

**GLEN CAIRN LADIES SOFTBALL LEAGUE**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015**  
**7:00 to 9:00 pm**  
**Lion's Den**

Present: Cara Doxsee, Heather MacDonald, Christine Anderson, Nancy Gervais, Linda Wilson, Sharron George, Lynn Preston, Irene Lajeunesse, Kimberly Kirby, Deb Ward, Robin Gyimesi, Sharon Carbonetti, Kim Myles, Lynn Cameron, Erika Schom, Jennifer Quinn, Tracy Scrimshaw, Karen Wood, Bani Ahara

Cara began the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

- 1) Motion to approve the minutes of our last AGM held on September 10th, 2014  
Moved by Christine, seconded by Lynn Cameron. Carried.
- 2) Approval of Agenda - Lynn Preston asked that the agenda be amended to include an additional item under new business. She wanted to discuss screening new players for ability level.
- 3) President's update – See Cara's report attached to the minutes.
- 4) Financial Report/Statement – attached to the minutes

Heather presented on behalf of our Treasurer, Sue Kehoe, who was not able to attend the meeting. We are projected to finish the year with a profit of approximately \$1400 and a bank balance of just over \$3000 to begin next season. This compares favorably to the deficit we ran last year. This year we held a trivia fundraising evening at the Glen that raised \$985. We charged \$10 for the year end banquet, compared to \$5 last year. Equipment costs were higher as we needed to order softballs this year. (In 2013 we ordered balls for 2 seasons, so there was no cost for softballs in 2014) We made an effort to reduce tournament costs by asking teams to provide their own food on Friday night. We also saved \$400, as there will be no year-end video this year (lack of photos). Christine asked what was included in miscellaneous in 2015. This amount included ice packs, sand to repair wet diamonds and chalk for tournaments. Heather thought that these same costs were included in the equipment line in 2014.

- 5) Committee reports
  - a) Equipment purchased this year
    - i) Yellow balls - Our league purchased balls from Spalding through VSP Sports. These balls have not been wearing well. Heather will follow up again with VSP Sports to confirm that 1 in 3 balls are wearing out the first game they are used. We will ask to get credit for the 5 dozen unopened softballs we will have on hand at year end. We would recommend going back to Play it Again Sports in Kanata to source balls next year as we feel we have a long standing relationship with them and would get a better response if we had a problem with the balls again.

## b) Year End Banquet and Awards Committee

We need to make a deposit by Friday with Grillmaster, so the Committee is busy following up with teams to submit their money and food choices. Last count showed 109 people attending. Our theme is 50 years of softball. If anyone would like to help decorate, please join Woody and Christine on Saturday. They are going to decorate all tables with a gold and black colour scheme. A suggestion was made that teams bring old trophies, medals and photos to add to their tables. Cathy Lee will be our MC. We have no door prizes to date. As mentioned earlier, there is no year-end video. Members have been invited to perform skits during the evening. Cara will send an email to players to let them know that team tables will be decorated by the Year-End Committee, request door prizes and to ask members to get their banquet money into the league asap. The nominations for the Lynne Heaslip Award have gone to that Committee to help in their selection for this year's recipient.

Question from Jen. It seems we are always following up to collect banquet money. Would it make more sense to add \$10 to everyone's fee at registration, as a prepayment for the banquet? It would be useful on the registration form to indicate what your registration fee is providing (18 games, 2 tournaments, play-offs, a t-shirt and a year-end banquet.)

## c) Tournament Committee

We need more sponsors – for teams and tournaments. Our current team sponsorship fee is \$250, but any level of sponsorship for tournaments is appreciated. We can recognize sponsors by posting sponsor names on our website and at the ball fields.

Sharon suggested preparing an information sheet that league members could take to a potential sponsor. Cara prepared something similar for MP who secured sponsors this year. Cara will share this letter with the new executive and they can decide if they want to make it available to our full membership.

We discussed whether there could be 2 sponsors on a shirt, if we were in the happy position of having more than 10 sponsors.

## 6) Cara introduced the 2015-2016 Executive

- President – Erika Schom
- Vice President – Kimberly Kirby
- Secretary – Lynn Preston
- Treasurer – Sue Kehoe
- Statistician – Deb Ward
- Captains: Bani Ahara, Christine Anderson, Erika Smith, Julie Rollin, Julie Tremblay, Karen Wood, Leah Mammoletti, Jennifer Quinn, Sherry Timmins, Robin Gyimesi

## 7) New Business

### a) Last year's AGM outcome recap

This is a follow up of some of the items that were discussed at the 2014 AGM. We decided not to use a pitching rubber and if we had a big hole in the pitching area we would fill in it with sand; we did not hold any ball clinics and we have noticed an improvement in captains reporting to the President and VP on a timely basis.

