



# August Board Meeting Minutes

August 18th, 2024

7:00 PM, Zoom

**Our Mission:** To provide the youth in the Spring Lake Park School District #16 attendance area the opportunity to learn and enjoy the game of fastpitch softball at a competitive level.

**Our Focus:** Teaching fastpitch softball fundamentals, promoting team play, improving individual skills and having fun in order to promote a life-long enjoyment of fastpitch softball.

## Call To Order

### 1) Welcome & Role Call (Tanya)

| Present | Board Member                                      | Present | Board Member   |
|---------|---|---------|--|
| X       | Tanya Hartwell, President                         |         | OPEN, Player Development Director                      |
| X       | Mike Raymond, Vice President                      | X       | Rich DiVito, Website & IT Director                     |
| X       | Josh Glood, Treasurer                             | X       | Brad Hunt, Brand & Marketing Director                  |
| X       | Stacy Nugent, Secretary                           | X       | Kristi Cobbs, Community Liaison & Fundraising Director |
| X       | Amy Bennett, League & Team Schedule Director      | X       | Carlo Faccini, Director at Large                       |
| X       | Zac Humphrey, Program Director                    | X       | Sarah Jordahl, Director at Large                       |
| X       | Sarah Gatlin, Panther Classic Tournament Director |         | OPEN, Director at Large                                |

\*Board Quorum for Approval Decisions: 50% of filled roles required

Additional Attendees: TBD

### 2) Review & Approval of August Agenda (Tanya)

Any additions?

Motion to approve as is

**Motion:** Kristi

**Second:** Mike

**Vote:** Unanimous Approval

### 3) Review & Approval of July Meeting Minutes (Tanya)

Any updates/revisions?

Motion to approve as is

**Motion:** Josh

**Second:** Sarah G

**Vote:** Unanimous Approval

## Financial Updates

### 1) Treasurer's Report (Josh)

#### **Treasurer's Report**

- August Financials update

#### **Discussion Notes:**

- Overall financials are looking good and as expected; on track against budget targets
- 2024 summer coach payments were sent; for future consider waiving head coach registration fees for established coaches instead of reimbursing to avoid fees

## Old Business

### 1) Try Softball Events Updates (Kristi)

Update on where we're at in addition to discussing a new Oct Event that Chris Bangle has proposed.

#### **Discussion Notes:**

- Investigating a Halloween event/dates for try softball in partnership with Chris; would be open to both current and new players
- Attempted last year but had to cancel due to weather; 26 players were registered last year before cancellation

#### **Next Steps/Board Lead/Timing:**

- **Kristi** to move forward with setting up an event this year
- **Brad** to help with communication once the details are finalized

## New Business

### 1) Fall Season Updates (Tanya/Amy/Brad/Rich)

- Teams have been set up in MN Softball; how many outstanding roster acceptances do we have?
- August practices are scheduled and in SportsEngine; when will September be ready to publish?
- Jerseys have been ordered for those who need; do we have an ETA on when we'll receive?
- Anything notable from the MN Softball Fall Season kick-off meeting?
- Fall Season Field Maintenance
- Anything else?

#### **Discussion Notes:**

- Both August & September practices are loaded in SportsEngine; website to come soon
- Propose opening up spirit wear store; possibly incorporate in some winter items, potentially at the end of October for Holidays
- Mikes feedback regarding scheduling meeting is that a board members attendance is not necessary, but possibly have some value for a new coach
- If coaches need scorebooks, they can be found in shed

- No additional feedback has been received regarding Fall Ball team placements; discussed the potential of hosting fall tryouts for fall teams only however it's a heavy resource lift (time & money) and we would not be able to accommodate additional tryout times if someone could not make it

**Next Steps/Board Lead(s)/Timing:**

- **Brad** to follow up with Spirit Wear vendor on opening up online store
- **Brad** to confirm delivery timing of Fall jerseys

**2) Summer Season Survey Results Review (Sarah/Brad)**

[Summer Season Survey](#) is closed; full summary can be found [HERE](#)

**48 total responses with good representation across most teams**

- Most teams at half or better in terms of responses
- 14U Blue was notably low with only 2 and Connor's team had 4
- Jamie's team also had 4 but there are many board members on that team

