

MARION SENIOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION
Minutes of Wednesday, April 12th, 2021
Tri Rivers - Cafeteria

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Marion Senior Softball Association was called to order at 6:00 PM by President, Gene Smithberger.

II. ATTENDANCE

Commissioners in attendance were: Steve Zonneville, Bill Finnegan, Steve Romshe, Ed Slone, Buddy Lyles, Mike Winders, Don Bentley, Jeff Crummel, Roger Smith and Gene Smithberger.

Excused Absences: Keith Thrush

Guests: Jerry Fagan

III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Steve Romshe moved to accept the minutes of the March 7th 2021 meeting and Don Bentley seconded with a change to correct spelling of Jeff's name. Motion passed.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

Roger Smith reported \$7,098.92 in the treasury as of 04/12/21. Roger also distributed a 2020 financial report to each commissioner. Roger stated we will switch financial institutions when he runs out of checks to one that doesn't charge for a second account so we can maintain a special projects account separately from the yearly account. Mike Winders made a motion to accept the financial report and Steve Zonneville seconded. Motion passed.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Buddy Lyles continued a tabled discussion from last meeting that we provide a protective screen to protect the pitchers. The batted balls are getting back faster but more than that, our reflexes are getting slower. It is purely a safety issue. Buddy received feedback from our pitchers and other leagues and about half liked the screen idea and half didn't. Some leagues that didn't have screens required pitchers to wear a mask and chest protector. Buddy suggested that we try the screen in the 65 league.

Steve Romshe made a motion to not use a pitching screen and Bill Finnegan seconded. The motion did not pass (2 for, 6 opposed, 1 abstained)

After more discussion we decided to vote on the use of pitching screen for safety of the pitcher in all 3 leagues and make it optional for each pitcher. We will try to obtain a portable 3 foot by 6 foot pitching screen. Some rules were developed for its use.

1. Optional for every pitcher per inning but must be used for the entire inning.
2. The pitching screen will be placed 3 feet in front of the pitching rubber and the left or right corner of the screen must be placed so half of the rubber is protected by the screen.
3. Pitcher must move behind the screen after the pitch but once the ball is hit, the pitcher can field the ball at his/her discretion.
4. If the batter hits the screen the 1st hit is a foul ball and the 2nd hit of the screen is an out.
5. If the pitcher doesn't get behind the screen after a pitch and touches the ball after it is hit, then it's considered a dead ball and the batter goes to 1st base (Dead Ball Single)
6. If the defense throws a ball and hits the screen it is considered a live ball.

Buddy Lyles made a motion to use the optional screen in all 3 leagues utilizing the rules stated above. Ed Slone seconded. The motion passed (7 for, 2 opposed)

Gene Smithberger asked Steve Zonneville to look for a 3 foot x 6 foot pitching screen and contact the Columbus league to see what they are utilizing.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

Gene stated that we will most likely start the season the June 1st with the draft being held Monday April 26th starting at 6PM.

Gene stated he has 103 players registered:

55 league – 44 players + 7 potential players – Coaches: Max, Ed S, Bill B, Jeff C

60 league – 57 players + 4 potential players – Coaches: Ed, Tom S, Jeff T, Jeff C +1?

65 league – 45 players + 5 potential players – Coaches: Larry K, Tom S, Larry W, and Don B – Terry C.

Mike Winders said we will have a cleanup day on Saturday May 15th to work on the field and also to clean the concession stand, bathroom, and upstairs of the building. If it rains, May 22nd will be the rescheduled date

Mike Winders will check with Travis (backhoe contractor) to take the hump out of the infield and also expand the infield to make it similar to Garfield.

Jerry Fagan discussed the 55 league. He said it is the foundation for the league and we should encourage and possibly open it up to younger players – possibly 52 years old. Right now we allow 53 year olds to play in the 55 league and there was a discussion whether to allow 52 year olds. No motion was made.

Buddy Lyles started a discussion on Rule 5H – Courtesy runners. Buddy reasoned it wasn't right for a player that wants to run the bases and to be removed by the coach. He stated the players pay to play and the coaches don't and that it is discouraging for players wanting to run to be replaced. After discussion Buddy made a motion to strike the sentence in Rule 5H allowing the coach to replace a runner. Steve Romshe seconded. The motion passed with 1 opposed.

MSSA Courtesy Runner rule will be the same as the USA Courtesy Runner rule.

The manager may use a runner for an individual player only once in a game. A base runner may ask for a courtesy player at any time and only the coach decides who is the courtesy runner and as usual an individual can only be used as a courtesy runner only once in each inning.

Buddy Lyles started a continued discussion on Rule 5B – Substitution Rule. In an effort to make the teams equal, a motion was made by Buddy to add the following paragraph to Rule 5B. Steve Zonneville seconded. Motion passed.

If there are no substitute players available for a team that has 10 players or less, that team would select any league player to be a catcher for their team. The selected catcher would be added to the lineup but cannot bat. When the selected catcher would come to bat it would be an automatic out however the game could not end with this automatic out and the next batter(s) in the lineup would bat until the 3rd out is obtained. If both teams had 10 players and no substitutes were available the teams would be considered equal.

Gene stated it is really important for the substitute players to be available and for players to contact their coach if they won't be available to play so the coach can contact Buddy.

Mike Winders discussed the illegal bat list and that it will be enforced in 2021 due to liability issues.

Gene said that we will put an ad in the paper promoting our league.

Gene asked that we add the most recent minutes and updated rules to our MSSA website.

Mike Winders discussed umpire changes.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion by Steve Zonnevylle was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM and Ed Slone seconded. Motion passed.

No next meeting date.

Minutes submitted by Steve Zonnevylle.