WSSL BoD 1/11/2024 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: John S., Ben D., Joanne W-F, Andy J., Bill L., Wes R. & Steve C.
Venue: Yorktown Pub

The meeting opened with a discussion on the status of the off-season WISC program noting that the 9 and 11 January open houses were well attended and a number of prospective members were present at each. It was further noted that the WISC was notably more assertive in seeking monthly dues from any WSSL affiliated persons who were going to attend our off-season sessions there. The BoD agreed that the league would do our part in encouraging attendees to meet this obligation in return for the use of this facility. Additionally discussed were the six pitching clinic sessions that would begin in February, dates and times yet to be confirmed.

The next issue discussed was calendar scheduling for key 2024 dates, to include what, if any, summer break would the league/divisions have. The Board determined that Rookie Camp would take place on the dates of 19, 21, 26 and 28 March on Quarterpath fields 2 and 3 as in years past. The draft for the Yorktown division will take place on 27 March at 7:00 pm and for the Jamestown Division on 29 March at 1:00 pm. The period of 30 March - 8 April was identified as the window within which league managers can schedule practices/scrimmages with their new teams. It was noted that the league would coordinate these dates with the city to ensure the grounds personnel have the fields in shape for play effective 19 March for Quarterpath and 30 March for Kiwanis as well. After much discussion it was determined that the Jamestown Division's opening day would be 9 April and for the Yorktown Division, 11 April.

The Board next discussed whether a traditional summer break would be utilized this year or whether a modified schedule could be used to play only early games (to avoid the higher temperatures) from mid-July through mid-August. It was determined that such a proposal deserved member input and a very short survey would be crafted and addressed to league membership via a similar mechanism used for the recent e-voting process.

Relative to recruitment initiatives the Board discussed a planned presence at the 15 February W&M basketball game as well as a 2 March event at Eggheads Restaurant in Gloucester. The 2024 Facebook marketing campaign (15 Jan - 15 March) was then discussed noting that this push was expected to yield positive results, similar to the two initiatives in 2023.

The next issue brought forth was a discussion with the respective division presidents regarding the identification of managers/assistant manager candidates as well as resources to address subs and umpires for each division. It was noted by both presidents that good progress has been made on all fronts, although additional time and conversations were needed prior to any final recommendations being made to the board.

The presidents are also proceeding on researching their uniform/hats and equipment needs in preparation for the upcoming season.

It was noted that umpire clinics would need to be scheduled prior to the start of the season to ensure that all volunteers were properly prepared to effectively manage this role in 2024.

The Board set the next BoD meeting for 2/8/2024.

WSSL BoD Meeting - 7 February 2024

Attendees: John S. Ben D., Joanne W-F, Andy J., Bill L.Wes R., & Steve C.

Venue: Brickhouse Tavern

The meeting kicked off with a status on the off-season WISC workout program. The Board assessed the program to date as meeting the goals as envisioned and it was noted that the sessions were typically filled to capacity, with many having a short wait-list. While all agreed that full sessions were a significant positive, one downside observed was that most SME/Trainers were not getting their own workouts in as the sessions are fully booked for almost two weeks ahead - as well as SMEs typically feeling that by signing up for a session they were taking an opportunity from someone who might need it more. It was agreed that on Friday's (beginning on 9 February through 15 March) a dedicated session would be held from 10:30-11:30 to allow the SMEs to focus on their own preparation for the season. The Board discussed the potential for an additional dedicated SME session to be added on Tuesday or Wednesday if this initiative proves successful.

The next topic discussed was the survey question that would be posed to the WSSL membership regarding whether players were interested in retaining the typical standard summer break for the 2024 season, or perhaps opt to play through the summer period by playing early morning games (9:00) only. The Board approved the survey question as well as agreeing to track the results for the Jamestown and Yorktown Divisions separately.

In conjunction with the survey question being posed, it was discussed that the WSSL's current rule regarding a 90 degree heat index threshold should be reviewed by the Rules Committee to accommodate the likely scenario of this threshold being conservative for summer play. It was noted that other leagues around the country help a higher heat index threshold than the WSSL.