**Athletes most enjoyed tournament play (77%), team camaraderie (85%) and their coaches (85%) this season**

- League night games (58%) and practices (66%) trailed slightly behind in favorability
- Skills Clinics were notably low (10%) but is also likely a correlation with attendance

**75% of respondents felt the level of play was appropriate**

- Overall, a significant improvement in sentiment from last year however there are still some outliers
- Opportunity for more competitive league night games for our 10B and 12B teams (*Keep in mind, the bulk of players on these teams were 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year players which likely won't be the case next year*)
- Tournaments felt right and competitive in most cases; some nuances we're already aware of and can address next season

**85% of respondents felt their athlete improved this season**

- Lots of positive comments including words like "massive", "greatly" and "tremendous" improvement
- A few isolated responses of "same" or "no" improvement across 4 teams

**When asked about skill development focus areas for next season, respondents prioritized:**

- Game Strategy (70%)
- Hitting (69%)
- Throwing (50%)
- Fielding (42%)

**Less than half of the respondents (45%) participated in the free skills clinics**

- That said, were better attended this year than last and while it didn't show up on the survey, we did hear positive feedback during the season about them being offered earlier
- Many noted scheduling conflicts/other priorities for lack of participation
- A few also noted the quality of training that they appeared to be geared more towards beginner skill development

**Of those interested in off season training, their priorities include:**

- Hitting (68%)
- Fielding (43%)

- Speed/Agility (37%)
- Pitching (25%)
- Catching (22%)
- Coaching (for parents) (4%)
- 19% noted they are NOT interested in off season training

**75% of respondents intend to participate next season**

- Slight increase from last year (72%)
- For those responded no (5), many noted they'll be joining club
- Of the undecideds, some noted they are considering other sports

**42% of families would prefer a buyout option to participating in fundraising; fundraising preferences include:**

- Selling Raffle Tickets (50%)
- Cub Foods Bagging (45%)
- Other ideas like selling food items, cards, or advertising drop off significantly

**Other General Comments/Themes:**

- Positive comments about the Board's openness to feedback, improved communication and transparency in decision making
- Evaluation Process
  - Frustration around the 14U/16U tryout process in that no 16Us were cut
  - Interest in including pitching & catching evaluations as a part of the team placement process
  - Interest in evaluations for Fall team placements similar to what we do for summer
- Some comments about the 8U season schedule (duration of the season, number of practices/games/tournaments etc..)
- Some challenges with the timing/late start of the 14U+ teams season
  - Things like Clinics and Fundraising are hard to participate in due to many girls playing high school
  - Ensuring those who aren't playing HS are still getting some training in so the whole team is ready once the season starts

**Roundtable Discussion Event: Propose Monday, September 30th**

**Discussion Notes:**

- Clinic attendance continues to be a challenge; is there a way to offer multiple dates or perhaps host during existing trainings to accommodate schedules - would need to consider cost implications
- Mixed bag of responses on fundraising; propose a buyout up front (with a potential premium)
- Fundraising does provide a method of program advertising; consider team sponsorships as a revenue generator however jersey sponsorship would likely not be an option until 2026 due to 2-year jersey cycle aligned on last season

**Next Steps/Board Lead(s)/Timing:**

- **Tanya** to draft email share-out regarding general survey themes and roundtable for 9/30.
- **Amy** to follow up with John to get Centerview cafeteria (or similar) reserved for Roundtable event

**3) Winter Training Opportunities (Sarah J./Sarah G./Amy)**

Update on the status of winter training opportunities.

**Discussion Notes:**

- Committee working on this was not available to meet; will revisit at Sept meeting
- Optimize & Speed are seeking information to distribute to families; we will share but would like to get our offerings in place before

**Next Steps/Board Lead(s)/Timing:**

- **Sarah J./Sarah G./Amy** to meet and have a plan prepared prior to next board meeting

**4) 2025 Spring Evaluations Kick-off (Tanya/Mike)**

For this meeting, would like us to align on the following:

- Evaluation Dates: Propose 3/1 - 3/2 with pre-evaluation practices the week leading up
- Evaluation Location: Propose using Westwood Middle School again
- Evaluators: Propose asking the HS Coaches again with Chris as the lead

For our next discussion, would like to tackle:

