



Bloomington Fastpitch Association Board Annual Meeting Minutes

7:00pm Monday, Nov 7, 2016
Bloomington Center for the Arts

- I. Call to order
Karen Johnson called to order the monthly board meeting of the Bloomington Fastpitch Association (BFA) at 7:00pm on Monday, November 7, 2016
- II. Attendance
 - a. Board members present: Karen Johnson, Cathy Currier, Sarah Johnson, Lori Magoffin, Daren Anderson, Erich Manwarren, Greg Westendorf, Jessica Musta, Lisa Bruins, Jenn Herron, Felecia Conner and David Rau, Tiffany Goehner
 - b. Other Attendees: Tammy Tessier Kealy, Jim Hanson (Clutch Hitters), Rich Hanson (Clutch Hitters) Tod Deming (Clutch Hitters), Renee and David Morabito, Felicia Conner, Karla Torp, Renae Spencer, Amy Christensen, Jim Leicht (Kennedy head coach), Mike Kupischke, Grant Effertz, Dan Pfeffer(ASA), Tom Bye (ASA), Bill Pearson (Suburban league), Mike Ramirez (City of Bloomington), Tona Fierro.
- III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (October 2016)
A motion to approve September 2016 Minutes as distributed was made by Eric Manwaren 2nd by Daren Anderson
MOTION APPROVED
- IV. Jim Leicht Proposal – Kennedy East Side Team Formation 8U/10U

Issues hindering a competitive Kennedy High school program include:

- 1) Lack of pitching and catching – 2 main reasons for this are the lack of fastpitch players on the east side developing early enough to become a good pitcher and the cost of becoming a good pitcher is high with pitching lessons and time commitment (both player and parent/sibling). The same is true of catchers although perhaps to a lesser extent. Kennedy currently has 5 pitchers with only 2 of them planning on pitching for sure (9th grade and 7th grade). The status of the other 3 is unknown. We have 4 identified catchers (2 of them 8th graders)
- 2) Lack of fastpitch experienced players – Many come from slowpitch at grade 8 or 9 or with no softball experience at all. Of the 51 players last year, approximately half had played BFA at some point but only about 10 were still playing summer ball and only 4 of those at the club level. Jefferson had all but about 3 with BFA experience with most still playing summer ball and about half playing club ball.
- 3) Lack of pride or sense of loyalty – many players transfer to Jefferson (about 6 currently in the Jefferson program...all BFA players). This is a result of either wanting to play with the players they've grown up playing with in BFA or the perception that if you want to be on good team, you need to go to Jefferson. We need all players to stay and be trained to succeed.

Proposals: In all 3 options we are requesting the following:

- 1) Allow Kennedy Booster Club to subsidize player fees and pitching /catching additional costs as it deems appropriate as outlined in #10 above
- 2) Develop and offer BFA lite teams as outlined in # 11 above.

- a. 8U (playing locally in-house or only with close communities and only play the state tourney)
 - b. 10U, and possibly 12U if the interest is there (both playing Suburban League B or C divisions with only state qualifier and state tournaments.
 - c. These lite teams may only have t-shirts instead of jerseys (no different than BAA which also then gets used outside of games – more advertising).
 - d. They would not play in the Bash nor be required to work volunteer hours.
 - e. The cost would be in line with BAA slowpitch in order for this to work.
 - f. They would meet 2-3 times per week for practices /games but not on weekends.
 - g. Registration would be the same as for the other spring teams but could also hold later registration dates like BAA does since they would not be practicing in the gyms like regular BFA teams.
- 3) Offer low/no cost pitching & catching instruction to all interested players as outlined in #12. If you have to make a choice due to a lack of funding/coaches, then ensure Kennedy players have equal representation.
 - 4) Increase advertising to target east side and BAA as outlined in #13
 - 5) Change the BFA Picnic as outlined in #14

Option 1 – No teams split by Kennedy/Jefferson (Worst option in our opinion and only listed to show it does not meet the Kennedy needs. This is what we perceived the board leaning towards by the questions /comments made so wanted to list it here. It does not allow for Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9 to be met

