

NHAA General Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, August 10, 2022, at 8:00 p.m.

Location: Sagamore Hills Park – Upper Pavilion

Meeting Call to order: 8:05 p.m.

Board Attendance/Roll Call:

Present:

Jim Filisky, President
Kevin Bilkie, Vice President
Mike Graham, VP of Fields
Dave Hermann, IT and Communications
Cathy Loya, Secretary
Matt Bewley, Board Member
Nicole Gvora, Board Member
Brian James, Board Member
Brenda Kovi, Board Member
Melinda Malyuk, Board Member

Present via Telephone:

Absent:

Chase Senk, VP of Equipment
Andy Papile, Travel Coordinator
Scott Lanzilotta, Treasurer
Kyle Deininger, Board Member
Nick Lanese, Board Member
Julie Moran, Board Member
Bobby Reville, Board Member
Kenny Sanger, Board Member
Marc Sprang, Board Member

A total of 7 community members were in attendance.

Agenda:

I. Review of general meeting minutes from March 9, 2022

Motion made by Jim to accept the general meeting minutes from March 9, 2022.
Motion first by Mike. Motion second by Kevin. The minutes were approved at 8:07 p.m.

II. President's Report

Jim expressed appreciation for the community members in attendance and thanked them for coming. Jim explained that the purpose for this meeting is to wrap up the spring/summer season and look forward to the fall season.

III. Financial Report

1. Current Financial Report
2. Treasurer Report

In Scott's absence, Jim reported a balance of \$53,214.63 as detailed on August 2, 2022. Jim did indicate that Fall Ball registration has been received since this report, as well as refunded to registrants because of low numbers in certain leagues. Jim did indicate that various monthly expenditures will be withdrawn soon including the monthly fee for the storage unit at Space Place, the monthly Toro payment, as well as the big field investments to be made this fall.

Jim advised community members that the entire year-to-date statement was available for review if anyone was interested. Jim also let community members know that the financial report could be made available if requested.

Jim highlighted to the community some of the investments made by the NHAA including the Toro machine purchased about a year ago. Jim also highlighted the field improvements to be made at Sagamore Hills Park (Field #4/Peters) as well as the field at Nordonia Middle School (NMS).

IV. Review of spring/summer season

Jim noted that the spring/summer season went well; however, enrollment numbers were down compared to years past. He indicated this is a trend throughout other communities as well. Jim noted a drop in enrollment for umpires as well. Other communities are also struggling with finding umpires. Because of fewer umpires, younger leagues were not provided an umpire; umpires were provided for older and more competitive leagues. Jim asked community members to help with recruiting umpires. Jim gave special recognition to Brittany Kovi, umpire, who was in attendance.

Jim asked community members if there was any input regarding experiences this past spring/summer season. Jim let community members know that because of lower enrollment the past few years, outside community play has taken place. In softball, the girls compete with western community teams (Brecksville, Broadview Heights, Seven Hills, Valley View, Brooklyn Heights) and it has been going pretty well. This allows girls to travel a bit along with not play the same teams all the time. In baseball, the older boys compete with outside communities as well including Hudson, Aurora, Twinsburg. For Boys Colt, NHAA partners up with Twinsburg. Jim addressed the concerns heard throughout the season regarding competitiveness of play. Jim indicated that every community starts at different times and may allow for additional practice time. Jim reminded community members that additional practice time is always available; contact Dave to schedule/request a day and a field.

Jim asked for community feedback regarding this past season.

- Jessica James indicated that softball had some issues about play. Specifically, coaches do not know rules for softball; they are comparing baseball versus softball rules. There were arguments between assistant coaches that were stopping play and it is inappropriate in front of the young players. Jessica suggested that something should be provided to coaches to assist with fundamentals to coach girls softball. Jessica brought a packet to share with the Board that shows basic fundamentals for practice for softball play. She pointed out a sample letter that coaches could use because communication was lacking with some coaches and their teams (i.e. communication for All-Star Game, times to be at games, etc.) The packet was accepted by the Board and will be scanned and shared with all members at the September meeting. Kevin did share previous Board discussions regarding providing coaches packets of information and direction for the younger leagues. Coaches will need to read the information. It was stressed by several Board members that copies of the rules should be on hand at every game.

Jim indicated that Community Rules should be followed – these are found on the NHAA website. Nikki indicated that anything outside of Community Rules will follow High School rules. Nikki suggested adding either at the initial Coach's meeting or during online registration a spot for coaches to be required to sign that they have read the rules. From there, if rules are not followed individual coaches can be referred to the Discipline Committee. Jim asked Dave to add this checkbox to the registration form on the website. Dave pointed out the Manager's Handbook as a resource as well.

