

UCSSL MEETING MINUTES January 15, 2026

Commissioner called the meeting to order at 7 pm. All in attendance introduced themselves and a sign in sheet was circulated.

New Team Names/Sponsors?

Treasurer's Report

Awards Banquet 2026

Attendance improved over 2025 but still many teams had no representation at all.

2026 Registrations

Forfeits 2026

- Our biggest problem for the 2025 season. We had a total of 25 forfeits which was nearly 10% of our regular season.
- 10 of our 21 teams had at least one forfeit while 8 of those 10 had 2 or more forfeits.
- At least 2 of these forfeits were intentional as a protest to the division makeup and schedule set up by officers. This was a low point in sportsmanship for our league.
- Other forfeit reasons: "part time players", Sponsors paying entire fee without player contributions.
- We still pay our umpires for same-day forfeits regardless of when they are called in.
- We have made it far too easy to forfeit.

There was discussion about raising the lower roster threshold (now 14) to a high number so mid-season (post-May 15) roster additions can be made in order to reduce forfeits. That rule change will be entertained at a subsequent meeting.

Bat Testing

One preseason testing for previously untested bats. Testing at fields. Testing mid-June. Officer Rich Gaul volunteered to hold additional testing sessions should they become necessary.

Uniform Shirts

Still mandatory with UCSSL logo. Color should be consistent for all players on the field. ORDER NOW so there are no issues when Opening Day arrives.

Rules and Enforcement

Once our 2026 rules have been established is it the desire of managers that they be strictly enforced or shall the officers have the discretion to enforce rules and grant waivers from them as they see fit? This will include (but not be limited to) enforcement of the team switch rule, wearing a uniform, May 15 roster addition deadline rule and the policy that the league will not reschedule games unless there are weather conditions dictating such or in the unfortunate event such as the death of a teammate or family member of a team member. Once again, managers **UNANIMOUSLY** voted for **ALL** rules to be strictly enforced (That vote was taken TWICE for emphasis).

Division Alignment and Schedules

Managers have unanimously granted officers the authority to create divisions and set the schedule based upon our perception of relative teams' strengths, relying mostly on previous year's results.

50s

Two teams have left leaving us with ten so there cannot be three separate divisions.

We do have a competitive disparity from top to bottom but not as pronounced as 60s

We will be moving to a 5A/5B format

A: **Douglas VW, Deegan Roofing, Phenomenal Boyz, Angry Joe's, Rocky's B & G**

B: **Terawulf, Thirsty Turtle, Dowling's Tavern, Echo Tap & Grille, Car Revolution**

Schedule format: 4X inside division and 1X outside for 21 games

60's

No doubt a greater competitive disparity in the 60s

- In 2024 the 4 A teams were 28-0 vs B Teams even with the 5-run spot. Average run margin: 12.5 runs after the 5-run spot.
- Swan Hotel was undefeated in regular season and lost one playoff game. We were hopeful they could split into two teams but evidently, they could not find enough players to do so. This would have allowed for three 4-team divisions. **Swan Hotel** Manager Steve Barba offered that the team would prefer to stay together, play with a larger roster and employ the "Manager's Dream" lineup when necessary.
- There was concern that we could lose one of our A teams **Linwood II** if they remained in an A Division. We simply could not have a 3A/7B format because that could have led to losing one or more additional A teams. Therefore, we will not repeat with a 4A/7B format.
- We will have one 11-team division where every team will play each other twice. There will be one bumper so similarly competitive teams will have an additional game. The last place team will not have a bumper. 21 game season totals.
- The top 4 finishers will play in an A playoff and the bottom 7 teams will play in a B playoff.
- There will only be 4 additional matchups between last year's A and B teams, and last year's B teams will still have the majority (62%) of their games against last year's B teams.
- The bottom 7 teams will still compete in their own playoff bracket.
- There was concern raised by managers of Kenilworth VFW, NJ Gov. Services, and Yogi's Boys that this would cause an automatic 4 additional losses for last year's B teams. Also, concerns were raised that with only one division, there would no longer be a regular season B Champion. One remedy to the latter was to provide this award to the 5th place finisher and 1st seed in the B Playoffs
- Officers are proposing new "special accommodations" for 2026: Last year's A teams will provide last year's B teams with either 10 runs OR 5 runs and an extra fielder. Had these special accommodations been in effect in 2024 it would have only changed the results of 2 out of the 28 games!

