



Greeley Sports Boosters

Horace Greeley High School
Chappaqua, New York

Minutes

September 15, 2021, 9:00am

Zoom

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Julie Balber - yes

Bonnie Berg – yes

Jennifer Bergin - yes

Missy Cohen - yes

Jeff Dorst - yes

Elyse Falk - yes

Amanda Goodstadt - yes

Samantha Potack - yes

Stacey Reynolds - no

Mike Rose - yes

CCSD

Geoff Curtis, Athletic Director - yes

Kristen McGurl, Assistant Athletic Director - no

Jane Shepardson, Board of Education Representative - yes

Committee Chairs, Team Liaisons, Members & Guests

Laura Brail, Ivy Braun, Alex Goldstein, Mike Hutchings, Kristen Mancini, Josh Mikesell, Joanna Nadel, Heather Wohl, Karen Yarasavage

WELCOME

- The June 2021 minutes were approved.

BOOSTERS BUSINESS

- **Welcome & Meet Geoff Curtis** Jennifer welcomed our new Athletic Director on behalf of the Boosters Board. Our new Assistant Athletic Director is Kristen McGurl.
- **New GSB Board member introductions** Jennifer introduced new Board members and recognized Board members who are taking on additional responsibilities. She introduced Alex Goldstein (helping Jeff with CTO responsibilities), Heather Wohl (working with Mike Rose on eBlasts), Kristen Mancini and Danae Richards (Chairpersons for Senior Athletes Dinner), Suzanne Lodge and Joanna Nadel (in charge of community events) and Josh Mikesell (whose new role will be discussed later during this meeting). Board members taking on new roles include Mike Rose (Executive Vice President), Julie Balber (in charge of marketing) and Missy Cohen (Treasurer). This is our largest board ever!
- **Boosters 2021-2022 Plan** We conducted a Board survey at the end of last year. There were lots of summer meetings and we collected input on where we are and where we should go. Last year, we launched our Training & Development Fund (the “TDF”) and awarded three grants; developed our team services efforts; and went almost completely online for merchandise sales. In addition, we increased our number of lifetime members. This year, we want to focus on getting the TDF to be self-sustaining by putting more effort into promoting it. We will focus on community events since we’re now able to do them. Julie is already doing lots of work on marketing, including getting new signage for our fields. Recognition will also be a focus. There is real interest in quickly communicating regarding our athletes’ success, a subject that arose from last year’s Senior Athletes Dinner. We want recognition for athletes, coaches, and our own membership. To that end, we will put names of all our members up on our website for recognition but also so there will be a way for people to see if they have paid their dues.
- **Recognition for Athletes & Coaches**
 - **Coaches** Jennifer indicated that there was lots of support for recognizing excellent coaching from the Board survey. She has discussed this with Geoff and the coaches. For the coaches, it’s nice to get recognition from the community. As parents, we want to help articulate the qualities we’re seeking in our coaches. Jennifer is going to work on this project with Amanda. Anyone else who is interested should reach out to Jennifer. Some values we’d like to promote include acting with integrity both on and off the field, investing in athlete skill development, attending community events, and building team spirit. There was a motion to create an Excellence in Coaching award to be given each spring to recognize the efforts of a coach. The motion was seconded, the Board voted, and the motion was approved.
 - **Athletes** The Board is interested in creating a position called Director - Athletic Achievement. This comes from some concerns raised in connection with the Senior Athlete Dinner. Last year, we didn’t have data to appropriately recognize all the seniors. Josh Mikesell has volunteered to work on this project. We want to identify all the athletes who are named team captains, players of the week, all-section, all-league and who

win other awards and/or commit to playing in college. Geoff and the Athletic Department will work on this, and Boosters will support their efforts, including by promoting achievements using social media. We started this week by promoting a LoHud player of the week for girls' soccer. Geoff mentioned supporting athletes for the Con Ed award. He said that this is a challenging project for any athletic department because seasons end at different times and there can be slight differences in titles for awards. Our goal should be finding every single achievement, but the group needs to decide how far we go with recognition (e.g., do we include honorable mentions?). We need to plan our recognition events late enough that we can have all the relevant information. It's easy to miss things because social media moves so fast. Josh introduced himself and said all that Geoff said aligns closely with what Boosters has previously discussed. A motion was made to create the position of Director – Athletic Achievement. The motion was seconded, the Board voted, and the motion was approved.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE (*Geoff*)