Jessica indicated that girls see these arguments and are getting turned off from playing softball. Jessica was proud to say that a few girls were interested again in playing softball by the positive experiences Jessica provided and are signed up for Fall Ball. Nikki was thanked by Jessica and Jim for handling a number of issues this past season. Jessica pointed out that issues should not go unaddressed for almost an entire season; they should be addressed immediately. Jim indicated that issues should be sent in writing to the Discipline Committee for immediate review.

- Andy Piskula brought up an issue with Babe Ruth and coaches not following the pitch count rule, which causes some kids to lose interest in playing because of the length of an at-bat. Jim and Dave indicated that coaches must follow the rules because they are written with a pitch count. A discussion was had about the rules at this point.

- A community member brought up issues with play in Pee Wee Reese regarding a Twinsburg coach using foul language in front of players and fans. Jim indicated that this issue was handled immediately with TBL. It was indicated that Pee Wee Reese players wanted to play more NHAA teams; not TBL teams. Jim indicated that the community was asked about playing games with other communities and this is what they wanted because they did not want to see play against the same teams.

Jim indicated that TBL teams were not travel teams; tournament kids were scattered among the different TBL teams. Jim indicated offering more pre-season clinics (i.e. Strike Force clinic, clinic in house at Nordonia gym space, outdoor clinics, etc.) to get kids back into the game earlier.

V. League reports for Fall Ball 2022

1. Registration for fall league play

a. Players

Dave reported 227 Fall Ball registrants. Mike asked how this compares to 2021, and Dave indicated we are down a bit (237 for Fall 2021)

b. Coaches

Dave reported that coaches are all set for each league.

c. Outside communities

Dave indicated that Boys leagues – Willie Mays, Pee Wee Reese, and Sandy Koufax – will play with Hudson. Colt will play with Twinsburg, Hudson, Solon, Aurora.

d. Umpires

Dave indicated that outside communities are also struggling with securing umpires for league play. Jim reported to the community that a large expense for NHAA is umpires. Jim reported that fees for umpires have gone up and will continue. Jim asked the community for assistance with finding umpires, including young kids who will be trained if interested. A community member praised young umpires in Willie Mays this past spring/summer season. Dave indicated negative experiences with coaches and fans is what discourages young kids from umpiring. Dave indicated that coaches and fans need to be warned by umpires and then umpires need to follow through with these warnings. Jim indicated that the NHAA Board will always back an umpire.

2. Schedule of dates for fall

a. Equipment update

1. Equipment replacements

Jim reported in Chase's absence that equipment looks good for the coming Fall Ball season. Mike was able to confirm.

2. Equipment returns from spring/summer season

Jim asked that coaches still in possession of equipment to contact Chase to either reissue for Fall Ball or schedule a time to meet to exchange equipment.

3. Equipment pick up for fall season

Dave indicated that equipment pick up for Fall Ball is Saturday, August 13 between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. at Space Place.

b. Uniform distribution

Dave indicated that uniforms for Fall Ball are likely to not arrive by the first game. Coaches were advised to watch for e-mail updates on this.

- c. Practice – start week of August 15
- d. Games – start weekend of August 20 and August 21

Jim reported to the community that Fall Ball games will mostly be played on Sunday afternoons (noon until 7:30 p.m.) to avoid the many conflicts presented (i.e. volleyball, football, cheer leading, etc.) Jim indicated that some games may be played on Saturdays or even during the week as the daylight allows. Dave indicated that the primary location for all games will be at Sagamore Hills Park.

Dave indicated that schedules will be published soon.

Jim indicated that girls softball will be internal within the NHAA; there will be no outside community play with the girls leagues.

3. League Reports

- a. T-Ball (co-ed)
 - 1. Trustee – Cathy Loya

Cathy indicated that T-Ball in the spring/summer was great with 6 full teams where the kids had fun and learned some skills. Cathy indicated 2 teams will be playing in Fall Ball 2022 focusing more on fundamentals and fun.

- b. Softball Updates
 - 1. Girls Manager Pitch (GMP)
 - a. Trustee – Kevin Bilkie

Kevin indicated that he will be working with Kyle to work to improve the league. There will be no GMP league for Fall Ball 2022 because of lack of players. Kevin indicated that the spring/summer league was fantastic!

- 2. A League
 - a. Trustee – Brenda Kovi

Brenda discussed what Fall Ball 2022 will look like because of low registration for traditional Girls A and Girls AAA. Brenda indicated that there is an even distribution between Grades 4-6 to play in one division while girls in Grade 7-9 will play in a second division. Three (3) teams are in each division. Brenda indicated it was a challenge to set the teams, but they were able to make even teams and are looking forward to a great fall season.

