**2022 Annual General Meeting Minutes**

**BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION**

Minutes of an Annual General Meeting

19th November 2022 10:00

Holiday Inn Reading – South Basingstoke Rd, Reading RG2 0SL

Approval Pending

**Voting Members Present**

BC Vetra

Belles Baseball

Bristol Baseball Club

Cardiff Baseball Club

Cornish Claycutters

Croydon Pirates Baseball Club

East London Latin Boys

Guildford Baseball Club

Herts Baseball Club

Hurricanes Baseball Club

Kent Buccaneers Baseball Club

Kent Mariners Baseball Club

Legends Baseball Club

London Archers Baseball Club

London Mets Baseball Club

Long Eaton Baseball Club

LYBL

Manchester Baseball Club

Milton Keynes Baseball Club

Richmond Baseball Club

Sheffield Bruins Baseball Club

Taunton Baseball Club

Umpires Association

**Observes Present**

John Boyd (BSUK)

Chris Rawlings (BSUK)

Gary Anderson (BSUK)

Gavin Marshall (Candidate)

Liam Carroll (Development Committee)

**Board Officials Present**

BBF Tom Thornhil, President (TT)

BBF Lee Manning, Development Official (LM)

BBF Chris Carter, Senior Affiliated Clubs League Commissioner (CC)

BBF Chris Deacon, Officials Commissioner (*Co-opted*) (CD)

**Apologies for absence**

Brighton Baseball Club

Essex Redbacks Baseball Club

Essex Arrows Baseball Club

Formosa Islanders

Kevin Macadam

Phil Versey (Observer Guest)