- Pitcher/Catcher Evaluations
- Athlete Evaluation Performance Scorecards
- Registration Timing
- Early Coach Identification
- Registration Fees

**Discussion Notes:**

- Discussed one or two day evaluations pros and cons; will likely stick with 2 days
- Propose future discussion on evolving evaluations scoring; average vs. top score, actual evaluation components/skills measured etc.
- Propose opening up registration earlier to accommodate more payment plan sessions
- Mike confirmed with Chris Bangle during the meeting that he is willing to help with evaluations again

**Motion to approve evaluations date, location and HS head coach Chris Bangle to participate and help coordinate additional evaluators as outlined above.**

**Motion:** Sarah J

**Second:** Sarah G

**Vote:** Unanimous Approval

**Next Steps/Board Lead(s)/Timing:**

- **Rich** to look into automating a hold on volunteer checks in SportsEngine
- **Mike** to start coordinating with Chris on evaluation logistics
- **Brad/Tanya** to prepare communication materials for an evaluations Save the Date

**5) 2024/2025 Season Strategic Plan Document Feedback Discussion (Tanya)**

Discuss any feedback, make necessary adjustments and then will be looking for a motion to approve our 2024/2025 Season Strategic Plan. I would also like to identify board leads/committees for the priorities.

**Discussion Notes:**

- Aligned on strategic plan priorities and made a few adjustments for clarity
- Assigned leads and committee members for each of the 2024/2025 initiatives

**Next Steps/Board Lead(s)/Timing:**

- **Tanya** to make final adjustments to the strategic plan document and share back with the group
- **Committee leads** to kick-off their workstreams as appropriate
- **Carlo** to advise on which committees he'd like to participate in

**Wrap Up and Adjourn**

Closing Notes/Reminders:

- Next Board Meeting: September 22nd at 7:00 PM via Zoom; Mike and Stacy noted they won't be able to attend

**Motion:** Stacy

**Second:** Brad

**Vote:** Unanimous Approval

*Potential Future Agenda Topics:*

- 2025 Spring Season
  - Uniforms
  - Game Changer Use
  - End of Season Player Feedback Cards
  - Field Maintenance (Ongoing + Game Prep)
- Future Financial Planning Discussion
- Revisit Board Roles & Responsibilities
- Community Outreach/Sponsorship; Ham Lake Chamber
- Coach Certification Tracking
- Alternative Panther Classic Sites

## Appendix A | 2024 Board Meetings

| Day      | Date                        | Location         |
|----------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Sunday   | January 21, 2024 @ 7:00pm   | Zoom             |
| Thursday | February 2, 2024 (Ad Hoc)   | Zoom             |
| Sunday   | February 18, 2024 @ 7:00pm  | Zoom             |
| Sunday   | March 24, 2024 @ 7:00pm     | Zoom             |
| Sunday   | April 21, 2024 @ 7:00pm     | Gatlin Residence |
| Sunday   | May 20, 2024 @ 7:00pm       | Zoom             |
| Sunday   | July 1, 2024 @ 7:00pm       | Zoom             |
| Sunday   | July 21, 2024 @ 7:00pm      | Zoom             |
| Sunday   | August 18, 2024 @ 7:00pm    | Zoom             |
| Sunday   | September 22, 2024 @ 7:00pm | TBD              |
| Sunday   | October 20, 2024 @ 7:00pm   | TBD              |
| Sunday   | November 17, 2024 @ 7:00pm  | TBD              |
| Sunday   | December 15, 2024 @ 7:00pm  | TBD              |

