**Kansas City Metro Senior Softball League**

**Board of Directors meeting minutes**

**May 20, 2020**

The Kansas City Metro Senior Softball League Board of Directors met at 5:30 p.m. May 20, 2020, via a GoTo virtual meeting because of the COVID-19 virus situation. Present were Randy Rowe, Dave Hendrikse, Susan Scholler, Ann Willkett, Donna McGuire, Barry Gordon, John Mondi, Tim Burkindine, Bob Zimmerman, Clint Berger, Mark Splettstaszer, Jeff Harlan and Steve Krull.

Absent: Rocky Osborn, Bobby Gregg.

President Rowe called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.

**Previous meeting minutes:** Mondi moved to accept the May 4 minutes. Willkett seconded. Motion passed 13-0.

**Treasurer’s report:** Gordon moved to approve the April report. Harlan seconded. Motion passed 13-0.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**New waiver form:** Hendrikse talked to two lawyers, who recommended we use whatever language we think is right to protect ourselves.

Mondi reminded the board of two examples he sent via email.

Berger noted that both specifically dealt with COVID 19 but we might want to be more generic, to deal with any future pandemic, etc.

Hendrikse suggested use wording such as “any communicable disease.” Rowe said he supported general wording to cover whatever comes out next.

Burkindine noted that people still can take legal action, even after signing a waiver, but that the waiver can serve as one step toward showing our due diligence.

McGuire said Senior Softball USA is still working on its new waiver, which has been extensively lawyered. She recommended we need to wait to see it.

Splettstaszer noted that we will also have to meet Parks and Rec standards, and make sure we are doing what each park district wants.

Willkett said we need to remember we have people who don’t want to play, people who do want to play, and everyone in between. We need to let everyone know what we have done, but we can’t do everything. General discussion followed on the difference between Missouri and Kansas plans to reopen adult sports. Independence may not open,

Rowe said. Lee’s Summit still doesn’t have a start date for allowing seniors to play.

Splettstaszer said he asked Doug Hite, with Johnson County Parks & Recreation, whether they would open for youth first and seniors later. Hite said, “When we open, it will be for everybody.” Johnson County is going to require the complex to be emptied after every double header, he said. For example, at Heritage, the 8:30/9:30 teams would wait in the parking lot until all early games are over and everyone leaves. Olathe might be completely different. Rowe said that will make those late games run really late. McGuire suggested we might have to go back to the 45 minutes until open inning rule. Splettstaszer said Hite didn’t say anything about disinfecting between games, but they probably are going to do that. McGuire noted that Kansas wants 30 minutes between games to disinfect until phase 3 starts, and then it drops to 15 minutes.

Hendrikse posted the Kansas rules for everyone to read via GoTo. Willkett noted that the document says game times are to be staggered, too, so that teams aren’t arriving at the same time.

Rowe said we would need to have waivers finished in time to start leagues. The question was raised: Who is going to be responsible for waivers being signed before players go on the field? Hendrikse asked if we are going to update our current waiver, or put on an amendment and worry about modifying the waiver for next year. Berger said that right now, the way it is set up online, the waiver has to be initialed before a member can pay dues online. We could set it so everyone has to re-initial. Or, we could have a paper copy, and have every player sign and date it and then upload each person’s waiver to his/her LeagueSheets record. McGuire asked if we could update and use the T1 roster form this year and have everyone sign as a team. After more discussion, McGuire moved that the board wait to see the SSUSA waiver before drafting ours. Willkett seconded. Motion passed 13-0.

Mondi suggested that board members help managers get signatures at the complexes when the season resumes. No one should step on the field without signing the waiver, he said.

Berger said that if we want to just use the T1 this year, we can discuss what we want to do going forward for those people paying online and needing to initial the waiver each year online.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**COVID 19 safety rules:**