**Minutes Written by**

Chris Carter

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| **No.** | **Topic & Decisions** |
|  | **Meeting Commences at 10:25am** |
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| **1** | **AGM Opens** |
| **1.1** | **Roll Call, Non-Financial Voting Members, Observers, Associations**  Roll call was taken by LM and the AGM was deemed quorate due to the percentage of Voting Members present. |
| **1.2** | **Welcome**  TT as meeting chair welcomed the members to the Annual General Meeting and thanked them for their support and positive contributions throughout the year.  TT noted that motions would be added to the agenda after Q&A on Board Reports. |
| **1.3** | **Appointment of Tally Keepers**  CC and Rhodri Theaker from Bristol Baseball Club were appointed as tally keepers for the day. |
| **2** | **Approval of Minutes of the Previous AGM and Matters Arising**  Three set of minutes were presented to the members. |
| **2.1** | **27th November 2021 Extraordinary General Meeting Minutes**  TT noted that Aspi Dimitrov from Herts Baseball Club had proposed in advance of the meeting The wording “it does not seem fair to put so much weight on YNBCs” in Resolution 4 should either be deleted or amended. Aspi could not recall precisely what was said on this but I think I only raised the potential issue of allocating votes if two or more clubs combine to enter one youth team in the YNBCs. He did not think he would have made that subsequent point as he actually thought that using YNBC entries is a much better way to verify youth votes than the current system where any club can register 100+ youth teams if they like even if those teams don’t exist.  TT called for a vote of the minutes including the proposal from Herts to remove the applicable sentence.  **Minutes Passed Unanimously** |
| **2.2** | **27th November 2021 Annual General Meeting Minutes**  No comments were made from the floor. TT called for a vote of the minutes.  **Minutes Passed Unanimously** |
| **2.3** | **31st January 2022 Extraordinary General Meeting Minutes**  No comments were made from the floor. TT called for a vote of the minutes.  **Minutes Passed Unanimously** |
| **3** | **Q&A on Board Reports**  There were no questions from the members. |
| **4** | **Motions** |
| **4.1** | **Motion 1 – Adoption of Policy**  Submitted by: Kent Buccaneers Baseball Club  Seconded by: Taunton Muskets Baseball Club  **Proposal:** From the beginning of the 2023 season, any new clubs entering the BBF Seniors Leagues for the first time, are not permitted to base their home diamond within a ten (10) mile radius of an existing club’s home diamond, unless both the BBF and the existing club within this radius do not object to the formation of another club in the proximity mentioned above.  Jon Carter from Hurricanes Baseball Club asked what this proposal would mean for his club. Juan A from the Kent Buccaneers explained that too many clubs in one area is not good. Ben Stobart from Guildford Baseball Club explained that this would not be good for areas like London. Mike Hayward from Long Eaton Baseball Club explained that this would dilute player bases in areas. Aspi Dimitrov from Herts Baseball Club said that under this policy there would be no more baseball diamonds in London. There is a need for more diamonds. Mark Bonney from Croydon Baseball Club explained that population on areas should be considered, with a possible application criteria. Ian Marchment from Manchester Baseball Club explained that those clubs that ground share could have issue with this policy. Kevin Snow from Taunton Baseball Club explained that his club are facing difficulties in the South West with another club setting up near them.  John Baxendale from the Umpires Association stated that in reality you actually need as many teams in as many places. Chris Deacon added that club development needs to be taken into consideration. EP from Cardiff said it’s easier to run more teams within one club as opposed to multiple teams. Chris Ward from Belles Baseball said we need more facilities.  **Motion 1 failed. (14 for, 57 against, 1 abstain)** |
| **4.2** | **Motion 2 – Resolution to Modify 6.18. of the BBF Constitution**  Submitted by: British Baseball Federation Board  **CURRENT:** 6.18. If a Voting Member is declared “unfinancial” by the Board i.e. owes money to the BBF, and has made no arrangement for meeting this debt, then that Voting Member is not entitled to vote. The declaration of “unfinancial” status shall be communicated by the Board to the Voting member not less than fourteen (14) days prior to any meeting at which voting privileges may be exercised.  **PROPOSED:** 6.18. If a Voting Member is declared “unfinancial” by the Board i.e. owes money to the BBF, and has made no arrangement for meeting this debt, then that Voting Member is not entitled to vote. The declaration of “unfinancial” status shall be communicated by the Board to the Voting member not less than twenty (20) days prior to any meeting at which voting privileges may be exercised.  **Motion 2 passed unanimously** |
