



## **May 26, 2022**

### **Minutes**

### **Indian Pride Park**

**Called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairman Birmele**

Interlocal Board Members present: Birmele, Mead, Mireles, Hall, Bachman, Morsaw (7:20)

Interlocal Board Members absent: Sweet

HCR Directors present: Birmele, Morsaw, Mead

Others present: Phil Lucas, Kellan Nichols, Nikole Sewell, Veronica Wolf

Motion to approve April 2022 meeting minutes made by Bachman, supported by Hall. Motion approved 5-0 (Morsaw was not present). Before approval, Jerrod reminded the board of all the discussion topics from the meeting that we discussed, so that those who may have missed the meeting previously knew what was discussed.

Jerrod brought the board up to date with the latest treasurer's report for the past month, which showed the current balances in the General, League of Miracles and Concession funds, as well as showing the expenditures the council had in the previous month. The current balances in the accounts showed that the general account had \$9,489.05 in it, while the League of Miracles account had \$325.92 in it, and the concession account had \$1,126.11 in it. The accounts remain in solid shape, but the general account, now that a sports season has started, is seeing more in the way of expenditures right now. The main expenses paid included electric, fuel, supplies, and umpires. The biggest expenditure was the 50% payment towards the popcorn fundraiser, which came out to be \$2,190.00. There was one large general account deposit, which covered the fundraiser, plus donations, signup fees and sponsorships. In the other accounts, concession had a large deposit (\$3,115.00) from the first couple of weeks in sales, but largely saw food supply expenses paid, while League of Miracles had one small, \$200.00 deposit, while making several small (always \$100.00) withdrawals at Huntington Bank.

Regarding baseball and softball, Jerrod brought the board up to date on the progress of these sports. The season has started, and much like every year, it goes by very quickly, and this year is no exception. The season started the first Monday and Tuesday of May, and in just a couple of weeks, on June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, the regular season will be concluded. And, while the board has directly had to deal with certain disciplinary issues along the way, we could not be more pleased with how the season has gone. Having over 200 kids for the second consecutive year shows we are doing plenty of things properly, but we still have some things to get corrected moving forward. It is essential to our organization to do everything we can to keep families coming back into our programs year-in and year-out.

Continuing with baseball and softball, Jerrod made notion to thank everyone involved in ensuring that our baseball, softball and t-ball seasons got off the ground running and kept moving forward. Included in the thank you's were Jeff Christner and Joe for their work in getting fields prepared on a daily basis, to Megan and Kellan Nichols for serving as our baseball and softball directors / liaisons, and dealing with issues as they came up pertaining to those sports, Marilyn and Tim Fish for running the concession stands on a daily basis, to our volunteers – including head coaches, assistant coaches, umpires and everyday volunteers - for their hard work in coaching our youth and making sure rules were followed, but, most importantly, a big thank you to our participants, parents and their families for believing in us, and being important role models and believers in the success of everyone involved.

Continuing with baseball and softball, the board agreed it was time to get back on track after not awarding regular season awards last year (due to funding issues). Last year, funds were always uncertain, but because we were so good at not spending on unnecessary things we didn't need, we have the funds to do so this year. The board tasked Megan with handling getting awards ordered; however, it was determined that awards needed to stay at roughly around \$1,000.00, but we could go slightly higher if need be. With over 230 awards needed between all sports, the board knew that the price could get a little steep if we went too expensive, so we still need to keep costs down, while still having nice trophies to give out.

Lastly in baseball and softball, the board discussed the upcoming baseball and softball tournaments. While the softball tournament dates seemed good-to-go (June 17-19), the baseball tournament (June 24-26) wasn't in the same boat. In discussing the softball tournament, the board wanted to make sure that it would be happening, as last year, it was delayed several weeks, due to being initially scheduled on the week of Fourth of July. Megan said she had enough teams in all divisions. Discussion then turned to the baseball tournament, and Kellan suggested moving the dates until after July 4<sup>th</sup>, as our dates currently conflicted with Berrien Springs, and many teams expressed interest in being involved with that tournament. If we moved the dates, it would put us on a weekend with Saint Joseph, but Eaton Park would be over, so it's possible many teams would make the trek to Hartford. After a discussion, the board agreed to move the dates of the baseball tournament to July 8-10, 2022. We are hoping that our two tournaments do turn out to be successful.

