



**Board of Directors Meeting  
May 30th, 2024 @ 6:00 PM  
Via Zoom  
MINUTES**

**Present:**

Scott Neiles, President

**Directors:**

Brooks Penrod  
Robb Andison

Bob Stanton  
Kareena Zanolli

Jackie Dugger  
Neil Teague

**Staff:**

Mike Branchaud, CEO

Gilles LeBlanc, Mgr. – Operations

Mya Slawter – Program Coordinator

Brooke Beleza – Intern, Administrative Assistant

Donna Ozarko, Mgr –Officials/Recognition

Angela Ballantyne, Mgr. – Sport Development

Cassidy Burton, Mgr. – Marketing/Communications

Payton Barkley – Intern, Canadian Championships

**1) Welcome and Land Acknowledgement**

President Neiles opened the meeting at 6:00pm EST and thanked all for taking the time to join. He acknowledged that the meeting originated on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people.

**2) Acceptance of the February 23/24 Meeting Minutes**

***Motion # 1 - Move to approve the February 23/24 Board Minutes***

***Penrod/Andison CARRIED***

**3) Approval of Agenda with power to add**

**4) Staffing Introductions**

Branchaud introduced the new staff members: Mya Slawter – Program Coordinator; portfolio including Timbits Softball, Canpitch, B5 and LTPD. Payton Barkley – Intern; main portfolio Canadian Championships and Brooke Beleza – Administrative Assistant.

**5) Safe Sport/Complaints**

**5.1 Sideline Learning**

Sideline Learning and Softball Canada have entered a multi-year technology partnership to enhance the safe sport framework in our ongoing commitment to address the needs of the softball community in relation to safety in sport.

Centralized Compliance and Risk Management: Sideline Learning is known for its ability to organize compliant and risk management processes in one central location. This platform integrates requirement tracking, member management, and education, providing a comprehensive solution under one umbrella. This not only simplifies administrative tasks but also ensures a more efficient and effective management system for Softball Canada.

Individualized Profiles for Members: One standout feature of this partnership is the creation of individualized profiles for each member. These profiles will outline the specific expectations outlined in Softball Canada's Screening Policy. By offering a personalized approach, the platform empowers players, coaches, umpires, and volunteers to fully understand and adhere to the guidelines, fostering a sense of responsibility within the softball community.

Creating a Safe and Inclusive Environment: The primary goal of this collaboration is to assist all stakeholders in participating in a safe and inclusive environment, free of abuse, harassment, or discrimination. Through the Sideline Learning platform, Softball Canada places the highest priority on creating a secure and enjoyable space for everyone involved in the sport of softball.

The partnership between Softball Canada and Sideline Learning marks a significant step forward in enhancing the safety and efficiency of sport management within softball. By introducing a national integrated safe sport tracking and membership management platform, the collaboration aims to create an environment where every member can thrive, free from any form of misconduct. This initiative showcases the commitment of Softball Canada to fostering a culture of safety, inclusivity, and enjoyment within the world of softball.

## 5.2 COC Meeting

Neiles and Branchaud attended the COC Meeting in April. It proved to be an informative session spanning a day and a half, with a emphasizing on workshops centered around Safe Sport. It appears that some members desire quick results and often resort to using buzzwords like "discrimination" to grab attention. Additionally, concerns were raised about the considerable financial resources being allocated by the PTs, with many questioning the necessity of certain expenditures centered around maltreatment.

***Motion # 2 – to go in camera***

***Penrod/Andison CARRIED***

***Motion # 3 – to go out of camera***

***Stanton/Penrod CARRIED***

***Motion # 4 – to accept the Safe Sport complaints as presented***

***Zanolli/Andison CARRIED***

## 6) **National Team P/T Registration**

Stanton reported receiving a call indicating that a player had been chosen for the Men's Border Battle, listing their hometown as NB. However, Softball NB has no record of this player and has confirmed that they are not registered with them, sparking a discussion. The player is, in fact, registered in NS and currently resides in NS. This raised concerns, as it appears that NT players do not need to be registered with their PT association, which seems unusual. Stanton raised the question of whether there is a possibility to revise this requirement. It was noted that an Athlete Agreement needs to be signed and they are insured with us for out of country but need to buy their own insurance in Canada. Stanton was satisfied with signing the Athlete

Agreement.

**7) Men's National Teams**

**7.1 Coaching Update**

Doug Allin has stepped down as Assistant Coach of the Men's National Team to better focus his energy on being Head Coach of the U23 Men's program. Jeff Ellsworth will not be available for the Saskatoon Tournament or the World Cup Group Stage due to club team commitments. John Stuart and Les Howey are currently the only two coaches with the team for the 2024 season. A call for Pool Coaches was sent in April and a total of 16 applications were received. John Stuart reviewed the applications and has requested that Softball Canada appoints Mark Quinn as an Assistant Coach to his staff.

***Motion # 5 – to approve Mark Quinn as MNT Assistant Coach***

***Andison/Penrod CARRIED***

***Motion # 6 – to approve Coaching update***

***Dugger/Stanton CARRIED***

***Motion # 7 – to approve MNT Report***

***Stanton/Zanolli CARRIED***

**8) Canadian Championships**

**8.1 U17 AirBNB**

The only nearby accommodation option for umpires, UIC/DUICs, and Supervisors is Levis, which is a 40-minute drive away. The host notified the Softball Canada that there are currently no available hotels in Levis, suggesting Airbnbs instead. While there is some associated risk (potentially underage working umpires), this option has been approved.