- **Fall Athletic Program** Since starting on July 1, the day-to-day running of the department has been very dynamic. He thanked Jennifer, Jeff, Julie, and everyone else attending today's meeting for all their help and hard work. He has been able to hit the ground running and continues to learn about how Chappaqua does things. Geoff gave a special shout-out to the school nurses who have been incredibly helpful with handling vaccination requirements. So far, he is most proud of how smoothly things are going despite challenges with transportation, Covid issues and other items that have arisen. He is proud of hiring new staff, including Kristen McGurl as Assistant Athletic Director and Rachel Marino, who is taking over the athletic coordinator position. He also hired a new trainer. There have already been several tricky situations he has managed, including a last-minute resignation from the cheer coach (due to a new job). The resignation left the cheer program in a precarious spot, but Geoff was able to secure two new coaches. In addition, the football opponent for this Friday night (one of only two home games) had to quarantine, but Geoff was able to scramble and found a new opponent (Goshen) willing to travel to us. Our fitness center will open, and we have done a great deal of collaborative work with buildings and grounds, including handling water that was in both gyms due to the hurricane. Our facilities crew was able to eliminate the water and we were able to use the gyms the same day. Geoff has had terrific support from Diane Lugo, the BOE and district administration. Jennifer mentioned how great it is to see teams supporting one another and attending one another's games. Geoff was super excited that we don't need to limit attendance to immediate family as was initially indicated.

DIRECTORS' UPDATES

- **Community Events** (*Joanna*) Excited to bring the community together and work on a kick-off event recognizing Boosters. The event was originally scheduled for this Friday

but was moved to be in tandem with Homecoming. Suzanne is taking the lead and we are planning a Homecoming Team Tailgate using the parking lot adjacent to the softball field. It will be held on October 1 from 5-7pm. The plan is to give each team a separate area to gather, all within a defined space, as well as to have a Boosters area where we'll give out pom-poms and face paint to representatives from each team, sell our own merchandise, and distribute lanyards. We will reach out to the community so they can come, hang out, meet Geoff, and have fun. Jennifer encouraged Joanna to do a Sign-up Genius to communicate with the rest of the Board and get volunteers. Julie will create a flyer and Elyse will help connect Joanna and Suzanne with the teams. Bonnie hopes to have a raffle to generate some funds for the TDF. Elyse asked whether this will be announced on SportsYou. Joanna said yes, as well as in Greeley Mail, other school newsletters, the town newsletter, etc. Laura mentioned that in the past, when able to do big events like this, other school groups were able to have tables outside so students other than athletes got involved. She suggested reaching out to other organizations (e.g., one year the theater students did tattoos and face painting, the PTA has sold merchandise). This can be an opportunity to bring a lot of other students and community members out to our fields.

