



2023 Strategic Plan

Adopted By the
Manistee Recreation Association Board
February 20th, 2023



Prepared for the Manistee Recreation Association

2023 Board Members:

President – Kenny Kott

Treasurer – Cindy Lundberg

Secretary – Eric Ware

Member – Matt Kieffer

Member – Mitch Deisch

MRA Staff:

Dursa Marshall, Executive Director

Ashley Simpson, Program Manager

Table of Contents	
Mission & Vision Statements.....	3
Core Values.....	3
Process Methodology	4
Survey Results	5
SWOT Analysis.....	6
Organizational Chart	7
Strategies and Implementation.....	8
Strategy Themes	8
Strategy Tables.....	9
Evaluation Framework	15
Plan Adoption Certification.....	16

Prepared by Networks Northwest



Mission Statement

The Manistee Recreation Association (MRA) is dedicated as the primary provider of recreational services to the communities of the Greater Manistee Region. Our mission is to provide opportunities for team building while fostering individual growth, supporting families, and promoting healthy lifestyles. Through our actions and core values, the MRA strives to continuously maintain trust with our community.

Vision Statement

To continue to be the trusted leader in recreation programming in the Manistee Region, delivering quality physical activity while promoting enjoyment and building community.

Core Values

- Community
- Growth
- Education
- Stability
- Health
- Family
- Fun & Enjoyment
- Trust

Organization Summary

Established in 1942, the Manistee Recreation Association is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, dedicated to providing recreational activities and sports programming for the Greater Manistee Area. The organization is supported through funding by community partners including the City of Manistee, and the Townships of Brown, Filer, Manistee, Bear Lake and Onekama, area business sponsors and program registration fees. Community is a core value of the MRA and preparation of this “Strategic Plan” weighed heavily on the input achieved through community engagement efforts, in order to effectively shape the directives of the organization to align with those desired by the members of the community.

Process Methodology

Strategic direction was initiated through community engagement and molded into the Strategy presented within this plan through the guidance of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director and Staff. The process included the following steps.

1. Issuance of a community survey marketed and directed at MRA participants, guardians and parents of participants and the community at large. (*Survey & Results in Appendix A*)
2. Direct community engagement at recreation program game and activity days. Flyer's promoting the survey were handed out to parents and informal discussion of levels of support or concerns that need to be addressed concerning the organization were had as opportunity arose. Attended program activities included spring soccer, tennis camp, t-ball, machine pitch, little league and fall soccer.
3. Talled survey results and shared with MRA Staff and Board Members.
4. Strategic Planning Meeting #1: MRA Board Members and Staff were provided an introductory question sheet electronically prior to the meeting. The three questions provided answers which directed the establishment of themes through discussion to guide Mission and Vision statement development. The second half of the meeting focused on performing a SWOT Analysis to determine Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.
5. Strategic Planning Meeting #2: MRA Board Members and Staff were provided a draft document outlining a Mission and Vision Statement, and accompanying list of draft goals. Review, comments and edits were performed to all written materials.
6. Draft document was prepared and distributed to MRA Board Members and Staff.
7. Strategic Planning Meeting #3: MRA Board Members and Staff prioritized goals, determined implementation timelines and assigned responsible parties.
8. Strategic Plan Final Draft reviewed by MRA Board Members and Staff.
9. Strategic Plan formally adopted by MRA Board on February 20th, 2023.



Take Our Survey

The Manistee Recreation Association is interested in your input!

Information gathered through this Survey will guide the MRA Board as they develop their strategic plan, to update their vision and mission, in order to best serve our communities.

Please scan the QR code or enter the link at the bottom of the page to take the survey.



https://networksnorthwest.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5gNxHMKVKN10g2gu

Survey Flyer Handed Out at MRA Program Events

Survey Results

The survey provides direct input from the community with the following resulting information.

- 233 responses were obtained through the survey. This is a statistically sound representation of the community participants in MRA recreational activities and programs.
- The largest percentage of respondents were from the City of Manistee at 39% with Manistee and Filer Townships combining for 26%. The remaining respondents were spread throughout the remaining communities with participation lacking from Arcadia, Cleon and Marilla Townships.
- The vast majority of respondents at 68% were 25-54 years old, with 82% of total respondents identifying as a parent or guardian.
- Youth Soccer (Spring & Fall), Basketball, T-Ball & Machine Pitch, Kid Swim (winter), Club Soccer (Spring & Fall), Flag Football, Little League and Tennis led the activities identified as having youth enrolled within by respondents.
- 68.18% of respondents were extremely or somewhat satisfied with MR Youth League Selection, with an additional 28.88% of respondents neutral on the topic.
- Participation levels for activities are impacted most by day/time of game and practices 28%, location of games and practices 15%, and costs associated with participation 11%. It is important to note that 23% of respondents felt nothing impacted their participation.
- Participants noted that additional youth leagues should be offered for volleyball, softball, tennis, golf, archery/fencing, gymnastics, karate, wrestling, additional swimming, running/ track
- Only 44% of respondents stated they would participate in adult leagues if made available.
- Adult programming suggestions included kickball, soccer, volleyball, disc golf, ladies basketball/softball, pickle-ball, bowling, hiking, and archery.
- Support for funding MRA programs through already established avenues such as enrollment fees, local unit of government support and local business support ranked the highest, with many supporting future collaborative ventures with other recreation minded organizations.
- 75% of respondents stated they support collaborative partnerships with other recreation related agencies.
- Respondents felt the MRA Board and Staff have been responsive to there expressed needs at 72%.
- Statements made to increase responsiveness involved answering questions when asked, not letting coaches stack teams, stronger communication, more advertisement, continued community and local government support for funding, more training for staff and coaches, and improving field and recreation space conditions.
- Preferred communication methods by respondents in terms of priority ranking are social media, email, website and text.
- Statements were provided supporting communication via mail, newsletters, through schools via fliers, announcements, message boards and phone apps.
- Final written comments included the following:
 - ◇ More training for staff, coaches and refs.
 - ◇ Many satisfied and very satisfied responses.
 - ◇ More practice time.
 - ◇ Offer refunds for cancellations.
 - ◇ Follow-up with coaches to improve their skill-set.
 - ◇ Invest in staff.
 - ◇ Dissatisfied with certain sponsors, and wide range of ages on team.
 - ◇ Need continuity of leadership.
 - ◇ Maintain and update website.
 - ◇ Maintain database of past and current registrants.
 - ◇ Communication of registration deadlines is very important.