1. Ensure Pitchers and catchers from the Kennedy side get equal playing time. This could be accomplished by having all pitchers on a team be from one school or the other which would ensure at least one Kennedy pitcher is developing (even if the coach is not doing the right thing by developing all pitchers on the team by playing only the top pitcher which has often been the case in BFA's history). The same holds true for catchers. It would make sense to have the pitcher and catcher from the same school on the same team so they form a bonds but it could also be Kennedy pitchers with Jefferson catchers and vice versa
 Cons – This would make it more difficult to form teams and does not guarantee that a pitcher or catcher not initially identified doesn't rise up from the other school. It is not realistic to expect the coach to make sure pitchers from both schools are getting equal time.
2. Obtain Kennedy side fields and have both practices and games split equally on both sides.
 Cons – with only 25% Kennedy players, this is not fair to the Jefferson side players. Yet having only 25% of games and practices on the east side does not address the Kennedy issue. Why not have everyone just play and practice as close to home as possible?
3. Kennedy Coaches could be involved in Sunday clinics at KAC/Game Changers if desired – All BFA players are welcome to all clinics
4. BFA chooses coaches as they do today and runs all player development / tryouts / team formation

Option 2 – Offer Kennedy teams with priority given to Kennedy side first, then Jefferson, then outside the city players. Allow families to decide at registration which type of team they want to play for as there are differences – This option would accommodate many of our goals except possibly #8 and #9. This option seems a little messy since it seems like an off shoot within BFA. This is our second favorite.

1. At registration, Kennedy side players are offered to play on a Kennedy based team. The choice is totally up to them but the advantages need to be explained so they can make an informed decision:
 - a. Practice and play closer to home (No Dred Scott)
 - b. Develop relationships with the players and coaches likely to play with in Highschool
 - c. Subsidized player fees and pitching/catching from Kennedy Booster club
 - d. Kennedy coaching staff involved from 8U on up
 - i. Training the Kennedy BFA coaches
 - ii. Working with players at Clinics and team practices
 - iii. Being taught fundamentals and plays used throughout the
 - e. Players grouped together by skill level at team formation if multiple teams
 - f. Teams will play at or above the team skill level to always be facing good competition
 - g. Work with the Kennedy Varsity players
 - i. Assistant coaching
 - ii. Practice/Clinic help
 - iii. Adopt a team / Cheerlead / get to know younger players
2. Obtain Kennedy side fields and have both practices and games on Kennedy side. Kennedy teams would have priority on Kelly fields when doing field draw.
3. Kennedy High school coaches would run tryouts as needed for Kennedy teams. If there is only one team at an age level there is no need for a tryout other than to see pitchers and catchers and maybe start working with them immediately if needed.
4. Kennedy Coaches could be involved in Sunday clinics at KAC/Game Changers if desired – All BFA players are welcome to all clinics
5. Kennedy Varsity coach chooses coaches for Kennedy BFA teams and works with them directly to ensure they are teaching the skills in the same manner.
6. Kennedy team families would have the same volunteer expectations for the Bash/NAFA, etc
7. Add a board position for the program as a liaison
8. Kennedy Varsity coach or representative if unavailable to attend all BFA board meetings.
9. Allow Kennedy teams to form for winter dome leagues or tournaments with priority given to Kennedy side first, then Jefferson, then outside the city players with Kennedy Booster subsidizing as they see fit to help future Kennedy players.
10. Allow Kennedy Teams to form and start practicing as soon as possible in the spring
11. Allow Kennedy Boosters to offer additional clinics /practices in the off season (Oct-March) with priority given to Kennedy side first, then Jefferson, then outside the city players
12. 'Regular BFA' teams are untouched. Provided there enough Kennedy side fields made available, they can still use fields on the Kennedy side, have evenly split teams, and everything else. At least one Kennedy team would play 'A' allowing BFA to not have to sacrifice a team in the event the 'Baker rule' is implemented.