The ongoing Facebook marketing initiative was discussed with the Board expressing general satisfaction with the responses to date with 66 responses resulting in 13 potential new players signed up.

The following calendar events were discussed:

February 15th - WSSL at William & Mary Basketball Game – 7:00 pm

March 2nd – WSSL Event at Eggheads Diner – Gloucester.

March 15th – end of structured WISC workouts

March 19th, 21st, 26th & 28th – Rookie Camp

March 27th – Yorktown Division Draft

March 29th – Jamestown Division Draft

March 30th – April 8th – Team Practices

April 7th – Jersey Reveal Party – Billsburg Brewery - 3:00 pm

April 9th – Opening Day Jamestown Division

April 11th – Opening Yorktown Division

The WSSL Treasurer noted that the annual audit of the WSSL's books would take place Tuesday, 13 February.

The Board next discussed the plan to schedule two Umpire Clinics as well as a Scorekeeper Clinic prior to Rookie Camp.

The Board agreed that the proceeds from the 2 March event at Eggheads would be provided to the Williamsburg Meals on Wheels chapter.

The Board determined the date of the March Director's meeting will be held on Saturday, 16 March at noon.

WSSL BoD Meeting - 16 March 2024

Attendees: John S. Bill L. Wes R, Joanne W-F, Ben D., Andy J. & Steve C

The meeting began with an update and wrap-up of the 2024 WISC indoor workout program. It was agreed that this year's program was better attended than past years, with sessions being booked to capacity routinely through to the end of the program. It was discussed that an area of improvement for future years is to ensure players cannot book themselves far in advance for most every session through the entire two month program. This often resulted in other players and new rookies being unable to sign up for over-booked sessions.

Sign-ups for the 2024 season were next discussed with it noted that 147 total players had committed to date and that, with the expected returning players who had yet to pay and new players coming to the Rookie Camp, it was expected that the league would field 12 teams, 7 in Jamestown Division and 5 in Yorktown. It was noted that the projected rosters for each team was 13 players, this could increase to 14 should a surge in sign-ups occur.

The board next discussed the league FB marketing campaign with a general assessment that we had received a positive net effect in return for the cost, however, the final stats were yet to be fully analyzed.

The Board turned next to the summer break (yes vs. no) poll results and, after some discussion and debate, determined the voting to have been close enough to not provide a clear impetus to move away from the league's traditional summer break. This matter will be tabled until the next league annual meeting in early December 2024..

The Board next reviewed a number of proposals submitted by the Rules Committee for consideration to changes in the WSSL's heat index restriction policy (offered in 2023 but not adopted), approved bat policy and to codify updates to the larger strike mat adopted during the 2023 season and the clarification of the over-throw rule as well as the scorekeeper role as part of the game-day officiating crew. The Board adopted most of the proposed changes submitted by the committee, however, in the areas of bat policy and the scorekeeper role made some additional changes. These changes are in the process of final review by the Board and will be included in an updated 2024 WSSL Rules document that will replace the current 2023 version and will be available on the website prior to the umpire and scorekeeper clinics to be held in late March/early April.

The Board then discussed that the Yorktown Division will hold an in-season tournament during the week prior to the summer break,

The Board discussed the preparations for the upcoming Rookie Camp, Umpire and Scorekeeper clinics and the movement of a storage box and equipment to Kiwanis for use by the Jamestown League.

It was noted that Eggheads fundraising effort had yielded over $600 for the Meals-on-Wheels program. Plans are being made to present these funds soon, with WISC, WSSL and MoW leadership in attendance.

It was noted that the 16th of April will mark the WSSL's 5 year mark. Discussions ongoing on how best to honor this milestone.

The Board determined the next meeting will take place at 12:30 on 18 April at Brickhouse Tavern.

WSSL BoD Meeting - 16 April 2024

Attendees: John S., Ben D. Bill L. Joanne W-F, Wes R. Andy J. And Steve C.

The Board kicked off the meeting by discussing the effectiveness of the field set-up and break-down process to date. It was agreed that additional work was needed to ensure that the workload would be more evenly distributed and that the home teams stepped up to take on this responsibility without fail.

