

# KNOCH YOUTH BASEBALL

## August 6, 2025 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Name	Position	Present	Absent	Name	Position	Present	Absent
Justin Thompson (JT)	President/ TWP Rep	X		Josh Harbison (JH)	Twp. Liaison	X	
Steve Tuzikow (ST)	V. P.		X	Jamie McSwaney (JM)	Colt/Legion		X
Melissa Stobert (MS)	Secretary	X		Curtis Walbert (CW)	Pony	X	
Tom McDougall (TM)	Treasurer		x	John VanLenten (JVL)	Bronco		X
Josh Harbison (JH)	Field Maint.	x		Mike Hedglin (MH)	Minor	X	
Ali Ciz (AC)	Concessions		X	Joe Brose (JB)	Farm	X	
Zak Sobotka (ZS)	IT/Web	X		Cory Tucek (CT)	T-Ball	X	
Angie Shoop (AS)	Sponsorship	X			Tax Preparer		

**JT opened meeting at 6:10 PM.**

**Minutes from July 16 meeting reviewed and approved.**

Several parents from the public attended this open meeting.

Parent from East Butler: son plays on SABA 8U all-star – wants his son to have a “fair shot” at evaluations and not be an alternate due to residence – requesting to be “grandfathered” in, since he has been playing with SABA for the past 3 years – East Butler didn’t have a program for a while which led this family to SABA – advocated for his son “he’s respectful and a good teammate; has had a lot of kid pitch experience” – younger son will likely play for East Butler, as they will likely have an established organization – will be 9U next spring

- May be a conflict with the ARL for in-house, as ARL does not permit out of community ball players; shouldn’t affect travel ball
- This child would make player 13
- During evaluations, this child was not near the “cut line”

Open discussion about proposed rule change –

- May be an option for parents to make 1 choice at the beginning of starting SABA and then not consecutive years
- MH: the idea is to create a policy that will be fair and allow for the development of players while allowing them to gain more enjoyment; section 8 bylaws “all star tourney play – placed at grade regardless of age” – this is forcing kids to play with older kids – MH proposes age-based concept with giving parents the option of playing with grade – kids born after April 30 they’re less confident/less physically developed leading to lower confidence, less developed; we currently do pre-season and post season evaluations – with the 12 kids that played last year who are playing grade level but are under the April 30 date: bronco and minor had 45 kids in each group- bronco had 5 kids playing up and they placed towards the bottom in evaluations; minor has 7 kids playing up and they also were evaluated at the lower end; 15 kids is “ideal” for middle school – none of these kids rank in the top 15, meaning none of these kids will likely play middle school ball because they’re likely to get cut; there are other kids playing AAU baseball that would rank higher, pushing these kids lower – grade rule isn’t working; 8U team 2024 – no kids played up (all age appropriate); 8U team this year had 3.5 kids that played up and they only averaged 1 extra base hit per game; age based= increase playing time, enjoyment, skill development, play more significant positions, higher in batting order, retain more players; other leagues: Little League, Cal Ripken, Pony, all go age based (butler, freeport, Seneca valley, mars, north hills, etc. all age based); proposal: vote to take place today; need transition plan; we can’t really change the situation for the current players – kids that are grandfathered in would stick with grade-

based rules and stay with existing all-star teams (too much change); age based eligibility would begin with 7U team coming up; if 7U player makes the decision to play with 2<sup>nd</sup> graders/parents commit then they will be considered in that age group for the rest of their time in KYB; farm commissioner would have to communicate with the families that have to make this choice (typically 2-3 kids/year); grandfathered in means you've been here playing with organization for several years; if not grandfathered in, then fall into new proposal rules (age based)