SWOT Analysis

Strength

- History, well known and established brand
- Growth in short time to make necessary change (recent change) (Staff and Board acting in this capacity)
- Board recognized when changes needed to be made
- Consistency in terms of quality performance that is now being resurrected
- Community supports MRA (Financial) (Provided grace during difficult times)
- Participation numbers have been relatively stable
- Resilience and determination as an organization when times were difficult
- Don't own assets in terms of facilities

Threat

- Lack of Finances (financial reality of region)
- Competing for finances (financial reality of region)
- Competing organizations (unwillingness to collaborate) (services provided)
- Lack of facilities
- Participation (aging population)
- Losing housing for full-time permanent residents

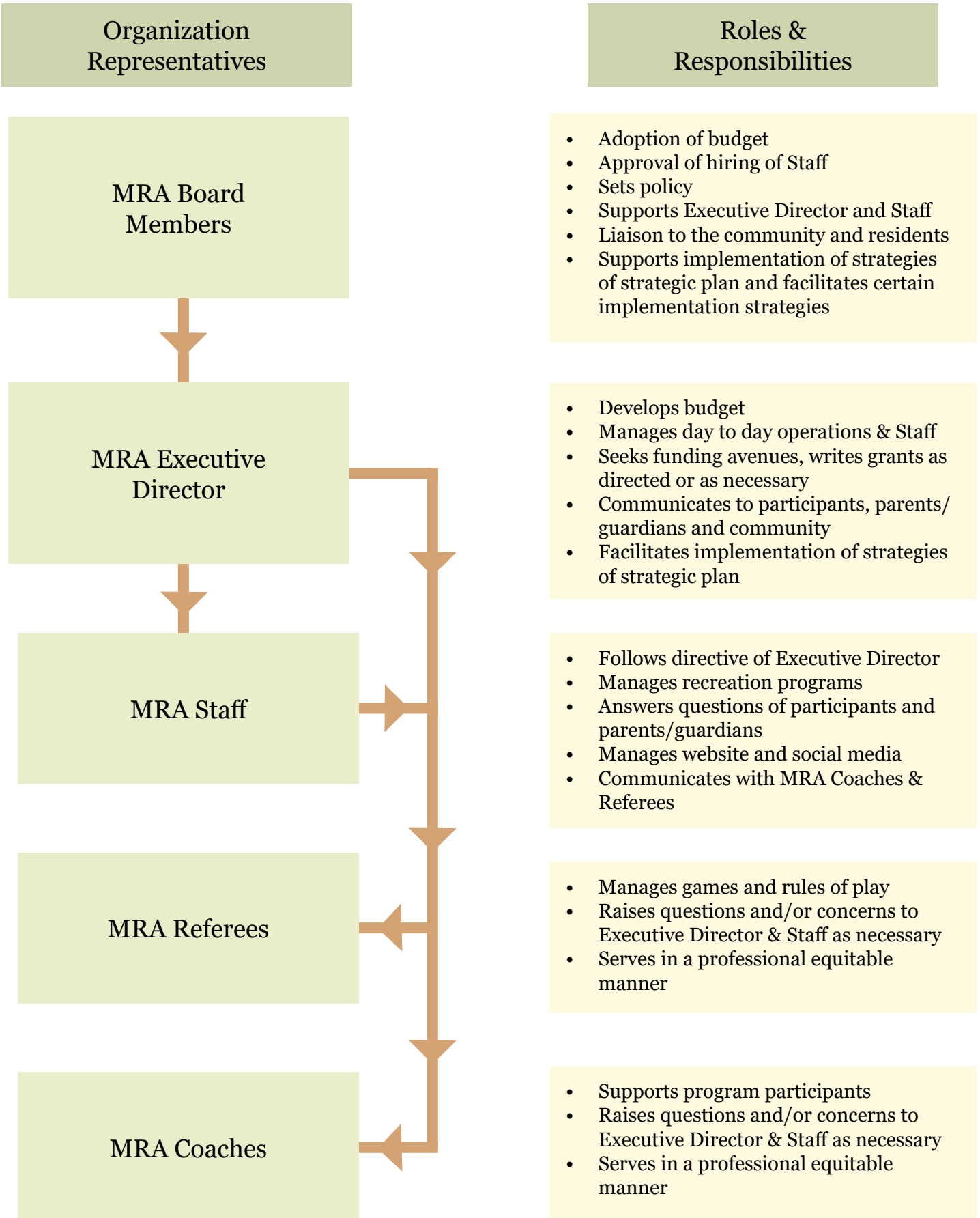
Weakness

- Board was too trusting
- Communication (internal organization)
- Staff turnover (5 new leaders in 4 years)
- Processes for policy (board) (training & recruiting)
- Finances (Whether a local unit has funding for allotment) (Potential of unfamiliarity by new elected officials at local units) (Lack of fund balance)
- Equipment (lack of an inventory) (aged & potentially degraded)
- Losing open space and facilities

Opportunity

- Collaboration
- Manistee County Community Foundation Grants & Funds (Minger) (Other Opportunities)
- Marketing (Social Media) (Financial Ask) (Awareness & Messaging through descriptive narratives) (Electronic/Digital Footprint)
- Sponsorships
- Expansion to Adult Leagues

Organizational Chart



**Note that the roles and responsibilities provides guidance and is not a fully comprehensive list of duties.*

Strategies and Implementation

The strategies found within this plan were developed through a comprehensive approach which included the gathering of stakeholder input with the community survey, analysis of the survey results through discussion held by the MRA Board, Staff and Planning Team; followed by a SWOT analysis conducted with MRA Board Members and Staff. Through this approach, overarching themes and accompanying objectives were developed, of which strategies with direct actions for implementation were framed.

Strategy flow follows this progression:

Overarching Theme > Objective > Strategy > Actions

Implementation efforts for individual actions are reliant upon a cooperative approach of Board Members and Staff. Strategies must be prioritized with a fair time-frame provided for implementation of specific actions, and delegating responsible parties for those actions. It is pertinent to understand, that while several strategies may be implemented simultaneously, it is not beneficial to the organization as a whole to adjust capacity from day to day operations to implementation activities that would decrease a level of service to the participants and community. Therefore prioritization must occur for individual strategies and actions.

Overarching Strategy Themes

- Communication
- Financial Management and Funding
- Community Building
- Collaboration
- Programming
- Equipment
- Marketing
- Association Management

Strategy Tables

Table Keys:

Priority: High, Medium, Low

Time-Frame: (on-going), (1) Year, (2) Year, (3), (4+) Year

Responsible Parties: Board = BRD, Executive Director = ED, Staff = S

Communication

Objective	Maintain and increase communication with residents and participants.		Prior-ity	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Utilize periodic press releases or news stories within local newspaper for updates concerning MRA status and MRA programs				
Action	Set a schedule of yearly necessary updates		H	1	ED, S
Action	Set schedule to a calendar for reminders		H	1	ED, S
Objective	Increased Digital & Direct Communication via Social Media, Website, Email and Phone Text		Prior-ity	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Desired methods of communication from residents are those included above; explore feasibility of utilization of multiple forms for single stream communications.				
Action	Determine ease of use for updates through single statement through multiple channels. Examples being: (Social Media Posts to FB) (Website Home Page “Important Updates”) (Email/Text communication blast)		H	1	ED, S
Action	Explore software options for directories, determine if cost equates to efficiency for tracking participant & community member contact information.		H	1	ED, S

Financial Management & Funding

Objective	Maintain a sound balanced budget.		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	A balanced budget allows for more ease of organization management and preparation for potential hardships.				
	Action	Forecast current year budget needs based upon at least 3 priors' years averages.	H	3, 4+	ED, BRD
	Action	Though difficult, generate ideas centered on potential pop-up expenses within a budget year, and set aside a contingency fund to account for such issues.	H	on-going	ED, BRD
	Action	Carry-over contingency fund and roll into updated fund each fiscal year.	H	1, 2	ED, BRD
Objective	Explore, Pursue and Expand funding opportunities		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Collaborate and Coordinate with the Manistee County Community Foundation (MCCF)				
	Action	Determine the feasibility of creating a fund for support of certain activities within the organization. (example being: sport equipment upgrades)	M	3, 4+	BRD
	Action	Advocate for best use for recreational funding by the MCCF.	M	2, 3	BRD, ED
	Action	Review organization needs and make organization grant requests based upon those needs.	H	1	BRD, ED
Strategy	Explore and Support Recreational Funding				
	Action	A Dedicated Recreational Millage has been discussed in circles within the community, attaining some attention at the County Board level. Continue to support and facilitate these conversations, providing input of the necessity of some funding towards community-wide recreation programming.	L	3, 4+	BRD
	Action	Determine "large community donors", and promote efforts towards approaching these individuals about supporting recreational programming.	M	1, 2	ED, BRD
Strategy	Participating Municipalities should be maintained and expanded.				
	Action	Continue strong communications to local units of government relaying importance of their support of funding for programming.	H	1	ED
	Action	Continue to meet with non-participating local units of government relaying the importance of the MRA to their community residents.	H	1	ED
	Action	Continue to work towards having all local units of government within the Greater Manistee Area participate in the support of the organization.	H	1	ED