It was noted that the reporting of game scores to Ben by scorekeepers immediately post-game also needed improvement.

The Board noted that all WSSL members need to be aware that there can be no use of City fields without the League sanctioning the activity and brokering same with the City. It was also noted that the City's requirement to have a current "Certificate of Insurance" had been met for 2024.

The Board next turned to the status of League sponsors, noting that the Coffeehouse seems uninterested in renewing their sponsorship. We decided to drop them from our home page. Eric Wolf's logo (Private Advisor Group) was added as a new sponsor.

The subject of field equipment and scoreboards was next discussed with nothing of note outstanding to immediately address. Hats and shirts were also discussed and it was noted that while hats were still available for rookies, providing additional shirts could take as much as two weeks to obtain with a minimum order required.

Wes announced that the second AED had arrived and upon the new arrival being successfully activated there will soon be one AED available for each WSSL field complex storage box.

It was proposed that an additional umpire/scorekeeper clinic could be useful to further augment these volunteer cadres. Steve C. advised he would contact Larry Rouse to determine if he could accommodate an additional clinic into his schedule.

The recent discussion within the Rules Committee relative to the new and larger strike mat potentially complicating the foul vs fair territory in the immediate vicinity of home plate was noted. The Board agreed there was potential for confusion on this, however, did not feel at this time it warranted a change in the wording of the rules, although it was agreed that umpires should be aware of the potential issue.

The recent Eggheads fundraiser for Meals on Wheels was discussed and it was noted that a photo of WISC, WSSL, Eggheads owner, and MoW reps was taken to provide to

the local media when the funds were presented and the League's generosity was noted by the thankful MoW staff.

The possibility of a WSSL member event at a William & Mary baseball game was proposed, it being noted that the college had offered discounted tickets to the League if interested.

Wes provided a Treasurer's Report to the Board.

Inclement weather/game status reporting was discussed with it being noted that, despite best efforts by all, there remain a number of league members who reach out directly to the Commissioner whenever field status is in question.

Per Ben's request the Board agreed to refine the team names soonest to facilitate consistency in reporting game scores and division standings.

The Board agreed on 22 May (since changed to 23 May) as the next Board meeting.

WSSL BoD Meeting - 5/23/2024

Attendees: John S., Joanne W-F, Wes R., Ben D., Bill L. Andy J. and Steve C

The meeting commenced with a discussion of league rules currently under revision as proposed by the Rules Committee. The draft proposal has been forwarded to all board members for review with opportunity to comment or ask questions prior to formal approval and implementation.

The topics of whether a 2024 in-season umpire email string has been established (none as yet) and whether the league would consider an umpire evaluation process were discussed. On the evaluation question, the board determined that if a quantifiable need was identified, appropriate evaluation criteria established and expert resources being identified and available then such a program could be considered. It was agreed that such a discussion would be tabled until the off-season where it could be revisited.

League-wide injury status and game attendance were addressed by the division presidents. The board then followed on with a brief discussion of new player evaluations and the process for identifying mid-season division assignments.

The board discussed the progress towards ensuring that field set-ups and breakdown were being properly addressed. It was noted that things were working adequately to date, however, reinforcing the use of the early game home team to assist with set-up and the second team home team's assistance with break-down would ensure that this workload was fairly balanced.

The utility of a pre-game check-list to be used by the umpire when meeting with team managers immediately before each game was discussed. It was agreed that a draft with salient points would be drafted for review by the C/Umpire Committee.

The in-season tournament for the Yorktown Division was briefly discussed. Given the rainouts to date the Jamestown Division has determined that they will use the dates just prior to the break to play make-up games.

The board then discussed the possibility of addressing the city required Certificate of Insurance (COI) for 2025 season play earlier, potentially in January in hopes of improved responsiveness by our insurer.

The Jamestown Division president discussed an error issue with our newest AED where it was indicating that the battery level was insufficient for use. Bill L. Advised that in researching the issue he determined that it was a known fault with some units and was unlikely to cause a malfunction when put to use. He did recommend, and the board concurred, that steps would be taken to return the unit for replacement during the coming summer break.