1. **General safety rules:** McGuire summarized the SSUSA rules, including no handshakes; managers disinfect game balls; players are to social distance in dugouts and on field; umpires and catchers wear face shields and/or masks. Gordon asked who pays for the disinfectant. Krull asked about lack of space in the dugouts. Hendriske pointed out the Kansas rules saying half of the team could be in the dugout. Mondi talked about a player who has sanitizer available for $16 a liter and disinfectant for $44 a gallon. A general discussion on disinfectants followed. Hendriske suggested that in order to play, you must observe SSUSA’s guidelines or the complex’s, whichever is most stringent. Kansas only says umpires must wear a mask. SSUSA says catchers must wear a mask and that everyone must maintain social distancing in the home plate area. Mondi moved that batters be required to wear a mask while batting but can remove the mask after reaching first base. Zimmerman seconded. More discussion followed. The motion failed 4-9. Hendriske moved that we follow SSUSA guidelines and/or the parks and rec guidelines for each location, whichever is more stringent. Willkett seconded. After discussion, the motion passed 13-0.
2. **Changes to game rules:** Mondi explained a list of proposals he believes would make the game safer in light of COVID 19. He proposed that we have run-throughs at all bases, with batters not touching the bases, like a runner now runs through the scoring plate. A runner at 3B should have right or opportunity to step into foul territory during the pitch if she/he feels the third baseman is crowding the line. All plays in the infield would be force outs. No tagging would be allowed. After a suggestion that the items be taken one at a time, Mondi made a motion to allow “run through” at first (meaning the runner would pass the orange base to the right of it but not touch the base, with a chalk line marking where the runner would be “safe” by reaching that point, even with the base). Burkindine seconded. After discussion, Mondi withdrew his motion for lack of support.

**Conference start dates:** Mondi made a motion that the Kansas conferences may begin play the week of June 14, if parks and rec departments approve. Harlan seconded. During discussion, some board members suggested this was too soon to get everything done to start. After more discussion, Rowe moved to amend the motion to add that our waiver also would have to be in place and signed by the players before play could start. Burkindine seconded. Motion passed 8-4-1.

Rowe reported that in Missouri, we tentatively are still looking at starting the second week in July because we are waiting on Missouri to set a timetable for us to play.

**Penalties for not following the new rules:** Gordon asked what the penalties would be. What if a manager doesn’t have hand sanitizer? What if players don’t follow social distancing guidelines? A general discussion followed. Krull said if players want to play, they will follow the rules. Rowe said we’ll need to play it out and see where it goes. Burkindine noted that if we violate a venue’s policy, they will kick our organization out. If needed, we can turn transgressors over to Sportsmanship Committee. We need to enforce the rules. Rowe said coordinators and board members will need to help enforce them. In some cases, we might give a warning. For others actions, we would have zero tolerance. (Example: Getting in someone’s face would be ejection.)

**Team rating parameters:** Berger said he has adjusted the team rating levels. After the rule book was printed, he realized we had set the wrong parameters for team ratings. We put the top of Bronze at 2.99 when it should be 3.0, for example. Berger moved that we adjust the team rating numbers up .01 to align them with the individual player ratings. Hendrikse seconded. Motion passed 13-0.

**Player skill rating committee:** Berger noted that our rule on player rating appeals is to have a minimum of five members who know the player’s skills, rate and submit their appeal rating to justify a player’s rating be changed as a result of the appeal. Berger expanded his original committee of 10 people to 30 people, in hopes of increasing the probability of reaching that minimum of five submitted appeal responses. That still didn’t work. He needed more people. So now, he asks opponents within the same conference as the appealed player played the current, or previous, year to evaluate the appealed player.

**Facebook request:** Mondi recommended launching what he calls a “membership awareness.” This would be a spinoff of the original COVID statement we posted to Facebook recommending that we support local businesses, etc. He wants to expand on that by setting up a table showing businesses (including those who are self-employed) run by league members and providing information about the service they provide, such as the location and phone number, so that league members can patronize those businesses. McGuire noted that it’s been recommended for year not to put phone numbers on Facebook, and that we need a disclaimer saying we aren’t endorsing the businesses, as we won’t know what kind of job each worker does. Mondi said he would include the disclaimer. After more discussion, Mondi said he will use the private message feature instead of listing phone numbers. Only people who want to be listed in this table will be listed.

**Wes Weddle tournament:** Rowe said he plans to run what he can from home (lining up teams, bracketing, etc.) But he will need other board members to help run the late-July event with McGuire, who provides the umpires, etc. Burkindine said he would do it. Rowe said he expected to use all 10 fields this year.

Burkindine moved to adjourn. Harlan seconded. Motion passed 13-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

**Board members and years terms expire:**

**2022** **2020** **2021**

Clint Berger Barry Gordon Tim Burkindine

Steve Krull Bobby Gregg Dave Hendrikse

Randy Rowe Rocky Osborn Donna McGuire

Ann Willkett Susan Scholler John Mondi

Bob Zimmerman Mark Splettstaszer Jeff Harlan