- 3. AA League
 - a. Trustee – Nikki Gvora
 - 4. AAA League
 - a. Trustee – Nick Lanese

Jim reported in Nick's absence that the 8 girls (all 9th graders) registered for Fall Ball were moved to the Grades 7-9 girls division.

- c. Baseball Updates
 - 1. Babe Ruth
 - a. Trustee – Chase Senk

Dave reported in Chase's absence that there will be 3 Babe Ruth teams for Fall Ball 2022.

2. Willie Mays
 - a. Trustee – Melinda Malyuk

Melinda indicated that there will be 2 Willie Mays teams for Fall Ball 2022, but games will also be played against Hudson. Melinda indicated having more than enough coaches for Fall Ball and they have teamed up. Melinda reported that the spring/summer season was competitive and went well.

3. Pee Wee Reese
 - a. Trustee – Kenny Sanger

No report was given in Kenny's absence. A community member did bring up to the Board regarding field safety issues especially at Ledgeview. Jim indicated that Mike is working on this issue.

4. Sandy Koufax
 - a. Trustee – Andy Papile

Dave reported in Andy's absence that there are 3 teams for fall along with 3 Hudson teams.

5. Colt
 - a. Trustee – Bobby Reville

Dave reported in Bobby's absence that there are 2 teams for fall. Dave also reported that TBL has 2 teams, Solon has 1 team, Aurora has 1 team, and Hudson has 2 teams. These games will be played at Blue Jay Field.

d. Travel Updates

1. Travel coordinator – Andy Papile
 - a. Recap 2022

Jim reported in Andy's absence there was a Girls 10U and Girls 14U team this past season. Unforeseen circumstances prevented a Girls 12U team.

b. Looking ahead to 2023

Jim reported in Andy's absence there will be the following Girls Travel Teams:

- Girls 10U – coached by Kevin (back up from Scott and Brian Griffith)
- Girls 12U – coached by Jerry Lowery (back up from Matt S.)
- Girls 14U – coached by Dustin Wadsworth (back up not known yet)
- Girls 18U – coached by Jim Filisky (back up from Jerry Lowery)

Jim reported that girls tryouts have been completed.

Tryouts for boys are finishing up and teams are being contacted.

- Boys 8U – coached by Mike Brumfield
- Boys 9U – coached by Tim Dunn
- Boys 10U – coached by Chase
- Boys 11U – coached by Mike Brumfield
- Boys 12U – coached by Ross May

VI. Fields Report

1. Secured fields for Fall Ball

Jim reported that paperwork has been submitted to Sagamore Hills Township for use of the fields at

Sagamore Hills Park. Most games will be played on Sunday afternoons.

2. Short-term plans
3. Long-term plans

Jim reported that Brian does a lot of work to maintain the fields throughout the season. Jim reported that a lot of dirt was added to various fields throughout the past season. Jim reported that the long-term plan is to allocate funds to upgrade Sagamore Field #4 (cut collar for older league play, etc.). Jim again reported Sagamore Hills Trustees have signed off on the project. The field will have more dirt added and then a crushed-brick field conditioner will be tilled in to allow for better drainage. The next step for this field will occur next year when another top dress crushed brick will be applied. Jim reported to the community that this application will be done to both Sagamore Field #4 / Peters Field, as well as the field at Nordonia Middle School (NMS).

Jim reported discussions with Casey Wright with Nordonia Schools regarding the field at NMS. It was indicated that there are no plans to have that field removed. Jim reported the Nordonia Schools are excited to hear of these upgrades to this field.

Jim reported the challenges with getting the parts of this project in motion because of the various entities that are dealt with. Jim indicated this is exciting for the community and for the kids involved with NHAA.

Brian indicated this is a big investment being made by NHAA. Jim pointed out that these field improvements can be used to show community the investments being made when seeking donations.

Kevin also pointed out this plan will not end here. The plan is to continue improving and upgrading various fields throughout the Nordonia community each year.

4. Fall field maintenance bids

VII. Fundraising / Marketing Report

1. Review of fundraising done in 2022

Jim indicated quite a bit of fundraising for 2022 including the Beer Tent from the Macedonia Summer Fest which brought in over \$4,000.00. Chipotle fundraiser was also noted.

2. NHAA Golf Outing – postponed right now

Jim indicated to the community the NHAA Golf Outing has been postponed right now but will be happening in 2023.

3. Chevy Test Drive Program

Jim indicated the Chevy Test Drive program will continue through August. Jim indicated one check for \$500 is coming to NHAA from Chevrolet and if 20 test drives can be done, then another \$500 check will be presented. Jim encouraged all to participate in this program. Jim indicated that Chevrolet also donates various items to NHAA (i.e. banners, shirts, equipment, etc.) through their Chevy Youth Sports Program.

