

BRAINERD BAXTER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION BBBA

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Monday July 12, 2021

Meeting Time: 9:00 pm

Meeting Location: Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

9:02 pm

Present:

Co-Chair	Steve Hanson
Co-Chair	Troy Rushmeyer
Secretary	Ann Scheinost
Treasurer	Jim Haakonson
Assistant Treasurer	Mike Eidenshink
Director	Eric Fenstad
Director	Wade Haapajoki
Director	Zach Heidmann
Director	Jeremiah Piepkorn
Director	Steve Schaitberger
Director	Mandy Vanek
Umpire Coordinator	Dave Rozinka

Absent:

Umpire Coordinator	Phil Berg
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OPEN FORUM

Time allocated for non-members to bring matters not on the agenda to the attention of the Board. Time limits may be imposed.

Wade presented two questions as received by 11U coach Mike DeRosier:

- Where can the Board Meeting Minutes be found? Approved minutes are posted to our website. The question of Financials being included in the minutes was discussed. These will be posted separately from minutes, and shared via the drobox. Motion to approve this change was made by Troy Rushmeyer, seconded by Wade Haapajoki. Motion passed unanimously.
- Where can the "Coaches Handbook" be found? We do not have a "Coaches" handbook, just the general handbook. This was added to the website during the meeting.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA / APPROVAL OF AGENDA / APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the June minutes and this agenda was made by Eric Fenstad, seconded by Wade Haapajoki. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Updates on 2021 BBBA Teams Tourney successes:
 - a. 9U played some great games
 - b. 10U took second and qualified for regionals in Minot

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- c. 11U did great
- d. 12U won their state tournament

NEW BUSINESS

1. Home tournaments - brief summaries of successes and/or areas for improvement
 - a. Fields / maintenance partnerships – concessions
 - i. Brainerd Parks and Rec – concessions provided, no fees
 - ii. Baxter Parks and Rec – allowed food trucks, no fees
 - iii. ISD 181 – will allow food trucks, fees to operate concessions if we desire; Side conversation regarding fees for concessions: Wade shared that he spoke with eight other school districts and community eds who do not charge fees to non-profits; he is collecting data to present this information to Heidi Hahn at the school district to have that conversation.
 - iv. CLC – did not charge for field use for the 14U tournament (most likely plan for upcoming 15U tournament); will allow food trucks, no fees
 - b. Volunteer help/coverages - Kudos to the board members who stepped up this year to ensure the success of our tournaments. Topic can be discussed more in-depth at a later meeting.
 - c. Umpiring coverages and challenged calls practices – Rozy suggested we wait to actively pursuing umps until a month before, as umps will not commit until 2-3 weeks before a tournament. There is definitely an umpire shortage. Also, our state tourney this weekend is paying \$60, and other towns are paying more (\$100 in Aitkin).
 - d. Rain-out decisions:
 - i. Our 11U and 13U games, “Flipping a coin” perhaps not best practice; something to take into consideration and discuss before next year.
 - e. Gloves will come off next year when these are state qualifiers - we just need to be prepared; committee to be formed prior to year-end to discuss ideas for next year, and lessons learned from this year.
 - f. Reconciliation Totals (Treasurer's report) - Jim Haakonson
 - i. Tournament income and expenses for each 2021 tournament were presented
 - ii. Account balance was reported
 - iii. Team double header umpire fees were provided
2. 15U AAA MYAS state tourney this weekend
 - a. 20 team tourney – \$150 gate fee per team paid to BBBA
 - b. The Host is responsible for the payment and /or providing of the following:
 - i. Operations Manager (MYAS supplies the Tournament Coordinator) the go-between the Tournament Director and the Site Coordinator
 - ii. Facility rentals: Mills, BHS, FMS, CLC
 - iii. Souvenir sales personnel, not applicable (MYAS providing)
 - iv. Concessions, if applicable – Mills will be covered by Brainerd Parks and Rec, food truck for BHS or FMS secured, will allow coolers.
 - v. While the contract with MYAS states that concessions will be provided. The issue of the concessions being mentioned in the contract was brought up: Steve Hanson spoke with Dawson Blank at MYAS, alerting them to the concession issue, that the board would discuss tonight, and if an amended contract was needed, MYAS understands.

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- vi. Half of the cost (minimum) of any paid, on-site medical personnel (i.e., certified athletic trainer, nurse, or certified first aid personnel)
 - c. Our host team (15U VFW) is allowed to participate without qualifying and only pays \$300 fee vs \$450 to MYAS. A motion for BBBA to forego their \$150 gate fee was made by Troy Rushmeyer, seconded by Wade Haapajoki. Motion passed unanimously.
 - d. We need volunteers to be site coordinators - Most of the Board members are unavailable. However, Troy Rushmeyer will serve in the role of medical personnel.
3. Wade's summary of pros and cons related to Rec and Travel ball was discussed (see below) -
Comments: Parents need to be surveyed, Rec and travel level players should not be mixed, leagues need to be separate; one issue is the insurance policies, the travel league would need its own insurance; coaches are pulling double duty as they are coaching rec and travel; separating would allow for various levels of tournament player to be developed.
Discussion: consider removing the rec-play requirement from the bylaws/handbook; a committee should be formed and partners need to be pulled in and included on the conversion discussion (community ed, VFW, school district, parks and rec, Legion, high school). There was disagreement as to if this should be an immediate vote to change the requirement, or if the discussion with our partners should happen first. There is a gap to be bridged. Wade volunteered to be a liaison to work with Community Ed help develop and train coaches, and build a plan with the High School program. We have to be careful about what this all looks like.

