

Attendance: Terry Olson, Corryn Anderson, Chet Latawiec, Nate Greene, Julie Cooley, James Saulsbury, Christina Smentek, Jamielynn Sparre, Stephanie Walschlaeger, Eric Potthoff

Absences: Eric Potthoff (1st 8/13), Stephanie Walschlaeger (1st 8/13) Sara Taylor (1st 5/21, 2nd 6/11, 3rd 9/10, 4th 10/10), Jamielynn Sparre (1st 4/16, 2nd 8/13), Liz Jabs (1st 4/16, 2nd 8/13, 3rd 9/10, 4th 10/10), Christina Smentek (1st 4/16, 2nd 8/13)

1. Meeting **CALLED to ORDER** at 7:00 PM
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** from Annual Meeting October 11, 2022
Motion to approve by Chet. Seconded by Nate. Motion passes.

3. NEW BUSINESS

President's Report

Appreciation of Board Members, Corryn and the Concessions Coordinators. Membership of players is up 10%. Two hit-a-thons were successful, batting cages are set to be installed this week.

Treasurer's Report

Registration 5 year trend data was shared. SBAA Statement of Activity with January-October 2023 data was shared, as well as anticipated SBAA revenue at end of 2023

Financial Reports attached

4. PUBLIC FORUM –

Mike Nelson - MN Moose

Mike provided a thorough history of how Soderville fastpitch has evolved and how club teams (not only the Moose) have had an impact on MN softball.

Questions about how the profit (Moose, LLC) and non-profit (SBAA 501c) legally work together.

Lengthy discussion about the Moose and SBAA relationship going forward. As SBAA, we support the MN Moose and would prefer players stay within the SBAA organization instead of going to other club teams.

Chet is stepping down from his spot on the Board.

Baseball Report

- Eric and the baseball committee appreciates Chet's dedication and support of baseball over the years.
- For the 2023 season, Soderville Baseball had 400 kids registered in 6U to 16U. We did not have a 17-19U team this year. This is a 7% increase from last season's numbers. We had 32 teams which is up 2 teams from 2023. We also had 3 Tournament Teams, 12A, 13A, and 14/15A.
- In years past, we have had a kick off party as a fundraiser for the association. This year, both the softball and baseball programs had their own fundraiser in the form of a Hit-a-thon that took place at P5 in Coon Rapids. Kids raised money and got to hit in the batting cages. The money raised went to purchasing batting cages that are in the process of being installed at City Park. We are hoping to make this a yearly fundraiser/kick-off and make it bigger and better each year.
- The fields did not open up to us until April 26th. With the late open, we often hear that teams don't get enough practice time before games start. We are all in agreement with that, but speaking with coaches, most of them wanted more games in their schedule and found they can get practice time in before games.
- Umpiring always seems to be an issue early in the season, but I would say this season was better than the past couple of years. It seems most games were able to be covered.
- We hosted a number of tournaments this year besides our in house end of the year tournaments. Our Soderville/Ham Lake Classic featured 38 teams at 3 different age levels and was played using both complexes. In years past, we have hosted the 13U MYAS State Rec Tournament. This year, we were asked to host the 13U AND the 12U tournament due another organization being unable to host that weekend. The tournament was moved back a week because MYAS added an All-Star Weekend for their Gopher State League. We hosted the 13U Rec and 13A All-Stars for the one day event. All tournaments ran without a hitch and speaking with representatives from MYAS, they really like working with Soderville and know we can run a good tournament.
- Our teams had an amazing run in the MYAS State Rec Tournaments. Soderville teams took 1st place in the 10U, 12U, and 14/15U age groups. At the 12U level, this is the 3rd year in a row a Soderville team has won the championship.
- The Ham Lake City Park complex was in great shape again this season. The Richmond family has been a true asset in keeping this complex in top shape.

Fastpitch Report

1. As with past seasons, we started the 2023 season back during the first week of January with our included off-season training at the Complete Game facility. It's a great way to get some reps in, be active, and connect with other players and coaches.
2. We again hosted an 8U league with other surrounding communities thanks to our operations manager, Corryn, for helping organize and keeping the league running smoothly. We had 15 different teams in the league, which included a slammin 8s tournament hosted by the Moose, and an end of season tournament.I.

