



**Softball New Brunswick Board Meeting
October 18, 2025 at The Fredericton Inn
8:30am ADT**

Attendance – Voting Members:

Scott Willis – President (Vote only if tie)
Hillary Pineau - Grassroots Coordinator
Ron Campbell - Provincial Umpire in Chief
Stephanie Picard - North Western Director
Paul Bedford - Fundy Director
France Bourque - South Eastern Director
Darleen Sobey - North Eastern Director
Craig Clarkson - Capital Western Director

Non-Voting:

Cameron Rogers - Executive Director
Megan Diercks - Technical Director

Vacant Positions:

Vice President

Non-Voting Observer

Absent - Voting Members:

Charlie Chiasson - Human Resource Coordinator
Matt Whipple - High Performance Coordinator
Josh Gordon - Adult Coordinator

1. Presidents Welcome

- a. Thanks to everyone for joining us
- b. Great HOF and Awards Banquet last night. Thanks to the staff for organizing and for everyone's help throughout the evening!
- c. Will try to get through the full agenda today; however, if we can't get through it all it will be pushed to the next meeting.

2. Land Acknowledgement

a. Darleen Sobey read the Land Acknowledgement

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

2. Upcoming Priorities



- a. Review our Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules & Regulation documents ahead of April
 - i. Should be minimal changes, a few recommendations from our consultant, Christine Powers-Tomsons that need to be discussed further.

3. 2026 Priorities

- a. Canadian Championship
- b. Male Ball
- c. Slo Pitch
- d. 100th Anniversary
- e. Pitching program expansion
- f. New Hire
- g. Office Space
- h. Future Selects
- i. Internal Handbook

4. Financial Update

- a. This time last year, we moved to a 15th month fiscal year temporarily and were projected to be at a loss of \$40,000 by year end. Updated projection is a deficit of approximately \$10,000.
- b. The budget line items have been updated to match the chart of accounts listed in Quickbooks so it is much easier to directly see how much money comes in and goes out in each category.
- c. Office Space
 - i. Sport NB will be moving offices, will be staying in Fredericton; however, currently looking for space. Their deadline to find a new space is March 2026.
 - ii. Will be attending a workshop during Sport NB Summit November 15, 2025 to discuss what PSO's need, budget, etc.
 - iii. Have had discussions with other sports as a backup in the event Sport NB does not come through.
 - iv. Will have an update for the next board meeting.
- d. Summer Students
 - i. With the landscape of the government, we are hopefully to receive a minimum of 2 student positions; however, we prefer to budget for 4 students with a busy year coming up.



5. Staffing Update

- a. Our current salary is not going to drive qualified employees from within or outside of the province. Trying to consider all options.
 - i. Potentially split the Performance coach position into two part time positions to fill specific areas of need. Not ideal, but would actually lead to savings of upward of \$10,000
- b. 3 priorities to fill as part of PPI program
 - i. High Performance Pitching Program
 - ii. Regional Pitching Program
 - iii. Future Selects Program

6. Season Recap

a. Reports

- i. Recommend doing the reports for April now while it's fresh in everyone's memory. To be submitted to Cameron by December 1, 2025.

b. North Western

- i. Had a lot of success with the Etoiles, Braves and Cyclones.
- ii. Need to speak with Eric Boutot for the orthodox league to see how things are going, interest for next year
- iii. Discussed expanding youth ball from outside of just St Leonard.

c. Fundy

- i. There is a lot of activity in the region. Overall, the season went well. No major issues.
- ii. Opportunity to host a few Provincials, which was nice for the region, and a chance to showcase the abilities.
- iii. Creating connections with two new groups; Belleisle and St. Martins Bay Bombers, who joined the John Jellison League.
- iv. Worked with a few associations to provide assistance on GNB funding opportunities for field maintenance and equipment



- v. Baseball is selling themselves very hard right now in the area, trying to entice girls to go to Baseball to have a better chance to compete at the 2029 Canada Games. Need to look at devising a marketing plan to sell the story and the advantage of our sport

d. South Eastern

- i. Overall it was a successful season. 3 clubs that are struggling with leadership, main priority at the moment for is assisting to keep things alive
- ii. Been spending time getting the region properly set up with a bank account, funding, etc.
- iii. Had a year end jamboree at the Dome for all clubs, was a success.
- iv. Issue brought forward was verbal abuse and bullying. Looking for more education on how to deal with these issues at the club level.
- v. Interest in hosting Men's Fastpitch Provincials in Bass River in 2026 to drive interest and fundraise for facility upgrades.