Items tabled for next meeting:

- 4. Coaching concerns (Troy and Jeremiah met with 9U coach and email from 11U coach needs to be reviewed by board and addressed per boards determination– see below)
 - a. Coach giving instruction to parents to have their players skip rec ball due to state tourney play. It was addressed, but there is an issue there for board to discuss.
 - b. 9U and 11U (Handbook criteria needs to be followed)
 - i. Equal/comparable playing times
 - ii. Kids' opportunities for development of skills, self-esteem and self-confidence
 - iii. Ability and willingness for parents to approach coaches
 - iv. BBBA needs to do better job at addressing these issues up front for coaches and parents alike
 - v. Coaches must approach the board if they believe there is a gray area and operating outside of the rules/policies of the Association must be addressed by the board.
- 5. Parent/Player Survey – needs to be drafted and shared
 - a. Proceeded by details of how important their (parents – players, our clients) opinions and input is to our ability to improve upon what we are offering.
 - b. Questionnaire can be directly related to our handbook
- 6. Coaches survey – Also very important to us improving upon what we are offering
- 7. BBBA Road map - (5 to 10-year plans/goals) that encompasses everything above and more
 - a. Starting here and working backwards to Map out where we are going and how we will get there
 - b. Partnerships are a very real part of this process

NEXT MEETING

Meeting Date: Monday August 9, 2021

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Meeting Time: 9:00 pm

Meeting Location: Zoom

ADJOURNMENT

10:48 pm

Motion to adjourn was made by Steve Schaitberger, seconded by Steve Hanson. Motion passed unanimously.

Wade - Rec and Travel Ball

Fellow Board Members,

During the past 6 weeks, I have learned a lot about many associations across the state. The biggest topic that seems to cloud over outstate communities is how do you navigate the Travel and In-house (Rec) league.

I reached out to over 27 associations ranging from Pierz to Eden Prairie, Bemidji to Owatonna, Waite Park to Grand Rapids, Willmar to Alex, STMA to Monti. Obviously, communities with larger populations will have larger numbers and vice versa. I did hear back from 21 of them. It was a great conversation.

What I did find out is we have the largest number of rec players in ages 9-14 (roughly 255 kids), possibly the highest in the state.

What I found is BBBA is one of 3 associations in the state that force their travel kids to play in house league. The other 2 are Bemidji and Rocori. Waite Park and Grand Rapids are in their last year of forcing kids and will not in 2022. Their reasons are the strain on multi-sport athletes and overuse/injury prevention.

Bemidji has their In house leagues divided into an upper level and lower level. They have lots of frustration with this new model. They are discussing ways to improve, but are leery of continuing, as parents are frustrated with the leagues being in the morning, and travel kids having morning and pm practices. Their numbers for rec league are 138 for (9-13), they play Ripken rules. Coaches are paid through community ed and usually younger kids/adults. Travel coaches have been parents.

Rocori has their in-house league at 3 age levels. They force their kids to play, which helps financially fund their league. They have a combined 106 players in the three leagues. Without travel, it would fold. They are looking to join the CBL (community-based league) with Sauk and Sartell as they each have 3 rec leagues. This may be the path they go and travel will be separate. But for now, they stay the course. they play MYAS/Babe rules. Parents volunteer to coach rec leagues. Rocori's biggest concern with both is their best baseball players also play other sports and have to pick.

Brainerd has their in-house league at 3 levels. We have a combined 255 kids. Our kids are divided up equally in the league (except 13U, which stays as a team), and travel coaches are forced to coach these teams. The rec leagues have 5 practices then begin games. The travel kids enter the league having 6-8 weeks of training and multiple games under their belt. That leaves 219 players with only 5 practices under their belt.

The Associations that travel and offer options to play rec are Alex, Willmar, and Owatonna. They currently don't have anyone doing it. Owatonna's head coach said too much baseball killed their program about 5 years ago. It burnt out players, parents, but also his good travel coaches doing multiple teams.

Here is the list of associations that offer a travel-only with tryouts for all players. The players are all offered a chance to travel and a AA or A team can be created if there is enough interest. If not they all play rec league. They found out that some teams want to travel to 3 tourneys, practice 2 times a week and play A ball vs rec league.

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Wayzata, Eden Prairie, Edina, Minnetonka, Sartell, Sauk Rapids, Marshall, Elk River, STMA, Becker, Monti, Pierz, Little falls, Annandale

Now- the cost associated with using facilities is a wide range one. There is NO single solution. Owatonna charges each kid \$40 to use city parks (included in their \$80 fee) for rec. The travel is the same fee, which is included in the travel expense. The city will get \$4000 for 100 kids. That makes sense. This is common with 75% of the associations. Travel and Community are treated the same with player fees.

Insurance...Each association carries insurance for each team. That can be priced out with many different groups and the cost part of the fee. That can be researched with more depth down the road. Obviously, Community Ed covers the rec league.