



**Board of Directors Meeting - February 8/25
Holiday Inn Express - 2881 Gibford Drive – 9:00 am**

MINUTES

Present:

Scott Neiles, President

Directors:

Brooks Penrod

Bob Stanton

Jackie Dugger

Robb Andison

Kareena Zanolli

Neil Teague

Vanessa Kosteroski

Staff:

Mike Branchaud, CEO

Angela Ballantyne, Mgr. - Sport
Development

Gilles LeBlanc, Mgr. - Operations

Cassidy Burton, Mrg. -
Communications/Programs

1. Call to order, Land Acknowledgement and President's opening remarks

- President Neiles opened the meeting at 9:00am EST

2. Adoption of agenda, with power to add

MOTION #1 – Move that the agenda with the additions be approved, with the powers to add.

***Moved by Teague, seconded by
Stanton, CARRIED***

3. Items arising from and acceptance of the November 7, 2024, minutes

MOTION #2 – Move to accept the minutes of November 7, 2024 Board Meeting

***Moved by Teague, seconded by
Andison, CARRIED***

4. Strategic Plan

Branchaud announced that the final copy of the Strategic Plan 2025-2029 has been completed and translated. The Operational plan is being completed currently to

complement the strategic plan.

MOTION #3 – Move to accept the Strategic Plan Report

***Moved by Andison, seconded by
Penrod, CARRIED***

5. Men's National Teams

5.1 Men's National Team

Softball Canada announced a 34-player Men's National Team athlete pool in December, with 24 athletes invited to the Selection Camp in Florida (April 30 – May 4). The World Cup roster will be named by May 15, following the camp. Ahead of the World Cup Finals in Prince Albert (July 9-14), Canada will compete in a pre-tournament in Saskatoon (July 4-6) alongside Team USA, New Zealand, and Japan.

MOTION #4 to move in camera

MOTION #5 to move out of camera

Ryan Boland has officially retired from the Men's National Team program.

The roster for The World Games in Chengdu, China (August 6-10) will be finalized by June 1. While the World Cup roster will be used as a foundation, athletes may decline participation, in which case the coaching staff will reassess selections.

5.2 U23 Men's National Team

The WBSC Americas continues to delay the scheduling of the Pan American Championship, the qualifier for the 2026 World Cup, but has confirmed La Pampa, Argentina as the host location, with the event now taking place in May.

In preparation, Head Coach Doug Allin held an initial call with identified U23 Men's National Team prospects to introduce the program and ensure they remain in shape. The coaching staff is planning a U23 camp and tournament in Kamloops, BC, in June and intends to enter a U23 MNT team into the Men's Canadian Championship in Kitchener. The team selected for these events will likely be a younger team in preparation for next year's events and alignment with birth year.

5.3 U18 Men's National Team

The WBSC Americas has announced that the U18 Men's Pan American Championship will take place in Bahia Blanca, Argentina, in October.

With the event now scheduled, Mark Quinn has been offered and accepted the position of Head Coach, pending Board approval. The current plan is to select two assistant coaches from the Men's National Team Coaches Pool.

U18 Men's Identification Camps are being planned for May/June to prepare for the event, though final details for the U18 MNT qualifier in Argentina remain uncertain.

LeBlanc requested for approval of Mark Quinn as head coach of the U18 Men's National Team.

MOTION #6 – Move to approve Mark Quinn as head coach of the U18 Men's National Team

***Moved by Penrod, seconded by
Andison, CARRIED***

LeBlanc requested for approval to add pool coach Bryan Brooks as an assistant coach of the U23 Men's National Team.

MOTION #7 – Move to approve Bryan Brooks as an assistant coach of the U23 Men's National Team.

***Moved by Zanolli, seconded by Teague,
CARRIED***

MOTION #8 – Move to approve the Men's National Team Report

***Moved by Zanolli, seconded by Dugger,
CARRIED***

6. Canadian Championship

6.1 Recommendations from Slo-Pitch Working Group

The Canadian Championship Committee met earlier this week to review recommendations from the Slo-Pitch working group to enhance the Slo-Pitch Canadian Championship process.