- **Marketing** (*Julie*) Julie met with all the different committees over the summer and developed plans for how to support everyone. For Membership, we updated the membership forms for the PTA welcome back packets, ordered new magnets and started working on an email about the top 10 reasons to join Boosters. We discussed creating a visual to show membership on each team and to emphasize the goal of getting to 100%. We are also adding names of all members (not just lifetime members) to our website. For Team Services, we are updating our website this week. For Fundraising, Julie has spoken with Bonnie and is working on ideas for creating an email campaign, as well as other ways to generate funds for the TDF, including trying to promote the apparel store once the team stores close. For Community Events, Julie will create a flyer for the tailgate. In addition, she is thinking about Boosters t-shirts for Board members to show a unified presence at events. Finally, she is working with the district as we need to replace all signage on fences and in the stadium. Jennifer, Geoff, and Julie met and finalized a design for the concept. She is hoping to get everything done and approved in time for homecoming. The school is producing lanyards to distribute to students. They will have a section that can be personalized with a number or nickname. The Athletic Department paid for the lanyards, and they will be distributed for free. They have ordered 1,000, intending to distribute them throughout the year to all students, not just athletes.
- **Membership** (*Samantha*) Samantha circulated membership information prior to the meeting. We are back on track for a more regular year. Up to 235 member families (when we ended last year with 265). We have also brought in ten new lifetime members, bringing us to a total of 84 lifetime member families. We continue to send emails (including one for ninth-grade families and one to all the fall teams) and try to continue building membership. Volleyball has been amazing! They are well-above the threshold for grants. We are continuing to send out magnets.

- **Team Services** (*Elyse*) Elyse is working with Samantha to push membership when teams are close to the 75% level. She raised questions about whether 75% should be a team threshold versus a program threshold and what happens when a freshmen or JV team crosses 75%, but their varsity counterpart doesn't. Jennifer indicated that thus far, only varsity teams have applied for grants, but both she and Geoff said they hope we can help parents of younger students understand that any help for their sport is an investment in the program overall. Jennifer thinks the biggest issue this year is getting lots of applications and not having sufficient funds. Elyse mentioned that things have been great with team services generally. The Rainbow Lettering stores went well. She is now turning her attention to winter sports and trying to get contacts ready. Diane is working on getting Elyse a list of coaches. Finally, Elyse said that Dawn Greenberg reached out to her regarding the Chappaqua Children's Book Festival. They have money put aside to give to Boosters if we send out a message and get some teams involved in volunteering on October 2. She will speak further with Jennifer about this.
- **Fundraising** (*Bonnie*) We are excited to have received a \$1,000 family donation in August for the TDF! We have moved the qualifying membership threshold to 75% from 60%. Bonnie gave a brief update about grants: the basketball shooting machine has been ordered. Diane is working with the new cheer coaches to get their grant (choreography camp some time in November) executed. We continue to sell magnets online and sold 35 this month (\$350), for a new record!
- **Financials** (*Missy*) Missy circulated financials prior to the meeting. We have brought in \$16,000 over the past six weeks, whereas last year, we brought in \$27,000 over the course of the entire year, so our pace has picked up. Working on finalizing this year's budget.
- **Technology** (*Jeff*) Social media is going very well. He is coordinating with Elyse. Several teams are actively using social media at every event. When parents ask why Boosters isn't covering their students' teams, Jeff encourages those parents to get involved. SportsYou was helpful in distributing messages for the Rainbow Lettering team stores. Those communications were well-received (in terms of number of people reading them).
- **Concessions** (*Jeff*) The most under-utilized asset in/around athletics is our concession stand. It gets used maybe two or three days each year by the band, which is in charge at home football games. This presents a poor image for visiting teams and a lost opportunity for revenue. He wants to assess what's there, what can be done and what's missing and he wants to develop a plan for how this can be better used so that the district, Boosters, and teams all benefit. He has reached out to Geoff and Joe Gramando. This facility is a district facility so we can use it if we choose to do so throughout the seasons.

GENERAL COMMENTS, QUESTIONS & NEW BUSINESS

- **2021-2022 Meeting Schedule & Format** When this year's meetings were originally scheduled, we weren't allowed to meet in-person. The district is now allowing in-person meetings. It was difficult to conduct the June meeting partially over Zoom and partially in-person. Options for this year are all Zoom, all in-person (so long as vaccinated or have proof of a negative Covid test), or mornings using one format and evenings using the other. If you have an opinion, reach out to Jennifer.
- Jane is getting together with Geoff to talk. Geoff is doing an unbelievable job, working around the clock and he is super invested in the department. Jane thanked him for his efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:14am.