

NCLL Board Meeting February 9, 2010 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Attending: Ken Feldman, Pat Murphy, Al Palmore, John Upham, Manny Loya, Michael Johnson, Pete Richmond, Mike Spear, Tim Richey, James Simone, Tom D'Angelo, Stacy Heilgeist, Kenneth Hagen, Peter Selby, Todd Holec, Rob Mathewson, Greg Nyssen

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Old Business/Updates

Registration/League Composition: Tom provided background on the past few years strategic plans and goals for the league including:

- a better, stronger league
- more competitive
- a better experience for the players
- a positive role in the community

He reported that we've made significant progress toward these goals with the responsibility for running the league shared by many more people than in the recent past, investments in training for the coaches, joining the Positive Coaching Alliance and starting this year, providing pre-season clinics focused on hitting and pitching for players.

In addition, there has been a major demographic shift in NCLL with respect to the age at which players enter the Majors and Minors. In the past, it was not unusual for a third of the Majors players be 9 or 10 years old. NCLL introduced an 89ers division last year.

This year, we have 30 12-year olds projected to play in the Majors. Overall, the number of registered players is similar to last year, however, the number of 11-year olds returning to the league was fewer than project, so NCLL needs to consider contracting the Majors to four teams. Tom prepared a handout with three options for the number of Majors and Minors teams that NCLL would field this year (see attachment).

Tom lead the discussion of the number of teams with the statement that contraction would be an intentional decision to enhance the playing experience and competitiveness of NCLL, it was not a sign that NCLL is declining. In fact, the projections for the future (with the large number of younger players in coach pitch and the 89ers) indicate that we may be back up to six teams in the Majors in two years. During the discussion of the number of teams, Stacy reported that there are currently 32 12-year olds, 35 11-year olds, 38 10-year olds, 7 9-year olds and 2 8-year olds who are requesting to play in the Majors or Minors.

Stacy stated that if we contract to four teams, with 30 12-year old players this year and normal attrition, we would have only about a dozen players returning to the Majors next

year. The returning Majors players tend to be role models for younger players and it provides a good experience for them to experience a second year in the Majors.

A spirited discussion followed with careful consideration of competitive balance, the impact on the quality of play in the Minors, the experience of the 12 additional players who would be playing in the Minors instead of the Majors if the Board approved contraction, and the possibility of re-drafting all of the rosters in for the Majors teams. After much deliberation, the proposal for contraction was not formally moved, and the Board decided to continue with the current number of teams, five in the Majors and five in the Minors. Since this is not a change to the current League organization, no motion was offered.

However, with four of the Majors teams returning five or six players and the fifth team only returning three players, it was decided that the issue of competitive balance needed to be addressed. Therefore, the Board moved, seconded and passed the following motion:

Moved: The Players Agent for the Majors/Minors divisions (John Mullins) shall propose to the Board for an email vote before the draft a method for ensuring that each of the five Majors teams has five returning Majors players.

As a result of this decision, in 2010 NCLL will field:

- Five Majors teams (primarily 11 and 12 year olds)
- Five Minors teams (primarily 10 and 11 year olds)
- Six 89ers teams (8 and 9 year olds)
- Approximately 14 Coach Pitch teams
- Approximately 13 Tee Ball teams

In addition, we have healthy numbers of Seniors (14), Juniors (30) and Softball players too. The exact numbers of teams to be fielded in divisions other than the Majors, Minors and 89ers will be determined by late registration.

Approval of Managers and Coaches: The slate of managers and coaches proposed by Tom was approved, conditioned upon the passing of background checks. With the decision to retain five Majors teams, Tom will need to ask Chris Complita if he will coach the fifth Majors team or move up to coach the Seniors team.

Player Selection: Tom reminded everyone of the dates for the tryouts, which are posted on the website. The Majors and Minors drafts will be held on February 27. Jennifer Paris is working on the Tee Ball and Coach Pitch rosters. Tom asked Mike and Todd to work with Jennifer on requests to “play up” and to try to finalize the rosters by next week.

Coach Development: Ken reported that the PCA session for managers is scheduled for February 27 and asked for a couple of volunteers to help with setting up the chairs for the

session. Tom asked that it be reschedule to run from 4 to 6 (instead of 4:30 to 6:30) to give us time to pack up and leave by 6:30.

Finances: Jamie reported that finances are good, with approximately \$62,000 in the bank. He asked that the Board pass a motion to change our fiscal year from January 1 through December 31 to October 1 through September 30 to better align our registration income and expenses with the baseball season. The following was moved, seconded and passed:

Moved: That the NCLL fiscal year run from October 1 through September 30.

Jamie also reported that he applied for a \$200,000 Opportunity Grant to fund the proposed improvements at Ross field. In addition, the City indicated that the \$5,000 budgeted for Ross Field improvements would pay for the fence on the west side of the field. Some improvements are already being made at Ross field, Jamie will report on those next month.

Umpire Update: Pat reported that the transition with AI is running smoothly. He and AI have sent a flyer to Rob with information on training sessions new and returning umpires. Pat would also like to coordinate more closely with the Division Coordinators to recruit new umpires from each division. Pat and AI are also working on scheduling an informal meeting “beer and pizza night” with coaches and umpires to discuss how to handle issues that might arise on the field. Tom stated that it has been suggested that NCLL show it’s appreciation for veteran umpires (those with at least five years of umpiring for the league) by providing them with special shirts. The Board approved the special shirts for veteran umpires.

It was suggested that NCLL also recognize long-time sponsors (those who have sponsored the league for at least 10 years) in some way, such as a framed shirt. The Board agreed with this proposal.

NCLL Website/Connectivity: Rob demonstrated the mock-up of the in-season home page. It will be based on a Google calendar that people with scheduling authority will be able to update. In addition, the League now has a Facebook page and will also have Twitter capability.

New Business/Good of the Order: Pat reported that a benefit fundraiser for the non-profit organization, Living Life Large for Others, will be held at Hales Brewery on February 20 at 7:00 PM. Tickets are \$25 and children are welcome. Living Life Large for Others assists in volunteer recruitment and is helping to recruit umpires for NCLL.