

**Town of Henniker  
Youth Athletics Committee  
Tuesday - March 5, 2009  
Grange Hall**

Approved Meeting Minutes

**Members Present:** Chair Marc McMurphy, Brian DuBreuil, Sarah Bisson, Sarah Nelson, Jarrod Brooks, Tim Lamphere, Jim O'Rourke, Valerie Simeone, Glenn Sullivan, Jaime Westin

**Members Absent:** Shannon Camara, Holly Cole, Priscilla Fitch, Lori Runksmeier

Chairman Marc McMurphy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and called for a vote on the minutes of the previous meeting in January. There was no meeting in February.

**1. Approval of January Minutes**

**Brian DuBreuil made a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting of January 27, 2009, the motion was seconded by Sarah Bisson, and it carried.**

**2. Budget Update – Spending Review, Town Meeting Concerns**

Marc said he had been notified by Peter Flynn that the Town of Henniker is expecting a potential loss in revenue from the State of New Hampshire that will amount to approximately \$250,000. Marc said the Athletics budget is already at its base, and the next possible reductions would have to cut into sports programs.

He said he had attended the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and a motion was made to cut almost as much as the expected loss in revenue from the budget before Town Meeting. If passed, the motion would have held the rate of an increase in taxes (adjusted for revenue loss) to approximately 4 percent. The motion was defeated, and now the property tax rate is expected to go up by more than 12%.

Meanwhile, Marc reported that the Selectmen did pass a motion to limit spending until at least July 1, 2009, when it is expected that the State budget will have been finalized and the exact amount of lost revenue should be known. A copy of the motion was attached to the meeting's agenda. Marc urged all athletic program directors to please contact Brian DuBreuil if they have any expenses that must be covered in the near future. He also suggested that they be sensitive to spending.

Marc conducted an informal spending review at the meeting.

### **3. Fundraising Plan**

Marc recommended that committee members focus on fundraising and reminded everyone that a recreation account is being proposed by warrant article at Town Meeting. He highlighted the two warrant articles relating to athletics:

Article 31: ... to raise \$10,000 for a practice softball field, including a backstop fence, and to authorize the withdrawal of up to \$10,000 from the Athletic Fields Capital Reserve Fund.

Article 32: ... to establish a Recreation Revolving Fund, that would be allowed to accumulate funds from year to year, which would be spent for recreation purposes and leisure activities.

Marc said a distinction needs to be made between recreation fields and athletic fields.

Various fundraising ideas were discussed. Marc said members of the committee had personally expressed to him an interest in raising funds. He said a fundraising committee of 4 to 5 people might be formed in the future.

### **4. Athletic Guidelines**

Marc introduced the topic and said the guidelines exist to improve the quality of the programs and support the program directors.

For the benefit of others, especially new committee members, he asked Valerie Simeone to give an account of a situation that occurred during the past basketball season, which she did. The situation might have escalated but was resolved satisfactorily when the Program Directors, Valerie and Priscilla, brought everyone together to talk, at which time they agreed to move on.

Valerie said the athletic guidelines at the moment are 'pretty generic' and do not specifically address that type of situation. Sarah Bisson and others agreed. She mentioned that the John Stark Generals Youth Football Association utilizes specific codes of conduct and measures of enforcement that might serve as examples for Henniker's athletic programs. New Softball Director Sarah Nelson commented that she is already aware of the John Stark codes. Valerie said she would look into the football association guidelines further so that guidelines for Henniker's programs might be updated. Marc suggested that she also ask Jim O'Rourke to review them with a legal perspective and make suggestions.

Committee members agreed that codes of conducts for coaches, players and parents should be updated. What's more, it was agreed that they should be made available for review and signature at the time parents sign their children up for sports. Marc said the program directors should be sure to let coaches know to make them available. He also said, if confrontational situations occur in the future, meetings definitely should be held and documented.

