

Fundraising/Promotions Year-End Report – September 2021

Peterborough City Soccer Association

It's been 21 months since the last Fundraising/Communications AGM report in December 2019.

Communications/Promotions

Early in 2020, I worked with a small group of board members and other volunteers to create a community engagement process about club member ideas for the future of our club. You may recall an online survey and an early March weekend of pizza, donut, and coffee-infused dialogue at the Spiplex. Participation was modest and good dialogue was had. We were working on a summary report to share with everyone. Then COVID-19 hit...

When the global pandemic was declared in March 2020 and soccer operations shut down, I supported the board to think through communications as we navigated a local, regional, provincial, and national landscape that was constantly changing, often with conflicting messaging between jurisdictions (e.g. health unit, Ontario Soccer, Provincial Government, different leagues, etc.)

Priority was communication with members and friends of PCSA. The first wave of communications was temporary cancellation notices in late March. In late May a letter from the President was issued informing players and families about possible partial refunds and/or shortened season. In July, another letter was issued cancelling the season and explaining the refund process. Other formal correspondence also occurred during this time (e.g. with Academy players and families).

By August 2020, the board decided that a newsletter would be a good way to keep players and families informed of the latest developments. In August a rudimentary newsletter was issued, followed by the club's first MailChimp newsletter in November 2020 with much positive feedback. MailChimp is user-friendly and allows easy hyperlinking to the club's website – the club's information hub. This was followed up with newsletters in June 2021 (re-opening), July, August, and September.

It should be noted that a large amount of informal communications with players and families has continued long before, and long after formal correspondence – mostly fielded by the club President, Registrar, Administrator, and Director of Coaching.

In addition to Mail Chimp, the club's website, Facebook, and Instagram pages were used to help spread the word about formal correspondence. Facebook is the most used social media platform with 292 followers and Facebook Messenger being used regularly to field player and parent/guardian inquiries.

Play On, Play Safe, Play Smart

Navigating the complicated landscape of re-opening was shared by all local soccer clubs. In September 2020, a YouTube video titled "Play On, Play Safe, Play Smart" was released by local soccer clubs "...who have been working to implement and understand Ontario Soccer's Return to Play Guide so that organized soccer can be played safely again." Specifically, it was a partnership between the Mixed Indoor Soccer League, Peterborough City Soccer Association, Peterborough Men's Over 35 Soccer League, Kawartha Senior Soccer League, Peterborough Women's Soccer League, Peterborough Youth Soccer Club, Peterborough Youth Indoor Soccer Club. and local referees. There was a joint media release and event at Eastgate.

Link to video: <https://youtu.be/fLgAq3j297E>

Peterborough Examiner story: <https://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/sports/peterborough-region/2020/09/03/new-peterborough-video-puts-focus-on-safe-soccer-during-pandemic.html>

Fundraising

Grants

Luckily for PCSA players and families, governments and funders recognized early on the negative economic impacts of COVID-19 restrictions for citizens, families, and non-profit organizations. Many governments and funders launched operations-specific funding opportunities (unheard of for non-profit organizations...where one-time projects are usually what is funded). Many grant opportunities were explored, and applications were made to the Jumpstart Sport Relief Fund (successful!) and the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Community-Building Fund – Operating Stream (application still pending).

This funding helps offset registration costs for players and families in a time where economic and other stressors are high...with the goal of getting everyone back on the pitch as soon, and as safely as possible.

Sponsorships

Individual team sponsorships continued as normal although there is no central repository of who is sponsoring who, and for what. Better coordination of team and club sponsorship is a possible area of improvement for the future. A few club-level sponsorships were discussed with potential sponsors...but nothing concrete yet.

Respectfully submitted by:

Todd Barr, Director of Fundraising/Promotions

September 12, 2021