Key topics included implementing a computer-generated coin toss to ensure an even distribution of home and away games, while allowing teams the opportunity to decline. A test will be conducted using AI, based on last year's schedule. Additionally, a virtual coaches' meeting is being planned one week in advance of the event rather than in person.

2024 Review

- All hosts met their contractual obligations by submitting their final report and financial statements and their bid deposits have been returned.
- Holding a supervisors' call in April was very well received by both experienced and newer supervisors.
- All appendices/forms from the Host Guide were made available on Google Drive. We still accept paper copies/scanned reports and forms from Supervisors.
- Moving the Official Player List submissions to Google Drive was very successful, with hosts and supervisors having immediate access.
- The SE Tourney platform was very successful and well maintained by supervisors.

2025 Updates

- The Host Guide has been updated with changes from the 2024 AGM and suggestions from the DEI Committee. Lisa Brown (BC) has volunteered to format the document to make it easier to navigate. Lisa and the DEI team will also review the Team Guide.
- The Supervisor's Manual is currently being updated, it will be uploaded to Google Drive and distributed to Supervisors. A Supervisor's call will be scheduled in April.
- Supervisor Assignments are being worked on.
- We will once again be using GameChanger (Scorekeeping), SE Play (Streaming) and SE Tourney (schedules/results/brackets) for this year's Canadian Championships.

6.2 2025 Dates/Locations

The U17 Men's Canadian Championship remains the only 2025 Canadian Championship yet to be awarded. The Canadian Championship Committee received a bid from Napanee, ON, on January 13 and is requesting Board approval, contingent on no additional bids being submitted by the February 12 deadline.

Event	Location	Dates
U15 Women's	Winkler, MB	August 13-17
U15 Men's	Winkler, MB	August 13-17
U17 Women's	Warman, SK	July 30 – August 3
U17 Men's	(Napanee, ON)*	August 6-10
U19 Women's	Surrey, BC	July 30 – August 3
U20 Men's	Saskatoon, SK	July 30 – August 3
U23 Men's	Kitchener, ON	August 25-29
Women's	Saskatoon, SK	July 30 – August 3
Men's and Master Men's	Kitchener, ON	August 27-31
Men's and Women's SP	Surrey, BC	August 10-16

MOTION #9 – Move to approve Napanee, ON as the U17 Men's Canadian Championship hostS

*Moved by Teague, seconded by
Dugger, CARRIED*

2026 Dates/Locations

Event	Location	Dates
U15 Women's	Fredericton, NB	July 29 – August 2
U15 Men's	Open	TBD
U17 Women's	Calgary, AB	July 29 – August 2
U17 Men's	Open	TBD
U19 Women's	Chateauguay, QC	August 5-9
U20 Men's	Open	TBD
U23 Men's	Open	TBD
Women's	Blackfalds, AB	August 5-9
Men's and Master Men's	Open	TBD
Men's and Women's SP	Open	TBD

6.3 Canada Summer Games

T2

Meeting

Brooks Penrod attended the T1 technical meeting in October 2023 and will also attend the T2 meeting in April to visit the facilities and gather updates from the Host Society and local Softball Organizing Committee.

Team

Participation

Yukon withdrew from the Men's Softball competition in October. The format has now shifted to a 9-team full round robin, instead of a 10-team tournament with two pools of five.

Yukon will still participate in the Women's Softball competition, bringing the total to 11 teams (one pool of five, one pool of six).

Coach Exemptions

The deadline for Provincial/Territorial Sport Organizations (PTSOs) to submit coach certification exemption requests to the Canada Games Council is February 10. A meeting between Softball Canada and the Canada Games Council is scheduled for February 19 to review the requests.

Major Technical Officials (MTOs)

- The deadline for Softball Canada to submit our list of Major Technical Officials (MTOs) is February 7th. This includes our Assistant Technical Representative, UIC/DUIC, working umpires and Sport Information Officer.