### b) Website updating to include "About Us" – a history of GCLSL.

Those present thought this was a great idea, something for the new executive to discuss.

### c) Facebook posts

Captains and members of the Executive who are on facebook are currently the editors and Erika and Kimberly are the administrators. All of our members should be able to post, for example, if you have something to sell. We hope as people become more aware of our facebook page, they will use it more. We also hear from people outside the league who see the FB page and ask about joining the league. If people are interested in our league please ask them to email the league Hotmail account (GCLSL@hotmail.com). It was asked if there were any guidelines on what you can post. In the past we have left this up to the President to decide. Don't want to clog up the email, but facebook is for these other social/non softball things. It was suggested that we put something on the website about, "Like us on Facebook".

### d) Revisit constitution to clarify use of spare pitchers.

If you have players who are healthy and willing to play they play first before a spare. Do we need to update the Constitution to reflect this? Sometimes things get blown out of proportion when there may not be a big issue. Only one incident was reported this year and it was thoroughly researched. As pitchers get older maybe they don't want to sign up at all if there are too many constraints. You don't want to discourage pitchers from signing up at all. We never have enough pitchers. In years past it was easier to be clear on the rules because we had 10 full time pitchers. Would it be a mistake to try to be clearer when we have a shortage of pitchers and catchers?

### e) Changes to how pitchers/catchers are accessed from Waiting list (activated before a person before them?)

Our Constitution currently states that a pitcher comes off the wait list first, if a pitcher is needed – see Article 3, Registration (g). We need to make sure a new player is able to pitch/catch at a level that is suitable for our league. That is the purpose of the clinics we have held in the past.

There are players who have indicated they would pitch 1 or 2 innings who never get to pitch. So if you are a captain with a FT pitcher should you not pick someone who indicates they would pitch 1 or 2 innings? Should we make a rule that if you have someone who indicates they will pitch 1 or 2 innings they have to pitch 1 inning each game? Do we need 2 rounds of pitching on draft night to ensure all pitchers are selected to pitch? Otherwise our PT pitchers don't get a chance to pitch and improve. What about a pitcher who thinks they can pitch in our league and then finds out they are not strong enough to pitch in our league?

f) Changes to registration or draft to accommodate the need for more pitchers?

We felt we had exhausted our discussion of pitchers in points d) and e) above.

g) Changing diamonds to save \$\$

It costs significantly less to rent the diamond at AY Jackson (\$13.50 at any time) compared to the one at the Arena (\$67.10 between 6 and 8 p.m. and \$93.90 between 8 and 10 p.m.) We wondered if a good way to help reduce costs would be to ask for more of our games to be assigned to AYJ during the season and potentially for the final games of tournaments. The men's league have traditionally had more games at AYJ so the question was raised whether our league would have priority for more games at AYJ. Kimberly attended a diamond allocation meeting this year. Next year all renters will be required to submit a financial statement, so that might change who is allocated the less expensive diamonds. Several of our members indicated they find it dangerous to play at AY Jackson as it's difficult for the pitcher and anyone who plays up the middle of the field to see the ball in the sunlight. Question – do we need to save money? We had a lot of rainouts this year and that costs a lot. We need to buy some equipment. Want to have some contingency funds. Would more late games at AYJ be an option since the sun would not be a factor? Do players want more late games? Could we play 3 games each evening and save money that way? Could we raise registration fees or how about we have a roster of 14 players? Mixed feedback on the larger roster since if all 14 show up each game, 14 is a lot of people to get into a line up. How about Sacred Heart or Mlacak as possible diamonds. How about Carp – they have great diamonds – well maintained, the guys put out the bags for you. Is it too far to travel to Carp for some players? A great discussion with lots of ideas.

h) Mercy Rule

We used to be a mercy rule in the Constitution but it was removed as players wanted to play out the full game. Could we include a mercy rule, with the stipulation that it is at the discretion of the 2 captains agreeing? If the rule is there, then at least it could be invoked when needed.

i) Equipment return

All equipment bags should be returned to Kimberly Kirby at the end of the season and she will go through them, take an inventory of what's there and store them until next season. If we have bats that are not being used anymore or that are damaged we should get rid of those. Some of our catching gear needs to be updated. Many catchers bring their own equipment so the team catcher equipment isn't complete. You almost need to know which catcher is on which team before allocating this equipment. But each bag should have the basic equipment in case you have to bring in a spare catcher. Catcher helmets have improved a lot too and may need replacement. It would be worthwhile to get a sense of what needs to be replaced and then as funds permit, replace items. Perhaps do a fundraiser specifically to buy new equipment? What about bats? Maybe tackle that next year. Try to buy equipment at the end of the season when there are sales. Maybe we need to buy better bats that have a longer life?

