

## August 2013 MSA Board Meeting minutes

8/13/2013

### Attendees:

Ann Garry, John Lorenz, Jim Herrod, Megan Schmidt, Kimberly Peterson, Pete Heyer, Don Yee-Yick, Scott Rice, Mike Dunham, Jason Eberle, LeAnne Eberle, Ben LaFrinier, Kevin Kielsa, Deb Kipp

Meeting was called to order

Minutes from last meeting were approved

### **New Business:**

3 parents from the U11 age group came to the meeting to express their frustration with the team formation process. They wanted to voice their frustration, offer suggestions for how to change the team formation process and ensure that the rules are always followed.

Each parent voiced their concerns in turn and discussion followed. The result of the conversation was that these parents recommended that the next time the soccer development council (SDC) convene that it considers rewriting the team formation rules. They also recommended that these rules be better publicized and communicated. They also wanted to ensure that the rules be applied consistently. The parents explained that the soccer association doesn't do things the same way as hockey and referred to the hockey association's policy as an example of how they'd like things to be run. Finally, they expressed concern that a single age group was receiving more resources than other age groups. They mentioned they couldn't find this in the policy, but that there is leeway by the DOPD, DOCD, etc. to place kids at levels.

The board members explained that the key difference with the hockey association and the point of confusion for the parents was that each age group is evaluated as its own group and the teams are created discretely for that group. The teams are placed in different leagues independently of other age groups' teams and focus is given solely to that age group for the purpose of placement. As a result, the group of U10 boys that were assigned to play in the U11 league were a discrete unit and not open for other boys of the U11 age group: the priority was to keep the age groups discrete from each other.

There was a lengthy discussion of why the MSA does not currently mix the age groups due to many pitfalls that exist within state association rules and their practical application. Some of these situations have befallen the club when it attempted to combine age groups to appease parents in the past.

The board went on to explain that the association is working hard to remain competitive and viable within the broader metro/state community and is implementing some changes. The tiering of teams is a departure from past practices and was attempted with two pilot groups last spring, the U9 boys and the U10 girls at that time. The result was that the experiment appeared to be successful and was

implemented across the entire U9-U10 age group for the fall. It will be re-evaluated over the winter to determine if it is a best practice and is serving the interests of each of the age groups. Similarly, extending the tiering of teams to place teams at a competitive level where they will be challenged regardless of age group classification was attempted with two age groups this fall. If successful, it will be further implemented. The goal as stated above remains to put kids of similar ability together and challenge them at an appropriate level so that they have fun and develop their skills.

The board further explained that the rules were published on the website and that a full page of the website was dedicated to the evaluation process. The board also mentioned that the decision of the committee was reviewed at the town hall meeting last winter. The rules had been formed by a committee of volunteers who were doing their best to create a fair written process where none had existed in the past. The board members acknowledged that based on this feedback it appears that the explanations of the policy could be expanded so that everyone understands them and can observe and appreciate that the policies were followed. They also pointed out the fact the committee members went to great lengths to ensure that they were followed under the watchful eyes of the board. The board also made it clear that board members who had any affiliation with a particular age group recused themselves from the team formation process so that the process was implemented by third parties who had no vested interest in the age group.

The SDC is open to new members and would encourage feedback and participation in helping review the current set of policies, determining what changes would be appropriate and what the practical implications would be for implementing those changes. It also would appreciate help in writing and clarifying what the application of the rules means so that other parents don't experience the same frustration that these parents felt.

#### **Treasurer:**

The board expressed concern that our newly elected treasurer has not attended the last two meetings and turned over the checkbook to the president. Based on his non-responsiveness, the board will attempt to confirm his intentions with regard to the position. In addition, Deb Kipp agreed to contact John Boyle to step in as an interim/emergency Treasurer to assist. The suggestion to utilize an agency to hire a part-time accountant was also made.

#### **Training:**

Don, Kevin, Jason and Mike met with Joaquin to finalize details of the fall training and to begin discussions for winter training. Given the limited number of daylight hours, this group is working to combine several teams per training session in order to give every child one hour of training per week. Given the larger groups, a motion was passed to allow Joaquin to bring an assistant trainer with him at \$15/hour. The estimated cost would be approximately \$1,000. It was pointed out the Joaquin

significantly discounted his hourly rate in order to accommodate the association and that we were still getting very high level training at lower than market rate.

Winter training is still in the works. We've confirmed the same number of training hours at the Vadnais dome as a minimum. We are exploring additional training either at the Mahtomedi Middle School Gyms on Sunday afternoons for futsal training and micro training. We are also exploring additional hours at the Vadnais Dome, although they are scarce at this point. Joaquin's training contract will be finalized once we have finalized our facilities availability.

### **Registrar:**

There are 376 kids registered for fall traveling soccer compared with 325 last fall season. There are 192 registered for in-house with one week to go, which is tracking with last year's 217 after registration closed.

Nearly 20% of the association took advantage of the split payment option, so that has made a big difference for a lot of families and helped them out. In addition, this might have also contributed to the reduction in angel fund requests.

It was decided to open spring registration early to allow families to spread out the higher cost of the summer season. The exact date remains to be determined, but we may mirror White Bear's policy of opening registration as early as November.

Winter training registration will also be possible to implement to allow for better prognostication for the number of training hours. Discussion of pricing for winter training was tabled until we have more data on the costs, facilities and schedule.

### **Tournament Director**

Ben LaFrinier and Mike Dunham agreed to continue their work from the previous years' tournament and serve in the role of co-directors.

### **Fundraising:**

Kimberly Peterson was recognized for bringing in approximately \$25k worth of fundraising for the association through a variety of donations and events. This helps to pay for additional programs such as hiring professional trainers, providing training shirts for coaches and players, updating the uniforms, providing angel fund assistance and a variety of other things.

The in-house kickoff date was decided for August 27 at 4:30 PM to 7PM. This will take place at the Stadium before and during the varsity soccer games. This event will allow the in-house coaches to meet

their teams, distribute jerseys and equipment and take care of administrative tasks. This also represents a chance for our littlest players to play a quick scrimmage during halftime of a varsity game and get high-fives from the big kids!

She is in the process of arranging the fall angel fund fundraiser: rumor has it that it will be a beer-tasting event instead of a wine-tasting event.

OSI has agreed to donate medical supplies again for the fall season, saving approximately \$500 costs for the association.

Kimberly has brought in sponsorship to completely pay for all the in-house kids to get free jerseys for the season with enough money left over to pay for shirts for all the coaches of all age groups as a thank-you for their time and effort.

### **Field Planning**

High School: The stadium and field 1 will be used by the high school teams. Field 5 is resting and is not to be used. Field 6,7 will be used for U13+ teams. Field 8 will be used for U5-U8.

Hanifl: The same 3 fields (38N, 38S and 39N) at the Hugo facility will be used by the U11-12 teams.

Southwest Park: The Upper field will be used by Joaquin for age group and team training and for U9-U10 weekend games. The lower fields will be used by the U9-U10 teams for games and practice.

As always, coaches are reminded to stay out of the goal mouths as much as possible during practice, especially when the ground is wet to avoid damage and keep the fields as nice as possible for games.

Next board meeting:

September 10, 2013

6 – 9 pm

Community Vineyard Church

2600 County Road East

White Bear Lake, MN