

West Seattle Soccer Club Meeting Minutes  
Annual Retreat  
Sat. Jan. 26, 2020 8:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Westside Baby Conference Room

Attendees: Goss (Pres.), Allan (Treas.), Gass (VP Coaches), Fry (VP Admin.), Lucas (Sec.),  
O’Byrne, Wiener, Conway, Hinthorn.  
Excused: Foulk.  
Absent: Persson (VP Players).

Lucas distributed mail from the WSSC mailbox.

**November Meeting Minutes:** Fry moves, Conway 2nds approval of the minutes as submitted with the amendment of removing the following sentence: “(He will add a publication date for the Coaches Packet as well.)” Motion passed unanimously.

**Donation request:** The Club has received a request from Arbor Heights School for an auction donation. Lucas moves, Allan 2nds that, until the club’s 2021 retreat planned for Jan. 2021, Lucas is authorized to make auction donations of a single free registration to schools within our geographic service area which request a donation. This policy is to be reviewed at the Jan 2021 retreat. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Lucas will reply to donation requests and facilitate redemption of the donated registrations.

**Club Finances:** Allan reported at length on club finances. All bills were paid within the calendar year so these figures are final. 2019 revenue was up from prior year by 2% . 98% of revenue is from registration fees. Spring enrollment was down but fall enrollment was down by only 4 players from the prior year. We will not promote players by age group for the coming spring season thus registrations are expected to increase. The club is +\$40,000 for the year 2019.

Field costs were down due to fewer reserved fields and better billing to co-users of the fields. Our storage locker fee was also shared in 2019. Our shared end-of-year event with Highline groups also reduced expenses. Referee costs were up by a small amount.

The club’s bill-pay service has experienced some issues this year. While the system we use (including the e-record created and the multiple approval process) is very secure, one additional security step will be taken: Allan will alter the connected bank account balance to reduce risk. Allan moves, Hinthorn 2nds moving \$75,000 from checking account to savings. Motion passes unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: At the February meeting Allan will present a plan for CD laddering to maximize interest on club funds.

Fry reports per player uniform costs will not increase in 2020 but ball expenses might; he also reports a reduction in credit card fees for 2020.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Referee retention:** Fry expressed concern about referee retention in the face of increasingly difficult behavior by players and coaches, especially older players. This concern is shared by the group and always a topic on our agendas. The board will put particular effort into the topic in advance of the fall season.

Allan provided historical registration statistics. From a peak in 2016, it appears that an annual decline has leveled out.

Historically WSSC was part of District 3 in a District system governed and run by the Washington State youth soccer authority. In 2013 this system experienced significant deterioration, at which time WSSC entered into an intertie agreement with Seattle Youth Soccer Association, which enabled WSSC teams to play in the SYSA organization. This intertie lasted for three years; WSSC did not formally become part of SYSA. In fall 2016, our national and state youth soccer organizations moved to a birth year system of organizing teams. SYSA declined to follow this change and remained on what is essentially a school year system. WSSC returned to its original regional/SSUL affiliations at this time and switched to the birth year system, which occasioned some difficulty and distress as teams adjusted to the roster requirements and changes required by the birth year system. League affiliation is a continuing agenda item for the board.

**SafeSport:** As expected, our parent entity HSA has enacted a SafeSport protocol, which WSSC is obligated to follow. This protocol requires the identification of at least one person on the WSSC board to receive initial SafeSport reports. WSSC has previously identified two contact people, who will be the VP of players and the VP of coaches, who will promptly advise each other of any SafeSport reports received. These two representatives shall choose a third board member, who they believe is the most appropriate choice given the report, to form a committee to investigate the report. HSA has provided a report form.

**ACTION ITEM:** Goss will draft a SafeSport FAQ to make WSSC's process clear to all and will bring it to the Feb. meeting for review and input. Copies of all relevant documents will be included in or linked from the coaches' packet.

**Uniform Orders:** Late uniform requests have become an undue burden. If coaches hand out uniforms early, any changes can be handled timely and as a single large re-order. No club personnel will be available to facilitate multiple custom uniform orders in 2020. Late orders may require the team to pick up in Tukwila. (Historically older teams sometimes request different sizes than the standard size run; there may be a way for older teams to custom order a size run in advance of the season, but coaches would be responsible for costs and consequences of incorrect sizing.)

**ACTION ITEM:** Wiener will add the due date for last uniform orders to the coaches' packet, as well as a due date for handing out the uniforms so that any re-orders can be completed timely. He will also add a line to the Admin calendar to remind parents of when they should have uniforms so they can remind their coach to hand out uniforms timely.

**Competition:** In younger teams, when scores aren't published, there are sometimes significant skill differentials among teams in a single bracket, but with no scores the club is unaware of this unless it is otherwise advised. Age group coordinators will attempt to gather more team information to better assign teams when there are two divisions in an age group, and to assess which teams might be invited to play up. Various ideas to improve competition were discussed, including the 3 goal rule (if a team is down by 3 it can add a player), limiting published score differentials (only publish a 5 goal differential regardless of actual score), etc. Different rules apply at different ages and in different leagues, so different ideas are considered for different age levels. SSUL's use of goal differential as a tie breaker for league standings is noted. The club recognizes that lop-sided scores, especially as a pattern, can be problematic and continues to work on improving competition for all teams.