## Appendix B | Important Dates

| Event                                    | Dates                  | Location  |
|--|------------------------|---|
| SLPSA Summer Season Registration         | 1/2-1/31               |   |
| MN Softball Director Meeting             | 1/22 (2/19 reschedule) | 7:00 PM Medina Entertainment Center                             |
| Summer Parent Meeting                    | 2/5                    | 7:00 PM via ZOOM  |
| Summer Team Evaluations                  | 3/2 – 3/3              | Westwood Middle School  |
| Summer Team Selections Communicated      | 3/4                    |   |
| Teams Registered with Big West           | 4/1                    |   |
| SLPHS Season Starts                      | 3/11                   |   |
| SLPHS Tryouts                            | 3/18 – 3/22            |   |
| Big West Coach Schedule Meeting          | 4/8                    | Medina Entertainment Center<br>10U/12U @ 6:00PM<br>14U @ 8:00PM |
| 8U League Meeting                        | TBD                    |   |
| SLPHS Youth Night                        | 4/25                   | University of Northwestern                                      |
| <b>Try Softball Event</b>                | <b>TBD</b>             |   |
| SLPSA Picture Day                        | 5/17                   | SLP HS Fields   |
| Big West Summer League Games (10U & 12U) | 4/29 – 6/20            |   |
| Panther Classic Tournament (8U/10U/12U)  | 5/11                   | Fridley Community Fields  |
| Big West Summer League Games (14U)       | 5/21 – 7/9             |   |
| MN Softball Metro HS League Games (16U+) | 6/3 – 7/10             |   |
| SLP Tower Days Parade                    | 6/6                    | Spring Lake Park  |
| 10U & 12U State Qualifier                | 6/22 – 6/23            |   |
| SLPSA Fall Season Registration           | 6/24 – 7/19            |   |
| 10U & 12U State Tournament               | 6/29 – 6/30            |   |
| Fall Team Selections Communicated        | 7/22                   |   |
| 14U & 16U State Qualifier                | 7/13 – 7/14            |   |

|  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
| NAFA Nationals 10U & 12U               | 7/18 – 7/21 | 10U Cottage Grove<br>12U Egan & Mendota Heights               |
| 14U & 16U State Tournament             | 7/20 – 7/21 |   |
| USA Softball Nationals                 | TBD         |   |
| Monsta Championships 10U               | 7/25 – 7/28 |   |
| NAFA Nationals 14U & 16U               | 7/25 – 7/28 | 14U Prior Lake & Lakeville<br>16U Champlin Park & Coon Rapids |
| Monsta Championships 12U/14U/16U       | 8/1 – 8/4   | Mounds View   |
| Club Evaluations can begin             | 8/5         |   |
| USA Softball Selects                   | TBD         |   |
| MN Softball Fall Ball Meeting          | TBD         | Medina Entertainment Center                                   |
| Fall Ball Weekend #1                   | 8/24 – 8/25 |   |
| Fall Ball Weekend #2                   | 9/7 – 9/8   |   |
| Roundtable Feedback Meeting            | Week of 9/9 |   |
| Fall Ball Weekend #3                   | 9/14 – 9/15 |   |
| Fall Ball Weekend #4                   | 9/21 – 9/22 |   |
| Fall Ball State Tournament             | 9/28 – 9/29 |   |
| MN Softball Year-End Directors Meeting | TBD         | Medina Entertainment Center                                   |

## Appendix C – Board of Directors Roles

| Name           | Current Role                                | SLPSA Board Appointment Date | Current Role Appointment Date | Role Expiration<br>(2 year term for Officers) |
|----------------|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Tanya Hartwell | President                                   | August 2022                  | July 2023                     | July 2025                                     |
| Mike Raymond   | Vice President                              | November 2023                | December 2023                 | December 2025                                 |
| Stacy Nugent   | Secretary                                   | August 2023                  | September 2023                | September 2025                                |
| Josh Glood     | Treasurer                                   | September 2023               | December 2023                 | December 2025                                 |
| Amy Bennett    | League & Team<br>Schedule Director          | September 2023               | September 2023                | -Hi Erica,                                    |
| Zac Humphrey   | Program Director                            | December 2023                | February 2023                 | -   |
| Sarah Gatlin   | Panther Classic<br>Tournament Director      | December 2023                | December 2023                 | Intending to roll off<br>July 2025            |
| Open           | Player Development<br>Director              |                              |                               | -   |
| Rich DiVito    | Website & IT Director                       | August 2022                  | October 2022                  | Intending to roll off<br>July 2025            |
| Brad Hunt      | Brand & Marketing<br>Director               | April 2024                   | April 2024                    | -   |
| Kristi Cobbs   | Community Liaison &<br>Fundraising Director | September 2023               | September 2023                | -   |
| Carlo Faccini  | Director At Large                           | October 2023                 | October 2023                  | -   |
| Sarah Jordahl  | Director At Large                           | April 2024                   | April 2024                    |   |
| Open           | Director At Large                           |                              |                               | -   |