**5. Softball Field Plan**

Marc asked how plans might move forward on the softball field if the warrant article is approved. Brian responded that he would prefer to wait until the article is passed before requesting estimates. Marc asked if there were any experienced people who might be consulted, possibly someone from the college. Someone mentioned Lori Runksmeier's name. Marc also asked when the season could be expected to begin, and he was told mid-April at the earliest. Glenn Sullivan explained that work must wait for dry ground that will support heavy equipment. Brian volunteered to serve as coordinator and said he would consult with Lori.

**6. Wrestling Update - Jim O'Rourke**

Jim said the program was publicized and he has heard from parents of 20 to 25 young people who are interested. Nothing has changed since January. In response to a question from Marc, he said the only budget expense he expected at the moment would be for insurance, with a premium of approximately \$17 per child. A parent suggested wearing protective headgear, and Jim is looking into it. He might be able to obtain a mat free of charge from the high school. Marc asked him to find out the mat's size and weight.

**7. Baseball Update - Tim Lamphere**

Tim reported that sign-ups had taken place. The number of sign-ups are down by 4 to 5 children per age group, he said, and the number of teams is down by two (one in the minors and one in the majors). Marc asked him about expected expenses, and he urged Tim and everyone to get them squared away as soon as possible.

**8. Softball Update - Sarah Nelson**

At this point, Marc introduced and welcomed the new Program Director for Softball, Sarah Nelson. Sarah said she had begun sign-ups and expects to fill four teams, which are grouped as follows by age: 7 to 8 years old (Rookies), 9 to 10 years old (Minors), and 11 to 12 years old (Majors).

However, she reported no one had signed up to coach as yet. Other committee members suggested coaching candidates to her at the Chairman's prompting. Marc also suggested a way to compel coaches to sign up.

Marc reported that he and Sarah had met with the head of the league, Lee Brown.

**9. Basketball Update - Valerie Simeone**

Valerie said the season is complete and was pretty successful with regard to goals of player and skill development.

Valerie said a coaching clinic was held, and she thought the new coaches appreciated it but the returning coaches were not as receptive. Marc said he thought there had been a huge turnaround with the players after the coaching clinic, and they began winning games.

The program hosted two tournaments at which it raised funds of approximately \$600, Valerie reported. At this point, Marc advised the other directors to keep thinking of fundraising ideas and learn from fundraising success stories.

Valerie mentioned that equipment return is scheduled for next week and she hopes to have everyone take a survey at that time. Tim Lamphere said he would share with her the survey he uses.

**10. Cheerleading Update - Sarah Bisson**

Sarah reported that there would a competition at Bishop Guertin High School the following Saturday morning. She said the season is going well, the girls are enthusiastic, and the teams look great. Valerie said she thought cheerleading had made a positive difference at one basketball game in particular, and she asked Sarah for scheduling and location details for the competition so the players might attend.

**11. Soccer Update - Marc McMurphy for Holly Cole**

Marc said he had spoken with Holly and she had mentioned ordering goals. Jim said he would contact her about them. Marc also relayed the following announcements, which he also included in the meeting agenda:

April 4 (Saturday):	Soccer clinic via Challenger Sports (60-90 minutes)
April 25 (Saturday):	1 <sup>st</sup> registration will occur on Baseball Picture Day
Week of July 27:	Player soccer camp via Challenger Sports. In addition, FREE coaching clinic during 1-2 nights of camp.

**12. Other Business**

Marc McMurphy suggested having a celebration in honor of program directors after the April committee meeting. This suggestion was warmly received.

Marc also said he is working to arrange an agreement with college work-study students who could coordinate uniforms and serve as IT managers for the website.

Valerie Simeone suggested that Picture Day doesn't have to be just for baseball and softball.

Sarah Nelson offered a fundraising idea of auto decal sales.

Jim O'Rourke brought up the Henniker Community Profile event to take place in April.

Jarrold Brooks suggested that Henniker have an outdoor skating rink. He also mentioned the winter carnival scheduled to take place behind the Community School the following weekend.

### **Adjournment**

The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. **Jarrold Brooks moved to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Tim Lamphere, and it passed unanimously.**

Meeting Minutes Approved April 2, 2009

Respectfully Submitted by

Recording Secretary Sheila Mitchell