Option 3 – Reorganize BFA to be the parent or umbrella for two high school based programs underneath who share insurance, tournament responsibilities, fundraising, advertising, purchasing power, and other roles that make sense at a higher level. Both high school programs run their own player development and have their own tryouts. Priority is given to players who live in the program area first, then the other side, then outside the city players. Providing spots are open any player can play on either program with no hard feelings as we are offering them more choices that may fit better with their families schedule and economic situation. It is still about the girls playing ball and growing both programs. This option would accommodate all our goals and is therefore our preferred choice. It would also be the best option for both schools, not just Kennedy.

1. At registration, players are offered a choice which program to 'apply for'. Hopefully we can accommodate all choices but priority will go to the future players of the high school in which they currently live. So Jefferson program will take Jefferson players first, then Kennedy, then outside the city. The Kennedy program will take Kennedy players first, then Jefferson, then outside the city. The choice is totally up to them but the differences between the two programs need to be explained so they can make an informed decision:
 - a. Where they will primarily practice and play
 - b. Costs and subsidies available
 - c. High school coaches and player involvement
 - d. Player development philosophy
 - e. Off season training plan
2. Obtain Kennedy side fields and have both practices and games on each side respectively whenever possible. Kennedy teams would have priority on Kelly fields and Jefferson teams would have priority on Dred Scott fields when doing field draw (or perhaps we split them up from the beginning and have separate field draws)
3. Each program would run tryouts as needed. If there is only one team at an age level there is no need for a tryout other than to see pitchers and catchers and maybe start working with them immediately if needed.
4. Kennedy Coaches could be involved in Sunday clinics at KAC/Game Changers if desired – All BFA players are welcome to all clinics
5. Player development board positions would be needed for each program who would be in charge of:
 - a. Tryouts
 - b. Team formation (along with committee)
 - c. Coaches training
 - d. Coach selection (along with committee)
6. Families would have the same volunteer expectations for the Bash/NAFA, etc
7. Add board positions for the programs as a liaison (Jefferson Program Director and Kennedy Program Director) who would lead each individual program
8. Other BFA board positions and structure TBD
9. At least one Kennedy team would play 'A' allowing Jefferson to not have to sacrifice a team in the event the 'Baker rule' is implemented. Or alternatively, if the league knows we are splitting based on school, they may look at each school individually so until either school has more than 3 teams at 10U or above, Jefferson could still split teams evenly and play B. This option may require naming the teams differently as opposed to Bloomington (Blue, Red, White, and Black) so other organizations see the split as well and are less likely to complain.

- a. Who's who and what's what...BFA, Suburban League, MMFL, NAFA, ASA, USSA
Reviewed the different associations for the softball community and how they work together for new members to the board or to BFA.
- VI. New Board Member Transition Status
 - a. Executed Code of Conduct
Discussed slide of hierarchy and the roles of each organization and the complexity behind each.
- VII. Open Board Position Recruiting Status

Currently the President and Vice President position are open. Karen Johnson and Cathy Currier have agreed to assist the board as needed until both positions are filled. It was requested that the current board members seek new candidates ASAP and perform a diligent effort in filling the positions.
- VIII. 18U Team Inquiry from Sedric Owens
To form a team for 18U and older, with the request from the FBA board to approve a team be started. There are currently six players that are interested and there will be no cuts with a max of 14 players. The board approved the team to form. Motion to approve was made by Sarah Johnson, 2nd by Felicia Conner and Greg Westendorf.
- IX. Treasurers Report
 - a. 2015/2016 Fiscal Year Close
 - b. Draft Preview – FY 2016/2017 Budget
- X. Initial Preview FY 2016/2017 Calendar
 - 2015/2016 Fiscal Year Close
 - 2016/2017 Budget
- XI. Director Reports
It was agreed to adjourn the meeting due to the time spent with the proposal from Jim Leicht and the Treasurer report for the fiscal year.
- XII. Open Comments
No comments as meeting was adjourned after the Treasurer report
- XIII. Adjournment
Karen Johnson made a motion to adjourn at 10:00pm, 2nd by Sarah Johnson

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 5, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the Bloomington Center for the Arts.