



MINUTES OF MEETING OF DIRECTORS -

BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION

Note: The BBF Board of Directors meets a minimum of four times a year (e.g., once a quarter). The BBF board minutes are disclosed publicly to provide our stakeholders with transparent information on the background on several points for consideration, the rationale for decisions, concerns and matters of record. The minutes are not verbatim, instead a balanced account of the BBF Board meeting.

Opening:

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Directors of Board of Directors duly called and held Friday, 12 June 2020 at 18:00 BST by conference call.

BBF Board:

- (G Perez) - President
- (V O'Brien) - Secretary
- (A Kettle) - Treasurer
- (J Pearce) – National Team Programme Official
- (G Erdos) – Officials Commissioner
- (D Kettle) – Coaches Commissioner
- (P Bohn) – Youth Commissioner

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Announcements

2.1. Meeting was quorate.

2.2. Declaration of conflicts of interest.

2.3. As a result of COVID-19 and the government announcement of a lockdown:

2.3.1. Great Britain Baseball National Team (GB Baseball) Seniors Team which was expected to take part in the World Baseball Classic in March, in Arizona, USA, was cancelled.

2.3.2. 21st March, Great Britain Baseball National Team (GB Baseball) try-outs scheduled for March were indefinitely postponed.

2.3.3. 4th April, BBF Senior and Youth leagues, and events were postponed until further notice.

2.3.4. 5th April, Great Britain Baseball National Team (GB Baseball) named Jonathan Rodriguez as their U18 Manager.

2.3.5. 6th June, Great Britain Baseball National Team (GB Baseball) names Cam McHarg as the Development Co-Ordinator.

2.3.6. June, MLB cancels the Mitel & MLB London Series.

2.3.7. June, CEB Federations Cup Group A cancelled (impacting the London Capitals and London Mets).

2.3.8. June, UK Little League competitions and UK Qualifies cancelled.

2.3.9. June, the BBF announces the regular season and youth competitions (Mix-n-Match events planned) cancelled.

2.3.10. June, Great Britain Baseball National Team (GB Baseball) U12 European Baseball Championship cancelled by CEB.

2.3.11. June, Great Britain Baseball National Team (GB Baseball) U15 European Championship Tournament cancelled by CEB.

2.3.12.

2.3.12.1. E-Learning strategy: As carried over and resolved from our last meeting, as part of our strategy for learning and to be resilient during the COVID-19 lockdown, we have planned, developed and implemented a series of free baseball webinars highlighting a number of topics e.g., bio-kinematics hitting, throwing, physical development and drills for baseball, baseball drills, baseball scouting and etc.



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Moreover, the above organised through our international contacts are hosted by coaches or representatives from the Chicago Cubs, Boston Red Sox, Yankees, Major League Baseball, and etc. The webinars are running throughout the lockdown to remain engaged without stakeholders and to provide them professional insights for baseball. Our audience has grown geographically i.e., attendees in over 25 countries now take part.

2.3.12.2 We were working together w ABUA-Europe at this point (European branch of the largest amateur baseball umpire organisation in the world) to organise our Officials webinars are continuing, growing in reach and include ex-professional umpires providing instruction on how to officiate. Moreover, our global audience is growing with attendees from a number of countries.

2.3.12.3 We planned, and organised a scorekeeping initiative which is in progress e.g., to find the best scorekeeping application to makes use of league wide.

2.3.13 As part of resilience (business continuity) strategy, during the lockdown as the NGB of the sport, we have planned, developed and implemented a series of strategic communications (emails, social media, digital magazines, website posts) about the status of the suspension or cancellation of baseball, our national teams (GB Britain Baseball News digital news update), leagues, officials (Umpires webinar clinics digital updates), learning opportunities, insurance, plans to resume whenever possible, and etc.

2.3.14 We are proud to announce the London Archers (Youth Club) received recognition at the CEB Convention (Feb) in front of over 30 NGB's in attendance. The recognition was the London Archers success in the Pony Tournament which saw them win the first ever European Zone Championships Pony 14U tournament and go on to compete in the US at the Pony International World Series.

2.3.15 We held our BBF AGM in February 2020 in London. We collected a series of feedback regarding our plans for youth baseball (Mix-n-Match), seniors' leagues, rules and etc. Our aim is to learn and act from the mentioned where plausible. It was resolved, after getting feedback at the AGM, "*what is our strategy to develop our sport*" we need to reinforce in our communications the fact we have not or are we responsible for the development of our sport. Rather for over 10 years, the development of baseball has been assigned to BaseballSoftballUK (BSUK) which has sourced over £6 million in public funding (with no pass through), has twelve full-time employees and two paid consultants (i.e., with over 70% of their operating budget going to salaries). In comparison, the BBF are responsible for governing our sport, overseeing our national teams, officials, rules, baseball leagues or events (over 1000 games annually), and promoting our sport. The BBF receive no public funding, have no paid staff and are an all skilled volunteer organisation.