- In October, the ODC was asked to determine their selection criteria and work with the PTSOs to have representation from each of them for at least the Men's or Women's softball competition, in order to submit our list for the deadline.
- Last cycle we had 10 working umpires for the Men's competition and 8 for the Women's competition. Expecting the same number of teams, we agreed to those same amounts for 2025.
- After looking over the schedule, the ODC asked us to make a request to the Canada Games Council to add a 9th working umpire to the Women's Softball competition. Since we were previously approved for eight, they could not cover the full cost of a ninth, but the Host Society agreed to pay for the accommodations of Softball Canada was ready to pay for the travel and per diem. For the betterment of the umpire crew and the event, we decided to take them up on that offer.

Request for Approval for the following Canada Games MTOs:

Jackie Dugger - Assistant Technical Representative (Men's and Women's)

Tonya Ribalkin-Zanon - Umpire in Chief (Women's)

Ron Campbell - Deputy Umpire in Chief (Women's)

Mike Morrissey - Umpire in Chief (Men's)

Clinton Harvey - Deputy Umpire in Chief (Men's)

MOTION #10 – Move to approve the Canada Games MTOs

***Moved by Andison, seconded by
Zanolli, CARRIED***

MOTION #11 – Move to approve the Canadian Championships and Canada Games Report

***Moved by Dugger, seconded by
Teague, CARRIED***

7. Operations Risk Management

Men's National Team Programs

The uncertainty of the international event calendar continues to have a huge impact on the Men's programs. Having all three teams active in the same calendar year is a major logistical and financial hurdle that we have been able to manage so far. This might not be possible if this level of uncertainty continues in future cycles.

Canadian Championships

Getting 3,000+ Canadian Championship Participants to complete the UCCMS requirements through SportConsent.ca proved to be extremely difficult in Year 1. We are hopeful Sideline Learning will be able to help us better manage this component and get as many participants as possible to complete it going forward. It only needs to be completed once in a participant's career.

There is a grey area on what is considered a Safe Sport complaint and what isn't, and how to communicate that to the parties involved. Education for our supervisors is needed to ensure the appropriate policy and process is followed when complaints arise.

MOTION #12 – Move to approve the Operations Risk Management Report

***Moved by Stanton, seconded by
Penrod, CARRIED***

8. Safe Sport

Sideline Learning

The use of sideline learning will improve the process of volunteer police record checks, certification verification and form completion. Sideline learning establishes a volunteer database for better management with an automated notifications feature resulting in email reminders for upcoming deadlines to reduce manual tracking.

OSIC is no longer managing Safe Sport; CCES has taken over; this eliminates upfront costs.

Education

For the 2025 U15 Canadian Championships, Softball Canada proposes requiring coaches to complete the CAC Safe Sport E-Learning Module. While not part of the Competition Introduction pathway, this requirement can be mandated for Canadian Championships. Starting with the youngest age group ensures coaches become familiar with this training early, easing the transition to higher levels and supporting Safe Sport education. The goal is to reduce disputes reaching Independent Third Parties and align with Softball Canada's strategic plan for a safe and welcoming environment.

Additional workshops for P/Ts, Supervisors, and UICs are being planned in partnership with the SDRCC and will be scheduled before the season. Website updates will clarify the distinction between Safe Sport Maltreatment Complaints and general disputes, with accompanying social media posts and updates to public-facing materials, such as coaching and umpire clinics.

The adjusted wording would be similar to below:

Maltreatment vs Disputes

Please note the difference between maltreatment and a dispute. General disputes are not considered safe sport in nature.

MALTREATMENT What is maltreatment? Acts and/or behaviours that have the potential to result in harm. This includes, but is not limited to: • abuse (physical, psychological, and sexual) • neglect • bullying • hazing • harassment • discrimination	DISPUTE What is a general dispute? A disagreement between parties can include but is not limited to: • Appealing results • A PSO not following by-laws or policies • Registration and transfer decisions • Team selection NOTE: Any field-of-play decision should be brought to your PSO.
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Safe Sport Line

Call our confidential help line at 1-833-656-SAFE (7233) if you're experiencing or witnessing any misconduct/maltreatment in sport, including bullying, harassment, hazing, or abuse. Sport participants have the right to experience a safe and welcoming sport environment.

Wish to submit a complaint?
Contact your Provincial Sport Organization
<https://www.sportmanitoba.ca/partners/>

Safe Sport Line

General Dispute

General Disputes are not considered safe sport in nature. If sport participants who have a challenge or disagreement with a PSO's policy application, decision-making, or unresolved issue can submit this matter to Sport Manitoba for review and assistance in settling the dispute.