3. The hit-a-thon proved to be a really nice event, despite the wintery weather that day. Thanks to Sara Taylor and Nicki Barry for quickly putting all aspects of this event together. If we are to continue with hit-a-thons, we may want to consider having the events and outcome managed at the individual team levels.
4. Soderville once again donated fields to JIA for a 10U tournament directed by the Assistant Fastpitch director, Jamielynn Sparre - a great event benefiting an important foundation which supports children and families of children with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis.
5. During this season, we worked with the city of Ham Lake, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Ham Lake Fire dept, to get AED machines placed at both Ham Lake Lion's Park and Ham Lake City park. We also recently received new backstops and fencing on the quad at Lion's Park. This was much needed, and fields look much better. The mayor of Ham Lake said he would like to address the concession stand next season. Let's hope this happens to benefit the players and community members. There still is a lot of work that should be done at Lion's Fields, one area that I noticed this weekend is the edging on the fields, and the challenges with weeds. We need to clear these out and have nice defined edges. If this isn't addressed this Fall, then it will need to be an immediate area to address in the Spring.
6. During the Summer season we had 4 teams at 10U, 3 teams at 12u, 2 teams at 14U, 2 teams in the high school league.
7. During the Fall season we had 4 teams at 10U, 2 teams at 12u, 1 team at 14U, 2 teams at the high school league. There is typically a little attrition between Summer and Fall.
8. Prior to the start of the season I was part of the MN Softball Competition Committee. This group looked at historical data, compiled it with draw area detail, and came up with team placement recommendations. The goal was to get away from B and C teams with 26-2 records, and instead, aim for placing teams at levels in which there would be equal parts opportunity as well as competition, with the ultimate idea that teams and organizations should strive to place teams at levels where they are around .500 on the season. Personally, my Summer 12U A team was 28-25-2 - just slightly over .500 even though I would say we were an average to slightly below average A team, so it worked out well for 12UA.
9. Regarding overall Soderville Bengal Fastpitch, during the Summer our 11 collective teams at or above 10U, had 134 wins, 209 losses, and 17 ties, which resulted in an overall Summer winning percentage of .396, or, 39.58% of games.
10. The short Fall season was more challenging as we lost some players due to it being Fall season, as well as because an entire group at 14U went to the MN Sox, and some at the lower levels went to MN Moose, Midwest Speed, and Smoke. Despite that, we still fielded 9 teams during Fall at the 10U and above level. Overall, these 9 teams had 27 wins, 60 losses, and 8 ties, resulting in a .326 winning percentage, meaning we won 32.63% of our games in Fall.
11. Overall, for 2023, Soderville Bengal Fastpitch had 161 wins, 269 losses, and 25 ties, for a winning percentage of .381, or 38.13% of games won. We will need to work in

the off-season to improve skill set, pitching capabilities, and reassess level placement prior to 2024. We need to rebuild from 8U and 10U up, and I am very excited to see we have good coaching for the 5 2024 10U teams. There were some big victories sprinkled throughout the season as HS Wright won the consolation bracket at the recent State Tournament, and the Summer 12UA team won the Cowgirl Classic in Mauston, WI.

12. During Summer, 6 of the 11 coaches were new coaches for Soderville Fastpitch, and 2 of the 9 during Fall were new. Soderville Fastpitch needs to evolve coach cross training so that each new coach is armed with a catalog of practice drills, game strategy, and organizational unity.
13. Looking ahead to 2024, we will need to find a new field maintenance person, as my dad, John, needs to step away from the responsibilities, as he must focus on health challenges at home. He indicated to me that he spent about 200 hours dragging fields this past season. Current pay is \$1,500 per season, if anyone is interested and able to take on this role. The Fastpitch Committee may need to discuss a pay increase as that works out to \$7.50 an hour (although it is usually a nice task to take care if the weather cooperates).
14. Tryouts were this past Saturday, and it went really well. We utilized Flexxball for the first time and it seemed really efficient. Make-ups just concluded today, and we should have access to a Soderville specific Flexxball site with ranking and recommendations within the next two days. If the Fastpitch committee is satisfied with the end delivered product, then we will move forward with Flexxball for future tryouts and adjust registration fees as needed.
15. The Fastpitch Committee typically meets the first Sunday of each month at 7PM virtually for our meetings. People with specifically assigned tasks, such as director, assistant director, president, treasurer, secretary, equipment manager, etc, are able to vote on matters, and any other attendees that have attended the previous 3 consecutive meetings can vote on items. If you want to get more involved, and become more aware of off-field happenings, this could be a good step to take. The meeting detail is on the site, but if you would like me to add you to the invite, please send me an email at James.Saulsbury@SodervilleBlaine.org

Townball Report

3-16 record for Townball. Terry is struggling to get players, players want one or the other, weekday games or weekend games, they don't want to do both. Requirements: players have to play 4 games to qualify for the playoffs. Playoff roster can be 25. Right now Terry has 17 players.

Elect New Board Members

3 open positions

5. **NEXT MEETING & ADJOURN** at 9:15 PM

Regular Board Meeting immediately following this meeting. Sunday, October 10, 2023
Location: Maxx's Bar & Grill