2.3.16 As previously resolved and carried over (learning/education), we organised and solicited member clubs to receive a digital licence to Elite Baseball Training (one per club) a US entity which offers a comprehensive online tool with a set of over 75 online videos for our members to learn about hitting, fielding, pitching from anywhere and at any time.

2.3.17 As previously resolved, in March, we have completed and released an entire revamp of our BBF online Handbook for the start of the season. The above is the most comprehensive Handbook, there has been with a number of new insights, definitions and descriptions to better foster the users understanding of the rule which officially govern our sport.

2.3.18 As previously resolved, we aimed to increase the number of clubs and teams by 10%. We have increased our club and team membership by over 10% above target.

3. Agenda

Topic of discussions

3.1 Topic #1: COVID-19 Risks and management.

As previously resolved and carried over we reviewed our Continuity Plan which is now in effect after COVID-19. It was discussed, we need to monitor, identify and mitigate our risks and continually provide strategic communications (internally and externally) during this pandemic. As the NGB, we



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agreed we must leverage our professional skill sets and be prepared to deliver what is required by the government, when and where for the return of baseball.

It was reviewed what were our operational threats, if realised and what are our capabilities to mitigate our risks. It was agreed, we need to remain engaged with our stakeholders and provide them whatever information is made available to us. For example, we planned, developed and implemented a COVID-19 report [link](#). The aim of the mentioned report is to provide the public a comprehensive update on the COVID-19 situation for our sport, a risk assessment, continuity management, calendar, and helpful links to third parties.

While COVID-19 is a disruptive event, we continue to communicate to keep our stakeholders as best informed as possible under such unstable conditions. It was agreed, we would have an agile decision-making process whereby board members agreed to share, support and implement whatever policy is needed to resume baseball activities.

3.2 Topic #2: To organise and promote baseball in Great Britain on behalf of its membership.

As previously resolved and carried over (innovation), to succeed in promoting the sport of baseball, we need a strategic professional approach to develop critical elements of our sport. Promoting women's baseball is a crucial element for the success of our sport evolution at the local and international level. In association with WB-UK Women's Baseball UK, we agreed to develop the first ever BBF Women's Baseball Leagues, e.g., playing opportunities, knowledge, and support. Our four-year roadmap is to deliver our objectives and values. For example, we propose to align our new Women's Team with our GB Baseball Programme framework and culture. We expect to leverage existing skills, knowledge, experience and resources from our board and GB Baseball Programme stakeholders over to our Women's Team. We further, expect to harness the beliefs, dedication and values from women across the country, to make our GB Baseball Women's Team innovative and a high-velocity programme. The Women's Roadmap as discussed,

2020

- Awareness and communications campaign about the GB Baseball Women's Team e.g., webinars, website content, communications, social media
- Integration into GB Baseball National Team Programme
- Connect and recruit prospective eligible team participants
- Set-up date(s) for 2021 try-outs, training and identify playing opportunities
- Source public funding and private donations
- Secure baseball equipment for the team

2021

- Awareness and communications campaign about the GB Baseball Women's Team e.g., webinars, website content, communications, social media
- Connect and recruit prospective eligible team participants
- GB Baseball Women's training, playing opportunities and schedule released
- GB Baseball Women's Team Try-outs
- GB Baseball Training dates set
- GB Baseball Women's new uniforms and hats design released
- GB Baseball Women's player selection announced

However, we all agreed as a result of COVID-19 and the lockdown we may have to push back our timeline and remain agile.

Amanda Hocking was named the BBF key contact and representative for Women's Baseball Leagues.

Further, it was discussed the rollout of the first ever GB Baseball Women's Team to our National Team Programme. The aim of the above is to integrate the Women's team with the rest of our



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Programme. Amanda Hocking was named the first ever GB Baseball National Team Woman Manager.

3.3 Topic #3: Finances

As previously resolved and carried over (finances): We discussed “what-if” financial risks scenarios and ways to mitigate our risks. Financially we are in a stable condition, however, it was agreed we need to monitor and manage effectively our cash flows, expenses, and costs. Where possible we need to decrease our costs and expense by over 50%, manage our short-term cash flows, continuously review our suppliers, agent’s financial soundness or other NGBs similar for comparison, and prioritise measures. We expect to come out of this crisis financially more agile to promptly act on opportunities and deliver services to our members.

3.4 Topic #4: BaseballSoftballUK (BSUK) risks

3.4.1 As previously resolved and carried over (managing risks), it was discussed; our aim is to manage our risks to be sustainable and resilient. However, we have identified a number of risks with BSUK our assigned development agency and a company we are one of two members.

