



## **Baseball PEI Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes**

**Sunday, 3 October 2021, 9 am  
Delta Prince Edward, Charlottetown**

### **In attendance**

- Walter MacEwen, President, Baseball PEI
- Connor Myers, Director of Skill Development/Administration, Baseball PEI
- Joelyne Taylor, Director of Female Baseball, Baseball PEI
- Darrel Kirev, Director of 11U Competitions, Baseball PEI
- John Munro, Director of 13U Competitions, Baseball PEI
- Ian Clays, Director of 15U and 18U Competitions, Baseball PEI
- Mike Richards, Supervisor of Officials, PEIBUA
- Randy Byrne, Executive Director, Baseball PEI

### **Regrets**

- Janet Cameron, Director of Provincial Teams, Baseball PEI

### **Meeting**

- 1) Walter called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.
- 2) The Agenda for the meeting was reviewed. A section was added concerning the location and type of meeting of the upcoming Annual General Meeting.
  - o Motion to approve the agenda moved by Ian Clays; seconded by Darrel Kirev. **Motion Passed.**
- 3) The Minutes from the last Board of Directors' Meeting (12 March 2021) was briefly reviewed.
  - o Motion to approve the Minutes of the 12 March 2021 meeting moved by Darrel Kirev; seconded by John Munro. **Motion Passed.**
- 4) Reviews of the 2021 season in each area took place:
  - a. Connor Myers reported on the summer as the Provincial Rally Cap coordinator. It was a successful summer in terms of the numbers of players and generally what he saw in terms of associations implementing Rally Cap programming. Connor did come up with a few recommendations for Rally Cap in 2022:
    - i. Association Rally Cap Coordinators should be determined earlier
    - ii. Baseball PEI develops a model 8-10-week template for programming for both 8U and 5U divisions of Rally Cap
    - iii. A list of equipment that each association should have for their Rally Cap groups should be created by Baseball PEI
      - a. There was discussion on whether it would be useful to try to get bases that had a bell and made noise when stepped on for 5U. John Munro said he would look into what company created these years ago, send that information along to Randy, and Randy will try to track down some of these bases.
    - iv. Create virtual coaching sessions for Rally Cap coaches/associations. Island coaches/associations should be encouraged to take part. The Blue Jays Academy could be invited to take part and/or contribute.

As well, with permission, Connor took several photos and videos and he is working with Mikeal Thomas to create a PEI Rally Cap-specific video.
  - b. Connor Myers also reported on the various clinics that have taken place since last winter. Between the Offseason Hitting, Pitching, Catching and Field clinics, plus the two girls-specific clinics, there were 205 registrants during the offseason. As far as the Summer Clinics Program went, close to 90 clinics were scheduled but due to weather, 62 took place. Response to the Summer Clinics was excellent, and Randy reported that the feedback he received was that Logan MacDougall and Jack MacKenzie were likely the best pair of summer clinicians Baseball PEI has ever had.
  - c. Darrel Kirev spoke to the 9U and 11U categories. There were few issues, everybody was relatively well-behaved and it was a successful summer.



