

Newtown Soccer Club Public Meeting Notes

11/20/2023

Changes or Questions about Last Meeting

- None
- Parks and Rec
 - Jon
 - Park and rec wants to meet with the soccer club to go over complaints about the club.
 - Posting notes and minutes efficiently
 - Sub Committee information
 - December 12th Meeting- to be held at the Teen Center.
- Rec Update
 - Joe
 - Happy Birthday to Joe!
 - Numbers are expected to grow this spring.
 - Nick and Joe need to speak with Gil to plan out how the spring season will look. Nick and Joe to meet to plan discussion separately ahead of time.
- Equipment Update
 - Carol Anne
 - Audit of storage unit and nets and fields- Will be done in the off season.
 - Taking the nets off the goals. Put them in storage.
 - Nick would like to help with his team and high school players.
- Financial Update
 - Rob

- All bills are paid for the fall. Parks and rec checks will be dropped off tomorrow (11/21)
 - Winter training first payment made
 - Taxes paid
 - 1099 forms to be filed in January.
- Coaching Director Report
 - Nick
 - Wonderful fall!
 - Being able to keep this coach staff together the past few years has been fantastic. Creating great relationships. Great young coaches that have come in recently.
 - Team wise it has been really competitive and we think that we got it right in terms of what divisions they were assigned to.
 - There are definitely teams that should move up from the division that they were placed in last season.
 - Coaches have been competitive without crossing the line.
 - Anything that the coaches want that the club can provide?
 - Any extra gear so that the coaches can feel like they are part of the organization/team without wearing the team jersey.
 - Extend it to the rec coaches. Training gear would be nice.
 - Gone over the winter schedule- will we have a U20 girls team.
- Travel Update/U15 Girls Discussion
 - Jeff

- Finalizing the winter training schedules- all done will be going out the teams tomorrow. Next week the link will go up for sign up.
- Looking forward to the Spring- We owe a few teams tournaments due to things being canceled in the fall.
- Memorial Day Tournament planning coming soon.

Public Participation

- Parks and rec meeting happened- Darryl Newman attended the meeting and was impressed with what they had to say about field closures. Bi-Laws have been posted online. Rebecca Hall has posted them on the website. Parks and rec has the bi-laws. Rebecca Hall to call CJSA to find out how to post them on the site. The new website has no place to post those and we were required to move to that site by the CJSA. Financial Statement needed- it will be created and posted on the website by the next meeting. Budget to be posted as well.
(DECEMBER)
- Patrick Fremont- Speaking on behalf of his wife Meghan. There was a game (a win) that was taken away from their team. The ref has the authority to close the field even if the field hasn't been closed by Parks and Rec. The field was closed by the ref but the game went on anyway. The game wasn't recognized by the league because of the field being closed. Patrick would like the game restored on the website. Jon and Jeff have called CJSA to ask them to restore it. CJSA hasn't restored it yet but Newtown will follow up again. The standings determine what division the teams play in so that is why parents feel so strongly about this issue. Jon will email him again and he will copy Meghan Fremont on the follow up.

U15 Parents Meeting

Jeff to open meeting: Meeting is to discuss Rostering issues for the U15 Girls team. Should the club expand the roster into two teams or keep them as one large team so they can continue to all play together. Spring evaluations would happen. 2009/2010 age groups.

- Steve Singlak- When his son was this age, his team played 50/50 playing time. The kids got discouraged and lost interest in the team. When kids get more playing time they develop their skills better and they start winning. Too many girls are on the field. They aren't getting enough playing time. They won't get better by not playing.
 - Nick Response- It's a difficult situation but practice days is what makes the kids better, not the game. Everyone wants to play the game but the practice is truly what is important. "What am I preparing them for?" Is what the coaches are thinking as these kids move through the program.
 - Steven response: When the skill level is so varied between all the girls so that inhibits the coaches ability to coach the team as the whole.
 - Nick Response: At the high school level, that is still going to happen where you will have a varied level of skill.
 - Coach Lyddy Response: The highly skilled younger kids will go to Varsity. Mid level, will go to JV. Entry level, freshman team. So the level of skill get divided up at that level. Prepare them to be mentally fit, physically fit and skill level fit. Teach life lessons through the sport to help them better prepare for the trials of life and high school. "There are a few things I think about when deciding to split up a team of this size. How many of those kids play on different teams or play other sports? How many injuries do you get

where people are out for weeks? Vacations that pull kids away. You need those extra players.