Community Building

Objective	Continue to build community and community support for the organization.		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Utilize media and social media for communication opportunities.				
	Action	Utilize press releases on a regular basis for spreading awareness of the organization.	H	1	ED, S
	Action	Utilize social media a least 3x monthly to spread awareness of the organization.	H	1	S
Strategy	The MRA organization should be front and center during specified community events.				
	Action	Utilize community events such as Forest Fest, Bear Lake Days or Onekama Days to have board member(s) attended table/booth with information for residents and visitors, spreading awareness and support for the organization.	M	1, 2	BRD, ED, S

Collaboration

Objective	Collaborate to create efficiency, cost effectiveness and shared support.		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Outreach to like-minded organizations, the school system and local units of government for collaborative approaches.				
	Action	Out-reach to local recreational organizations, regardless of involvement with programming to see if partnerships for shared support make sense.	L	2, 3, 4+	ED, BRD
	Action	Out-reach to the school system for collaboration and discussion of shared use of assets.	M	on-going	ED
	Action	Out-reach to local units of government for collaboration and discussion of shared use of assets.	M	on-going	ED
	Action	Involvement with the County Recreation Planning Update Process. Participate and help guide County and Local Unit priorities in the 5 year updates to the County-Wide Recreation Plan.	L	3, 4+	BRD, ED, S
	Action	Become a recognized and integral stakeholder in any community process.	H	on-going	BRD, ED
	Action	Explore opportunities to collaborate/partner to support organizations which serve recreational users with special needs.	L	2, 3	ED, S

Programming

Objective	Expand programming to include activities desired by residents.	Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Meet the needs of the community as expressed through comments and feedback received in the community survey.			
Action	Review the community survey for activities suggested for inclusion.	H	1	BRD
Action	Reach out to groups and other organizations which may have involvement with those supported activities to ensure the community needs are met.	M	2, 3	ED, BRD
Action	Explore holding a community input via social media or face to face session to get additional input on those specified desired activities.	H	on-going	ED, BRD

Equipment

Objective	Expand equipment inventory and equipment quality.	Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Provide necessary equipment in a quality condition to those families in need of assistance due to financial hardship or constrain.			
Action	Create an inventory of existing equipment. Create a quality ranking system, rate each piece based upon condition, note size, identify if in need of replacement.	H	1	ED, BRD
Action	Note equipment deficiencies upon completion of the equipment inventory.	H	on-going	ED
Action	Reach out to the Manistee County Community Foundation to see about setting up an “equipment fund”, for purchasing equipment to be shared to financially constrained families.	H	1	ED, S

Marketing

Objective	Maintain Organization Brand		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Trusted Community Organization continues to benefit community as spoken in circles throughout the Community.				
Action	See Communication Actions “press those actions”				
Action	See Community Building, second objective above “press that action”				
Action	Elevator Speech should be developed by Board. Board members should be able to recite Mission and Vision Statements.				
Action	Board members should be prepared to deliver the elevator speech and be willing to do so at any time		H	1	BRD, S
Action			H	1	ED, BRD
Action			H	1	BRD
Action			H	on-going	BRD
Objective	Create Marketing Materials		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Colorful and informative materials which are relevant to the current offerings of the organization should be offered.				
Action	Develop a template for marketing materials which include a “tri-fold pamphlet” and a “rack-card”				
Action	Utilize template and plug and play information for yearly or every two year updates to the marketing material template.				
Action			H	1	S, ED
Action			H	on-going	S, ED
Objective	Utilize Social Media (FB, Instagram, TikTok) to market the organization brand		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Create buzz about on-going programs, with participant and community location pictures, as well as support posts for similar recreation groups, entities or sites.				
Action	Put together social media posts on an array of platforms that build upon the brand of health, fun, community, etc. These posts shouldn’t be about program due dates, but rather about a great sunny day on the soccer field, tennis court or baseball diamond. Post about a new field or court upgrades and improvements. Support like-minded entities which share your similar goals.				
Action			H	on-going	S, ED
Objective	Make the Website an inviting, intriguing site while maintaining information		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Update the website				
Action	Brainstorm website ideas with Board.				
Action	Review website update options and expense.				
Action			H	on-going	BRD, ED, S
Action			M	2, 3	BRD, ED, S
Objective	Newspaper Articles and Press Releases are regularly occurring.		Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Utilize periodic press releases or news stories within local newspaper for updates concerning MRA status and MRA programs.				
Action	See Communication Actions				
Action			H	on-going	S, ED

Association Management

Objective	Policy Development for organization directives and management	Priority	Time-frame	Responsible Party
Strategy	Provide a policy manual which outlines procedure, organization stance and directive for various activities under the organization umbrella			
Action	Communication needs and participant directory upon registration (emails strongly suggested) set within policy chapter	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Communication avenue and needs to participants within a policy chapter.	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Policy chapter outlining the role of coaches, potential training avenues and resources, how to contact parents and participants and their responsible role with the organization.	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Policy chapter outlining the role of referees, potential training avenues and resources, how to deal with difficult parents, participants or other attendees, and their responsible role with the organization.	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Policy chapter in how to deal with inclement weather notifications, the stance of the organization, and whether practices or games will be made-up	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Policy chapter in how to deal with unruly participants or parents, and the stance of the organization.	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Policy chapter on how to be an effective MRA Board Member.	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Policy chapter on staff including leadership and staff members	H	on-going	ED, BRD
Action	Policy chapter on background check procedures for board members, staff and volunteers.	H	on-going	ED, BRD

Evaluation Framework

One of the most important aspects of this strategic plan is the monitoring of the success of implementation of the plan strategies and actions. Below is a four step process that provides an avenue for monitoring implementation on a regular basis. It is recommended that evaluation occur quarterly for the first year and then be conducted biannually for successive years.

To help facilitate the evaluation framework, an excel spreadsheet has been created and transferred digitally to the organization. A copy can be viewed in Appendix B. This spreadsheet contains each action item and provides a comprehensive way to digitally manage evaluation progress.

1. Review actions implemented during this evaluation period. All actions undertaken should be broken down, with specific tasks completed for the action placed within the notes of the spreadsheet.
2. Adjust the status of specific actions in the spreadsheet as necessary. Change status of action to; “initiated”, “on-going”, “paused”, “completed”.
3. Review priorities and adjust prioritization within the spreadsheet.
4. Move forward with implementation of on-going and high priority actions.

Plan Adoption Certification

The Manistee Recreation Association, having undertaken a comprehensive strategic planning process for the organization, and having participated in preparing and providing support for the information contained within this plan and accompanying appendices does formally approve and adopt this strategic plan on the 20th day of February, 2023, at a regularly scheduled board meeting.