The board next discussed the potential for holding mid-year and end of season league picnics/parties with both matters determined as TBD at this time.

The next board meeting is scheduled for 19 June.

WSSL BoD Meeting Minutes - 6/19/2024

Attendees: John S., Ben D., Wes R., Bill L., Andy J. & Steve C.

The meeting opened up with a discussion concerning the editing of rules addressing baserunners leaving prematurely and defensive fielder alignments. The Board's position on these two issues will be forwarded to the Rules Committee for final review and formatting and the relevant rule sections will be revised over the summer break for second half season play.

A pregame umpire-managers discussion checklist has been proposed by the Board to ensure appropriate reminders are issued prior to game start. The list will be forwarded to the head of the Umpire Committee for review and comment and will be used in the second half of the season prior to every game.

The Board discussed the need to re-emphasize to umpires and managers the need to speed up play as much as possible with the heat upon us and to encourage all to feel empowered to speak if they see potential health issues during play.

The Division presidents next discussed the status of their respective divisions as well as the current injury picture they are facing.

Andy J. mentioned that a Yorktown manager's meeting will take place on on 20 June. Among the topics being discussed is the need for additional volunteers to step up to fill umpire and scorekeeper roles going forward. He next discussed the Yorktown mid-season tournament taking place on 25 and 27 June.

John S. proposed an informal league outing at a Pilots baseball game and the Board concurred with the idea. Date is TBD.

Wes. R. provided a Treasurer's report to the Board. The Board concurred with Wes that the League's finances are healthy and we are well prepared to meet all anticipated 2024 financial obligations.

The Board next discussed a proposal for a League party to take place mid-August to welcome all back for the second half of the season.. Billsburg Brewery was discussed as an option for such an event. Details to follow.

The status of the second AED dedicated for play at Kiwanis was discussed with the previously reported battery issue noted as unchanged. The plan is to have this AED repaired during the summer break and to have it working and acting properly in time for play in mid-August to resume.

The Board agreed that the first play date for the League's second half of the season will be 13 August and that the final play date for the Yorktown Division season will be 10 October. For Yorktown playoffs will take place on 15 and 17 October with the division all-star game

scheduled for 22 October. For the Jamestown Division the final date for season play will also be 10 October, with the dates for playoffs and an all-star game remain TBD.

It was noted that there will be no November League in 2024.

The next WSSL Board meeting is scheduled for 31 July.

BoD Meeting Minutes - 31 July 2024

Attendees: John S., Ben D., Wes R. Joanne W-F., Andy J. and Steve C.

The meeting commenced with a discussion to finalize rule language relative to runners leaving the base early and the batter's use of the first base orange bag based on umpire's assessment of player safety during a play. Updated rules will be uploaded to the website prior to the start of the season's second half.

A supplemental shirt order is being processed with Parkway Printing to address needs for the season's second half.

The board revisited whether an umpire evaluation process would be established this season and again determined it would not. The discussion stressed the board's preferred approach to address umpire improvement via feedback vs any sort of structured punitive determination. It was agreed that this guidance would be relayed to the Umpire Committee. The board agreed that the annual league meeting in December is the appropriate venue to raise this again if anyone feels strongly about it.

The division updates were provided and player injuries and appropriate replacements were discussed. In the short-term absence of Jamestown Division President Bill L., Joanne W-F agreed to manage Jamestown Division substitute player assignments. The remainder of Jamestown presidential duties will be assumed by other board members also until further notice.

The ongoing summer break practice schedule coordinators will remain Dick H. For Jamestown and Will M. for Yorktown. It was stressed that weekly communication with the Treasurer was needed to ensure payments to the City were made correctly.

The board turned to discussing social events and decided to cancel the 11 August summer social and focus on an end of season social, date is TBD.

Playoff schedule for the divisions were discussed with the dates of 10/15 and 10/17 determined. Additional information to follow.

The Breast Cancer Awareness charity game date will be held on 10/13. Additional information to follow.

The all-star games will be held at Quarterpath Park on 10/22.

The homer derby and base-running competitions will be held on 10/24.

