

**MINUTES OF THE
NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

December 2 & 7, 2014

Bally's, Las Vegas, Nevada

December 2 Meeting

The meeting was brought to order at 6:02 p.m. CST. Those present were:

Carrie Austgen, Deer Park High School, High School Representative
Darci Brownell, Sierra College, Cal JC Representative
Pat Conlan, Georgetown University, First Vice President
Kathryn Gleason, Boston University, Third Vice President
Boo Gillette, Arizona State University, Assistant Coach Representative and incoming Second Vice President
JoAnne Graf, Coaching Emerti Group
Bill Gray, Missouri Southern State University, Division II Representative
Joanna Lane, Central Michigan University, Fourth Vice President (Tuesday meeting only)
Patrick Murphy, University of Alabama, Past President (Tuesday meeting only)
Diana Pepin, Eastern Connecticut State University, Division III Representative
Natalie Poole, University of Memphis, Division I Representative
Tommy Ramos, Midland College, NJCAA Representative (Tuesday meeting only)
Rhonda Revelle, University of Nebraska, President
Kevin Shelton, Texas Glory, Travel Ball Representative
Hal Wynn, Faulkner University, NAIA Representative (Tuesday meeting only)

Kate Drohan, Northwestern University, Second Vice President, was not present. Incoming representatives Don Kennedy, Missouri S&T University (Division II); Diane Miller, University of Nebraska (Assistant Coaches), and LeeAnn Taylor, San Diego City College (Cal JC), were present for parts of the meetings. Lacy Lee Baker, NFCA Executive Director, and Carol Bruggeman, NFCA Associate Executive Director, were present. The full NFCA staff came in for a portion of Tuesday's meeting.

1. 2014 National Convention. Ms. Baker reported that 1,378 attendees were pre-registered for convention, which was the most ever pre-registered. In addition, 120 exhibitor companies in 177 booths were registered, another all-time record. The number preregistered for the preconvention seminar was 256.
2. Sponsor Contacts. The following board members were assigned to visit with respective sponsors to make sure their needs are taken care of during the convention: Ms. Gillette and Ms. Gleason (Louisville Slugger); Mr. Gray (Schutt Sports); Ms. Revelle (Mizuno); Ms. Taylor and Ms. Brownell (Diamond Sports); Dr. Graf (Easton); Mr. Shelton (Wilson); Mr. Ramos (BowNet); Ms. Pepin (USSSA); Mr. Wynn (Three-Piece Tee); Ms. Austgen (NCSA), and Ms. Poole (SportsBoard).
3. Convention Manual. The group reviewed the convention manual and schedule, noting duties involving board members.

4. Open Communication Between the Groups. There was quite a bit of discussion regarding communication between the groups, and how the Softball Summit played into that. The following comments were made:
 - A. All of the Division I discussion items from the Working Groups were distributed prior to the convention to the membership, so there shouldn't be confusion regarding Division I hot topic items. Mr. Shelton felt that the travel ball communication prior to the convention had been good.
 - B. Ms. Baker explained that the Softball Summit was established so that the different membership groups could share thoughts on common items. Originally, there had been a business meeting held at the convention, but as business became federated by division, the Softball Summit replaced the business meeting so groups could still discuss common issues. It was the general feeling that one of the best Summits was when the pitching rule was discussed, since it affected all groups. It was decided that at this year's Summit each group would give a report, and then discussion would follow. Some board members questioned the need for a Softball Summit in the future.
5. Future Conventions. The group noted the following convention sites confirmed at this time. Ms. Conlan and Ms. Gleason had good things to say about their visit to Atlantic City, which is being considered for 2019.
 - A. 2015: Atlanta Marriott Marquis
December 2-5, 2015 (first week after Thanksgiving)
 - B. 2016: New Orleans Marriott
December 7-10, 2016 (second week after Thanksgiving)
 - C. 2017: Bally's Las Vegas
December 6-9, 2017 (second week after Thanksgiving)
 - D. 2018: Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers
December 5-8, 2018 (second week after Thanksgiving)

The meeting was recessed at 9:44 p.m. PST.

December 7 Meeting

The meeting was brought to order at 8 a.m. PST.

6. Executive Director Evaluation Tool. The group reviewed a document from the Executive Committee that will be used for evaluation of the executive director.
7. Convention Review. The board was very pleased with the convention, and felt there was a lot of good energy there. The following ideas for improvement were discussed:

- A. Hall of Fame Dinner. There was positive feedback on the Hall of Fame dinner, and the changes made to the format (elimination of the “presenter”). The event got finished in a three-hour time span (dinner one hour, followed by two for the program), which was really good considering there were four inductees.
- B. Clinic Speakers. Many felt that the speakers were more dynamic than last time.
- (1) Length of Speakers. Some felt that Tracy Warren needed a longer time, while other speakers went too long.
 - (2) Music should be played in down time between speakers.
 - (3) More Pitching. It was felt that more pitching topics were needed, like possibly exploring multiple facets of pitching, possibly going on at same time.
 - (4) Pop-Up Skills Discussions. It was noted that more and more pop-up skills discussions happened, and it would be good to figure out how to capture that discussion. One board member said that the convention was a “Think Tank” and video and audio should be available from the discussion.
 - (5) Pre-Convention Seminar. One member recommended a three-hour time frame for the pre-convention seminar, instead of four.
 - (6) PowerPoint Presentations. NFCA should remind speakers to make font size big on the slides since the audience is about 1,500.
 - (7) Travel Ball Curriculum. Mr. Shelton said that the College Coach Panel was extremely well received. It was recommended that it be extended to a two-hour time period. Other topics went about 20 to 25 minutes, and that was fine. There was some sentiment to renaming the coaches panel to encourage high school coaches to attend. Mr. Shelton will type up notes from the panel for distribution.
- C. Internet. Some attendees felt there should be free internet. It was noted that there was free internet at the Internet Café, which prompted some board members to say that it should have been better publicized.
- D. Convention Scholarships. One coach had mentioned that there should be convention scholarships for graduate assistants. It was felt that the grad assistants could apply for the Mary Nutter Scholarship Fund.
- E. Mentoring.
- (1) It was felt that the mentoring session went well. There was one complaint about a mentor’s comments and another about some mentees not behaving professionally. More money was raised than ever to “pay it forward” through the Mary Nutter scholarship and other professional endeavors.