4. Social media

Melinda keeps the social media presence. It was suggested to join Instagram.

5. Website

Dave and Melinda keep the website updated.

VIII. Board Member Nominations

Bylaws: 'The Board of Trustees will have a minimum of five (5) and no more than twenty-three (23) Trustees per year. The number of Trustees will be staggered for the two year terms so as to afford continuity.'

Jim reviewed the bylaws with the community and current Board members. Jim expressed that active participation in the program is needed. Jim also indicated that meetings occur the first Wednesday of each month, but as we get closer to the season additional meetings will be scheduled. Jim also indicated that attendance is required per the bylaws, and that absence could result in removal from the Board.

1. Terms expiring at the end of 2022 season

a. Marc Sprang

Marc has not indicated that he would like to return for a new term.

b. Andy Papile

Motion by Jim: Move to retain Andy Papile to the NHAA Board.
Motion first by Nikki. Motion second by Cathy.

c. Bobby Reville

Bobby stated via text that he would like to return as a trustee.

d. Scott Lanzilotta

Motion by Jim: Move to retain Scott Lanzilotta to the NHAA Board.
Motion first by Nikki. Motion second by Brenda.

e. Julie Moran

Julie will need to be contacted regarding her wishes for a new term. Kevin indicated via text message that Julie wishes to step down from the Board.

f. Matt Bewley

Motion by Melinda: Move to retain Matt Bewley to the NHAA Board.
Motion first by Brenda. Motion second by Kevin.

g. Kyle Deininger

Motion by Cathy: Move to retain Kyle Deininger to the NHAA Board.

Jim gave clarification to Kyle and Matt's term expiration at this point stating that they both came in to the Board to fill vacant positions, and this was done before the bylaws were updated. Their terms do expire in 2022.

Motion first by Melinda. Motion second by Brenda.

h. Chase Senk

Motion by Jim: Move to retain Chase Senk to the NHAA Board.
Motion first by Nikki. Motion second by Cathy.

i. Nikki Gvora

Nikki resigned from the Board at this time. Jim thanked Nikki for all of the hard work she put into the program as a coach as well as a Board member.

2. Terms expiring at the end of 2023 season:

- a. Jim Filisky
- b. Kevin Bilkie
- c. Mike Graham
- d. Dave Hermann
- e. Cathy Loya
- f. Brian James
- g. Brenda Kovi
- h. Nick Lanese
- i. Melinda Malyuk
- j. Kenny Sanger

3. Board nominations

a. Andy Piskula

Andy introduced himself to the Board as well as community members. He indicated he has been a coach for a while now and indicated he is also involved with football. He enjoys the kids and seeing the improvements made throughout a season. He indicated a system of sportsmanship and fun that he has developed and implemented with Kenny. He also indicated he would be happy to join the Board.

b. Chad Akins

Chad introduced himself to the Board as well as community members. Chad indicated previous coaching experience. He wishes to help the community and the NHAA organization. He expressed a desire to keep Nordonia kids playing in a Nordonia program.

c. Dustin Wadsworth

Dustin introduced himself to the Board as well as community members. He indicated has been a coach for a number of years with girls softball. He also expressed a willingness to help in any way as he does have a background in marketing.

d. Jerry Lowery

Jerry introduced himself to the Board as well as community members. He indicated that he has been around NHAA for about 10-11 years. He indicated coaching travel teams as well as rec league teams. He expressed a passion for the NHAA because it has been such a staple in the community for such a long time and the Nordonia community is simply great. He also expressed a wish to see growth in the program.

The Board moved into a private executive session from 9:08 p.m. until 9:10 p.m to discuss new Board appointments.

Motion by Jim:

Move to accept the following new members to the NHAA Board:

- Andy Piskula
- Chad Akins
- Dustin Wadsworth
- Jerry Lowery

Motion first by Nikki. Motion second by Kevin.

A unanimous voice vote was taken and the motion passed.

The new members were welcomed to the Board.

IX. Open Forum / Discussion

Nikki expressed appreciation and thanked the community for the opportunity to serve on the NHAA Board.

Brian indicated he has been contacted by a few community members who wish to assist on Board committees.

Jim thanked the community members in attendance.

Date of next NHAA General Meeting: To Be Determined – Will be after Fall Ball season

Location of next NHAA General Meeting: Zoom

Date of next NHAA Board of Trustees meeting: Wednesday, September 7, 2022 **Time:** 8:00 p.m.

Location of next NHAA Board of Trustees meeting: Sagamore Hills Park – Upper Pavilion

Meeting adjourned: 9:13 p.m.