Board Member Signatories:

Kenny Kott, President

Date

Cindy Lundberg, Treasurer

Date

Eric Ware, Secretary

Date

Matt Kieffer, Member

Date

Mitch Deisch, Member

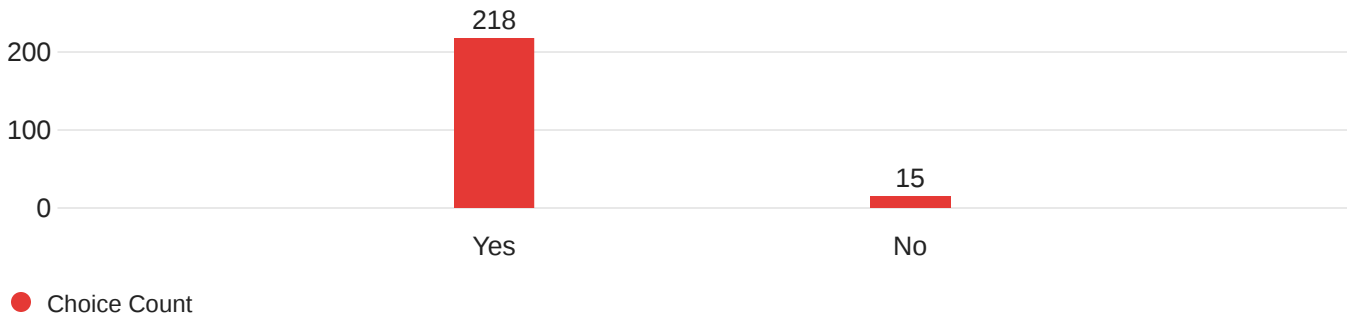
Date

Dursa Marshall, Executive Director

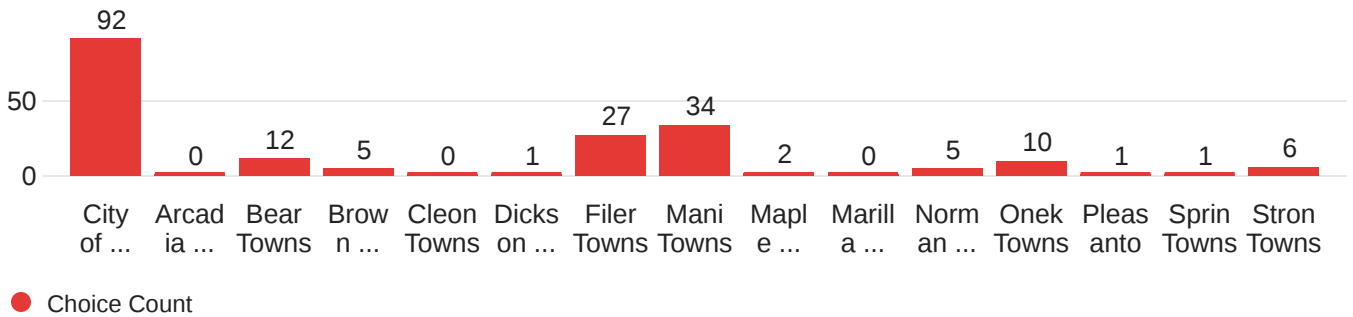
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Appendix A: 2022 MRA Survey Results

Q1 - Are you a Manistee County Resident?



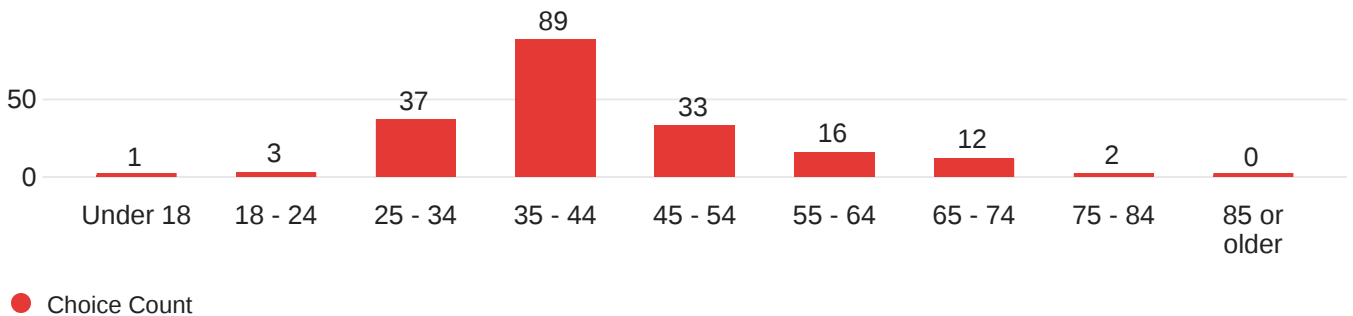
Q2 - In which community do you reside?



If Not Manistee County, where do you live results.

- Mason County, Grant Township
- Filer County
- Oceana County, Sheby Township
- Mason County, Freesoil Township
- Hudsonville
- Livingston County
- Irons
- Lake County

Q4 - How old are you?



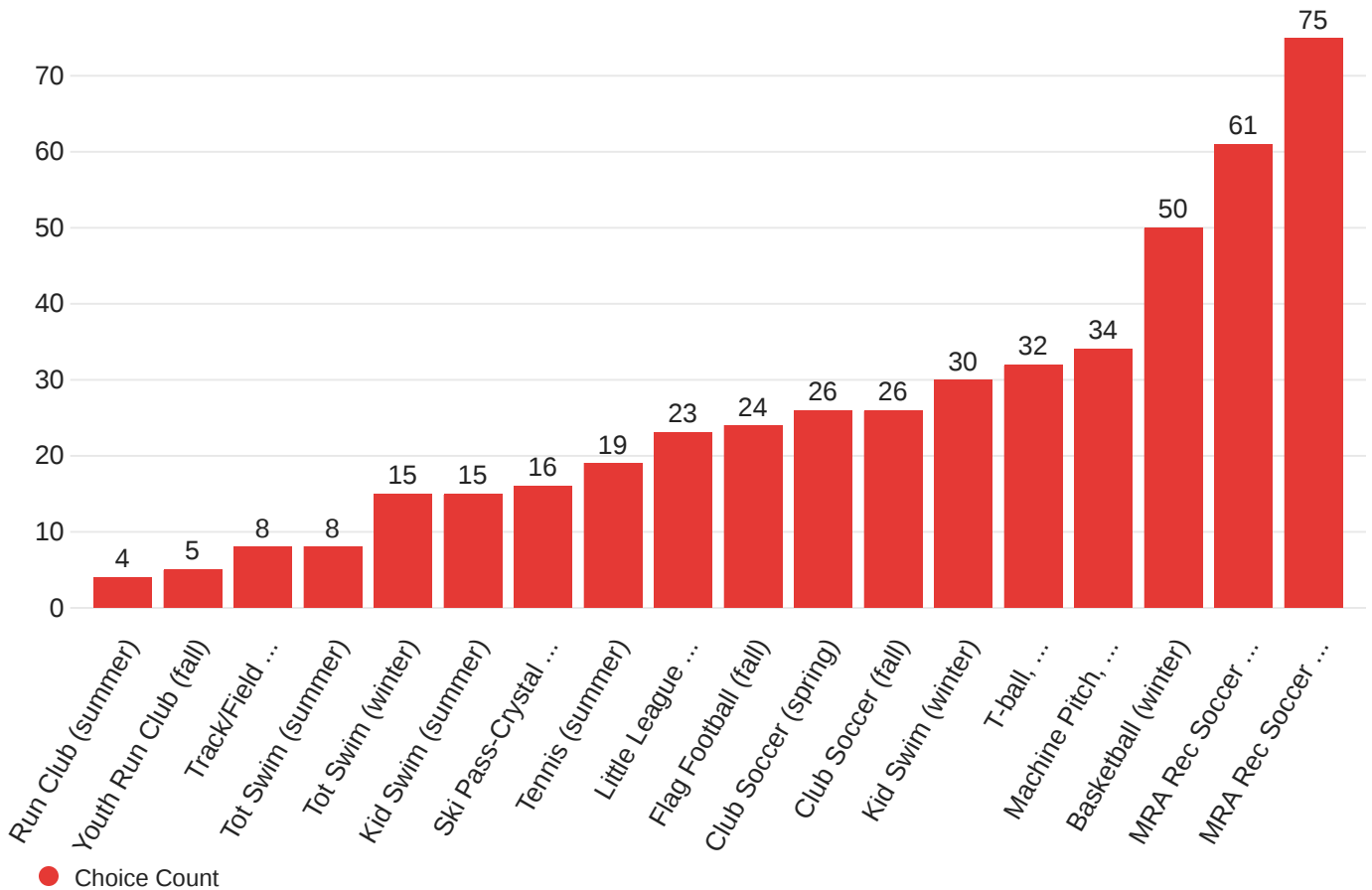
Q5 - Are you a parent or guardian?



