

Marion Senior Softball Association Meeting Minutes 01/07/26

Marion Senior Softball Association met on 01/07/26 at the Marion County Board of DD located at 2387 Harding Highway East in Marion Ohio.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by the President Max Gerber.

Present

Max Gerber
Mike Winders
Will Ogden
Steve Zonneville
Marty Alves
Buddy Lyles – by phone
Roger Smith
Sam Grisham
Jerry Fagan

Absent

Don Bentley
Gene Smithberger
Bill Finnegan
Ed Slone
Steve Romshe

Guest

Terry Conley – Phone call

Review of minutes from the last meeting

Max opened the meeting at 4:30 PM. There was a discussion of the last meeting minutes and they were accepted without any changes. Motion by Sam Grisham to accept the minutes and 2nd by Jerry Fagan with all in favor.

Financial r,report

The financial report was given by Roger Smith. There is currently \$6,429.87 in the account. This is a \$100 increase from last meeting due to a donation. Sam Grisham motioned to accept the report and Jerry Fagan 2nd with all in favor. Roger stated we do have a EIN number which is needed for the 501-3C application. Roger also said that he sent out 3 memorial donations for players loved ones that passed away.

Old Business

We agreed that the 50 and 60 leagues start at 6:00 pm and the 70 league will start at 5:30 pm

A motion was made to make Will Ogden the new Tournament Director replacing Keith Thrush who resigned. Sam Grisham made a motion to make Will the new Tournament director and Mike 2nd – Motion passed.

Rule Change (Section 5I) was made to the courtesy runners for partially disabled players.

Sam Grisham made a motion. In the 1st inning the coach would assign a courtesy runner and subsequent innings the last capable batter from the previous inning would be the courtesy runner. Will 2nd and the motion passed.

Rule Change (Section 4B) - Sam purchased a compression tester to make sure ASA/USA and senior bats are safe to use and aren't illegal. Sam made a motion to adopt that Senior bats tested are greater than 140 psi and ASA/USA bats are greater than 220 psi. Each player can have 2 bats tested as part of the player fees and additional bats tested would be \$5.00 each. This would be done to ensure player safety. Bats will have a sticker stating the compression results initialed by Sam. Jerry 2nd and motion passed.

Sam created a Go Fund Me page for our MSSA league to improve the field for our senior leagues to keep seniors happy, active and safe. He said we need to work on getting the 501-3C application completed.

He said we need to pass the word so that others can make donations to the fund and we should put a link on the MSSA website and on Facebook.

Max discussed the MSSA banner and the sponsor banners. Max will get with Don Bentley to change or get a new banner for the scorekeepers building showing league days and times. He also asked for feedback on Sponsor banners. He said we need to make sure the sponsor banners are big and simple and are made with large letters so they can be read from a distance.

Mike made a motion that banner renewals and banners for team sponsors are \$200 and new banner sponsors are \$300. Steve 2nd and the motion passed. Sponsor fees would stay at \$400.

Marty said he will request the Knights of Columbus sponsor a team for each league and if we have a flyer or table cards he could post them at the Knights of Columbus.

Mike stated we may lose Homeless to Home as a sponsor and Shirk Antiques this year.

New Business

Terry Conley joined the meeting via a phone call to review the field improvement updates.

On Dec 23rd Terry talked to Ryan at the Ohio Secretary of State's office to discuss obtaining tax exempt status for our league. (Phone # 614-466-2655). Ryan said the 1st step is completing and submitting a 532B form and Terry suggested we get an attorney to help with this process. Bill Finnegan and Eric Griebbling's names came up as attorneys that may be able to help. There is a \$100 filing fee. The YMCA, Community foundation and Boys/Girls clubs are tax exempt organizations that we could contact to see what they did to obtain the tax exempt status.

Terry said he can contact United Way to see if they can help with some funding and suggested we contact the Rotary club also but we need to get tax exempt status first and suggested that we wait till after the City Park and Recreation board approves our request. Sam suggested we also contact Ohio Health.

Mike stated we will need to file a tax return each year after we become tax exempt and that any money raised be put in an account separate from our league expenses. The tax return would show what we brought in and what the money was used for. Someone suggested we contact the Marion city grant writer (Zoey Brown) to see if she could help write a grant.

Terry said if the City approves our proposal then attorney Mark Russell will review and approve our proposal. At the city meeting we also want to discuss seal coating the parking lot, sun awning, a portable building and a Flagpole near the entrance to the park. Larry Kelly may be able to help with the flagpole.

Terry also talked about the city (Randy Holt) is planning to put AstroTurf on 2 of the fields at Lincoln park and suggested we talk to the contractor to see if we could get reduced pricing for our project.

Terry said Gene stated the area we want to put AstroTurf is smaller than 14,000 sq feet and our cost should be less so we need to check the infield dimensions. Tony Ray may be able to help with the concrete work which would also reduce the cost and Don Bentley may be able to get us re-bar and for little or no cost.