| **4.3** | **Motion 3 – Resolution to Modify 11.1. of the BBF Constitution**  Submitted by: British Baseball Federation Board  **CURRENT:** 11.1. The Board shall have power to discipline in such manner as the Board thinks fit a Voting Member or Member which is guilty of conduct considered by the Board to be disgraceful or Regulations made under this Constitution.  **PROPOSED:** 11.1. The Board shall have power to discipline in such manner as the Board thinks fit a Voting Member or Member which is guilty of conduct considered by the Board to be disgraceful or in breach of the Rules and Regulations made under the Constitution.  **Motion 2 passed unanimously** |
| **4.4** | **Motion 4 – Resolution to Insert 3.2. into the BBF Constitution**  Submitted by: British Baseball Federation Board  **CURRENT:**  3.1. To organise, promote and develop baseball in Great Britain on behalf of its membership.  3.2. To ensure the operational running of baseball is dealt with in a satisfactory manner.  **PROPOSED:**  3.1. To organise, promote and develop baseball in Great Britain on behalf of its membership.  3.2. In collaboration with the British Softball Federation (“BSF”), to organise, promote and develop Baseball5, eSports, Para-sports (such as Blind Baseball and Wheelchair Softball) in Great Britain, including the entry of club teams and national teams into international competition. For the purposes of this Article, “eSports” means any form of active virtual/electronic entertainment representing or impersonating fully or in part any of the disciplines, events or trademarks governed by the WBSC as well as all related online and offline competitions.  3.3. To ensure the operational running of baseball is dealt with in a satisfactory manner.  **Motion 4 passed unanimously** |
| **4.5** | **Motion 5 – Resolution to Modify 5.17. of the BBF Constitution**  Submitted by: British Baseball Federation Board  **CURRENT:** 5.17. Any Officials roles that are vacant at the time of an AGM shall be subject to an election, and will serve the balance of the four-year or two-year term appropriate for the role.  **PROPOSED:** 5.17. Any Officials roles that are vacant at the time of an AGM shall be subject to an election.  Aspi Dimitrov from Herts Baseball Club explained this would affect the block system for board elections. Ian Marchment from Manchester Baseball Club explained that continuity is key for the BBF Board and therefore block system is not good.  CC explained that different board roles used to be either four or two year terms and when the roles were all changed to two years, this section was not adjusted to remove the four year reference.  TT added that the removal of this sentence is to remove any ambiguity in terms of the elections of officials and that the BBF is not blessed with an influx of volunteers. It is easier to co-opt individuals to vital roles if there would only be serving for a shorter period of time.  **Motion 5 passed unanimously** |
| **4.6** | **Motion 6 – Resolution to Modify 5.18.2 of the BBF Constitution**  Submitted by: British Baseball Federation Board  **CURRENT:** 5.18.2. National Teams Committee – chaired by the National Teams Programme Official and including at least one other Official, the General Managers and Head Coaches of all senior and youth national teams and one player representative from the Men’s National Team.  **PROPOSED:** 5.18.2. National Teams Committee – chaired by the National Teams Programme Official and including the Lead Programme Official and any other officials that are deemed necessary by the National Teams Programme Official.  TT announced that the BBF Board had withdrawn the motion.  **Motion Void** |
| **4.7** | **Motion 7 – Resolution to Modify 5.3. & 5.4. and to insert 5.3.10. into the BBF Constitution**  Submitted by: British Baseball Federation Board  **CURRENT:**  5.3. The Board shall consist of up to nine (9) Officials:  5.3.1. President  5.3.2. Secretary  5.3.3. Treasurer  5.3.4. Development Official  5.3.5. National Teams Programme Official  5.3.6. Officials Commissioner  5.3.7. Coaches Commissioner  5.3.8. Senior Affiliated Clubs League Commissioner  5.3.9. Youth Affiliated Clubs League Commissioner  5.4. The Officials at 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4 and 5.3.5 shall be collectively termed “Officers”. The Officials at 5.3.6 and 5.3.7 shall be collectively termed “Commissioners”. The Officials at 5.3.8 and 5.3.9 shall be collectively termed “League Commissioners”..  **PROPOSED:**  5.3. The Board shall consist of up to ten (10) Officials:  5.3.1. President  5.3.2. Secretary  5.3.3. Treasurer  5.3.4. Development Official  5.3.5. National Teams Programme Official  5.3.6. Officials Commissioner  5.3.7. Coaches Commissioner  5.3.8. Senior Affiliated Clubs League Commissioner  5.3.9. Youth Affiliated Clubs League Commissioner  5.3.10. Marketing and Communications Official  5.4. The Officials at 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4, 5.3.5 and 5.3.10. shall be collectively termed “Officers”. The Officials at 5.3.6 and 5.3.7 shall be collectively termed “Commissioners”. The Officials at 5.3.8 and 5.3.9 shall be collectively termed “League Commissioners”.  **Motion 7 passed unanimously** |