- d. John Munro discussed the 13U category. At the 13U “AAA” category, there were some issues with coach discipline early in the year, but after some discipline was handed out and phone calls made, there were few issues. There were basically no issues at the 13U “AA” category. 13U “A” had issues with associations organizing late and teams registering very late. As well, with 17 teams, there was a major gulf in quality. Some need for a type of tiering and/or declaration of teams as to whether they are competitive and recreational should be considered for 13U “A.”
  - e. Ian Clays reports on the 15U and 18U categories. The five leagues in those two categories went well, and we had success at Atlantic events with club and Provincial teams. Yet, at the 18U level, the lack of respect shown by players (and some coaches) needs to be addressed, and coaches need to do a better job of rescheduling sooner to avoid a pile-up of games at the end of the regular season.
  - f. Randy Byrne delivered a report on Provincial teams in place for the absent Janet Cameron. It was a successful summer for Provincial teams and it was very good that they were able to engage in some interprovincial competition. The call for the 2022 Provincial team head coaches is out now (at the 13U, 15U, and 16U Girls categories).
  - g. Joelyne Taylor discussed girls’ baseball. Numbers were up significantly (double to 2019 and up by over 60 players from 2020). They were unable to hold any all-girls jamborees as field times were a significant issue (next year, efforts should be made to host a jamboree at the start of the season). Girls numbers are going at the younger ages and the key is to keep them playing. Canadian Girls Baseball will not return as a member of Baseball PEI in 2022; however, only ten girls participated in their programming this season.
  - h. Mike Richards spoke to the PEIBUA’s experiences in 2021. Due to the return of in-person clinics, it seemed that generally the quality of umpiring was better this season. Ejections and umpire abuse were down from 2020. There were 120 registered umpires in 2021, the most ever; however, many did not umpire many games or even a few, so that number was deceiving. Burnout was a major issue for several experienced umpires, and that led to issues getting games filled at Provincial Championships. The number of female umpires was low (two), so the PEIBUA is working with Lisa Turbitt of the Baseball Canada National Umpires Committee to create a platform to help recruit more female umpires.
  - i. Walter MacEwen spoke to the financials situation of Baseball PEI, stating our finances are very strong due to fewer expenses – especially with no National Championships and not many associations taking advantage of Baseball PEI’s funding of pitching machines and girls registering – and the success of our Blue Jays Getaway Fundraiser (which netted over \$30,000 this season). There is money to try some initiatives.
  - j. Walter MacEwen also discussed the work that has gone into creating proficient scorers and a scoring system on PEI. Three leagues used GameChanger to score all of their games (22U, 15U “AAA” and 13U “AAA”). There were relatively few issues, other than the occasional complaint about the objectivity of scorers and the knowledge of the rules of baseball. The feedback on the pilot program was positive. More training needs to be done in the offseason, especially around proper paper scoring, and the hope is that two more leagues will score their games with GameChanger and proper paper scoring in 2022 (maybe 18U “AA” and 11U “AAA”).
- 5) The Board of Directors discussed a potential need to address the competition structure and the need for some sort of tiering, especially at the “A” levels (and somewhat at the 11U “AA” and maybe 13U “AA” levels). There is a major disparity between the quality of teams at the “A” level, and even at the 11U “AA” level (which usually has about 10-12 teams each season). There was a brief discussion about maybe moving teams up-or-down a skill level during the season, but that was dismissed due to potential complications and the fact that an incredibly strong team at “AA” that could be competitive at “AAA” is extremely rare. It was agreed that there is a need for some sort of tiering, especially at the “A” levels, but at the same time, there is real worry about making regular-season games worth placing at Provincial Championships, as that can lead to issues with coaches not developing players and pressure on umpires. It was decided this topic will be discussed at the Fall Forum, and over the winter, a subcommittee will be formed with 2-3 members from the Board of Directors and 2-3 members coming from associations.
  - 6) There was more discussion about issues facing the PEIBUA in adequately staffing games, especially at provincial Championships. The mentorship program saw 26 Level 1 and Level 2 umpires; due to staffing shortages and health issues, the PEIBUA was unable to do the goal of forty mentorships established at the start of the season.



However, it was a very positive start. The real issues around shortages in umpires were at the older levels that required more adult/experienced umpires (there are enough young umpires for the 13U “AA” categories and below; that being said, some young umpires are intimidated to do behind the plate due to the velocity of pitchers throwing). The PEIBUA is looking to grant permission for older/experienced umpires to do more games with the one-man system at certain levels as a response to this shortage (and giving them the option to go from behind the mound). For Provincial Championships, over 60% of umpires also play or coach, so that, along with burnout, leads to real shortages at that time of the year. There will have to be a look at the calendar to maybe try to reduce the number of umpires also playing at the same time, look at extending Provincial Championships from three days to four days and play more games in the evening, waive the registration fee for one year for new adult umpires (and maybe have it so they don’t have to attend an in-person clinic every year, especially if they are staying at the same level). More adult umpires are needed and efforts will be made to recruit more. Finally, there were some issues with club tournaments being scheduled on the same weekend as Provincial Championships, drawing umpires from an already small pool of umpires. Baseball PEI will create a permit system for tournaments, and any club tournaments that could potentially create issues for the PEIBUA to staff Provincial Championships will not be permitted.