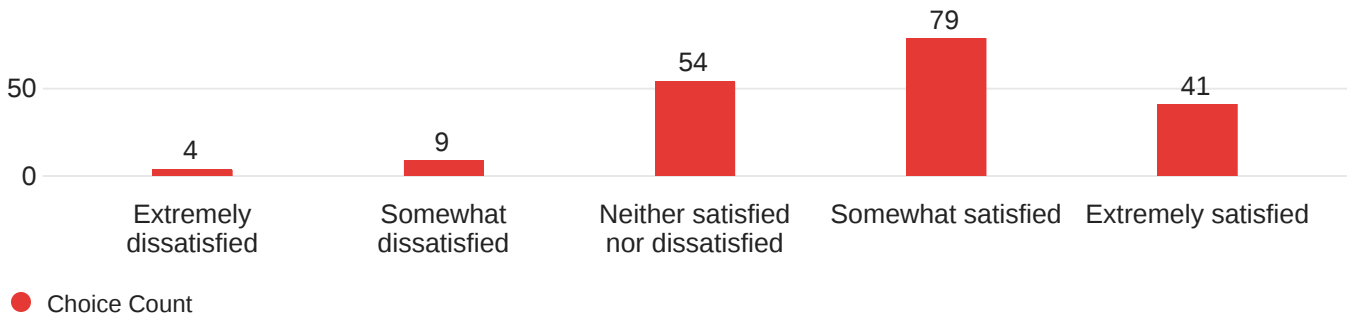
Q6 - Do you enroll your children or children under your care in MRA Youth leagues?



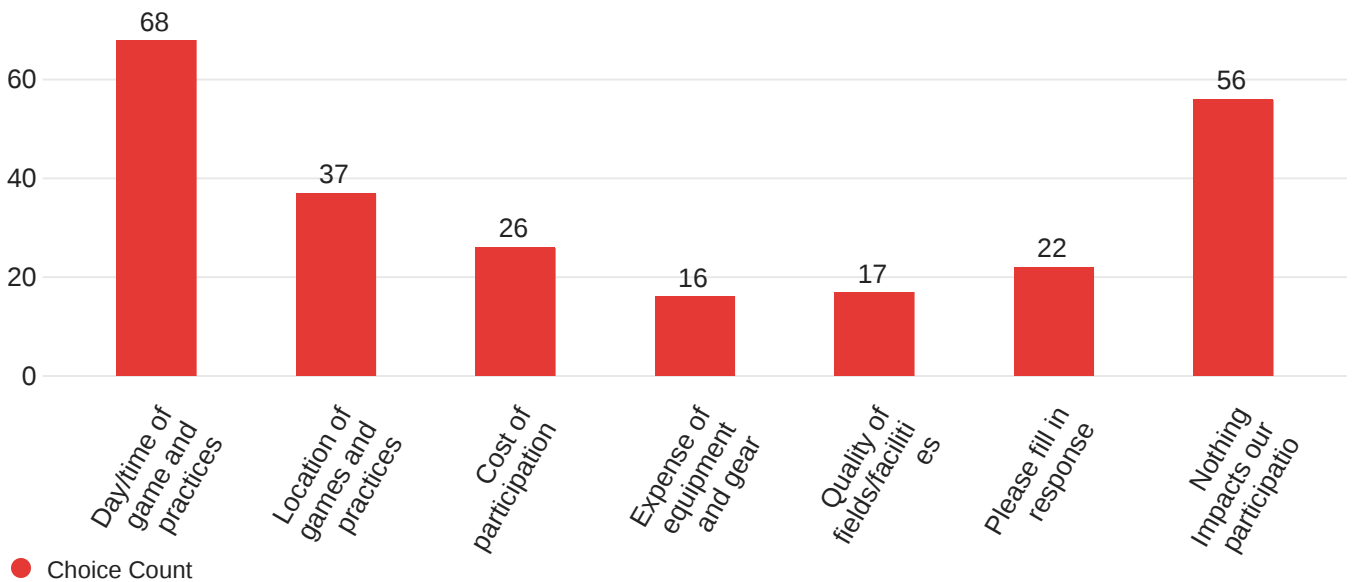
Q8 - In which Youth leagues do the children participate? (check all that apply)



Q15 - Are you satisfied with the selection of MRA Youth leagues?



Q17 - What impacts the enrollment/participation of Youth under your supervision in MRA youth leagues? (check all that apply) - Selected Choice



Q 17: Fill in Responses

Please fill in response - Text

Available coaches

Transportation

All of which have been just fine this year

Lack of participants.

Child with mild cognitive delays

na

quality of coaches

We choose not to participate due to the over encompassing age ranges for teams such as soccer and basketball. Its a disservice to both the older kids who are skilled and the younger kids who are not skilled to even remotely close degrees, yet placed the same teams. It is also such a disappointment in seeing the sponsorship that is advertised. My child would be dress coded at school for wearing an Authentic 231 shirt to school, yet is encouraged/ required to wear it for youth sports.

Age variation

We have evening work schedules and practice game times aren't published far enough in advance to ask for work accommodations for kids to be able to participate. Would be good if flyers come home from work, we don't do Facebook.

My children have aged out

Number of practices/games at different times. 4 kids in different age groups gets to be a lot.

Special needs

quality of coaching and lack of experience working with youth

Not having day time practices or games

Overall organization of the MRA

As my daughter got older she didn't want to play baseball because of the lack of other girl participants

Lack of communication

Nothing specifically had in the past, but going forward, I would say how the teams are divided, as in more fairly and evenly and the way coaches are interacting with other coaches as well as how coaches are allowing their players to interact with other players.

Having games on the same days and times with little league and machine pitch.

Q16 - What additional Youth leagues would you like to see offered?

What additional Youth leagues would you like to see offered?

N/a

Volleyball, running/track, gymnastics

Over 5th grade

Xc skiing

Girls Softball

tennis

We haven't noticed a teach & field or running league lately & would absolutely participate.

Fencing, archery

Golf

Volleyball, more running

Additional swimming lessons

na

Gymnastics, karate, wrestling.