- When Swan Hotel plays any of last year's A teams, they will provide either 5 runs OR and extra fielder.
- Criteria: Average margin of victory A over B was 12.25 runs AFTER the 5-run spot Swans average margin of victory over other A teams was nearly 9 runs.
- Earnest discussion was held on the new special accommodations. Other proposals were considered and ultimately a majority vote approved a 7-run AND extra defensive player when last year's A Teams play last year's B teams. Last year's A teams unanimously approved the 5-run OR extra defensive player when Swan Hotel plays last year's A teams.
- A vote was taken that approved special accommodations continuing into the playoffs in the 60s Division

Winter Meeting Schedule

March 26 Rules or Field selection Submit Proposed Rule changes in writing by April 9

1 - 1 and 1 count would be 5/11 1 week earlier than last year

2 - We play each team twice with 2 bumpers games we argued why not true bumpers game Marty then said ok. We won't call it bumper they changed the name will be changed to supplemental games.

3 – First game is Monday April 20th

4 - We will use 5 fields as of now Linden, Rahway and maybe Scotch Plains.

5 - The league will pick the fields this year which i think is BS, we hand in a field priority they rotate.

6 - Team fee is \$1600 Rocky's is giving us \$1000 we need to come up with \$600.

7 - March 4th meeting we will go over rule proposals, if you feel a rule needs changing then send them to me i will update my email. I already sent for few proposed changes.

8 - April 15th meeting we will have fields and schedule.

9 - Banquet had 100 people 2026 banquet is October 2nd 2026.

10 – Should we should order shirts or are the shirts from last year enough.

Field Selection: The 50's will require 4 fields and the 60's 5 fields. We are still working on securing fields, but it appears we will have 3 fields in Linden and fields at Rahway River Park and Warinanco. It is unlikely that we will get the Scotch Plains fields (Jerseyland and Brookside), TBD. The Officers will make the field selections based on manager field preferences and late game preferences (possibility of 8PM, late starts at Tremley). We are looking for field agents to assess field conditions on game day for county fields, so playability can be determined by 4pm game day.

Rules and Enforcement Once our 2026 rules have been established is it the desire of managers that they be strictly enforced or shall the officers have the discretion to enforce rules and grant waivers from them as they see fit? This will include (but not be limited to) enforcement of the team switch rule, wearing a uniform, May 15 roster addition deadline rule and the policy that the league

will not reschedule games unless there are weather conditions dictating such or in the unfortunate event such as the death of a teammate or family member of a team member. Once again, managers UNANIMOUSLY voted for ALL rules to be strictly enforced. 1-1 Count (with NO courtesy foul): will begin on April 20th (opening day) and continue through the week of May 4th games. Beginning Monday May 11, league will resume 0-0 count. Division Alignment and Schedules Managers have unanimously granted officers the authority to create divisions and set the schedule based upon our perception of relative teams' strengths, relying mostly on previous year's results. Bumper games are now called "Supplemental" games.

60s Division • There will be one 10-team division where each teams plays the other 2X (18) with two rounds of supplemental games: one at the half-way point and the other at the conclusion of the regular season schedule. The Halfway supplemental games will be as follows: 1st v 3rd, 2nd v. 4th, 5th v. 7th, 6 v. 8th, and 9th v. 10th. The second bumper will be as follows: 1st v. 2nd, 3rd, v. 4th, 5th v. 6th, 7th v. 8th, and 9th v. 10th.

Playoffs: The top 4 finishers will compete in the A playoffs commencing in the semifinals. The bottom 6 finishers will compete in the B playoffs where the 5th and 6th finishers will receive first round byes. 7th will play 10th and 8th will play 9th in a play-in series. The lowest (worst) remaining seed will play the 5th place team and the highest remaining sed (best) will play the 6th place team in the semifinal series.

Special Accommodations: For 2026

Four Levels:

1) Swan Hotel will provide Linwood Boyz 5 runs OR an extra fielder.

2) Swan Hotel and Linwood Boyz will provide AJ Jersey and Deegan Roofing 5 runs OR an extra fielder

3) Swan Hotel and Linwood Boys will provide Awnings, Yogi's Boys, Kenilworth VFW, Angry Joe's, Debellis, and Rocky's 7 runs and an extra fielder.

4) Deegan Roofing and AJ Jersey will provide Awnings, Yogi's Boys, Kenilworth VFW, Angry Joe's, Debellis, and Rocky's 5 runs OR an extra fielder.