Currently, Softball Manitoba is piloting a suspension tracking system, with potential expansion to Ontario.

Learn More

8.1 Canadian Championship Documents – Umpire Specific

Recent events have prompted a review of UIC, DUIC, and umpire documents and surveys to clarify compliance management and policies for Safe Sport Complaints and General Disputes.

MOTION #13 – To move in camera

MOTION #14 – To move out of camera

***Moved by Andison, seconded by
Penrod, CARRIED***

9. Women's National Team

9.1 U18 Women's National Team (U18 WNT)

The U18 WNT program is set to host three open identification camps in 2025. Softball Ontario, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan have coordinated the camp dates. Softball Canada will partner with Ramp Interactive to test their system during these camps. The camps are scheduled for May 24–25 in British Columbia, May 31–June 1 in Ontario, and May 17/18 in Saskatchewan.

Plans for the final selection camp for the U18 World Cup team are being finalized, with an East/West format being considered to improve accessibility for participants.

The U18 Women's Softball World Cup will now take place in Oklahoma. Half of the team's roster will be new due to players aging out specifically noting that the pitching staff is aged out.

U15 Women's National Team (U15 WNT)

The Pan American Championship is scheduled to take place in Acapulco, Mexico, from March 22–28, with 10–12 teams expected to compete. While WBSC Americas is finalizing event details, Softball Canada has already begun preparations to ensure the team is ready to excel on this international stage. Softball Canada has determined that the U15 athletes must travel with a guardian. Since the athletes are so spread-out Softball Canada determined it didn't make sense to do a hub meeting spot with athletes. The parents/guardians of the athletes will also stay at the same hotel as the athlete, Softball Canada is still waiting on hotel information.

The athletes selected to participate are as follows:

Callie	Bell	Alberta
Coco	Chapman	British Colombia
Rachel	Clegg	British Columbia
Jayden	Girling	Ontario
McKenzie	Howard	Ontario
Amarah	Hunter	British Columbia
Saesha	Kent	British Columbia
Rylee	Kobasew	British Columbia
Tatum	Lecavalier	Alberta

Sara	MacDonald	British Columbia
Jordyn	Mackenzie	British Columbia
Robyn	McIsaac	British Columbia
Kenzie	Newman	Saskatchewan
Leah	Rayson	British Columbia
Chelsea	Tan	British Columbia
Jade	Tough	Ontario
Sophia	Massaro*	Ontario
Claire	Griffin*	Saskatchewan

Approval for Coaching Staff for U15 World Cup in Italy:

- Head Coach: Joey Lye
- The assistant coaches will be reevaluated since this competition is the same time as the Americas qualifier.

MOTION #15 – To approve the U15 Women’s National Team World Cup Coaching Staff

Moved by Teague, seconded by Penrod, CARRIED

U15 Women’s National Team Identification Camps

Alberta provided positive feedback on Rafter's follow-up emails and the evaluation process. It was noted that the camps follow a different structure than previous evaluations, presenting a learning curve. However, as this process aligns with the Women’s National Team camps, future athletes will become more familiar with it over time.

9.2 OTP/Kaleigh

The Women’s National Team program received less than half of the OTP funding originally asked for. The funding cut has resulted in budget cuts coupled with not knowing the amount of funding that will be received from Sport Canada. The explanation to why the WNT program received less funding was because softball was considered a new sport since it was not in the last Olympics. OTP did state that there is still the potential to receive additional funding based on specific projects.

Moving forward the WNT Program will:

- Weigh opportunities to make the best decisions regarding training programs/competitions
- Consider other avenues to help support the budget due to the potential change in annual budgets from funding cuts.

MOTION #16 – To move in camera

**Moved by Andison, seconded by
Dugger, CARRIED**

MOTION #17 – To move out of camera

**Moved by Teague, seconded by
Penrod, CARRIED**

Coaching

Master Coach Developer Sport Specific Training

Three different P/T's have identified new MCD's in their provinces. The role of the MCD is to train, mentor, and support Coach Developers to ensure high-quality coach education programs. They oversee program design, maintain standards, provide leadership, and promote best practices in coaching to enhance the development of coaches and athletes. This training is sport specific based and will be offered by Mark Quinn in Toronto on February 15/16.

