

BRAINERD LAKES AREA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION, INC. MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Friday, January 18, 2019

Meeting Time: 5:30 PM

Meeting Location: Brainerd City Fire Department, 23 Laurel Street, Brainerd, MN 56401

CALL TO ORDER

5:31 PM

Present:

Chairperson	Troy Rushmeyer
Vice Chairperson	Derek Owen
Secretary	Ann Scheinost
Treasurer	Mike Eidenshink
Director	Zach Heidmann
Director	Jon Toft
Director	John Schafer
Director	Joel Kubesh
Supporting Member	Tony Sailer

Absent:

Director	Brian Scheinost
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OPEN FORUM

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

Troy Rushmeyer reiterated BLABA's mission is to allow the kids in our community to play competitive baseball and all that includes (fun, lifelong friendships). We recognized a decline in this opportunity, and that there needs to be a positive experience for both the players and their families. Being that the association is in its infancy, it was reiterated that our processes are not set in stone; we are flexible and always open to all ideas.

Four community members attended the meeting, and posed several questions for discussion. Following is a recap of the topics addressed and a recap of the conversations surrounding those inquiries.

1. How is the scheduling of umpires handled for games booked outside of tournaments and additional games?

For games schedule outside of tournaments, the Board will do everything possible to ensure umpires can be provided. However, circumstances may dictate what we are able to do, and we may have to improvise (someone umping from behind the mound, etc.). The Association will do everything possible to make sure that games happen, including possible assistance with umpire payment.

BRAINERD LAKES AREA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION, INC. MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

2. What about players that have May birthday? Would they be allowed to “play up” with their grade?

Page 5 of the current version of the Handbook states: *The age level for which a player is eligible is his/her age on April 30th of the year in which he/she will be playing. Players in their respective age groups must not reach the next age before May 1. With the permission of the Board, a player may be allowed to “play up” with his/her grade level even if his/her age indicates he/she should be playing at a younger level. A player cannot “play down” at a younger age for any reason.*

MYAS allows a two year play up. The Board will always, first and foremost, ensure that it’ll be a good experience and safe outcome for the player when determining eligibility to play up.

3. What are fund raising requirements and where do the 5 hours of volunteer time have to be served? If we fund raise, does that go to the team or to the Association?

The 5 hours of volunteer time can be fulfilled in many ways. Examples include bookkeeping for game stats, assistant coaching, hotel research for out-of-town tournaments, assistance with Brainerd tournaments (check-in, concessions, scoreboard, announcing). Also Association-related work (fundraisers, etc.). The volunteer efforts help immerse the players and their families in the community. Fundraising assets would go to the Association to benefit everyone as a whole.

There was further discussion around family financial assistance. As we become more established and our fundraising efforts increase, we would definitely look at “scholarship” options for our players. The Association is currently working through options for sponsorship for the website, banners, etc.

4. Equipment and uniforms. Are they all included in that price? What is all included? How about Bats?

The registration fee includes a hat and jersey. Players will be responsible for purchase of pants. The attending community members shared a great suggestion of having uniforms which can be used year-over-year by each age group. Baseballs will be supplied, along with one set of catcher’s gear. Bat regulations were also discussed, and are posted on the MYAS website. (NOTE: A link to the 2019 regulations has been added to the homepage of our website.)

5. What does house league look like? Do we play others towns or just other Brainerd teams? Is that Pony league?

Brainerd Parks and Recreation Pony league is 13, 14 and 15 year old players. Teams only play other BPR Pony teams, not other towns. League players are drafted into existing teams to balance the talent level, and affords players the opportunity to experience play with other players and coaches. There was great discussion around the benefits and drawbacks of not having the players consistently play on the same teams between league and traveling. Thoughts on team sizes and playing time were also shared, along with AAA vs. AA tournament play in MYAS.

6. Would we travel as a team to other smaller town to play league games? Who does the scheduling?

Because of the great discussion around league play and schedules, Tony Sailer agreed to open the field at Jaycees Park to ensure that games are played 2 set days per week instead of 4. This will be an immense help to traveling teams in their practice scheduling efforts.

BRAINERD LAKES AREA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION, INC.

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

7. January 26th Try-outs: With participation in winter sports, there are players who cannot attend the planned try-out session. What is their option? Is the \$25 fee refundable if a team is not formed due to lack of players?

A spring try-out session will be held in March. Date and location to be determined by the Board at a later date. If there is a team not fielded because of lack of players the \$25 fee would be refunded. Starting in the Fall of 2019, try-outs will be conducted each fall for the next season.

The vetting process for coaches was also addressed; there will be an application processes and background checks will be conducted. The top priority of the Association is ensure that coaches provide, first and foremost, a positive experience, along with top-notch skill-building and growth opportunities.

The Board is very thankful to the visiting community members, for the awesome discussion and sharing of ideas, along with the joint passion of a positive baseball experience for the youth and families of our community.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Approval of January 3, 2019 Board Meeting Minutes - A motion to approve the minutes of the previous January 3rd meeting was made by Derek Owen, and seconded by Zach Heidmann. Motion passed unanimously.
- B. Lead-Off Party Post-event discussion:
- C. TRY-OUTS - Saturday, January 26, 2019, Forestview Middle School
 1. Entire gymnasium is reserved from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
 2. Try-out sessions:
 - 10:00 AM – Noon = 9, 10, 11 year olds
 - Noon – 1:00 PM = break
 - 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM = 12, 13, 14 year olds
 3. 4 tables and 16 chairs will be provided, 1 table for registration
 4. Printed documents to be made available (Ann Scheinost):
 - Parent/Player Agreement
 - Liability Waiver
 - Handbook
 5. \$360 custodial fee will be invoiced after the event (this is a discounted rate as we are a local youth organization); try-out fees are designated to help cover this cost.
 6. Scoring form will be created at the next meeting. Outside recommendation is to take the top six, and go from there.
 7. Current Evaluators: Kurt Wicklund, Steve Kappes, Nick Jelacie, and Brett Kramer; unsure of which varsity staff. MYAS is looking at creating an evaluation team to assist in try-outs for associations.
 8. Contact Jennifer Rushin to determine time to check out gym layout and evaluate the condition of hitting and pitching screens
 9. A spring try-out session will be held in March. Date and location to be determined by the Board at a later date.
 10. Revisit how many players will make team: Top six automatically, per highest scores

BRAINERD LAKES AREA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION, INC. MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Process address addendum for corporate documents – this agenda item was not discussed
- B. Troy will provide tier costs for “Trusted Coaches”

NEXT MEETING

Meeting Date: Tuesday, January 22nd, 2019

Meeting Time: 5:00 PM

Meeting Location: Brainerd American Legion Post 225, 708 Front Street, Brainerd, MN 56401

***The purpose of this meeting will be to prepare for Try-Outs on January 26th.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 7:36 pm was made by Zach Heidmann and seconded by John Schafer.
Motion passed unanimously.