would be started with a runner on base.
- Every batter starts with a one - one count (one ball, one strike before their first pitch). This would make games shorter.

These changes are proposed to increase participation below AA. We want players are on the field, not in the dugout. Discussion about our current practices...We already have a modification in place that involves getting out a tee to support the batter after a certain number of pitches are thrown. In t-ball each inning already starts with the bases loaded.

Little Leagues across the country are noticing that lots of players are leaving baseball. We want to increase retention. If we plan to move forward with changing our rules, we would definitely need to come to agreement with Bellevue East and revisit rewriting our local rules.

Fields

- We have received field allocations from Bellevue School District and the city. The next step is figuring out how many games/teams we need to schedule and how that matches with Bellevue East.
- Part of the puzzle is considering which fields are appropriate for which levels.
- Turf fields don't require any prep. There is a turf lacrosse field at Tye where t-ball has been held... Two or three t-ball games could be played there simultaneously. Somerset also has a turf field. Phantom Lake Elementary might also be a better alternative to Puesta.
- Eastgate isn't suitable for any games since there isn't appropriate fencing.
- One of the biggest challenges with training coaches is helping them reach out to parents willing to be responsible for field preparations.
- The Puesta field has a lot of field prep that needs to be done that can take up to an hour before the game. Traffic is becoming increasingly bad and it is hard for most people to get there on time (not adding in the extra time needed to help with the field prep).

- Rob doesn't want to scare coaches away and would like to make it easier for them to volunteer without taking on field prep responsibilities. He used to run a clinic to train parents on how to do field prep. They need to learn where things are in the shed and have extra time to rake and chalk. If volunteers are able to help, it is worthwhile to keep games at Puesta since the rental cost is only \$800/year.
- We should find out more about reserving the lacrosse field behind Tye. Maybe we could fit pitching machines in the green box? Fencing is an important consideration. The Tye lacrosse field has a fence around the perimeter, but we don't remember them having dugouts or a fence behind the plate? There is a field that is on a long trek behind Town and Country grocery store in Lakemont. There isn't a green box there and it would be hard to deliver one.
- Soren suggests that we need a subcommittee to work on this problem. A and AA have only half the registration we hoped for. Would changing fields turn this around? In two years Puesta will be remodeled so this problem will not go away.

The following coaches were approved by the board for the 2020 season:

Softball A

Megan Russel

Softball AA

Amy Lowen

Softball AAA

Kyle Bowers
Jennifer Augustin

Softball Coast

Josh McMurdie
Jeff Piao

Softball Majors, Juniors

Eric Broughton
Joon Huh
Matt Brown Ruiegg
Darcey Teets
Andre Barashkoff
Scott Collins

AA Baseball

Jeremy Campbell
Josh King

AAA Baseball Coaches

Jason Cruz
Rob Candiotty
Bill Boone

Coast Softball Coaches

Ken Hutton
Mark Rindy
Tommy Fligh
Zeb Pike
Anton Lee
Pat Henley

Majors Baseball Coaches

Aaron Jackson

Brett Novotny

Chris Freer

Eric Drever

Eric Loh

Jason Ackerman

Patrick Rhatigan

Paul Look

Rob Freytag

Robert Perez

Ron Hay

Steve Baum

Steve Bouddhabandth

Tim Chin

Wes Chin

Intermediate Baseball Coaches

Nicholas Kelleher

Patrick Rhatigan

Kurt Fleugge

Erik Lawrence

Juniors Coaches

Erik Carnrite

Fred Clarke

Alan Wittman

Soren Llanes

Mike Garrett

Bellevue East Collaboration

- Darcey reports that he has coaches lined up for A, AA, and AAA. Ideally we can add a few more players to allow for two smallish teams instead of one large team.
- There may be 5 more A kids coming in. Some of the levels are have between 15-19 players. The district may assign up a handful more players at various levels to create interlocking. Bellevue East will vote to approve their coaches.
- We must make sure that coaches are using appropriate language and being gracious with umpires. The majority of complaints that come to the board include adults cursing or demonstrating frustration. All VPs need to have this conversation with coaches.
- Only coaches that are approved by the board may coach. Note - players should be base coaches if we there isn't a board approved coach available. We are still seeking more volunteers to fill coaching positions.
- Cesar notes that the official rules state: At Majors and above, teams must be between 12-15 players. At Coast and below, 8-10 players are recommended. Last year there were many games that didn't include 9 players from each team. If that happens, the teams may "borrow" players from each other to staff the outfield and the game won't officially count. We have declined the opportunity to hire any outside umpires. Cesar is doing a great job.

- Coaches will need to come and get equipment at the end of February/first week of March. Coaches should also bring their binders so we can update them with the safety plan, field locations, etc. Alan has noticed the binders are pretty trashed/missing. Lucy would like to continue to prepare one for each team so coaches have a place to organize their information.
- Team selection will be next week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday. There is a designated date in the green book for practices to begin.
- Larry keeps all the affidavits to keep them safe and ready for All-Star time. He is good at organizing everything.

Recruitment

- We would like to increase the diversity of our league to match the richness of our community.
- Brainstorming ideas about how to connect multi-cultural families with fun playing ball on the field... Maybe offering Jing Mei students the chance to be on the same team would be attractive. We could schedule Saturday games after Chinese school ends. Maybe practice and games could be at the Jing Mei field. Kids could bring a snack and stay after school for practice.

Calendar

Our next board meeting will be held at 8:00 on Thursday March 5, 2020 at Newport High School in room 1113.