- Parent: question – we play with 9U but we're not grandfathered in; where do we play; there wasn't a 10U team; how do you make a choice; age eligible for 9U – where does he play?; if choose to stay with grade then that wipes out 10U next year due to not enough kids
- Parent: two kids played down so there could be a team; not fair if these 2 kids are forced to play with next age group up and new kids coming in have the choice; only 10 signed up for 11U
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- MH: data shows it wasn't a good choice to move to grade based in 2021; need to look at the future of the organization; I wish there was a great opportunity for everyone, but don't know that there is a sweeping league wide option; if 24 kids are at 10U group, it's not going to be 12 and 12, so may be a team with 14 kids; we can't say at the moment everyone gets to choose
- Parent: can't you say current players are grandfathered in and they get to choose
- JH: travel ball is a privilege not a right – we need to separate from rec ball; we mix the two too much and we shouldn't
- Parent: seems like all of this is done to accommodate one family
- MH: not the case – accommodating all kids because when you're young and forced to play against older kids success isn't guaranteed
- CW: 2021 the grade-based vote was sold to him due to what other teams were doing at that time; we need to separate rec ball and travel ball; child has to MAKE the team/meet a certain performance level; we need to take a look at particular situations; don't want to make constant exceptions;
- MH: team balance and roster needs (current proposal) – this will be looked at; better for the health of the league if we have an 11 U team; losing a team is not the goal
- CW: every division has to have a team – that's the goal
- AS: we have to look at 2 things: changing rule for the benefit of all kids in KYB – benefitting this years kids and all succeeding kids; a few kids may need to have exceptions; in order to make it work for everyone, we should look at making exceptions; doesn't seem like we're setting our kids up for fair competition if we're going by grade when all other organizations go by age
- CW: need to look at the future so we're in line with everyone else; whatever helps keep kids here, playing KYB baseball, is the priority; we don't want kids leaving KYB; we want to put quality teams on the field
- JT: allowing a choice every year would cause turmoil
- JB: maybe have the option to try out for both ages

- Parent: we bonded with the players and parents so don't really want to break apart
- AS: everyone should be able to play; enough teams for all; change at first seems hard, but sometimes we need to give it a chance
- JB: shouldn't force to play up with their grade if they're more comfortable playing down
- Parent: what if someone new comes into organization
- Board: then they get to pick
- JT: we have current wording in bylaws that we can use to apply to this new proposal
- Parent: past 2-3 years, child had to play up with grade and he struggled – we left KYB and he played with older kids and was at bottom of line up, struggled, scared, intimidated, kids bigger; last year we kept him down and he was batting 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> ; when he dropped with kids his age, he excelled; not here to make friends, here to make a ball team
- CW: goal to keep kids here and bring back kids that left to filter to JV/Varsity; our job to make it competitive
- Parent: son is playing up and he is getting better; makes him better

#### **MONTHLY UPDATE –Justin Thompson (JT) reported:**

Fall ball registration closed Monday evening

All-stars are wrapped up; maybe 1-2 still planning something

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT – Tom McDougall (TM) reported:**

JT: no significant withdrawals or incoming money

\$12000 still needs paid out to Penn Fencing

Some incoming for concessions

AS: can Tom provide a total of all money spent this year so it can be included in letter to sponsors; help the cause of asking for support; need to work this into information being dispersed to sponsors and families

#### **CONCESSIONS – Ali Ciz (AC) reported:**

JT: no update

#### **FIELD MAINTENANCE – Josh Harbison (JH) reported:**

JH: may need some chalk for fall ball; field dry is good; need to get CUB's tire back on – may need to take to Stan's

CW: are we still looking at seeding, plugging, rolling, weed & feed for the fall; could we reach out to businesses about borrowing equipment (either to league/parents or businesses)

#### **TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVE – Justin Thompson (JT) reported:**

JT: no update

**WEB/IT/SOCIAL MEDIA – Zak Sobotka (ZS) reported:**

ZS: 125 final fall ball numbers

**SPONSORSHIP – Angie Shoop (AS) reported:**

AS: bar bingo: talked to Xtra innings and they are still doing them; owner is getting back to AS with possible dates; November would be hard, but should pursue early December, if this works for owner.