e. North Eastern

- i. Hosted two Provincial Championships this year that went well.
- ii. Pitching clinic with Vicky Leblanc this past spring, was very well received.
- iii. Was able to gather some contact information for various unregistered leagues across the province; will pass along to the staff.
- iv. A small committee started for the 100th anniversary celebration. Plans to meet in November.

f. Capital Western

- i. Lots of successes in the area, growth in participation and development across the board.
- ii. Numerous provincial championships, hosted and won by Capital Western teams as well as teams attending Eastern Canadians.
- iii. Regional director does not currently have a lot of contact with Slo Pitch leagues.



- iv. Capital Western needs recreational leagues set up (Similar to John Jellison League). Identify a few people to help support the generation of schedules.
 - 1. Discussion surrounding use of RAMP or GameChanger to coordinate game schedules

g. Social Media Pages

- i. Staff brought forward to the Regional Directors to inquire if there is interest in generating regional pages tied to the Softball NB social media account. To align branding, content, ability to cross post etc.
- ii. All Regional Directors would be in favour

7. Umpires

- a. Reviewed the 2025 Agreement.
- b. 141 umpires registered this year (19% increase from 2024). 75-80 are new officials
- c. Well within budget for the year up until Air Canada strikes with some unexpected costs for the 7 umpires that attended Canadian Championships.
- d. Big push for clinics hosted around the province this year. At least one was hosted in each region.
 - i. Priority on announcing dates early next year and pushing on social media
- e. Mentorship
 - i. U11 Jamboree was a major success
 - ii. Bob Stanton and Jeff Whipple were present and assisted at numerous tournaments
 - iii. For mentorship, there needs to be more follow through following the Jamboree to see them through the season so they have a full progression plan and goals
 - iv. Need to develop a list of mentors and submit to staff so they are covered for insurance.
- f. Change in the direction of where the program is going. Some key individuals stepping aside in the coming years. Succession planning will be crucial.



- i. List of qualified clinic instructors to be developed so staff can take the lead on scheduling clinics early in the new year.
- ii. Talk at Blue Convention about more individuals to take the Instructor/Evaluator Course to help build capacity
- iii. Expanding on individuals who had the opportunity to UIC a tournament/provincials.
- g. Scott noted that Ron needs to generate a group around him to support and have a firm plan and direction. Put people to task
- h. Expenses
 - i. Regular reporting of the budget and expenses did not happen.
 - ii. Learning curve with the new bank and payment process.
 - iii. There is the ability to pay fees directly through RAMP. Something to look at down the road
- i. GNB Grant information needs to be shared on where the funding was spent so the report can be submitted in a timely manner
- j. Officials doing unregistered leagues
 - i. Need umpires well aware what leagues are registered/unregistered so they know if they are covered under the Softball NB insurance policy
 - ii. If the league isn't registered, how do we connect with them to see if we can get them on board.
- k. Some confusion surrounding Travel Expenses, need better communication to officials and hosts so they know what they are responsible for.
- l. Discussion around a process for selecting Canadian Championship assignments each year. Finally getting to the point to be able to have people around him to create sub committees to support and do these things.
- m. Concerns brought forward around sending so many Umpire to Slo Pitch Canadian Championships when we do not have a strong presence with our Slo Pitch programs.