High Performance Coach Program Pilot

30+ coaches registered for the High-Performance Coaching Program. This material is being piloted with some of the revised Competition Development resources being worked on by Coach + and the CDC.

Due to high interest, participants were divided into two sessions:

Session 1: 6:30–8:00 PM EST

Session 2: 8:00–9:30 PM EST

Attendance is mandatory for all three classes (Jan 19 – Hitting, Jan 26 – Pitching, Feb 2 – Fielding). Participants must also complete pre/post-class quizzes, review materials beforehand, and have basic tech skills (Zoom, Google Classroom).

A post program survey will be conducted to gather feedback from the participants. The goal of this program is two-fold – piloting material and growing the pool of potential NT coaches.

Comp Dev Evaluations

The need for a formal **Competition Development Evaluation process** has become increasingly clear. With the shift to a P/T-centered delivery model, a disconnect with Coach Evaluators has emerged, highlighting the need for clearer processes. These processes should be clarified in collaboration with P/Ts, evaluators, and Christine, with completion targeted within the next month to ensure full implementation for the next cycle.

Once finalized, we will update and train Coach Developers on the new materials. Additionally, we will focus on expanding the pool of trained Coach Evaluators to increase capacity for evaluating coach portfolios, practices, and games at this level.

10. Sport Development Risk Management

Safe Sport

- **Lack of Awareness:** Poor communication of policies and procedures may result in confusion or non-compliance among participants.
- **Incident Mismanagement:** Failing to follow up on reported incidents could lead to repeated issues and loss of trust within the organization.
- **Failure to Report Misconduct:** Lack of a clear reporting system may discourage participants from reporting harassment or abuse.
- **Insufficient Insurance Coverage:** Gaps in liability or injury insurance could leave the organization financially vulnerable.
- **Non-Compliance with Laws:** Failure to align policies with legal requirements may lead to legal action or reputational damage.
- **Inadequate Policy Enforcement:** Lack of clear or enforced guidelines for harassment, abuse, or discrimination prevention.
- **Insufficient Screening:** Failing to properly screen coaches, volunteers, or officials could lead to unsuitable individuals in leadership roles.
- **Limited Training:** Insufficient Safe Sport education may result in participants being unaware of appropriate behaviors or how to report misconduct.

Women's National Team

- **Overtraining and Injuries:** Intense training schedules without proper recovery time can lead to overuse injuries or burnout.
- **Medical Oversight:** Inadequate medical staff or lack of injury protocols, including concussion management, may worsen athlete injuries.
- **Travel-Related Health Risks:** Long travel schedules, jet lag, or exposure to different climates and illnesses can affect players' health and performance.
- **Budget Constraints:** Limited funding or mismanagement of financial resources can affect access to proper facilities, equipment, and staffing.
- **Sponsorship Risks:** Failure to maintain ethical partnerships or meet sponsor expectations could lead to loss of funding or reputational harm.
- **Doping Violations:** Inadequate monitoring and education regarding anti-doping protocols could result in sanctions or disqualifications.
- **Political and Security Risks:** Competing in regions with political instability or inadequate security measures could endanger athletes and staff.

- **Pregnancy plans:** Exploring policies for supporting athletes who are pregnant, supporting parents and childcare.

Coaching

- **Inconsistent Training Standards:** If coaches are not adequately trained or mentored, the quality of coaching education may vary, leading to inconsistencies in program delivery.
- **Limited Accessibility:** Centralized training locations or platforms may create barriers for coaches in remote areas, reducing participation or preparedness.
- **Knowledge Gaps:** Coaches may lack sufficient expertise or sport-specific knowledge to effectively deliver training, impacting program quality.
- **Disconnect with Evaluators:** A lack of alignment or communication between coaches and evaluators can lead to inconsistent evaluation practices and outcomes.
- **Insufficient Evaluation Capacity:** A limited number of trained evaluators and coach developers may delay timely assessments, causing frustration and bottlenecks in the program.
- **Unclear Processes:** Ambiguities in program expectations, evaluation criteria, or delivery methods can result in misunderstandings.
- **Resistance to Change:** Coaches and stakeholders may resist updates to training or evaluation methods if they are perceived as unnecessary or overly complex.