Dicks 20% off is next weekend (15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>) at Butler and Cranberry

**LEGION/SENIOR COMMISSIONER – Jamie McSwaney (JM) reported:**

JT: no update, but JM and CW did a lot of work on legion field; team also got involved and did work

**COLT COMMISSIONER – Jamie McSwaney (JM) reported:**

JT- no update

**PONY COMMISSIONER – Curtis Walbert (CW) reported:**

CW: field looks good; team of 13-14 kids; Alex will coach again; email from someone that wants to sign up late – CW will reach out to this family; within ARL; CW can help with practices

Games will start week of Labor Day; practices likely to begin mostly on Legion field but not sure when

**BRONCO COMMISSIONER – John VanLenten (JVL) reported:**

JVL: fall ball will have 2 teams; Mars projecting 1 team, may need to engage CT also; not sure who Bronco CT contact person is; practice to start week of 8/18; looking to have all kids practice together 1x/week to build fundamental skills; 8/10 evaluations; 11U losing 3 kids so looking to fill these positions

**MINOR COMMISSIONER – Mike Hedglin (MH) reported:**

MH: had evaluation for 9U earlier this week. Another scheduled for this Sunday for kids that couldn't make it. Roster created, but not yet sent to coaches. Practices start week of 8/18. Games start week of Labor Day. Coordinating with Mars and CT; minor field will get back stop done next week; wants to get steps poured after back stop completed; grass will need cut; 3 teams for minor: Rinamin, Bogan, and Torrez are coaches

**FARM COMMISSIONER – Joe Brose (JB) reported:**

JB: 35 kids, 3 teams: Tucek, Protz; playing with Freeport and will meet within the next week to create schedule; East Butler reached out, but not sure if going to work with them; practice starting week of 8/18 having 3 practices before Labor Day; evals for 7U are almost done; 8U evals are complete; 7U done with tourneys: second place x1; 8U had one second place out of 5 tourneys;

**T-BALL COMMISSIONER – Cory Tucek (CT) reported:**

CT: 9U has 1-2 more tourneys; shut-out #1 seed in last tourney; making progress; t-ball have 22 kids signed up, but 1-2 kids may be added; 4 teams potentially; St. Lukes is good to go with us next year; in process of getting grass cleaned off infield; goal to get field as maintenance-free as possible; if go without a season, hope to only have to do bare minimum work to get up to par; may reach out to some companies to see if someone can donate sand; need to replace storage box, as it is a hazard – need to have something to store rakes, etc. for field maintenance; may need new trash can vs. not having a trash can (since there isn't a concession stand)

**VICE PRESIDENT – Steve Tuzikow (ST) reported:**

JT: no update from ST; but got fall ball practice balls ordered; he's been moving along with all-star evaluations

**New Business Not Noted Elsewhere & Open Forum:**

JH: for home tourneys – if parents and the team make food items, does KYB keep profit?

NO – because concession is the only thing that generates profit from all-star teams; team gets percentage of sales; team only makes full profit off entry fees; KYB might only be breaking even based on the percentage we give to tourney/All Star team; JH disagrees due to money coming in for sign-ups, and concession throughout the year

AS: Brad-mar pine – has separate food from regular concessions; would it be easier to separate food items?; may need to adjust prices, look at profit margin; 7U team – because we didn't have fryers and didn't have items to sell so we should consider giving that team more money; JT: we did order pizza out of KYB funds to sell since there weren't fryer items

Board vote on new age-based proposal:

Board unanimously voted to adopt the age-based proposal STARTING WITH 7U.

Board members voted 8-2 to allow for choice for all other players that are impacted by this change during this transition year (email to be sent to all affected):

ST- no choice

MS – choice

AS – choice

ZS – choice

JH - choice

JB – choice

CT – choice

MH – no choice

JVL – choice

CW – choice

Board vote on East Butler player that has been playing for KYB for 3 years to be grandfathered in. Vote was unanimous.

**JT ended meeting at 9:11 pm.**

**Next meeting (Open): 8/ 28 /25 7:30 PM @ Jefferson Twp. Building**