Board Meeting Date: 12/07/2020

Board Members Present: Kevin Wood, Cliff Walker, Krista Cordoza, Kristi Willis, Rich Thomas, Bob Greene, Gabe Johnston, Jay Striniste, Jason Black, Gabe Johnston, Gary Navarro, and Denise Whitmire

Zoom Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.

***Review and Approve Minutes***

Cliff motioned that the Board approve the meeting minutes for September 16, 2020, and Kristi seconded the motion. Gabe motioned the Board approve the minutes for the November 9, 2020, meeting and Jay seconded the motion. The motions for acceptance of the September 16, 2020, meeting minutes and the November 9, 2020, meeting minutes were approved by the Board.

***In Person Registration***

We currently have 47 players registered. We also have an additional $1,100.00 donated to the League above last years registration. If the trend continues, we could see an additional $5,000 to $7,000.

Roughly the distribution of ages of the registered players is 4-5 in each Division; however, we do have one 5-year-old.

In order to limit the number of people attending the in-person registration, it will be handled by Kristi and Kevin. We are encouraging on-line registration for all returning players.

Rich stated that people may be reluctant to register because of the uncertainty due to COVID-19. Kevin said that the fact that we carried over the registration fees from last year makes it easier for parents to commit, despite the uncertainty. Rincon Valley is experiencing this problem because they refunded the fees from last year, so their players must come up with the registration fees now. Kevin stated that all of the Leagues will experience a registration problem, it is the extent of the problem that is unknown.

A question was asked as to the wording in the on-line registration form regarding returning players. Kevin will review the form and make sure that an option to register as a pool player is also available.

***Field Work Days***

All but 1 yard of the 15 yards of dirt was distributed over the Farms and Minors outfields. Kevin purchased a roller which is due to be delivered next week. The roller will be dragged behind the quad. It was purchased because of the difficulty in finding one available to rent. It will now be available to the League for the continued upkeep of the fields. We will be putting down seed in the outfield that will hopefully grow by the time the season starts.

***Local Rules 2020/2021***

No 4-year-olds for T-Ball even though they are allowed by Little League International. We decided against it as a Board because of the liability associated with having 4-year-olds, which technically could be 3 if they are League age 4. With 4-year-olds, you cannot have Coach pitch. Typically, we start the season on the Tee, then have Coaches pitch halfway through the season. Covid-19 will be enough of a challenge trying to social distance 5-and-6-year-olds.

We age each Division. Little League International rules that 8-10 is the age group for All-Stars. We give first priority to 13-year-olds for 50/70.

We are hoping to have a Junior’s team this year. It would be exciting to have a Senior’s team. Since Seniors start after High School baseball season ends, we could have a whole team come like it did in 2019 when Dave Wood brought a team. His team won the TOC championship in 2019. It is a 4-week schedule with 3 games a week and 1 week for playoffs. The team plays at Piner High School. However, this may be a different season due to Covid-19 as the regular season schedule may be adjusted. Later registration, the end of the High School season, is allowed for Senior players.

There was a lot of discussion regarding having 9-year-old drafted up to Majors if they demonstrate abilities. The consensus was that the discussion should be held to after assessments and whether or not there were a lot of 9-year-old with ability or just a couple. The possibility is that a player that is 9 may excel in Minors but, might end up with only minimum play in Majors and sour him toward the game. Rich stated that as a Board we have an obligation to look out for the player.

We will continue to discuss the matter of a player age 9 being drafted to Majors once we have seen the registration numbers and performed assessments for talent. Gabe asked about players coming from other Leagues and being placed in lesser divisions. Kristi informed him that we reserve the right to adjust for placement.

If a player is drafted to a higher Division than what they want to play, there is no auto revert to the lower division. They will be placed on a list if there is no team available to take them.

Kevin stated that we will probably have more practice this year than usual due to Covid-19. Kids want to start playing scrimmages, but due to the lengthy off season they need repetitive drills and basics. This will not only hone their skills to make a better season, but will help minimize injuries.

So other than the dates, 2020 to 2021 the other changes to the Local Rules include

Editing the registration wording and not putting in the dates for when events will occur; we will just list the months that things occur.

Do we have a backup for assessments if it rains? Cardinal Newman, but once school resumes, and sports are permitted fields will book up fast.

Assessments could always be performed on the blacktop and in the cages.

Westside is talking about starting a 50/70 team this year. They have obtained permission to use the El Molino facilities. Kevin brought up whether or not that the inter-league with Santa Rosa (Minors and Majors) would be outside of the Mark West bubble. However, the majority of the Board felt that we do not really have a protective bubble. All of the decisions this year will be dictated by the Sonoma County Public Health Office. Also, if Parents are not comfortable with the minimal travel, we will utilize the pool players.

Because of Health and Safety Protocols we will be asking the Parents to be flexible. The Parent meeting will be a Zoom Meeting this year. We will have to discuss spectator guidelines.

Kevin asked if all of the Board members have completed their background checks and if not to please get them completed.

Kevin will update the Board of Director’s list.

Rich motioned that the Board accept the Local Rules as amended and Cliff seconded the motion. The Board accepted the revised Local Rules for 2021.

***Miscellaneous***

* The Home Run Hut Committee held its first meeting on Sunday, December 6th. We decided to make modifications that would facilitate this year and concentrate on major changes during next off-season. We believe the changes will make it a place where everyone will want to work and help out. We will be patching the floor, moving the order window to the back of the hut, installing a counter on the back window where people will now place their orders, adding a plexiglass barrier, removing unneeded shelving to make more room inside the Hut, the front window will become the pick-up window. These changes will facilitate flow for ordering and picking up that will hopefully eliminate the large congregation of people behind the 50/70 stands. It will also allow for social distancing. The barbeque will be over by the equipment shed where it is being stored. An L shape with the tables will facilitate a pathway for persons leaving the order window at the rear of the Hut. Patrons will go up the concrete ramp, place their order, and leave via the stairs past the barbeque area to the front of the Hut and pick up their order. With the remodel done in the Equipment Shed, there is storage which will free up space inside the Hut.
* The League has received reimbursement for the quad that was stolen in July. We already have a big quad so be on the lookout for a replacement in the $2,500 range. We might have a better chance finding one after Christmas since people get new toys and will put up their used items for sale.
* The Oakland A’s last year donated uniforms and hats to the Leagues; however, this year they are providing a $4,000 donation to each League instead.
* The Challenger League has determined that they are cancelling their Spring Season. They may try to have a Summer or Fall season. But as a result, there will be no conflicts with use of the fields. We will have to get creative if the season gets pushed out.
* Kristi will put on the website tab under registration that only new or new to the League players need attend the in-person registration, all returning players register online.
* Registration sign locations have been slightly adjusted to match the flow of students picking up school packets. (Schaefer and Jack London)
* Kevin will call Cindy Beth (Healdsburg) regarding assimilating the Windsor Middle School, Mattie Washburn, and Windsor High School into the Mark West Little League District. Kevin has kept the District Administrator in the conversation.
* Kristi and Krista have been updating the Mark West Facebook page and will make sure that registration information is included.
* Coaches and Managers packets and applications may be turned in at any time. Returning Managers have a modified application that is submitted to Kevin.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

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Next Board Meeting will be January 11, 2021 (a Zoom meeting).