District 2 Little League Meeting

March 6, 2025 *|* Tavern Restaurant, Westfield. Meeting called to order by Steve DePalma at 6:31 pm

Attendance

**Towns In Attendance: Longmeadow BB&SB, Chicopee, Northampton, Southampton, Belchertown, Westfield, Amherst, Wilbraham SB, Gateway, Easthampton, East Longmeadow, Agawam**

**Steve DePalma, Ernie Fitzell, Marc Winer, Michelle Winer, Steve Elliot**

* **Data Center check-in:** Most towns have completed ASAP and chartering process. Please check on your status for Constitution. Still quite a few outstanding or missing.
* **Registrations:** Many towns regs are closed or getting close. Went around the room and discussed turnout. Most towns are down in numbers.
* **Schedules:** Marc will be meeting with all of softball on March 12 to get totals for teams and coaches so the schedules can be started ASAP. Ernie asked about which towns will be playing jointly and if they need any help. Intermediate and Senior baseball will all be travel across the District. Enfield is a possibility for some inter-district play for Majors, Intermediate and Senior baseball. Ernie will reach out.
* **Softball update:** Marc spoke about concerns with HS softball taking 7th and 8th grade students, and the impact that may have on 12U and 14U teams this Spring.
* **Baseball update:** Ernie will be setting up a baseball meeting soon to collect information on the upcoming season. Will update once he has totals.
* **Boundaries:** Belchertown is asking to expand their boundaries into South Hadley, Holyoke, Ware and Palmer. Everyone had the opportunity to discuss concerns. Most concerns were with Holyoke, and some with South Hadley. Belchertown agreed to leave Holyoke alone for now and resubmit. Any towns that will be encompassed by Belchertown will be automatically available for District play without exception. This request will have the caveat that if any of these towns grow large enough to have a viable league on their own, that they will be allowed to charter separately. It was requested that all towns check with their boards and report back by email with any other concerns by March 12. *UPDATE:* Most towns have responded with concerns, but approval for Belchertown to expand into South Hadley, Palmer and Ware.
* **Waivers:** Steve D has already submitted quite a few to LLI. If you have any that need approval, get them to us as soon as you have the required waiver form(s) and letter/email from the parent/guardian. Once approved, your President will receive an approval letter through email. Please keep for your records. Deadline for all waivers is June 1.
* **Jimmy Fund:** There was discussion about D2 doing a video with their own players/teams to promote our involvement and use for recruiting. Westfield Vocational has a program that would be willing to help with this process. There was more discussion about getting back to fund raising and promoting the reason for the tournament. Maybe offering prizes for top fund raisers. Also looking for more District wide participation and involvement.
* **Tournament Dates:** Green Monster - 7/13-19 (12U) and 7/20-26 (10U). Jimmy Fund - 7/13-19 (10U) and 7/20-26 (12U). Will discuss older baseball and also softball dates as we get closer to July.
* **Coaches Clinics:** If you are having one, and have room to invite other towns, please reach out. Many towns do not have these set up, and would be better to have more towns involved. Maybe also reach out to HS or college coaches for help with clinics. D2 would also like to provide a professional level option, but would need a buy-in from every town to defer the large cost. Will look into for 2026.
* **District All Star teams:** Hoping for one team from each town, especially for Majors BB and SB. If you don’t have enough interest or commitment from your own town team, you can join with another town to form a team to give as many players the opportunity to play as possible. Please think ahead and promote early to gain momentum and interest in April or early May. Please make every effort to have teams filled and registered before June 1 so we can get schedules and such together early. Question was raised about eligibility for players that play on HS teams, which now may include 12U players in 7th grade. Marc will look up the rules on this concern and update.
* **QR code for donations:** Discussion was had about using a QR code or Venmo for collection for District games. It was ultimately decided that it was not in the best interest of the District to offer it to everyone. If separate towns want to do it on their own, that is up to them.
* **Tournament booklet:** Just a reminder about procuring sponsors for your town and gathering information needed as previously sent out to everyone. Please review and submit this info as soon as possible.
* **District All Star Team event:** We are looking for a larger venue for this year to host our event. If you have, or know of a venue that would be suitable, please reach out to Steve D.
* **State Tournament host for softball:** Agawam will be hosting 10U and 12U state final games again this year. Dates will be July 12-13.
* **Rule Changes for 2025:** Significant rule changes are in the rules app, and were also handed out at the meeting. Highlights:
* Jewelry - any jewelry that will cause harm or cause distraction shall be removed before the game. Clarification to come soon. *UPDATE:* Jewelry is permitted, not prohibited. Please use best judgement for the safety of everyone involved.

If you have any specific questions about rule changes or rules in general, please email Steve Elliot so he can forward any concerns to Williamsport.

* We had 3 indoor clinics so far with 77 people coming to these in total. This is a significant increase from years past, and is a good sign. We will be holding the outdoor/on field clinic on March 29 (raindate April 5) at Sadie Knox field in Westfield. All new and experienced umpires are welcome.
* **New Business:**
* Steve D is trying to get a State meeting to be hosted in D2. Will bring up this invite at the State level.
* Springfield charter/waivers: Does Eduardo still need to sign off on Springfield players? Steve D will ask Bristol for clarification.
* Policy on forfeiting games during District play was discussed. A written policy is needed and should be followed by all without exception. Only East Region can declare a forfeit.
* More discussion was had about boundary expansion, not only with Belchertown, but other towns that border locations that do not have a LL charter. The ultimate goal is be sure that any youth has the opportunity to participate in Little League and to get closer to full coverage in our District.

**If you are willing to host the next meeting, or any other meeting in the future, please reach out to Steve D, Ernie, Marc or Michelle with a location. We are more than happy to move the meeting to a different location each month. Please think about hosting one meeting a year at least in your town. We need a space that will house at least 20 people in a relatively quiet place for up to 2 hours.**

**Please make every effort to send at least one representative from your league to each of these meetings. It is VITALLY IMPORTANT that everyone receives this information and is involved in the discussions. We need every town’s input and vote at these meetings so we can continue to move forward together as a District.**

**Next Meetings: April 10, 2025 at 6:30 PM. Location is TBD.**

 **June 7, 2025 at 6:00 PM (District Coaches meeting).**

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Submitted by Michelle Winer