29 October will be date for the WSSL scrimmages at the War Memorial Stadium in Hampton.

In the previous (6/24) board meeting it was determined that there would be no November League for 2024, however, the board discussed whether league paid for practices/scrimmages would be offered to league members. At the conclusion of this discussion the board decided to take a month breather prior to ramping up for 2025 with elections and the annual meeting in December, the Christmas parade also in December, and WISC session kicking off again in January.

The board noted the date for the Christmas parade is 8 December. The current plan is to largely replicate our very successful and fun 2023 entry to include the band “Identity Crisis” rolling with us along the route.

The WSSL Treasurer provided his update to the Board and it was determined that the state of our finances is healthy.

AEDs were again discussed with the status of our second unit remaining TBD.

The the next board meeting is scheduled for 21 August.

WSSL BOD MEETING MINUTES 9/11/2024

Note: No Board meeting was held in August 2024 due to scheduling challenges.
Meeting opened with discussion about a play that happened in the Jamestown Division regarding a player who uses a runner from home when he bats. Board discussed how the situation was handled and left issue with Bill L for resolution.
Regarding time limit, still some who think time limit can be waived if managers agree. This is not the case. Managers and umpires need to know the rules
Discussion about unnecessary delays, primarily in Jamestown Division. Some teams routinely get 7 innings in, some only get 6.
Yorktown State of Affairs – Andy J
Have a few new players joining who will primarily be subs at this point. Usual flux of players, one A level player out for a while due to change in work schedule. All in all things good in Yorktown Division.
Jamestown State of Affairs – Bill L
Rosters are good, Gravel needs a player, perhaps one of the new Yorktown subs but that is yet to be determined. 5 teams contending so good season from a competitive standpoint for the most part.
Fields – Can't use fields at Kiwanis after noon on Thursday for the weekend. NO parking vehicles in places other than the designated lots.
Playoffs and Other Games
Breast Cancer Game – 10/20
Cathy working on details, no firm updates. Ben has updated the webpage noting the game. Wburg says we can have a food truck there, also someone else using a field that day, we need to decide which one we want as we have first choice. Discussed rules for guys that hit homers, regarding would they stand or be some other result, i.e. double, single, etc. Seeking volunteers to submit their names for a drawing to play on the men's team. Men who played last year will be ineligible this year to give others a chance to play. Board seeks more involvement from Yorktown division.
Playoffs upcoming, October 15th and 17th. Discussed format. Much the same as last year but more teams in Jamestown.
AllStar games October 22nd at Quarterpath both divisons. Mostly same way to choose players as last year, x amount per team. Likely 5 per team in Yorktown, maybe 4 for Jamestown. Voting to begin early October. Managers to tabulate results for their team, plan on a couple of extras to fill in for those chosen who can't make it.
Skills competition 10/24 at Kiwanis. Mike Allen in charge of HR Derby, Andy Jacobs to do baserunning. Another possible event suggested by Andy, longest throw from home plate to the outfield.
Scrimmage at War Memorial Stadium 10/29. No sure of selection process among volunteers, perhaps x amount per team. Will need to get out there and see how the field needs to be set up, bases, mound, etc.
End of Year Celebration – Tentatively 11/2
John will check with Mike Sloan for a potential venue. Can also do Billsburg or Chickahominy Riverfront Park as alternatives. Talked about doing it during the day so it will be warmer. League to provide everything unless someone wants something specific then they can bring it. (wine, beer type, etc.) We've not done any socials this year so can spend a bit more on the end of the year. Will get "Identity Crisis" if they're not booked.

BOD Elections
Annual meeting will be Thursday 12/5 at WISC. Luncheon following meeting at Revolution Golf. Suggest opening nominations 10/1. Thinking about folks that may be interested in filling positions.
Christmas Parade – 12/8
"Identity Crisis" will play on the float like last year. Already registered and paid up to the city.
Finances
Still no check from Brickhouse Tavern. League finances remain healthy.
Next BOD meeting will be 10/9. Place to be determined

BoD Meeting Minutes - 10/9/24

Attendees: John S., Bill L., Joanne W-F., Ben D., Steve C. And Andy J. (Wes R. Not present)

The Board commenced the meeting by discussing potential AED/CPR familiarization/training for WSSL members. In discussions with the relevant City personnel it was determined that the training available through them was a formal two-hour block of certification training and there was a charge per attendee. It was decided that inquiries with York County and James City County would be made to determine if no-cost less structured training is potentially available.