Since January 2020, after material allegations by two independent directors of BSUK senior management, the BBF have been asking for a copy of the independent BDO Report which was an audit of BaseballSoftballUK (BSUK). The BBF have not received a copy of the report from BSUK. However, on the 26 February, 2020, the BBF received an email from BSUK CEO:

- Whereby BSUK provided us with a summary (two paragraphs) of the BDO report. It was discussed and resolved; the short headlines supplied to us were of material concern. As a member of the company, we agreed we need to continue and lobby BSUK senior management for a full copy of the report so we can assess BSUK other performance and our risks. Receiving a summary after a delay of six months of the findings in the BDO report is unacceptable. Moreover, when the summary has significant results against the senior management of the company. BSUK senior management withholding information or communicating with us promptly, openly and transparently goes to their company’s ex-independent chairperson allegation (2019) and reason for her resigning from the company e.g., “*lack of communication, withholding of information, and a continual manufacture of lack of trust.*”
- BSUK senior management which is accountable for the significant results of the independent review of the BDO report has vetted, nominated and placed independent directors on their board, without our consent. It was resolved, to inform BSUK the above is of concern as we have previously found material issues with BSUK board of directors’ nomination process. We object to BSUK senior management, deciding to unilaterally appoint directors before they provided us with a full copy of the BDO report to assess and make informed decisions.
- Previously, BSUK senior management has advised us the former resignations letters from their ex-independent directors should not be of concern. It was resolved, the mentioned is in contradiction to the short summary of the BDO report which showed significant findings, provided to us and we expect to continue to lobby BSUK for a full copy of the report.
- As previously resolved and carried over in Nov 2019, we decided as a member of the company, we dissented in the re-appointment of one of BSUK independent directors. Our reasons, we found that specific nominee, not independent, unwilling to follow-up with our legitimate requests regarding BSUK performance, and we lost overall confidence in him as a result of his conduct. However, BSUK senior management has decided against our express dissent and has gone ahead to re-appoint the independent director in question. Moreover, they have upgraded his appointment to senior independent director of the company. We discussed, why would any independent director which one of the two companies’ members, have expressly stated it has lost confidence in his independence or conduct, would want to continue to serve as an independent director? We agreed the above is another instance BSUK is not considering our members’ authority and lack of working fairly with its member. We will inform BSUK we object to their appointment of the individual as an independent director, after our members dissent at their General Meeting in November 2019.



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- As previously resolved and carried over, in 2017, we signed a new members agreement and gave up some of our authority in the company so BSUK could source new public funding, e.g., £1 million. However, the BBF only agreed to the above if there was going to be Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) set on the performance of the company. Since, 2018 we have received delays and incomplete teams and participants data from their senior management. Without complete, prompt, validated and transparent team and participants data, we cannot conclude or make informed decisions. BSUK senior management has informed us "there will be no further information that can be provided on participation numbers," as they claim they do not have enough directors or resources to attend to the above. The above is of great concern and discussed, considering BSUK has 12 paid staff members (which include heads of development), so how can they not have resources to deliver to us an annual development report promptly, which is the primary objective why they serve the BBF? Regardless of the 2019 data being in question, for over a year we have been waiting and expecting BSUK to correct their 2018 participant and team's data which we found errors and have notified their senior management. As resolved at our last meeting, we assessed BSUK data and we found gaps and errors. We discussed, our concerns that unless BSUK is co-operative and make corrections to their data, they are working without a validated baseline for the accurate number of participants and teams playing baseball. The above increases our risk in BSUK e.g., possible gaps in systems and controls (governance), they may be underperforming in the development of baseball, and a lack of working with us in a co-operative and transparent manner. Moreover, considering they have sourced over £6 million in public funding over ten years, it makes sense that they only submit accurate development numbers to Sport England. Further, the above goes to the ex-chairperson independent directors' allegations in her resignation letter (2019) "*demonstrate the unprofessionalism and inability of BSUK's senior management to reset the relationship and move into a productive relationship.*" It was resolved, to request BSUK senior management to make corrections to their development numbers (teams and participants), provide us the update, so we can set an accurate number of participants and teams playing baseball.
- 4 **All other business.** As a result of COVID-19 and the lockdown of baseball, it was resolved, some of our aims for 2020 will have to be reframed, cancelled or we need to come up with alternative plans where required. For example, but not limited to:
- 4.1 The regular season has been cancelled. So, we aim to cancel Farnham Park bookings, and other expenses to mitigate our expenditures.
 - 4.2 The budget forecast will have to be reassessed, updated and deferred to Finance.

There being no further business to transact at this time, it was voted to adjourn the meeting.