***Motion # 8 – to approve Canadian Championship update***

***Dugger/Zanolli CARRIED***

**9) French Translation**

Softball Canada and Softball Quebec staff continue to work through translation issues, with several calls held over the last few months to discuss how we can improve the situation going forward. Despite nearly two years of revisions (including two rounds by their own umpire group), Softball Quebec is still not satisfied with the French rulebook.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Softball Canada has committed to redoing the French rulebook index from scratch. A copy of the current French rulebook was sent to Softball Quebec to allow them to fully review it again with the goal of printing a new version of the French rulebook for the 2025 season. The online version of the French rulebook is fine as it does not include the index, and a free subscription code has been offered to QC umpires. Softball Canada and Softball Quebec have agreed to review the Lexicon that was previously put together in 2015 to ensure terminology is current. The updated Lexicon will be sent to our current translator VCI Communications. LeBlanc and/or LaManna will review the translation of smaller documents, while larger documents will be sent to VCI for the original translation, then to Softball Quebec to determine who the best person would be to review the translation (Softball Canada will compensate for the revisions).

**Motion # 9 – to approve French translation report**

**Dugger/Penrod CARRIED**

**10) Officials**

10.1 CC Approvals

**U15B:** Audrey Desmarteaux-Houle had to decline the opportunity to UIC the U15 Boys. A request for Board approval to replace her with Jocelyn Lacroix (QC).

**U15G:** Annie Michaud also had to decline UIC at the U15G, requesting Board approval to move Ariane Longtin (QC) to the UIC position and have Don Kennedy (ON) replace Ariane as DUIC.

There was a discussion about the rationale behind choosing French-speaking UIC/DUCs for events in QC. The consensus leaned towards prioritizing skills over language to ensure fair distribution of opportunities.

**Motion # 10 - Move to approve UIC/DUIC changes to appointments**

**Andison/Penrod CARRIED**

10.2 Ed Bitz Scholarship Approvals

A request for Board approval for Amy Clegg (BC) and Dana Edamura (BC). As Ed Bitz Scholarship winners.

**Motion # 11 - Move to approve Amy Clegg (BC) and Dana Edamura (BC) as the Ed Bitz Scholarship winners**

**Dugger/Andison CARRIED**

**Motion # 12 – to approve Officials Report**

**Dugger/Penrod CARRIED**

**11) Hall of Fame Approvals**

A request for Board approval for Bryan Kosteroski (Builder), Don Bates (Coach), Gary Skjerven (Official), Trevor Ethier and Keith Mackintosh (Athletes).

**Motion # 13 - Move to approve Hall of Fame Winners Bryan Kosteroski (Builder), Don Bates (Coach), Gary Skjerven (Official), Trevor Ethier and Keith Mackintosh (Athletes)**

**Zanolli/Stanton CARRIED**

**12) DEI Report**

As written.

**Motion # 14 - Move to approve DEI Report as written**

**Zanolli/Penrod CARRIED**

**13) Emerging Leaders**

Through an application process, the COC runs the Emerging Leaders program targeted towards

young professionals in the sport industry who show a promising future as leaders within Canada's sport industry. Burton was accepted as one of the 20 participants for the 2024 season.

**14) B5 International Representation**

A club team out of QC is representing Baseball Canada and Canada at a B5 international event. Branchaud has been in contact with Baseball Canada for a contract seeking to clarify any responsibilities in case of unforeseen circumstances and reiterated we share B5 with Baseball Canada in this should we want future involvement.

***Motion # 15 - to approve Emerging Leaders and B5 International Representation***

***Penrod/Andison CARRIED***

**15) Strategic Plan Update**

Benoit Girardin from LLB Strategies has wrapped up interviews with Softball Canada partners. He aims to finalize a report by June, followed by Zoom meetings with the staff towards the end of June and with the Board during the week of September 16, possibly coinciding with the Board meeting. Zanolli inquired if Benoit could engage with the DEI committee, while Branchaud plans to discuss with Benoit the integration of DEI perspectives.

***Motion # 16 - to approve Strategic Plan Update***

***Zanolli/Penrod CARRIED***

**16) Prince Albert World Cup**

There are six teams in the event representing 6 countries. Host meetings are once a month. The only concern is potentially the cost for the host. Moving forward as expected.

***Motion # 17 - to approve Prince Albert World Cup Report***

***Stanton/Teague CARRIED***

**17) Sport Canada / OTP**

Sport Canada is introducing a new consultant along with a revised funding application process. A lot of NSOs expressed dissatisfaction with the budget allocation due to rising costs. In addition, Softball Canada met with OTP only to discuss next steps, with no immediate actions planned until post 2024 Olympics.

***Motion # 18 - to approve accept Sport Canada / OTP report***

***Teague/Zanolli CARRIED***

**18) PEI Masters Team**

There was a phone call out of the blue from Carol Mayne from PEI who has hosted Canadians and is looking to do something different and applied to send a team to go to the European Masters – a WBSC Europe Event and is looking for Softball Canada's signature of approval. There is concern about the insurance ramifications to Softball Canada as Softball PEI does not include insurance for out of Canada events. Board agreed allowing to sign off based on concerns and that Softball Canada is approving but not a representative.

***Motion # 19 - to approve signature based on concerns and adjustments to back up***

***Andison/Teague CARRIED***

**19) Past Volunteer Recognition**

Stanton proposed recognizing the dedication of some volunteers in some capacity (in Softball Canada program areas), with the main concern being the possibility of overlooking individuals. All were in support. The awards committee (Dugger, Stanton and Ozarko) to come up with further ideas to move forward.

**20) Budget Update**

Still to be reviewed by Board.

***Motion # 20 - to approve budget update as presented***

***Dugger/Teague***

**21) Next meeting**

In person – September 27/28

***Motion # 21 - to approve written reports and to Adjourn***

***Penrod/Teague CARRIED***