| **4.8** | **Motion 8 – Resolution to Modify 5.7. of the BBF Constitution**  Submitted by: British Baseball Federation Board  **CURRENT:** 5.7. The League Commissioners shall be directly elected by Affiliated Clubs with a direct association to the region and senior/youth bracket for each Officials role.  **PROPOSED:**  5.7. The League Commissioners shall be directly elected by Voting Members with a direct association to the senior/youth bracket for each Officials role.  Aspi Dimitrov from Herts Baseball Club asked if this will impact the reuniting of independent leagues. Ian Marchment from Manchester Baseball Club explained that the Northern Commissioner’s role is redundant. TT added that the constitution should be a living document and should be reflective of the current state of the Federation. Removing this clause does not forbid the possibility of reintroducing the clause should it be applicable in the future.  **Motion 8 passed unanimously** |
| **5** | **Financial Matters** |
| **5.1** | **Balance Sheet and 2022 Accounts**  TT passed over to CD. CD began his presentation of the 2022 Accounts, commencing with a presentation of the Profit and Loss. CD explained a number of aspects of the document. ‘Other income’ is fines accumulated from penalties in Enforcement Actions. CD added that despite no YNBCs, little cash was lost as we held a last-minute tournament on fields that we had already booked and paid for at Farnham Park. Website costs include both basic website and MyWBSC scoring platform combined.  CD then added to the Financial Position Statement that the Bad debt is unlikely to be paid.  ‘Other debtors and accrued income’ are mainly accounts for GB related expenses.  Two donors have helped out tremendously to support those families who are not in a financial position to pay for their child’s expenses to play for GB. GB Merchandise sales total approximately £10,000. There had been lots of movements between accounts (GB have an account for each age group). CD added that Bill Varon from Richmond Baseball Club who is a qualified accountant, has joined the finance committee and thanked Bill for his support.  Overall, we are in a healthy position.  Reserves are just under £30,000. CD then referred to last year’s AGM discussion regarding reserves, and explained that the Finance Committee will review the current reserves position and our future plan regarding managing reserves and the level of them.  CD asked for the accounts to be approved.  **Accounts passed unanimously**  Proposer: Manchester Baseball Club  Seconder: Herts Baseball Club |
| **5.2** | **2023 Budget**  CD presented two options for the members consideration for the 2023 Budget.  Option One leaves the team fees the same as 2022 at £250 per team.  CD went through the budget and expanded on a number of items for the members.  The BBF Board recognises that costs are going up, however, it was outlined that some items may be higher than expected. Insurance is an example; we are expecting a 5% rise in insurance costs after consultation with our insurers.  We have to keep the insurance fees within the membership fee as opposed to a separate fee for clubs to ensure we are not selling insurance. International affiliations refer to WBSC and WBSC Europe.  Ian Marchment from Manchester Baseball Club said he thinks at the last AGM that the insurers would prefer us to do insurance on a player basis as opposed to team/club basis. AP from Kent Mariners disagreed and explained the conversation at the last AGM which refers to FCA rules in terms of selling insurance.  Richard Evans from Bristol Baseball Club asked about the historical pledge to WBUK. CD explained the position with the women’s pledge being a historical pledge made by the former BBF administration.  KP from Kent Mariners asked what the projected increase in AGM and Board costs are. CD explained that many Board members have not claimed many expenses for travel etc and that we will have a bigger board. Furthermore, the BBF should be making more of a name in Europe which involves going to international meetings. TT explained that the increase is not an expectation but more as a worst case scenario. DD from Richmond asked about the expected income from donations and development and asked if this puts us in jeopardy. CD explained that we do expect the donations and both LM and CD confirmed that the development congress will give more detail on this later, but involves charging attendees for events.  CD explained briefly on how the WBC award will work and made it clear that the money awarded for WBC is for grassroots development. Projected deficit of approximately £2,500, still leaving more than enough reserves based on what we would need to run one season with no income. CD referred to the earlier comment that the Finance Committee will review the position of reserves.  Option Two is to charge a smaller fee per team and also a new fee per participant.  CD explained that this option is a result of researching how other sports register their teams and participants. Registration platform has been looked into and potential benefits are significant regarding our sport’s administration, development, and other benefits to members of the community such as easily accessible development opportunities for them and other aspects like discounts in retailers etc. The package is large and worth looking into. Currently, registrations are extremely difficult to manage through the basis method of using a google sheet and cross checking with the online rosters.  