



FC EXETER
Monthly board meeting
Nov. 14
Exeter Recreation Department offices
32 Court St., Exeter

Present: Patrick Garrity, Maria Proulx, Eric Kelley, Jenn Young, Christie Farris, Scott Craig, Jessica Costa, Luke Martell, Shane Bradt.

Absent with regrets: Jason Faria, Porter Hayes, Geoff Meadville, Matteo Taormina, Ben Bailey

Welcome and meeting minutes

Maria Proulx opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m. in attendance were Patrick Garrity, Eric Kelley, Jenn Young, Christie Farris, Scott Craig, Jessica Costa, Luke Martell and Shane Bradt. Absent with regrets were Jason Faria, Porter Hayes, Geoff Meadville, Matteo Taormina and Ben Bailey.

Maria asked for questions regarding the October meeting minutes. Hearing none, she called for a motion to accept the minutes into the record. Jessica made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Eric. The motion passed.

Fields and equipment

Patrick provided an update on fields. Lining was more costly than in previous seasons because of the need to find a new vendor at the last minute. The Exeter Rec Dept has purchased lining equipment which, going forward, should help contain costs.

All goals at Exeter Rec will be moved to the far side of the facility and locked after Sunday's season-ending family gathering. Patrick will provide locks, and Jenn and Scott will help secure the goals.

Patrick will secure the goals at Timberland and Stratham Memorial School and drag the goals off the field at Brentwood. All flags and any other equipment in the sheds will be returned to the club's storage facility for the winter.

End-of-season gathering

Jenn, Scott, Shane and Christie will be board representatives at Sunday's end-of-year gathering for families at Exeter Rec. More than 100 families have RSVP'd they will attend.

NNESL update

Maria provided an update on the most recent meeting of the Northern New England Board of Directors, which included a discussion about resurrecting an end-of-year-jamboree for U9-U10 teams for which there are no playoffs. Logistical hurdles, including finding suitable locations and competing head-to-head with NNESL playoffs, create barriers.

The league is also considering its options for governance. President and co-founder Matt Caffelle and league administrator Kim Foley are stepping down. The board is currently considering options, of which includes an opportunity to be pulled in more structurally under the New England Club Soccer League umbrella or be managed by a third-party vendor, CM8 Soccer, which works with soccer organizations and facilities across the country. The board has asked representatives from CM8 soccer to present a proposal at its next meeting.

Town/player conflicts

A long discussion was had regarding enforcement of league rules that establish club borders by school district. There were several observed examples of players who live within FCX's district who played for opposing NNESL teams. All who spoke expressed frustration that using players from outside a club's borders — without at least speaking with the home club ahead of time — runs afoul of the spirit of a town-team league.

Patrick expressed concern that the families making that choice might be seeking a better experience for their player, which raises the questions of why and how the club may be able to address that. Shane observed that the defections are generally part of opposing clubs' open recruitment of players rather than anything lacking in the FC Exeter experience. It was expressed that new league administration could address this issue directly and enforce the rule.

Non-club play

The board discussed the ongoing use of the FC Exeter brand, including the name and uniform kit, during non-affiliated play such as the Seacoast United indoor sessions at Hampton and the Granite State Women's Soccer League during the summer. Most of our coaches use the name and kit during the winter season with good intentions, but Patrick raised the question of whether the club wanted the name and brand to be used unsanctioned and without any oversight or control.

Jenn proposed a message could be shared with the club's families clarifying that FC Exeter operates teams throughout the fall and spring seasons but does not enter and is not affiliated with any indoor or summertime leagues or teams.

Evaluation and feedback

The coach response to the player evaluation and feedback survey has been good. Patrick will assemble a summary of the coach survey and present it during the next board meeting for consideration.

Spring 2024

Jenn is working on opening registration for the spring 2024 season. Opening registration before the new year in past years has yielded little traffic, so her goal is to have it open by early January.

Financials

Jenn reports that the club's balance is up 8 percent year-over-year, but overall expenses rose 31 percent caused mainly by tournament participation at a higher cost and by increased field-lining costs.

Annual meeting

The board agreed to push the January board meeting and the Annual Meeting to the third Tuesday in January, Jan. 16. The board currently consists of 14 members, with two vacancies.