

**MARION SENIOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION**  
**Minutes of Monday, January 29th, 2024**  
**Marion County Board of DD Conference Room**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Marion Senior Softball Association was called to order at 5:30 PM by President, Gene Smithberger.

**II. ATTENDANCE**

**Commissioners in attendance were:** Don Bentley, Ed Slone, Buddy Lyles, Steve Romshe, Jerry Fagan, Roger Smith, Mike Winders, Steve Zonnevylle, Sam Grisham, Max Gerber and Gene Smithberger.

**Absences:** Bill Finnegan, Keith Thrush

**Guests:** Rick Schondel

**III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Sam Grisham moved to accept the minutes of the 11/29/23 meeting and Buddy Lyles seconded. Motion passed.

**IV. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Roger Smith reported \$405.58 in the memorial fund, \$1,000 in the Hall of Fame fund and \$2445.61 in the General Fund for a total of \$3851.19 in the MSSA Checking Acct. as of 01/29/2024.

Since the last meeting Roger paid the \$1145.92 bill for the championship shirts from the former Rivers Edge and \$734.15 for 12 dozen softballs (44/375) at \$5.10 each from BSN Sports. Sam mentioned for next year he will check to see if we can get a better price on balls from a new company called Short Porch.

Steve Romshe moved to accept the financial report and Mike Winders seconded. Motion passed.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

Sam discussed the Hall of Fame progress. He said he worked with Tony from the city for a location for a display cabinet. Tony donated and installed a cabinet for our league behind the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout. He put the key for the cabinet in the building. Sam requested that people go on-line and fill out a nomination form. Nominees will need three letters from different people to be nominated. The nomination committee ( league commissioners ) will then review the application and the nomination letters and put them on the MSSA website for players to vote on. Pioneer players or coaches ( Those that have passed or physically can't play anymore ) can also be nominated. Sam again asked for suggestions to raise more money for the Hall of Fame.

## **VI. New Business**

Gene opened the meeting thanking everyone for their service to the MSSA league. He asked our guest Rick Schondel ( Co-President of the Marion Leagues ) to discuss his recent meeting with the new Marion Mayor Bill Collins, Kenny and Tony from the City Recreation Dept. along with Josh Vickers ( Co-President of the Marion Leagues ) at the Marion Airport.

He stated the Bill Collins was very supportive of the leagues and has been and is continuing to put money into the fields at Lincoln Park. They recently added lights on Lincoln field at a cost of \$75K and plan on adding lights to Morbitt and Hogg and their estimate is \$75K total for both fields. Rick and Josh are the only ones that have keys to all the lights at Lincoln Park. Rick said the mayor wants to softball/baseball brought back to Marion and there is budget money for improvements. The mayor wants kids to come out and play ball at Lincoln Park.

The city is also adding pickleball courts and new basketball courts at Lincoln Park

Anything posted about Marion sports the mayor also wants posted on the city website.

The mayor also said he wants to see a lot of food vendors at the park.

Garfield park was brought up by Rick as another field for Men's softball and the city said it is only to be used for youth due to the building built across the street from left field.

*Note: We will ask if we can take the net used at Garfield for Kennedy Park at our meeting with the city since no Men's leagues are allowed there anymore.*

*Gene said that he will set up a meeting with Marion City Mayor Bill Collins to discuss our questions and concerns.*

*Question – Will the city upgrade lights at Bigford field at Kennedy Park.*

Several brought up shirt costs and vendors which are being looked into. Don said This That and the Other in Galion makes shirts. Vizual Express in Marion is also being asked for shirt prices.

Gene reviewed coaches and sponsors. We still need 3 coaches for the 60 league and possibly 1 for the 50 league. He believes we have enough sponsors for our leagues.

There are 6 eligible players that can move into the 60 league and 4 eligible players that can move into the 65 league.

\$25 fees for each league are due on or before April 5<sup>th</sup>. After April 5<sup>th</sup> the cost is \$30 for each league.

Ed Slone suggested we modify the rules for the pitching screen use to get pitchers familiar with it. He suggested that we keep the screen on the field during the whole game and that the pitcher has the option to stand behind it or not depending on the caliber of the batter and that if a hitter hit the screen it is a foul ball.

After discussion Ed made a motion to amend the Rule 5E eliminating items 3 and 5 which would allow the option of the pitcher moving behind the screen and that when a batter hits the screen it is a foul ball. Steve Z seconded and the motion passed.

Ed Slone opened up a discussion of the commitment line ( Rule 5J ). After discussion Steve Romshe made a motion to replace the words "If a defensive player "with the words "the Catcher" and Sam Grisham seconded. Motion passed.

Mike said Karen would most likely want to be the scorekeeper on Monday and Tuesday nights and she may score keep all 3 nights if we can't find another scorekeeper.

Mike also stated we need a Thursday night umpire.

We discussed the substitute player rules and no changes were made.

*Buddy suggested that when we meet with the city we should ask what the cities obligations are and what the MSSA league obligation are. Other questions are when is the city going to do the work they were going to do? When can we bring our items back to the scorekeepers building? Why was the water shut off so early last year?*

## **Tabled items:**

Roger mentioned that we need to update parts for the defibrillator ( Pads and Batteries ) and that Roger will purchase the parts.

Steve Zonneville said he would check on the cost of a new pitching screen and extra netting. Mike asked if there was any that had better supporting legs. Note – In our initial search Franklin was the only company that we found that had a 3' x 6' screen.

*Mike Winders stated that we need a new pitchers rubber and the city probably wouldn't buy new pitchers rubber and that the league should purchase one. Good question to ask the city at the meeting Gene is setting up.*

Sam and Max discussed a new 6' x 12' home plate that would prevent batters from digging out around home plate making it uneven.

We reviewed adding the MSSA logo to each player shirt. Sam and Roger will check on pricing for this

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## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion by Steve Zonneville was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 PM and Don Bentley seconded. Motion passed.

Gene set up the next meeting on Monday March 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM at the same location.

Minutes by Steve Zonneville