N/a

Not sure

More swimming lessons

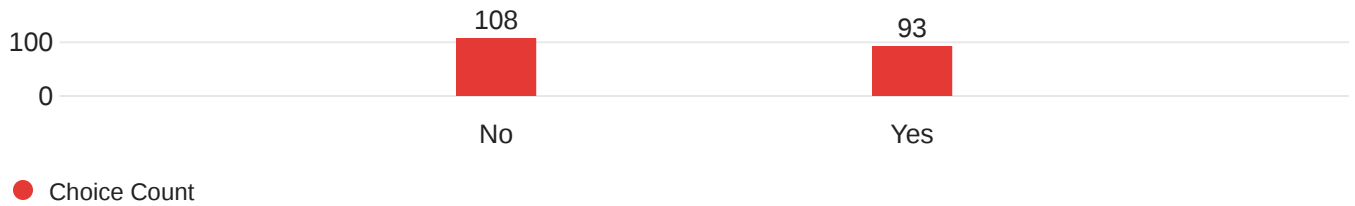
Nothing you people suck, not sure what even makes you a non profit organization. You charge way too much, and then get people coaching who are jerk offs. Can't even accommodate people who can't do sports on Sundays due to religious beliefs. And when half your activities get cancelled instead of offering a refund you offer 50% off to try again. Pretty sure you people pocket the money. We need a YMCA. We will never support you people in the future

Wrestling, running, swimming

Karate

I think we need to get the major sports we have going better before looking at add more. We struggle with coaches and space to practice.

Q10 - Would you participate in MRA Adult leagues if made available?



Q11 - What type of adult programming would you like offered?

What type of adult programming would you like offered?

Kickball

Volleyball

Soccer and softball

Any

Women's Softball League; Ladies Basketball League; Disc Golf League

16 years in softball or volleyball

Not sure, hiking local trails? Yoga, tennis

Basketball, soccer

Volleyball

Pickleball, not sure that's possible!

Basketball, flag football, softball

Maybe a bowling league

Baseball young adult

Pickleball, hiking

Swimming, archery

pickleball, exercise, disc golf, hiking

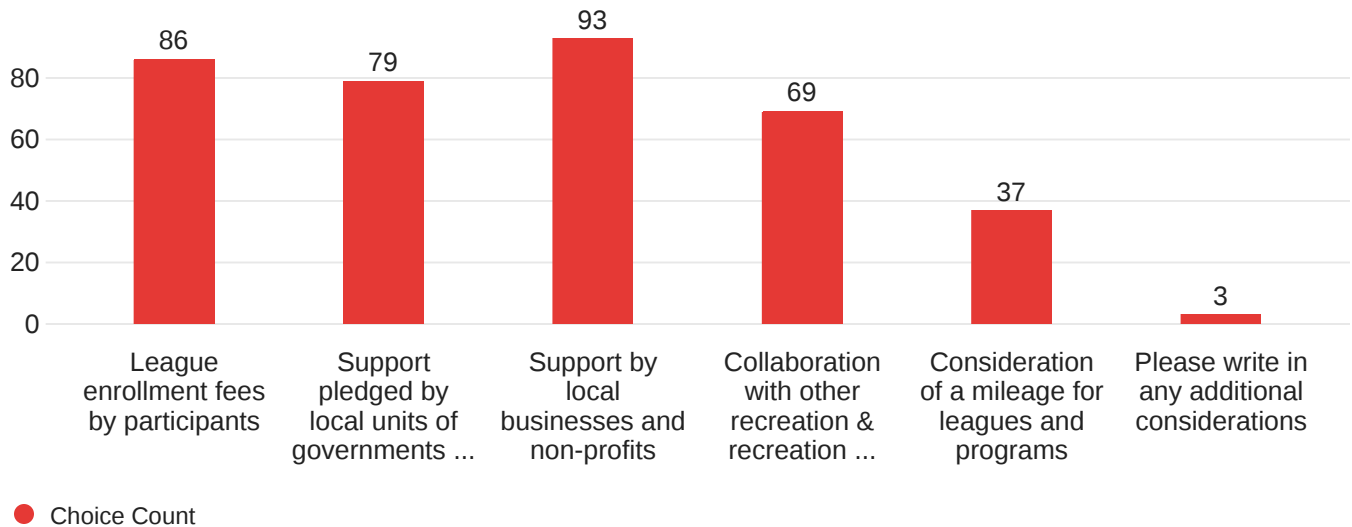
Badminton, pickle ball, disc golf

Softball, volleyball

Soccer

pickle ball, disc golf, Frisbee

Q20 - Considerations for funding of MRA programs should include? (check all that apply) - Selected Choice



Q20: Write in reponses

Please write in any additional considerations - Text

I don't know

Tshirts don't cost \$30-70 bucks a kid and everyone brings their own equipment. So what are all the extra charges for? Especially swim pay 30 bucks for 2 swim lessons because the rest get cancelled. Where'd all that money go

No mileage if that's what "mileage" meant

Q21 - Do you support collaborative partnerships with other recreation related agencies?



Q22 - Do you feel the MRA Board and MRA Staff have been responsive to the expressed needs of the participants?



Q23 - From your point of view, what can the MRA Board do to be more responsive to expressed needs?

From your point of view, what can the MRA Board do to be more responsive to expressed needs?

No concerns

Stop letting coaches stack the teams

Just answer questions when asked

I don't know as I have never expressed a need to them

Better communication

Nothing at this time, you all do a great job!

Recognize that township participation and fee based registration definitely affects hard pressed parents from being able to include their children in all of the sports teams that they would like to trial. In today's world expenses are not getting any easier and charging \$70 for a tee shirt (which is often late for season start) and volunteered coaches makes life difficult.

More advertisement

Hold regular meetings for public input and discussion

Get the coaches and players their teams at least two weeks before they start

More communication

Make more affordable and accommodating. Years ago my kid in baseball couldn't practice because the coach only practiced on Sundays when asked if she could at least practice with a other team on a different day we were told tough luck.

Creative solutions to same problems year to year. For example, not enough coaches. Creatively problem solve — business donate gift cards to coaches, tuition free for your kid, gift card to MRA. I remember a festival on the field as a community with snow cones, not just individual team party as a real highlight for my kids one year. I think activities that are non-team or leagues— yoga, Tai Chi (for kids!), dances, and working with collaborators for “MRA day by age groups” at bowling, ice skating, pool, snowshoe, ice fishing, bird watching, trail hiking on and on...expand definition of outdoor play and have other organizations collaborate.

From the outside not knowing what is done or not done it looks like the board is a little detached to the day to day running's. The fields the MRA uses are mostly owned by the city but who is responsible for what things at each field.

Consider kids who might be new to the sport in later grades

MRA can have better communication.

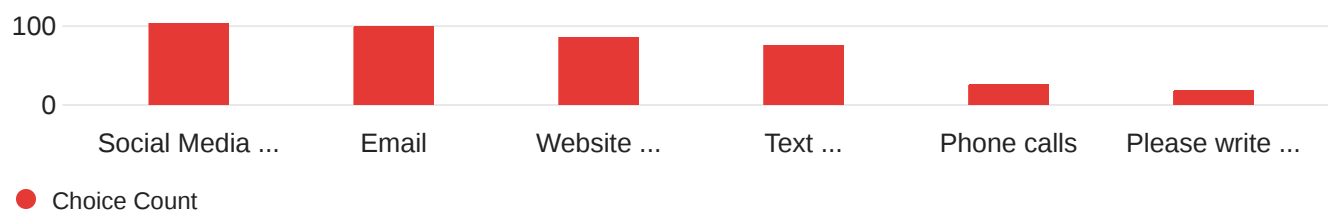
support the director with more training and support coaches with more training.

Replace soccer nets and fix flooding of fields or change location

coach's training

Good response for basketball and soccer... I appreciate what you do MRA!