The Board next discussed an issue where an umpire was observed providing less that their full attention to a game they were officiating. Steve C. advised that he would work through the head of the Umpire Committee to ensure the issue was appropriately addressed.

Most recent player additions to the Yorktown and Jamestown Divisions were discussed with all agreeing that the new players seemed to be fitting in well with their teams.

The Division presidents provided updates to the preparations for the upcoming end-of-season tournaments and the skills competitions on 24 October.

The group then turned its attention to the preparations and fundraising for the upcoming Breast Cancer Awareness charity game. Joanne advised that the teams were mostly locked in at this point and that donations and contributions towards the auction/silent auction were robust so far.

The Board tentatively identified Saturday, 16 November as the date for the end-of season party. The plan is to hold it at Billsburg Brewery in Jamestown and to have the food catered at the league's expense. The start time will be 12:00 when the venue opens.

Preparations for the upcoming League elections were discussed with the Board unanimous in agreement on using the same electronic voting platform as was used in 2023. The time-line as provided in the recent WSSL Secretary email sent to all league members was discussed with no changes proposed.

It was noted that the Christmas parade date this year is 8 December and that we will be entered again with the band "Identity Crisis" on our "float" providing musical accompaniment.

In Wes R.'s absence John S. provided the status of the league's finances which were described as healthy.

The next Director's meeting will be held on 6 November.

WSSL BoD Meeting Minutes - 11/6/2024

Attendees: John S. Bill L. Andy J., Joanne W-F, Ben D. And Steve C.

Venue: Brickhouse Tavern

The meeting commenced with a discussion of the latest status of the League's AEDs and the interest in finding a suitable AED/CPR familiarization course through a local government emergency services entity. Options were discussed with Williamsburg City assessed as a non-option due to their program's cost and time demands.

The board next turned to the two division presidents to provide an overall assessment of the 2024 season for each. Bill L. offered that he considered the Jamestown Division's season to have been an unqualified success, to include the post-season tournament. It was mentioned that the only notable concern within the division was for the unsanctioned use of city fields by WSSL players. It was agreed that, while the excellent relations the League enjoys with the City remain despite these occasions, the risk of endangering this relationship was simply too great to overlook. It was assessed that now, and into the foreseeable future, there really aren't suitable options available to us outside of the City. It was further agreed that a notification email would go out to all League members addressing these incidents and the larger concerns of our relationship with our host.

Andy J. followed by assessing the Yorktown Division's season as very successful and largely uneventful, to include the in-season and post-season tournaments. It was noted that the late decision to go with 14 player rosters for the five teams largely worked out, particularly for teams that dealt with player injuries that resulted in prolonged absences from play.

The next topic addressed potential recruiting strategies for 2025 play. Setting up another Facebook campaign was discussed with the matter left as TBD.

Ongoing preparations for the 16 November end of year party were discussed. It was noted that 82 RSVPs had been received to date with additional RSVPs expected. It was agreed that the number 100 would be used with the caterer with an update expected a few days prior to the event as things firmed up. John S. will send another League-wide email out reminding all about the event.

The Board next turned to the topic of preparations for the upcoming Annual Meeting as well as the associated board election for the positions of Commissioner, Treasurer, and Communications Director. Steve C. advised that a small number of nominations had been received to date, with the formal nomination window opening 11 November and ending on the 24th of November. John S. advised that he would include another reminder for the meeting and the election in his next update, to include information about the post-meeting lunch to be held at Revolution Golf.

The last topic of discussion addressed the preparations and arrangements for the Christmas parade. It was noted that the band "Identity Crisis" would again accompany the League in the parade in the same fashion as last year.

The next Board meeting will be held on 5 December at the WISC immediately prior to the Annual Meeting commences.