- i. Were approached by Softball Canada to help support the event. Hoping that those officials sent will now put more into giving back to the program.
- n. Better communication needed to membership at the start of the season to send the most recent rules, etc.
- o. Better compliance of receiving umpire reports at the completion of the tournaments with the reports being tied to money this year.
- p. **Motion to pay umpires association the sum of \$6,642 for the 2025 season on the condition of an annual growth and development review.**
 - i. First: Paul Bedford
 - Second: France Bourque

Carried: 6-0-1

8. Provincial Championships

- a. Reviewed the size and successes/shortfalls of each championship
 - i. Overall very successful summer of tournaments.
- b. 11 tournament teams are very difficult when it comes to seeding and random draw for the schedule
- c. Staff is starting the process now to inquire if there are any groups interested in hosting provincial championships in 2026. Will assist in the development of the calendar of events, and avoid weekends (Ex. YQM festival) that are major conflicts
- d. Staff will be reviewing rules and regulations this fall
- e. Coaches/Managers meetings need to be communicated as mandatory. Consider putting a fine on a team if they do not attend the Coaches/Managers meeting.
- f. Question brought forward of possibly implementing a reduced registration rate for host teams.

9. Eastern Canadians

- a. U15 Eastern Canadians, 1 NB coach ejection
- b. 2026
 - i. Scheduled to host U13 Boys and U17 Girls August 20-23, 2026
 - ii. Will be taking applications for hosts in coming months



10. Gender Equity Program

- a. Canadian Women in Sport has a gender equity grant of \$1,000 for groups that want to complete this. We applied to be a part of it and were accepted to participate
- b. Strong on the athlete side of things for females; however, struggling with female officials and coaches.
 - i. Megan to take the lead on officials side and Cameron to coordinate coaches side
- c. Hoping that the processes developed and discussed can be used on the Male athlete side moving forward.

11. High Performance Program Review

- a. **NB Selects**
 - i. U13 Future Selects
 1. Cameron ran 7 sessions, impressed at the turnout and effort
 2. Parents were engaged and eager to have the program get off the ground
 - ii. U15 Girls and U17 Girls
 1. Good attendance and regional representation
 2. Winter Training teams to be selected early November to begin training in the new year.
 - iii. U19 Women's
 1. Opened tryout registration; however, did not have enough to run tryouts at this time
 2. Confident they can get the team off the ground, and have a coach interested to lead the program.
 - iv. U15 Boys
 1. Male ball committee eager to get a U15 boys team off the ground.
 2. If the program can get off the ground, Eastern Canadian may be a better fit to attend for 2026 rather than Canadian Championships.
 3. Ontario has noted that so long as Softball Canada is in support, they would consider supplying NB with a pitcher to assist the program



4. This age group is 2029 Canada Games

v. Coaching Staff

1. Coach interviews were completed for U15 and U17 girls. Had an external member sit on the hiring committee (Scott Searle), along with Cameron Rogers and Charlie Chiasson.

2. U15 Girls

a. **Motion to accept Jeremy Drummond as Head Coach of the 2026 U15 NB Selects with Jeremy Tracy, and Luc Bourque as Assistant Coaches.**

i. First: Ron Campbell Second: Stephanie Picard
Carried: 5-2-0

3. U17 Girls

a. **Motion to accept Rheal Lesvesque as Head Coach of the 2026 U17 NB Selects with Ricky LeBlanc, Monica Bourque, and Maddy LeBlanc as Assistant Coaches .**

i. First: Hillary Pineau Second: France Bourque
Carried: 7-0-0

vi. The board directed that a letter of offer must be provided to coaching staff to be signed to acknowledge they will conform to Softball NB guidelines, policies, stipulations put forward.

vii. Brief conversation held on developing a defined playing up policy for NB Selects down the road.

b. **Canada Games**

i. Very successful tournaments

1. Historic 5th place finish for the men's program
2. Tied second highest placement (4th) since 1989 for the women's program

ii. Some things under the hood for improvement



1. Gaps when it comes to select skill development (Ex. Small ball, leading off the base, bunting, game IQ, etc.)
2. Teams struggled to execute when defense was tested
3. Both programs struggled to develop a Yearly Training Plan (YTP)
 - a. Staff recommended that Canada Games programs going forward are run very similarly as the NB Selects program when it comes to scheduling, budgeting, etc. This aligns with what other PSO's are doing, and what our government consultant recommends.

iii. Discussion around the networking opportunity and need for additional support at Canada Games. Recommendation that going forward, it is built into budgets to send a Softball NB representative to the games.