- 7) The subject of off-season clinics was discussed. It was agreed that we will try to offer 13U and 10U Regional clinics in four locations across Prince Edward Island for ten weeks from January to March in 2022. A person shall be hired to oversee these offseason camps. We will look to work with the Provincial 16U Girls team to offer clinics throughout the winter, either weekly or bi-weekly. Also, associations will be encouraged more to launch their own offseason camps/clinics to promote skill development. As well, there will be 2-3 one-day camps taking place over the winter on specific skills, and we will try to get 1-2 outstanding clinicians to run 1-2 weekend camps for “elite” (i.e. strong “AAA” and/or Provincial team players).
- 8) Behaviour amongst players, coaches, and teams was improved in 2021 in comparison to 2020; however, there were still situations where respect was not shown. The idea of creating signs to give to associations to put up at fields to remind spectators to be respectful was discussed; the idea will be floated at the Fall Forum for associations to discuss. Mike asked what rights umpires had if fans were abusive. Randy responded that Baseball PEI would be supportive if umpires were to not start games unless that abusive fan left the field. How to improve our Provincial teams was discussed. The play and coaching here on PEI is very strong, so to improve, we must improve our focus on strength, conditioning, and nutrition. Baseball PEI will get new head coaches for Provincial teams to select a training squad in the fall of between 25-30 players. Then, we will work with a strength/conditioning group to offer a weekly session that is open to potential Provincial team athletes over the winter. Work will start on this ASAP. As well, Baseball PEI will work with somebody from the UPEI nutrition department, and Ringette PEI (which has already done this) for a template for teams for nutrition and food during National Championships and tournaments the teams are attending. To facilitate this, each Provincial team will look to get 2-3 parents to set up a committee to oversee food and nutrition during competition. As well, there was discussion about whether or not Baseball PEI wanted to send a team to the National 22U Championships (in Dartmouth/Halifax) in 2022. It was decided that trying to set up a Provincial team at this age was not wise, and the better method would be having an Elimination tournament in June/July and have that team – plus pick-ups – represent PEI at National Championships. Randy will reach out to the Junior League to see if those teams think it’s worthwhile to try to send a team to National Championships at this level and whether those teams would be interested in entering an Eliminations and going to Nationals.
- 9) The NCCP Pathway changed this year, and at the “A” levels, there were complaints about the increased clinic required. There was discussion as to whether this was necessary (the extra clinic). It was determined that at the “A” level, it was not.
  - o Motion to change the necessary clinics for certification for a head coach at the “A” skill level to be the Initiation and Teaching & Learning clinic and for an assistant coach at the “A” skill level to be the Initiation clinic moved by Darrel Kirev; seconded by Ian Clays. **Motion Passed.**
- 10) There was a short talk about ways for Baseball PEI to improve communication with coaches/associations. It was agreed to by the Board of Directors that communication is good and associations will be reminded at Fall Forum to be sure to pass along necessary information to teams and to remind their teams to check and read emails.
- 11) The Board of Directors reviewed nominations for the 2021 Baseball PEI Awards and voted on the winners:
  - a. Team of the Year: Eastern 13U “AAA” Express



- b. Senior Male of the Year: Grant Grady
- c. Minor Junior Male of the Year: Alex Curran
- d. Major Junior Male of the Year: Tyler Taylor
- e. Junior Female Athlete of the Year: Claire Keough
- f. Masters Athlete of the Year: Scott Harper
- g. Coach of the Year: Desi Doyle
- h. Volunteer Administrator of the Year: Nicole Ready-Doucette
- i. Junior and Senior Umpires of the Year: to be determined by the PEIBUA

The Intercollegiate Male Athlete of the Year will not be handed out as there were no nominations submitted. There was discussion as to whether we should try to present the awards in-person or online (the Awards Nights is tentatively scheduled for 23 November). The group agreed that if possible, an in-person event was better. Randy will start looking into the places, how many they can accommodate, prices for catering, et cetera and look to confirm a location in either Charlottetown or Summerside. At the end of October, changes may have to be made based on the current Covid situation and recommendations from the CPHO.

- 12) The current Baseball PEI Strategic Plan ends in 2022. It will need a bit of tweaking. A subcommittee will be set up to examine it over the winter and come up with necessary changes. Ian Clays, John Munro, and Janet Cameron will be asked to help Randy and Walter with this subcommittee.
- 13) The ball used at the 9U level (Rawlings TVB850) does not stand up well to the outdoor elements. David Kenny from Summerside has worked with a company in China to use a spongier ball at the 9U specifications that is more durable. He has come up with a ball that is more durable and cheaper. Baseball PEI has agreed that teams/associations can order this ball from David Kenny and use it for exhibition and regular season play (due to our deal with Rawlings, we would likely have to use the TVB850 ball for the Provincial Jamboree). Also, Rawlings has come out with a ROMCAN ball, with is like the ROML ball except it is machine-stitched and not hand-stitched. It is \$15 cheaper per dozen, and while it may not have as much “pop” as the ROML ball, it is better than the 80cc ball used in 15U play. Baseball PEI has agreed that 18U teams can use either the ROML or ROMCAN ball for regular season and exhibition play.
- 14) It was determined that Baseball PEI will attempt to secure a location larger than Sport PEI to hold the 2021 Fall Forum and AGM on Saturday, 23 October. If possible, this is much better than holding these events via Zoom.
- 15) Janet Cameron supplied a motion to be discussed and voted on as to whether Baseball PEI should be paying Randy Byrne a monthly fee for his cell phone, as he uses it a lot for Baseball PEI business over the winter and during the summer (especially at Provincial Championships).
  - o Motion to give \$60 per month to the Executive Director to go towards their cell phone bill – due to them having to use it for Baseball PEI business – moved by Janet Cameron; seconded by Ian Clays. **Motion Passed.**
- 16) There was no in-camera session.
- 17) John Munro adjourned this meeting at 3:17 pm.