MOTION #18 – To accept the Sport Development Report

***Moved by Kosteroski, seconded by
Zanolli, CARRIED***

11. Slo-Pitch Program Update

11.1 Border Battle Update

MOTION #19 – To approve Tony Carnelos as the Border Battle team manager for both the men's and women's teams.

***Moved by Andison, seconded by
Penrod, CARRIED***

- The Border Battle call for coaches will be sent out in March. All previous coaches will be contacted beforehand and given the opportunity to resubmit their resume.
- Burton will send Zanolli and Andison athlete agreement examples from the WNT program.

Softball Canada will evaluate the Border Battle value and consider additional competition opportunities for high performance slo-pitch athletes to service the elite program/athletes.

Softball Canada will also consider other strategies to engage the Slo-Pitch community outside of the Border Battle and looking into growing the recreational side.

11.2 Working Group

The Slo-Pitch working group has been meeting monthly. The working group proposed some recommendations for the Slo-Pitch Canadian Championship to the Canadian Championship committee. Through these recommendations, the working group will look to survey the Slo-Pitch Canadian Championship athletes, coaches, and umpires on site regarding foul ball system strategies.

12. Learn To Play Program Update

Kidzsmart Collaboration

At the Softball Canada Annual General Meeting, feedback from Provincial and Territorial Associations highlighted the need to enhance the Learn to Play program to better support coaches and make a lasting impact on young participants. A review of the program led to discussions with Kidzsmart Communications in December to explore improvements.

Key Developments:

- **Strategic Goals:** Expand softball's reach by engaging new families and inspiring interest in the sport.
- **School Engagement:** Aimed at Kindergarten to Grade 3 classrooms, a three-part storybook series is being developed to introduce softball through fun, educational lessons (not as a gym class, but as a classroom-based initiative).

Program Structure:

- **Format:** Three video modules narrated by a moose, featuring caricatures of male and female National Team athletes (pending approval).
- **Modules:**
 - **Smart Choices:** Promotes healthy habits and introduces softball basics.
 - **Sportsmanship:** Teaches respect, fair play, and positive fan behavior.
 - **S.T.E.M.: The Science of Softball:** Uses softball to explain Newtonian physics with hands-on activities.

Next Steps: Softball Canada and Kidzsmart are finalizing the proposal. Kidzsmart will also provide recommendations for a potential rebranding of the Learn to Play program.

Administration Guide

To support Provincial and Territorial staff members in implementing the Learn to Play program, an Administration Guide is being developed. This guide will outline operational guidelines, ensuring consistency and continuity even in cases of staff turnover. The guide aims to provide clear instructions and resources to enhance program delivery at the grassroots level.

Canpitch Program Update

PIB Clinic

Softball Yukon, in partnership with Softball Canada, will host a Pitching Instructor Beginner (PIB) clinic in Whitehorse this April. This clinic marks the final PIB session required under the agreement to deliver one clinic in each province and territory. This milestone represents the successful completion of a nationwide effort to support the development of pitching instructors across Canada.

Administration Guide

An evaluation of best practices for Canpitch clinics is underway, involving surveys of Provincial and Territorial Associations to identify the most effective methods for implementing clinics based on specific regional preferences. By analyzing these processes and developing an Administration Guide, the aim is to enhance communication regarding Canpitch clinic delivery and to establish better tracking of the number of clinics conducted annually.

MOTION #20 – To accept the Programs Report

***Moved by Kosteroski, seconded by
Andison, CARRIED***

13. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Softball Canada Staff Member Update

As of January, Burton has taken on the responsibility of overseeing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) portfolio.

B5 Promotion & Indigenous Logo – Summary

B5

Promotion:

The DEI Committee is donating 25 B5 kits to minority groups across Canada to help

introduce softball in an inclusive, accessible, and fun way. Groups can apply through an application process, and kits will be distributed equitably based on the submissions.