Q24 - How best can the MRA Board and Staff directly reach out to program participants and residents? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice



Q24: Written Responses

Please write other recommended method - Text

Mail

Newsletters

Online registration, payment and filling out of forms PLEASE PLEASE. This would be my #1 recommendation for how to directly reach your #1 customer for kids programs—busy parents! A decent online portal would be absolutely worth your investment.

schools but make sure communication is actually shared with students. Ask schools to help support MRA programs that feed into their school sports.

mobile open house at PT conferences, health fair, other school events

Mailing out information

Posted at school for kids to see

Kids get their middle school/high school information in the daily announcements at school/listed online

Phonecall

News letters

Reaching out to all the schools and putting papers in backpacks to go back in with kids home

Social media should be #1 right now, esp with the younger parents!

Physical board at school

Flyers

Through the schools. MRA emails go to my "Promotions" folder and I never see them.

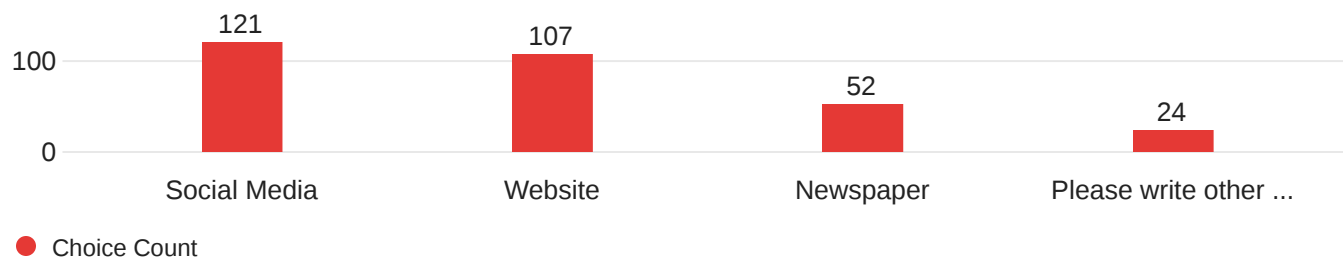
Mass text or email to anyone who has ever registered their child

Send sign up flyers home with children from school. Not everyone sees or remembers what they see on facebook

I'm told there's a youth soccer app that CASA in Cadillac uses. Might be something to consider.

Robo calls

Q25 - How can the MRA Board and Staff best widely market news and information about programs? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice



Q25: Written Responses

Please write other method - Text

Mail

Email

Schools

Communication is key so making the investment there in having a communications/marketing ideally paid staff member will be worth it—instead of a secretary I would suggest a good digital communication specialist to operate the office in that manner.

through schools?

email past and present participants

Emails

Mailing flyers

A mailing might be effective. Like an oversized postcard.

School flyers!

Dedicated mobile app

Do it the same every time so parents know easily and quickly where to find the info they need!

News letters

School

Flyers in town? Ask the businesses who sponsor to advertise

Physical Board at the school

Work with the Armory and the Wagner Center and the schools

School flyers

Flyers

If the schools have a Facebook page, tag them in your posts. Or ask the schools to share them.

Q27 - Provide comments on MRA programs and leagues. (Satisfied? Insufficient? Expansion? Reorganization?)

Provide comments on MRA programs and leagues. (Satisfied? Insufficient? Expansion? Reorganization?)

More training for coaching volunteers that hasn't coached before, make sure ump's and coaches aware of same rules, don't allow coaches to stack the teams, in baseball make sure all kids get the chance to bat twice each game

Great range of programs

My only complaint is that I would like my kids to learn how to play the sports and usually there isn't time between when the coaches are assigned and the first games. I would like more practices where the sport/game/rules are explained. I know this is up to the coaches, but it would be nice to have like 4 weeks of lead-up time before the games start where coaches can run meaningful practices.

Satisfied

Reorganization

Satisfied

Satisfied

Satisfied

Offer refunds when people sign up for something and you cancel

I would not want to drive any further than we already do for soccer (under 2 hours, preferably under 1.5)

I'm satisfied for the most part. The turnover and the knowledge of what programs are next or available for the kids as they grow older could use help getting work out. Coaches are always in need but you don't get anything for being a coach. You could look at free/reduced rate for there child. Open it up for a coach if they don't have a child or would rather use the free/reduced rate to a child in need.

There are not many programs for adults.

Very satisfied!

Parent volunteers are highly appreciated, however sometimes coaches can do more harm when introducing a sport. A child's first experiences can determine their future in a sport. After initially volunteering what follow up happens with coaches from practices to games. What works well? What needs to be adjusted? How do coaches increase the caliber of play as children get older? (coach camps, feedback)

insufficient

Satisfied

Programs are good, coaches are good

Reorganization

Our kids enjoy playing MRA soccer.

Satisfied

Q28 - Provide comments on the MRA Board & Staff and management of programs and leagues. (Satisfied? Dissatisfied? Quality of oversight?)

Provide comments on the MRA Board & Staff and management of programs and leagues. (Satisfied? Dissatisfied? Quality of oversight?)

Unsure, have no idea who is on the mra board or what they do or if they even attend games

Your doing a great job

Satisfied

Dissatisfied with communication

Satisfied

Satisfied

Lacking oversight

Invest in your staff people! They are good people who need some help and good back up part time help in marketing, operations, events. As mentioned, an online portal to pay, register, and complete paperwork would be a huge improvement and worth the investment!

hard to tell on this one as the turnover rate for workers / directors have been high for the last few years.

Wonderful staff very helpful

Very satisfied. The staff is attentive, timely and considerate of the multitude of facets associated with the MRA offerings and processes.

Create procedures and programming that directors can follow and be supported. This would help when there is a transition from one director to another director.

Dissatisfied with the WIDE range of ages included in a team, dissatisfied with inappropriate sponsorship

Satisfied

Everything seems way better now with Dursa

Satisfied

don't know

Satisfied

Need continuity of leadership

Satisfied. I'm pleased to see payment available online and efforts made to improve the website.

Q29 - Please provide any last comments that you feel were not captured in the previously provided questions.

Please provide any last comments that you feel were not captured in the previously provided questions.

For the age group MRA deals with, focus should be on learning fundamentals, having fun and developing character.

Being on soccer club board I know how much work goes into putting the teams together, I don't think parents understand how hard it is to find coaches for all these activities. I feel parents are getting a great deal with the programs but parents also need to step up and help out more, I don't know if we can do more to support them with coaching so it doesn't seem so intimidating!!

Please make sure website is up to date. Several times in the past I've looked for various info/times/cost etc and it's nowhere to be found.

Sat

You're doing a wonderful job, Dursa!

I'm seriously afraid to even try to enroll my kid in anything through you because if it gets cancelled you don't refund.

Keep up the good work for our kids! Consider expanding non-team recreation play. Get creative to solve recurring issues of lack of volunteers or staff time

It has been a few years since we have a child participate. My oldest a freshman now. Years ago it seemed like some teams were "stacked" with the same players on the same teams every year. My youngest, who's ten years old, has health complications that prevent him from being able to compete with his peers. I would love to see some sports such as disk golf, bowling, cornhole or other suggestions that the MRA might offer. However, this is the first time I've mentioned this need to them.

Id love to see online registration and payment options available for all sports within each season.

Satisfied

An email database of prior and current participants would be a great way to get the word out about upcoming registration deadlines. Finding out when registration opens and closes for programs is the biggest hurdle for us. Missing the deadline is a huge issue at home.

Ensure there are refs for games. It was better this year than last though.

Can we get online enrollment and payment please?

All good

I appreciate the MRA soliciting this feedback from the community.