ACTION ITEM: Wiener, Goss, Fry (maybe Hinthorn) will form a Task Force re competition and will bring recommendations to the March meeting.

**Coach Development, Support and Retention:** A related issue is coach support, training and retention. The club continues efforts to improve the coaching experience in all respects. Detailed discussion was had regarding how all the above issues, and many more, impact coaches, and how we can support our coaches. WSSC continues to fund the monthly Coaches' Social on the first Tuesday of each month from 7-9 pm at The Westy. Ideas for improvement include providing more equipment, lesson plans, education, better coach kits. Wiener notes that he has offered all of these items and more, including helping at practice, prepping for practice, etc. So far, no coaches are accepting these offers. It was noted that holders of a Grassroots license have free access to practice session plans from US Soccer.

ACTION ITEM: Wiener, Goss, (maybe Hinthorn) will form a Task Force on Coach Support and Retention. [DID THIS GET APPROVED?]

**Board Succession:** At the April 2020 Coaches' and Annual General Meeting (AGM) the following positions will be open for election: VP Admin, VP Coaches, Treasurer, and three 2-year commissioner positions. Fry will step away from the VP Admin role but is willing to continue to serve as a commissioner and assist/train VP Admin as needed. O'Byrne is also willing to serve as a commissioner and to assist with additional tasks beyond his duties as Field Steward. Allan is willing to continue to serve as treasurer. Wiener is willing to serve as VP Coaches. The club is seeking candidates for VP Admin. and commissioner positions. Goss will leave the WSSC board with the club's sincere gratitude for many years of service to the club and the soccer community.

ACTION ITEM: All board members will bring candidate ideas to February meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Goss will contact a club member who has expressed interest in board service, referred by O'Byrne.

**Soccer Office:** Pros and cons of our arrangement with SO were discussed, as well as possible expansion of SO role to include age verification and collection of certain fees. (Unpaid "play up" fees are approx. \$900.) By consensus we agree to have SO handle spring age verification. US Soccer Connect, the new national registration platform, will hold all players at every level in the entire country. Old registration data is expected to migrate to the new system in advance of the

fall season registration. We will learn more about the work level that will be required by the new system and discuss the scope of SO assignments at that time.

ACTION ITEM: Fry and Hinthorn will explore SO alternative email systems and report back to the board on options.

**Spring Registration fee:** Has been corrected on the website to \$75.

**RMA Clearance Expirations:** As previously discussed, due to a policy change at WYS, all RMA clearances will expire on April 30, right in the middle of our spring season. WSSC has been trying to change this policy. The expiration date will not be changed, but the good news is that there will be an exception for anyone who gets an RMA clearance between Feb. 1 and April 30 – for those people the clearance will be valid until April 2021. It was noted that there is a 45 day grace period for renewal.

**Spring Coaches' Meeting and Annual General Meeting (AGM):** Will be held Thursday, April 9, 2020.

ACTION ITEM: Lucas will secure a venue for the AGM.

ACTION ITEM: Goss will prepare the slide deck for the AGM and present it at the March board meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Wiener will prepare the Coaches' Packet for the Coaches' Meeting and present it at the February board meeting.

**Positive Coaching Alliance:** PCA has a parent program in addition to its coach program. The board is considering sponsoring a joint coach/parent PCA presentation at the spring Jamboree.

Fields: All goals are locked, new locks were purchased and have been reimbursed. Note that Roxhill no longer operates as a school and the homeless population there has increased. Spring fields are not yet known but may be Hiawatha or Sealth. O'Byrne is considering a "net party" to replace old and damaged nets before the spring season begins. It was reported that Cooper and the STEM school may be developing fields which might be rentable in the future.

WSSC invested in the Highland Park field and it is now getting weedy.

ACTION ITEM: O'Byrne will contact Parks about maintenance of fields, including Highland Park.

**Donations/Employer Match:**

ACTION ITEM: Wiener will include a reminder of this program in the Coaches' Packet.

NEW BUSINESS:

**Futsal:** Indoor futsal is gaining popularity and is currently being played in some area community center gyms on a pick up basis. WSSC will investigate and consider possible involvement in a futsal program in winter, between outdoor soccer seasons.

**Important Dates:**

Saturday, February 1 Spring registration begins

Tuesday, February 4, from 7-9 pm Coaches' Social at The Westy

Monday, February 10, from 7-9 pm, Board Meeting at The Westy

Thursday, April 9 Spring Coaches' Meeting

Saturday, April 18 Spring Season begins

Thursday, April 30 All RMA clearances expire (except those obtained between Feb. 1 and Apr. 30)

Sunday, June 14 Last games of spring season