- (2) Possibly having an assistant coach curriculum, that would be about three-hours.
- (3) Possibly signing up for a 30-minute session one-on-one, with multiple coaches doing it at the same time.
- (4) Maybe have a mentoring meeting prior to the convention for first-time attendees so they know someone.
- (5) Continuing to mentor year-round.

F. Caucus Meetings.

- (1) Travel Ball. Mr. Shelton felt there had been some good discussion at the event, although now, since the move of the caucus to Friday, it conflicts with the high school caucus. The timing is still a problem since there are some travel ball coaches who are also high school coaches. Other items Mr. Shelton brought forward were:
 - (a) Group was adamantly opposed to no fall recruiting window, but supported a shorter, six-week window.
 - (b) The travel coaches were in support of the proposed idea of no recruiting contact or visits before July 1 after the sophomore year. A vote was in favor of this.
 - (c) Group was against the certifying of events.
- (2) Division III. A bigger room is needed for the caucus. The convention planning should consider 200 attendance.
- (3) Cal JC. Ms. Brownell reported that 45 to 50 attended, which was a great number for the group. Some of the key points were:
 - (a) Their main focus is to get something into effect legislatively in the next two years to expand back to eight teams at their Cal JC championship. In 2007, due to cost containment measures, the championship was cut from eight to four teams; they were told it would last until 2014. Unfortunately, in 2014, it was not increased back to eight.
 - (b) There were three past presidents present, so a lot of the session was spent in trying to educate.
- (4) High School. Ms. Austgen noted the following:
 - (a) The survey results were discussed at the caucus, including the fact that of the respondents, the majority still wanted hard copy of the newspaper; education was the big need and want of the group, and the current membership price is fine.
 - (b) Growing the membership is important, and it was decided that the NFCA would find state reps, and regional reps, to help with membership as well as provide a sort of “phone tree” in reverse. Since the convention is being held in Georgia in 2015, it’s important to make a big push in that area, possibly

having a contest between Florida and Georgia. Other promotional ideas were discussed, including a trial membership.

- (c) CEU units need to be available for the convention, as well as a way to sign up for a roommate.
- (d) The NFCA needs to explore more regional mini-conventions, and/or tacking NFCC classes on the different coaches associations' meetings and clinics.
- (e) There needs to be more "call to action."

(5) Division II Caucus. Mr. Gray reported the following:

- (a) For planning purposes, the caucus needs to be set for 200 people. The caucus also utilized "sharing circles," which meant they moved the chairs into groups, so the room needs to be large enough to accommodate.
- (b) The Bronze meeting rooms were noisy, and there needed to be more chairs and seating the Grand Salon.
- (c) There was a lot of discussion on the Division II Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year.

(6) Division I Caucus. Ms. Poole noted:

- (a) She felt the transparency of the Division I working group information helped in the debate, as well as with other groups.
- (b) The caucus could have gone longer on Friday, so it needs to be moved to a room without a conflict if more time is needed.
- (c) It was recommended that the talks by Dee Abrahamson and Donna Vavrinec be moved to another time period so they can talk to all interested parties at the same time.
- (d) Ms. Weekly had a meeting with some of the travel ball organizations and will forward a proposal for the January HCC meeting.

G. Committees.

(1) Tournament and Camp Committee. It was felt that there were some great ideas generated.

(2) Hall of Fame Committee. Ms. Conlan felt the committee had good discussion. The following was discussed:

- (a) A better definition of "Pioneer Category" is needed.
- (b) The selection schedule needs to be moved up, and there needs to be better publicity of the deadlines and nomination process. Ms. Conlan will get the NFCA office a suggested timeline and recommendations on how to publicize.
- (c) A lot of coaches don't understand that there needs to be service to the NFCA; it's not just win-lost record.

- (d) There needs to be more recognition of the Hall of Famers. The following was recommended: posters of Hall of Fame members; feature of Hall of Fame members on Throwback Thursday and in the newspaper.

8. Unsigned Convention Sites.

- A. Atlantic City/Las Vegas Combination. Ms. Baker was given the go-ahead to negotiate with Caesar's Entertainment for 2019 in Atlantic City (Harrah's) and 2021 in Las Vegas (Rio). It was noted that the NFCA had not been to the Northeast since 1993, and because of the room rates in larger Northeast cities, Atlantic City would be a good option to explore.
- B. 2020. Phoenix was suggested as a possible site for 2020 since the convention had not been to the West, except for Las Vegas, since San Diego in 2010.

9. Linked In. More needs to be done with Linked In.

10. NFCA Reports. The group acknowledged reports from the NFCA staff regarding (1) events, (2) education, (3) membership, (4) social media, and (5) marketing.

11. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. PST.

[Note: Other prospective projects and NFCA administration issues were discussed in executive session.]