DD from Richmond Baseball Club explained his concern with the system and said this would be administratively difficult for clubs to manage. CD disagreed and explained that the system is easy and manageable, DD said there is approximately a 25% increase in costs to clubs (partly through players) by using this system.  Mark Bonney from Croydon Baseball Club said that clubs may need to charge higher fees if they don’t want their players paying directly to the BBF which would be difficult to manage. CD explained that Baseball is very cheap to play here. LM supported this and said his son who plays football has to pay a fee to the league as well as the club and it’s much more expensive to play football than baseball. CD said MyWBSC have been extremely helpful and have a good relationship. Mark Bonney from Croydon Baseball Club asked if there can be training for clubs for the MyWBSC system. CD agreed this can happen.  Ben Stobart from Guildford Baseball Club commented on the value, it is a greatly increased fee. CD explained that the benefits of this extra cost will be tremendous and easier to administer, and improves the integrity of the sport. Ben Stobart asked if this system is only beneficial to the Board. CD said that the membership would also receive direct benefits to this system. TT commented on the logic of player registration and explained how being affiliated to the BBF provides value by using this system.  Ian Marchment from Manchester Baseball Club commented that if the Board is spending less time on administration, they have more time to spend on other things that will benefit the members and the sport directly.  Mark Bonney from Croydon said he needs more information before voting and suggested that this budget approval is done at a later date after more information is provided.  Ian Marchment from Manchester Baseball Club asked if Option Two is feasible to put in place before the 2023 season. CD confirmed that it is feasible.  Chris Ward from Belles Baseball said that reserves would be around £21,000 if Option One was approved but the system that was planned using Option Two was used, and proposed that it could be an option to approve option one and use the system anyway.  Debbie Patterson from LYBL asked what constitutes a team, and how does it work for players that play more than one of youth, adult and women’s baseball.  LM suggested that it should be done based on the amount of teams you have in your local youth league as an example, i.e. the number of teams you register.  DP from LYBL said the coverage on insurance for youth is not the same as adult and didn’t see value for her club.  Mike Hayward from Long Eaton Baseball Club said we need to get out of the mindset of costs and driving down the sport as we are already very cheap compared to other sports.  Aspi Dimitrov from Herts Baseball Club said that MyWBSC has provided value. Conscious of the fact that clubs need to ask players to pay additional money to the BBF directly.  CD said that the cost for MyWBSC doesn’t change depending on the number of participants registered so the more participants registered, the more value for money we get.  Debbie Patterson from LYBL asked if youth teams that run local leagues can use the scoring platform. CD confirmed that they can if they request to.  Aspi Dimitrov from Herts Baseball Club asked how the new system will improve MyWBSC in regard to controlling and checking who is on the field, and verifying people that are added to rosters.CD said that with the new system, the BBF have to approve each player to be added to a roster instead of the current system of teams registering whoever they want with little oversight by the BBF without a lot of unmanageable administration.  CD asked for votes on the two budget options taking into consideration Chris Ward from Belles Baseball Club’s proposal.  **Option One passes (58 for Option One, 13 for Option Two, 0 reject, 1 abstain)** |
| **6** | **Election of Board Officials**  TT asked for ballots for board elections.  TT explained that Erik Gustafson had officially notified the Board that he has withdrawn his candidacy for both the National Teams Programme Officials and the Officials Commissioner role and therefore all candidates remaining are unopposed.  It was proposed by Ian Marchment from Manchester baseball Club and seconded by LM representing London Archers that all ballots could be submitted at the same time rather than sequentially one at a time.  TT notified the members that voting members should omit Erik Gustafson’s candidacy on the ballot papers and stated that any votes for Erik Gustafson will be counted as a spoiled ballot.  Whilst the ballot papers were counted by the tally keepers, the Annual General Meeting adjourned to Lunch at 12:45pm.  The meeting returned at 13:30 and the results of the elections were announced by CC. |
| **6.1** | **National Teams Programme Official**  **Gavin Marshall: 70 (Elected)**  Reject: 0  Abstain: 0  Erik Gustafson (Withdrawn) |
| **6.2** | **Officials Commissioner**  **Chris Deacon: 70 (Elected)**  Reject: 1  Abstain: 0  Erik Gustafson (Withdrawn) |
| **6.3** | **Youth Affiliated Clubs League Commissioner**  **Paul Rance: 71 (Elected)**  Reject: 0  Abstain: 1 |
| **6.4** | **Coaches Commissioner**  **Mike Hayward: 71 (Elected)**  Reject: 0  Abstain: 1 |
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|  | **Meeting Adjourned 13.35pm** |