I attended a game at the Bear Lake softball field a couple of weeks ago and was taken aback by the verbal taunting of the head coach of the yellow shirted team by the head coach of the black shirted (Bear Lake) team. The Black shirts were up by a score of 7-1 or 7-2 and the Yellow shirts had one last at-bat. The head coach wanted to pitch one of his incoming 7th graders against a team of 3rd and 4th graders and the Yellow team coach objected because of the age difference. The Black team coach taunted the Yellow team coach in front of his players and was loud and quite mean-spirited in his verbal abuse. I understand that he apologized to the umpire the next day but did not attempt to smooth things over with the Yellow coach. More concerning was the fact that his grandson told the players on the Yellow team including my grandson who is his classmate that they "sucked". The coach's actions were disappointing given that the other coaches and the umpires were trying to teach these impressionable youngsters good sportsmanship and discipline. As I wrote, I coached all levels of baseball for about 30 years and was the President of my Recreation Club for about 40 years and this was some of the worst behavior that I ever witnessed in youth sports. I witnessed the verbal taunting of the head coach of the yellow shirted team by the head coach of the Black shirts 3rd-6th grade team. He taunted the coach of the Yellow shirted team in the last inning of a game wherein he had a healthy lead (7-1 or 7-2). He wanted to pitch one of his incoming

Website updating was not happening in the last few years. Would be easier to have that done

NA

I think the way teams are formed needs to be addressed, such as trying to evenly distribute kids in each grade, maybe doing away with or limiting the number of team requests. I also think a major discussion needs to be had with volunteer coaches on their own sportsmanship and the discussion of sportsmanship of players. The lack of both has been very frustrating this year.

Maybe host a referee class so kids can get certified and help with shortage.

Theme	Actions	Priority	Time-Frame	Responsible Party	Status	Notes
Communication						
	Set a schedule of yearly necessary updates	H	1	ED, S		
	Set schedule to a calendar for reminders	H	1	ED, S		
	Determine ease of use for updates through single statement through multiple channels. Examples being: (Social Media Posts to FB) (Website Home Page "Important Updates") (Email/Text communication blast)	H	1	ED, S		
	Explore software options for directories, determine if cost equates to efficiency for tracking participant & community member contact information.	H	1	ED, S		
Financial Management & Funding						
	Forecast current year budget needs based upon at least 3 priors' years averages.	H	3, 4+	ED, BRD		
	issues.	H	1, 2	ED, BRD		
	Carry-over contingency fund and roll into updated fund each fiscal year.	H	1, 2	ED, BRD		
	Determine the feasibility of creating a fund for support of certain activities within the organization. (example being: sport equipment upgrades)	M	3, 4+	BRD		
	Advocate for best use for recreational funding by the MCCF.	M	2, 3	BRD, ED		
	H	H	1	BRD, ED		
	A Dedicated Recreational Millage has been discussed in circles within the community, attaining some attention at the County Board level. Continue to support and facilitate these conversations, providing input of the necessity of some funding towards community-wide recreation programming.	L	3, 4+	BRD		
	Determine "large community donors", and promote efforts towards approaching these individuals about supporting recreational programming.	M	1, 2	ED, BRD		
	Continue strong communications to local units of government relaying importance of their support of funding for MRA Scholarships.	H	1	ED		
	Continue to meet with non-participating local units of government relaying the importance of the MRA to their community residents.	H	1	ED		
	Continue to work towards having all local units of government within Manistee County participate in the support of organization.	H	1	ED		
Community Building						
	Utilize press releases on a regular basis for spreading awareness of the organization.	H	1	ED, S		
	Utilize social media a least 3x monthly to spread awareness of the organization.	H	1	S		
	Utilize community events such as Forest Fest, Bear Lake Days or Onekama Days to have board member(s) attended table/booth with information for residents and visitors, spreading awareness and support for the organization	M	1, 2	BRD, ED, S		
Collaboration						
	Out-reach to local recreational organizations, regardless of involvement with programming to see if partnerships for shared support make sense.	L	2, 3, 4+	ED, BRD		
	Out-reach to the school system for collaboration and discussion of shared use of assets.	M	on-going	ED		
	Out-reach to local units of government for collaboration and discussion of shared use of assets.	M	on-going	ED		
	Involvement with the County Recreation Planning Update Process. Participate and help guide County and Local Unit priorities in the 5 year updates to the County-Wide Recreation Plan.	L	3, 4+	BRD, ED, S		
	Become a recognized and integral stakeholder in any community process.	H	on-going	BRD, ED		
	Explore opportunities to collaborate/partner to support organizations which serve recreational users with special needs.	L	2, 3	ED, S		
Programming						
	Review the community survey for activities suggested for inclusion.	H	1	BRD		
	Reach out to groups and other organizations which may have involvement with those supported activities to ensure the community needs are	M	2, 3	ED, BRD		
	Explore holding a community input via social media or face to face session to get additional input on those specified desired activities.	H	on-going	ED, BRD		

Theme	Actions	Priority	Time-Frame	Responsible Party	Status	Notes
Equipment						
	Create an inventory of existing equipment. Create a quality ranking system, rate each piece based upon condition, note size, identify if in need of replacement.	H	1	ED, BRD		
	Note equipment deficiencies upon completion of the equipment inventory.	H	on-going	ED		
	Reach out to the Manistee County Community Foundation to see about setting up an "equipment fund", for purchasing equipment to be shared to financially constrained families.	H	1	ED, S		
Marketing						
	See Communication Above "press those actions"	H	1	BRD, S		
	See Community Building, second objective above "press that action"	H	1	ED, BRD		
	Elevator Speech should be developed by Board. Board members should be able to recite Mission and Vision Statements	H	1	BRD		
	Board members should be prepared to deliver the elevator speech and be willing to do so at any time.	H	on-going	BRD		
	Develop a template for marketing materials which include a "tri-fold pamphlet" and a "rack-card"	H	1	S, ED		
	Utilize template and plug and play information for yearly or every two year updates to the marketing material template.	H	on-going	S, ED		
	Put together social media posts on an array of platforms that build upon the brand of health, fun, community, etc. These posts shouldn't be about program due dates, but rather about a great sunny day on the soccer field, tennis court or baseball diamond. Post about a new field or court upgrades and improvements. Support like-minded entities which share your similar goals.	H	on-going	S, ED		
	Brainstorm website ideas with Board.	H	on-going	BRD, S		
	Review website update options and expense.	M	2, 3	BRD, ED, S		
	Utilize periodic press releases or news stories within local newspaper for updates concerning MRA status and MRA programs.	H	on-going	S, ED		
Association Management						
	Communication needs and participant directory upon registration (emails strongly suggested) set within policy chapter	H	on-going	ED, BRD		
	Communication avenue and needs to participants within a policy chapter.	H	on-going	ED, BRD		
	Policy chapter outlining the role of coaches, potential training avenues and resources, how to contact parents and participants and their responsible role with the organization.	H	on-going	ED, BRD		
	Policy chapter outlining the role of referees, potential training avenues and resources, how to deal with difficult parents, participants or other attendees, and their responsible role with the organization.	H	on-going	ED, BRD		
	Policy chapter in how to deal with inclement weather notifications, the stance of the organization, and whether practices or games will be made-	H	on-going	ED, BRD		
	Policy chapter in how to deal with unruly participants or parents, and the stance of the organization.	H	on-going	ED, BRD		
	Policy chapter on how to be an effective MRA Board Member.	H	on-going	ED, BRD		
	Policy chapter on background check procedures for board members, staff and volunteers.	H	on-going	ED, BRD		