- Berta Martins: You can not put someone out on the field for a few minutes and then pull them off quickly and expect them to learn anything. This is a sensitive age. The girls are going to suffer from a mental health/confidence stand point if they get split up.
 - Ryan response: Soccer is a “cut” sport at the high school level. So these girls will need to face that eventually.
 - Berta: The newer players look up to the better girls. Splitting them now would be unfair. They are getting mercy rule time not actual playing time.
- Kimberly Picilla: The girls all work so hard, they are all advancing, they are all getting better it makes no sense to split them now. They have worked so hard to learn how to work together that it seems crazy to make a big move like that now. We won our season. Why would we split them when they are clearly succeeding?
- Jon and Jeff: The reason this topic came up was that Jeff got tons of emails from parents complaining about playing time.
 - Rob Merrifield: The point is to improve and win games. It was better to retain the girls that would have been cut had the teams been split. The girls are all friends now. You can’t split them up now. If you are not the star of the team, you contribute to the team in other ways. The decision was made in error to keep them all together but it is not the time to fix it now.
 - Jeff: We need to find 8-9 new players in order to create two teams that would have the proper number that we would need. Once we get the 8-9, then we move to an evaluation system to get the teams balanced.

- The team was an A team last year and this year they played down to a B league. So they dropped competition levels significantly during all this.
- Donald would take 15 girls and the 6 others would be moved to the other team. The girls would be split by evaluations.
- Nick: There are benefits to both sides. A and B teams haven't worked because of the natural things that happen to keep players from showing up- scheduling conflicts. At the older age groups, when you look at large numbers, we never even got close to fielding a team. We ended up needing to double roster in order to get the numbers for games.
- Daisha Leahy: Even at practice the kids are sitting out for 20/30 minutes just because of the drills that Donald runs. Daisha loves Donald, thinks he's an amazing coach. He works so hard. The parents are not behaving. They are yelling across the field screaming at Donald and demanding answers as to why their kids aren't playing. It has been hard to watch.
- Josh Reilly (Team Parent): I see all the challenges. Do we have to follow the guidelines when it comes to playing time? It was a common theme. Everyone was counting minutes and feeling bad if they played too much or not enough. Donald was communicating with Donald begging parents to have some patience and humility. Let's vote and see what the majority says. I see the benefits of both sides. It's a terrible situation but it has happened and we need to move forward. There is a need to move up and to let kids who are skilled see that harder competition.
- Tim: "I don't see how splitting the team into two doesn't accomplish everything." They get more playing/game time,

more practice time, more one on one time with coaches. It's hard to see why this is bad.

- Nick: For whatever reason (mostly numbers) it hasn't worked for the older levels. Repeated information about how kids at this age just are committed to too many other activities or social events. Then we get hit with "Why did you split the teams??"
- Sean McCormick: They used to be adversaries but they are all getting along so well now. From the social aspect, this would be a mistake. I don't see a world where you can fix that down the line when they get to high school. It comes down to a playing time issue. If you fix the playing time issue, you fix the problem.
- Joe Martins: This team would need more games than the other teams to ensure that the kids get the time they should.
- Jon- You can't have equal playing time, competition and a large group. You can't have all three.
- They are cheering each other on at the games even though they aren't playing.
- Chris Romano: The girls that don't get a lot of playing time are OK with that. They like the team that they are on and they are happy to contribute in whatever way they can. The word "vote" is intimidating. Maybe just get information and survey the team about what they want.
- 14 out of 22 team mates are represented at this meeting.
- Can this team get an assistant coach. More attention during practices and no one needs to sit during drills because there is another body to run another group of girls in a separate drill.

Next Steps:

- Look to have an assistant coach on the field. **Keep the girls together.**
- Nick will sit down with Donald soon. Talk about what was said. Adding friendly matches. Second tournament.