Regarding cheerleading and football, most of the discussion revolved around early seasonal topics. First, earlier in the evening, Joe, on behalf of the high school football program, and several of the high school football players were involved in hosting a 'Punt, Pass, Kick' competition at our facilities, and roughly 20-25 participants took their shot at top honors. Several participants in the event were declared winners and awarded prizes for their efforts. Secondly, the board discussed getting kids signed up, and decided to hold signups at both of our tournaments at the gates, so that parents did not have to pay the entrance fee just to get to the concession stand to sign up. Lastly, Jerrod discussed that he has not heard of any changes regarding the upcoming season and that it appears the current league will stay together, while reminding the board the season usually begins with practices in August, with games starting in September and running through the month of October.

Regarding League of Miracles, Jerrod reported that the team is participating at the park several times a week during the season, hosting games

against our teams and teams from other communities that are enjoying an opportunity to participate in the fun. Number of participants in the program continue to grow exponentially (now at 40 kids), since other communities are starting to disband their groups. Our Hartford group is now at a point where they may have to split the group into older and younger divisions, which is a good thing to see. It's great to make such a difference in the community.

In old business, the board agreed that we need to continue doing fundraisers for each sport going forward, earning additional income that could go to use in, among other things, replacing aged equipment. Several football helmets are being replaced, or have already been replaced, thanks in large part due to inventory from the high school, that has seen their better days, and are now past the required age of use at that level, due to increased safety concerns. However, the helmets are still in fantastic shape for our use. Ideas were pitched around, both from board members and the public that appeared, but it was also determined that we should look for different fundraising ideas for each sport, so that we were not doing the same things over-and-over again, and keep things fresh.

Also, in old business, Rick mentioned that Honor Credit Union is opening in Hartford on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, and brought up the fact that despite paying for a sign to be hung on the fence at the park, it has not been completed, and that they are not very happy about it. Jerrod mentioned that a few sponsors have not sent in their logos to be printed, and that was the hold-up in getting them done. Jerrod also mentioned that the scoreboards in the clubhouse were also not done correctly, mainly in large part that all the scoreboards had the same field printed on them, and now, will be obsolete with the logo change. Jerrod also mentioned that the boards were supposed to be picked up last summer, but were not, and that, at-times, it was hard to get with the company we use. Board members discussed that one person should not take on all these obligations on their own, and to divvy out tasks so that everyone gets involved more. It would make things easier on all of us and maybe, just maybe, relive some of the headaches. Andy mentioned that he would contact JC Signs regarding the scoreboards, while Marilyn would contact JC Signs about the Honor sign and the remaining sponsorship signs. Jerrod told Marilyn he would send her the list of the signs needing to be made, because it is seven as of right now. Rick mentioned giving Honor a free sponsorship next year for having to wait for a sign to be made, something the rec council will heavily consider when the time comes in 2023.

In open discussion, the board addressed making sure everything was set for the upcoming tournaments, and if we need anything ordered, we need to get it done as soon as possible, due to possible delays. Joe mentioned other possible fundraisers not discussed before, including possibly offering designated parking areas inside of the park during tournaments, which we could charge for, and make a profit from. However, during tournament time, a lot of our own board members, umpires and volunteers, use up plenty of the parking inside the facility, so this is something we could investigate for the regular season next year. In terms of getting people involved, Joe mentioned maybe we could communicate with Nick and have him get involved in potentially offering something, like an athletic pass for the year. Andy mentioned that our relationships in certain sports with the high school have improved, but that it has been several years since others have made an appearance at the park. The board has made an appeal with Nick and our former superintendent that those relationships need to be improved. For our younger participants, they see the older kids as 'role models' and it would brighten their day if they would try to get involved.

Next meeting will be June 22, 2022. The original date was set for June 15<sup>th</sup>, but there is a meeting that has been scheduled between our group (Jerrod, Joe and Megan will attempt to attend on behalf of us; Rick will attend on behalf of the city) and Brad Geesaman at Hartford Public Schools to discuss how the city, school and our organization can function together moving forward.

Motion to adjourn by Birmele, supported by Bachman. Motion approved 6-0.

Birmele adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Submitted by  
Megan Mireles  
Interlocal Board Secretary