

Illinois Fire Juniors/PSCSL October 2019 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:06. Attendees included: Tim Koch, Amanda Jones, Jeremy Kelley, Matt Frank, Erika Hunt, Kathy Heitzman, John Lambert, Pablo Eves, Andie Halley, Jeff Hobbs, Pam Bauman, Kirt McReynolds, Kurt O'Connor, Bill Lee, Myron King, Amanda Esparza. Chris Downing and Sean Dunne joined via phone.

President's Topics - Tim

- Tim introduced the new board members and board assistants and welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- The legal papers officially merging the Fusion and PCSL 501c3 and corporations has been signed and is getting legally completed. The merger is fully effective as of Oct 1.
- Tim announced that administrator Amanda Esparza has offered her resignation effective at the end of the year. An announcement to the club as well as a solicitation for any individuals interested in the position should go out soon.
- The HR process for the Director of Ops position continues. There will be a formal interview of up to a half a dozen of the candidates and then the final few will be invited to meet the board/staff for in person interviews. These should start in the next month. We still aim to extend an offer and have a hire in place by the end of the year.
- There will be a board meeting in November. As of now, the December board meeting is scheduled but there may be a shift in the time/place/location based on a number of factors. The final details will be communicated at a later date.

IFJ Fall Tourney Shootout – Andie

- The tournament is set for next week. We currently have over 100 teams. There are no major issues of concern at this time. Hotel rooms are very rare in town and we have been working with the CVB and a few specific hotels to find rooms for some teams who still need additional rooms. Some teams have withdrawn from the tournament or expressed that they have had to book rooms out of town. May need to consider a different date next year.
- We look forward to a successful first tournament. There are a few new experiments this tournament regarding items such as Field Marshalls, volunteer needs, and check in. Lessons from this tournament will be used in the Spring. Preparations for the Spring tournament have already begun.
- There are a number of field/complex tasks that need to be handled prior to the tournament. A volunteer sign up will go out shortly. Millings will be dropped and spread in the parking lot during the next week prior to the tournament.

Rec Operations Update - John/Pam

- The PCSL rec season is concluding successfully. This season has been much better than the record wet spring be experienced earlier this year.

- We again have increased sign-ups for Spring 2020 and continue to look for additional coaches in order to fill out teams. The U5 program continues to gain strength and receive positive feedback.
- Discussions around positives and negatives from the season occurred. Of note, the ref program received very positive feedback and further encouragement from the board. On the flip side, further focus will be needed to help create a more dependable pool of individuals for jobs such as field supervisor, referee managers, IFJ ambassadors, etc.

Travel Operations Update – Myron/Amanda/Kurt O.

- The fall season will wrap up for most of the club within the next 30 days. There have been a handful of issues this year largely around individual team/coach situations that are unique to each team. Otherwise, overall the year has been successful.
- Oct 5th was the first ‘club weekend’ where the IFJ hosted the vast majority of CIYSL games. This resulted in a very large number of games/teams coming to the fields but the fields were not staffed to handle the influx. The board discussed a number of issues, chief among them the lack of parking, the condition of the parking lot, the lack of concessions, the usage of the porta pots, etc. It was determined that in the future we need to treat a club weekend similar to how we host tournaments given the large number of people and the fact that many of the people stay between their two games.
- Conversation around upcoming winter training, camps, and futsal occurred. Look for an email coming soon with additional details on winter soccer options.

Marketing/Sponsorship – Amanda

- A dine to donate at Chipotle (Veterans in Bloomington) is set for Oct 23rd 5-9 pm. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go to our field funds.
- The marketing committee has met and has a number of new ideas to explore. The focus will be to provide expanded marketing options starting in Spring of 2020. A number of new ideas include potential food options following Thursday night practices, increasing the availability of concessions on days with a large number of games, and increasing the sponsorship opportunities available to potential sponsors.
- The marketing committee will meet again regularly outside of the board meeting times.

Community Outreach- Chris/Sean

- Top Soccer has concluded for the Fall season. This was another successful year with over a dozen players who were new to the program. There were an ample amount of buddy players available to help out and Chris highlighted them and thanked them for their assistance.
- Given the success of Top Soccer, we will plan to once again offer a session in Spring 2020.
- Sean plans to once again pursue options for community involvement over the winter. Past offerings such as bell ringing for the Salvation Army, working at Midwest Food Bank, etc. will be pursued again. Look for further details over the next few months.

Fields Update – Jeremy/Tim

- We continue to engage with the CVB/Town/City and other stakeholders. We are pursuing parallel paths in which we would either be a major tenant of a multi sports complex in the event it were built or we will secure our own new fields before our lease runs out at the end of next year. The board has communicated to the outside stakeholders that we will make a decision one way or another on our path by the end of the year. There continue to be a number of paths that are being considered, but the executive board has already identified multiple sites that are positive and feasible for new fields.
- The capital campaign committee continues meeting with potential donors, currently focusing on potential large or naming level sponsorships. The team plans to start personally and individually reaching out more to club members in the next few months. There also are plans to develop a mini campaign around 'giving Tuesday' on Dec 3rd.

Other New Business

- No new business. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.