Indigenous Logo Launch:

Unveiled at the November AGM by Kareena Zanolli, the Indigenous logo was showcased through a presentation, branded sweaters worn by staff and board, and sticker giveaways. The launch, supported by a press release and social media, generated strong public interest. Softball Canada and the DEI Committee are now looking to integrate the logo more broadly into the organization's branding.

Merchandise:

A merchandise line featuring the Indigenous logo is in development with Homerun Sports. Proceeds will help fund future DEI initiatives.

DEI Committee Member Applications

In January, a call for new DEI Committee members was posted on social media. There are five open spots on the committee, including one Co-Chair position. Once the application period closes, the committee members will be selected through a three-person evaluation process.

MOTION #21 – To accept the DEI Report

***Moved by Zanolli, seconded by Dugger,
CARRIED***

Motion to approve the DEI Committee Applicants

- Brittany Brunn SK
- Anastasia Morrison ON
- Jason Cohon ON
- Dakotah Pratt AB
- Sheridan Hamilton NB
- Rhea Jankowski ON
- To remove Job from the committee due to a lack of participation and attendance

MOTION #22 – To approve the DEI Committee Applicants.

***Moved by Teague, seconded by
Penrod, CARRIED***

14. Programs Risk Management

Program Implementation Risks

- Learn to Play Program: Collaboration with Kidzsmart on a revamped strategy has potential risks related to timely project approval, curriculum alignment as well as learn to play program alignment, and engagement levels among schools. Thorough proposal reviews and stakeholder input will be important to program effectiveness.
- Learn to Play Program: Without a sponsor secured for the Learn to Play Program, major updates to the program will lead to significant budget allocations.
- B5 Promotion Initiative: Equitable allocation of B5 kits relies on a fair and transparent application process to reach minority groups effectively. Clear guidelines and evaluation criteria are being established to minimize dissatisfaction.
- Slo-Pitch Development: The working group's ideas must align with broader organizational goals. Periodic updates and board approvals will ensure alignment and manage expectations.

Engagement Risks

- Indigenous Logo Integration: Expanding the use of the Indigenous logo within Softball Canada's branding must balance cultural sensitivity and broad organizational adoption. Collaboration with key stakeholders (focus group, DEI committee etc.) will ensure respectful integration.
- With a packed schedule of events in 2025, maintaining consistent and effective communication across social media platforms is critical. Delays in content updates or lack of engagement could result in missed opportunities to grow Softball Canada's audience.

MOTION #23 – To accept the Programs Risk Management Report

***Moved by Dugger, seconded by
Teague, CARRIED***

15. Officials

15.1 Blue Convention

Planning for the Blue Convention in April is progressing well. To date, 147 individuals have registered (including 27 unpaid), with a target of surpassing 200 total participants. While there has been a learning curve due to the lack of a formal knowledge transfer regarding the event's planning processes, efforts are underway to document and streamline procedures.

Indicator Club

Twenty umpires have been officially nominated to the Indicator Club.

Convention Attendance & Level 5 Umpires

There was discussion around potentially requiring Level 5 umpires to attend the Blue Convention in order to be eligible for Canadian Championship assignments. However, concerns were raised about the financial implications and scheduling conflicts with international events (e.g., WBSC). As an alternative, Softball Canada is considering awarding Professional Development (PD) points to attendees, rather than implementing a mandatory requirement.

Next Steps

Billingsley is currently developing a written procedures guide to support future planning and ensure continuity for upcoming Blue Conventions.

15.2 Fee increase

In September, a proposed increase to the umpire fee (from \$18 to \$20) was discussed. Following the AGM, Softball Canada was informed that P/T's believed they had the option to choose between the \$18 and \$20 fee structures. It was later discovered that this messaging originated from the ODC and not from Softball Canada.

This resulted in a miscommunication regarding the approval process. The option to select the fee amount was communicated as having board approval, when in fact, it had only been approved by the ODC.

The original intention was to provide Quebec with the option to remain at the \$18 fee due to the lack of availability of French rulebooks (as the \$20 fee includes complimentary manuals, whereas the \$18 fee does not).