j) Year-end video

Karen didn't get enough photos early enough this season, so will not be preparing the year end video. Do we want a year end video? YES!! Maybe this will be a good wake-up call and encourage players to submit photos early next year. We should make an announcement at the banquet explaining why there is no video this season. Robin uses drop box for her team photos. Karen was provided with the link to the drop box so she could access Robin's team's photos whenever she needed them. Robin's team members just kept adding photos as they had them. It's free to use drop box. This might be a good way for all teams to collect and share their photos with Karen next year.

k) Proposal for new team uniforms

See Jennifer Quinn's proposal which is attached to the minutes.

Jen is willing to sit at registration night with samples, if there is interest in this idea. Perhaps a first step would be to bring samples to the next Executive meeting so the captains can see the shirts. Heather mentioned that in the past we have not been able to get support from a majority of captains to move to another style/fabric for shirts.

Although Jen refers to a sleeveless shirt in her proposal, she thought there could be a mix of sleeveless, cap and short sleeve shirts, depending on the preference of each player.

Would we ask players to buy 2 shirts – cost of \$50 – too much for people? Or maybe the league pays for one of the shirts? If someone retires, they can give/sell their shirt to new players.

We could have some type of symbol to add to your shirt to indicate each year played in the league.

Players at the meeting seemed to generally like the idea and encouraged the new Executive to explore the idea further.

l) Use of spare pitchers during playoffs

We discussed the following proposal for use of spare pitchers during the playoffs:

During playoffs, a team can call up a pitcher or catcher that is playing for a team that placed 1 level above or any team that placed below. In the case of the three lowest ranked teams they can call up a pitcher or catcher up to 2 levels above their placing.

Examples: Team A placed 5 and is playing Team B which placed 10<sup>th</sup>.

Team A's pitcher is not available thus Team A can call up a pitcher that is on a team that placed 4<sup>th</sup> or below.

If Team B's pitcher was not available Team B would be able to call in a pitcher who is playing on a team up to 2 places above (9<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup>)

Team C placed 1<sup>st</sup> and Team D placed 7<sup>th</sup>

Team D's pitcher is not available. They can call anyone who placed 6<sup>th</sup> or below.

This rule is meant to keep pivotal positions from changing playoff outcomes. This rule would help to alleviate the challenge of a lower ranked team calling up top ranked pitchers or catchers. These positions change how the game is played. These positions impact the game significantly and can cause a team to lose which may not have if the top pitcher or catcher were not subbing for that team. To have a catcher or pitcher play from another team that placed close to the same as the calling team helps to maintain the competitive level of that team and ensure fair play.

Once teams are eliminated from the playoffs, then those pitchers/catchers may be picked up by any team. You may not use the same spare more than 3 times during the playoffs.

It was a good discussion with many players seeing the merit of this proposal.

m) Screening new players joining our league for ability level

Some players in our league were concerned that if players join our league without a minimum level of skill and knowledge of the game, that they were at risk of being injured. For example, when batting against a strong pitcher or missing a fly ball in the field. We currently include a box on the new player registration form asking new players to tell us about their previous softball experience. Some league members felt there should not be anyone playing in

our league who has never played softball before. Other league members argued that this is a recreational softball league where everyone is welcome and it's our responsibility to help new players learn the game. How about a general skills clinic before registration to assess skills and make new players aware of the skill level in our league? It's important to educate new players about our league and let them make an informed decision about joining our league. It would be a good idea to encourage people to come out and see a game before they join. Perhaps the skill level in our league has improved over the years. There are other leagues in the area, such as the women's league that plays out of West Carleton, that may play at a different skill level. Members indicated that they have always enjoyed the clinics to start the season and would love to see these return.

## 8) Open discussion

Another cost saving idea might be to eliminate the base umpire for the final game at the tournaments? What is the cost? We don't play with them for the rest of the season, do we need them in those games?

The question was asked why we include the membership fee to the Kanata Sports Club as part of the fees to join our league. All the adult recreational leagues in Kanata become members of KSC. KSC is a good community member. They give back to our community in many ways. What do we get for our membership? Free use of the hall. (Otherwise it costs \$300 per use.) KSC sponsor one of our teams and both tournaments. The first year that we included the KSC fees in our registration the KSC purchased some equipment on our behalf. That agreement was for the one year only.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.