Terry said that Larry Jordon (City of Marion) would like the dirt from the infield and they would dig it up and haul it away for free if we get the funding for a turf infield which would save \$7,000.

We also need to contact Tackett fence company. The contact is Dewayne Tackett and he could meet someone who knows what the scope for the fencing the week of January 12th. We need to contact him at 740-396-6435. His dad Gary would provide the estimate after getting the details from Dewayne.

Some items discussed were – Higher fence around the outfield to match the right field side, 2 outfield gates and 1 large gate to get heavy equipment in and out of the field. The fences should have rails on the bottom of the fence to maintain its integrity and also cover on the top of the fence. Max suggested we also get a quote on black fencing vs galvanized.

Terry suggested we get the fencing as a 1st step then work on the turf as the 2nd step and a walking path with benches, trees and exercise equipment as the 3rd step which may help be more appealing to get funding.

Terry also brought up additional funding from the state such as applying for unclaimed funds which has 4 billion dollars in it and community development grants such as the block grant allocation program which

has 11 million dollars in the fund. Lorain County received funding for parks and recreation for 648 thousand dollars which included playground equipment, sidewalks – walking path.

Max suggested we contact Walmart, Rotary club after we obtain 501-3C status.

Sam asked if anyone knows Ted Graham and maybe he would be willing to provide funding also.

Terry would be willing to work with the group to get pledges, funding and publicity.

Mike made a motion for Terry to coordinate obtaining 501-3C status and Sam 2nd – Motion passed.

Mike said to help speed up the game we need the commissioners to emphasis to coaches that if a player needs a substitute runner that they have a runner already assigned and ready to get on the base.

Rule Change (New Section 5L) Since we will be playing 3 games a night and to help speed up games Mike made a motion for Tie Games.

“To break a tie each team starts the extra inning with a runner at 2nd base. The runner shall be the last batter from the previous inning that completed his/her turn at bat. No courtesy runner can replace the original 2nd base runner until he/she reaches 3rd base.” Sam 2nd and the motion passed.

Mike suggested that we raise the scorekeeper rate per game from \$10 to \$12.50. The scorekeeper announces, keeps books, operates the scoreboard and fills out the player who got on base forms so they can be posted on Facebook and also sends the scores to our website manager.

Sam seconded and 8 yes votes and 1 no vote. The no vote thought the cost should be raised higher to \$15 per game. Motion passed.

Mike also said if we know of anyone that would or could do the score keeping to give Karen a break it would be appreciated. Marty and Will said they could possibly help on Monday nights.

Jerry said he has spent \$150 on stamps mailing out forms to prospective players and he will make up a recruitment sheet that each commissioner could post at various locations.

Jerry wants to sponsor his son who has a 224 bowling average and made a motion to put the MSSA logo and info on the back of his shirt. Jerry said it would cost \$160 and Sam said he would pay for half and Sam 2nd the motion. Motion passed.

Max asked that we consider starting a big ball league in the fall. We would use a 12 inch ball and would use the MSSA rules. Sign ups would be done by July 1st. Sam made a motion to put out info and see if there is interest in a Wed. big ball league and that we put a note on the web page that we are exploring if there is interest to contact Max Gerber. Mike 2nd and the motion passed.

Steve asked that each commissioner review the duties list and add to it and offer comments. This is to help new prospective commissioners know what the duties are if they want to become a commissioner. Sam and Mike already provided comments.

Tabled

From December meeting - Buddy needs to know at the beginning of the season who the sub players can be (possibly draft picks 5-8)

Buddy said new players substitution status be adjusted halfway thru the season to achieve fairness in who are in the sub brackets.

Sam agreed with Jerry Fagan’s previous proposal that we have each player in a “A,B,C” bracket and a sub utilized be in the same bracket as the player they are subbing for.

After discussion we decided to table this item but the option that the League Commissioner and the Sub Commissioner get together in the beginning of the season and mid season to discuss the substitution pool. If needed the coaches could confer to make sure no team forfeits.

Mike brought up that a player asked what we are doing to ensure that sexual predators aren't allowed to play and if we do background checks. This player will be invited to the next meeting to discuss his concerns.

Sam suggested that we consider 75 and older players start with a zero – zero count when at bat.

Jerry asked if we could consider players that are 49 be allowed to play in the 50 league if we need more players.

Marty knows a shirt vendor that would give us a good price – more info to come.

Marty would like to promote the league at the K of C. He suggested that we have a fundraiser spaghetti dinner at the beginning of the season and a fish fry at the end of the season at the K of C facility. He would like our logo so he could make table placards.

Marty also suggested we could have a Clay shoot event to help raise money and would need volunteers to help.

Max brought up that we still need to resolve if we can install a sun shield over the bleachers on the 3rd base side.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled after the City Park Board meeting on February 10th.

There were no other items to discuss, and Sam Grisham made a motion to adjourn, Jerry Fagan seconded, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

SHZ - 01/07/26