A motion is now being brought forward to formally approve the fee increase to \$20, with Quebec being the only P/T permitted to maintain the \$18 rate for the current year. Quebec would transition to the \$20 fee the following year, in line with the ODC's recommendation.

MOTION #24 – To accept the Officials Report

***Moved by Andison, seconded by
Penrod, CARRIED***

MOTION #25 – To move in camera

**Moved by Andison, seconded by
Kosteroski, CARRIED**

MOTION #26 – To move out of camera

**Moved by Stanton, seconded by
Teague, CARRIED**

16. 2025 AGM

16.1 Hotel Information

Softball Canada is working with Softball Nova Scotia regarding the hotel choice for the AGM. The Hotel is the Sheridan four point in downtown Halifax - \$159 per night and \$25 parking per day.

2024 AGM Survey

Softball Canada is reviewing the results and considering updates.

The main feedback:

- Wanting more content in the meetings.
- Wanting more networking opportunities.
- Enjoyed the 1 on 1 meetings with Softball Canada.

It was discussed that Softball Canada may consider extending a day for the ODC to come in for in-person meeting (day later). This upcoming AGM is a rule change year, and it could be good to get people in a day in advance to prepare for this (ODC and board) pending on the number of proposed rule changes.

MOTION #27 – To accept the AGM Report

***Moved by Teague, seconded by
Andison, CARRIED***

17. Officials Risk Management

- Possible challenge: Ensuring an adequate crew roster for the SP Canadian Championship.
- Continual Challenge: Translation and getting materials out at the same time remains an issue.

- Continual Challenge – the disconnect and constant battle between ODC and Softball QC
- Self-reporting form for Level 4 and 5: The Province must approve the umpire to be within good standing for the umpire to be considered for an international event – costs extra because of the lateness from province approval and ODC.

MOTION #28 – To accept the Officials Risk Management Report

***Moved by Teague, seconded by
Andison, CARRIED***

18. Staffing

- Brooke Beleza is coming back on a one-year contract as the events and official's coordinator.
 - Brooke will lead the administrative duties of the Canadian Championships but will not be the point person for Canadian Championships. Brooke will have the support from the staff in the office to help with event procedures.
- Hiring a communications and programs coordinator one-year contact position to support Cassidy
- Gilles will be adding translation and website to his roles and taking out Canadian Championships.
- Softball Canada will be hiring an intern and a part time administrative assistant for the summer.

19. Prince Albert World Cup

The second Zoom meeting with the host committee has taken place. The committee is in the process of applying for an individual single-sport grant. Although men's softball is technically ineligible due to its non-Olympic status, the committee intends to submit the application in hopes of securing support.

Financial planning remains a challenge, as the host committee is currently exploring options to break even amidst existing financial commitments.

As a lead-up to the main event, Canada will host a **"Four Nations Super 8"** tournament in Saskatoon, featuring Canada, the USA, New Zealand, and Japan.

20. Working Groups/Committees

Neiles is finalizing the working group/committees and will have it out this week.

Hall of Fame: moving forward, all the staff will have input and support the three board members overseeing hall of fame applications.

Softball Ontario Membership Reduction

Softball Ontario is requesting a membership reduction. Softball Canada has asked for an official request and to view their budget with any other supporting documents and clarification on registration fees. Once Softball Canada receives these documents, then further discuss and a decision will be made.

RAMP

Softball Canada will look more into RAMP to try to implement a database. A working group will be created to investigate membership fees and RAMP.

Softball New Brunswick

Softball New Brunswick increased their registration fee. With that being said, they contacted Softball Canada saying they are willing to pay \$2 per member to Softball Canada confirming a \$6000 fee

Board Approved

22. Budget

Softball Canada applied for the 4-year funding. Expected budget cuts will need to be made due to funding cuts.

23. Other Business

Hall of Fame Rings

The price has increased: large is \$400+tax including \$50 for Softball Canada, Small is \$385+tax. The rings may be ordered and purchased individually by HOF members. Softball Canada will contact past HOF members with a purchasing link and future HOF members will receive the link automatically.

Next meeting is to be determined

MOTION #29 – To adjourn

***Moved by Kosteroski, seconded by
Zanolli, CARRIED***