12. Male Ball Committee

- a. First committee meeting held on September 29, 2025 via zoom. 17 individuals expressed interest and were invited to attend, had 8 engaged attendees.
- b. Got a sense of what programs and teams are expected for 2026
- c. Reviewed history and past few year registration numbers
- d. Need to find a true leader in the membership to lead this initiative
 - i. Mark Young is working to generate a U15 Boys league in the Capital West region
- e. Need to go after youth at the U9 level to get them playing and fall in love with the game.
- f. Richard Jones is on board to develop a social media campaign targeting the male game.

13. Slo Pitch Committee

- a. Had a conversation with Denis Leger in Moncton
 - i. Discussed what he would like to see for the program. People are not happy with SPN right now and there is a lot of interest in partnering with Softball NB.
 - ii. Key draws to focus on: better prizes for events, a strong, reasonable and clear set of rules to be established for Softball NB events.
 - iii. Get dates out early



- iv. Safety: Majority of people are now wearing pitchers masks, if Softball NB was to provide batting helmets, they don't foresee a lot of pushback from athletes.
- v. Some tournaments provide the pre-approved bats to avoid having to bat testing

b. A couple of groups have inquired about putting teams in for Canadian Championships

- i. Need to put out a call for expression of interest. If enough interest, may need to host a qualifier

c. The motion for the Softball Canada AGM to remove rule Article 3, Part 1.2.c.iv.e regarding allowing 5 athletes to be released was brought forward to the other Atlantic provinces for consideration, and the consensus was rather than eliminating it all together, to recommend reducing to 2.

- i. This is what was submitted to Softball Canada. Board was in support of this change

14. 100 Year Anniversary

- a. Beginning to plan the celebrations. Tie in this to the 2026 U15 Girls Canadian Fast Pitch Championship
- b. Need someone to chair this initiative and develop a merchandise line, liaise with regions in their planning
- c. Dan Mersereau is willing to take lead in the social media posting throughout the year promoting the history of the organization
- d. Suggestion to set up a tent with memorabilia at Canadian Championship
- e. South Eastern region plans on doing their celebration during the Moncton Classic
- f. The North Eastern region has a committee struck and wants to do a memorabilia display. Was originally thinking of the end of August, but may want to do it earlier, prior to Canadian Championships.

15. 2026 U15 Women's Canadian Championships

- a. July 28th to August 2nd, biggest tournament we've run and hoping to make it the best
- b. Have started planning and held a few committee meetings.

16. Individual Registration



- a. Overall, just shy of \$50,000 in income between players, coaches, officials, etc.
- b. Will do a few review in Winter Board Meeting after staff have had opportunity to pull the budget together
- c. Softball Canada will likely be implementing an individual fee in the next 2 years.
- d. Late Fee: Does the Board feel that we should be implementing this to reduce time and efforts by staff chasing individuals to complete registration.

17. Minor Rules

- a. Pace of Play: need to work to speed this up across teams
- b. U9
 - i. A fielder's mask is currently required for all infielders; however, U11 is only required for the pitcher.
 - ii. Is it creating a barrier **forcing** a player to purchase a mask? Is this deterring boys away from the game?
 - iii. Scoring system to be reviewed
- c. U11
 - i. Open inning and overthrow rules to be reviewed for clarity

18. 2026 Master Calendar

- a. Bring forward any potential conflicts for dates
- b. Once any tournaments, 100 year plans are solidified, let the office know

19. Staff Review

- a. Cameron Rogers and Megan Diercks left the meeting at 3:48pm

20. New Business

- a. Regional Player Transfers
 - i. Discussion brought forward that there is interest from members in bringing in a process to facilitate association transfers within a region
 - ii. Won't be able to implement it for 2026; however, we need to start building a framework for 2027. Look at different options from other PSO's within NB or



Softball PSO's across the country. Board is in favour of exploring the option and reviewing what other groups are doing currently

b. Handbook

- i. Request for a search function on the Handbook so people can easily find what they are looking for

c. Vulnerable Sector Check

- i. France Bourque inquired if Board members should be submitting a VSC/CRC. As they are working with vulnerable populations at times during their role
- ii. A good recommendation for their protection and should be submitted as part of onboarding.

21. Next meeting

- a. December 9th, at 7:00pm, via Zoom

22. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn

- i. First: Paul Bedford