

2023 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL





A. Business Organization

Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club, LLC
3400 Line Drive
Sioux City, IA 51106
(712) 277-9467

John F. Roost, Principal and Director

Tom Backemeyer, Vice President/General Manager
Steve Montgomery, Field Manager

B. Staffing and Organization

The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club (the Xs) is an independent professional team that has played ball since its inaugural season in 1993. Today the club competes in the independent American Association of Professional Baseball, a professional partner league of Major League Baseball (MLB). Each year, the Sioux City Explorers play 100 games, with home games (half of the schedule) played on Mercy Field at Lewis and Clark Park in Sioux City, Iowa. The regular season annually begins in mid-May and ends in early September. The Sioux City Explorers typically rosters a team of 30 players. There are 13 pitchers and 18 position players. The team has a field manager, two coaches, and a trainer. Each season, over 50 part-time employees support the club's team and operations.

The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club is owned by **John F. Roost**, a Siouxland entrepreneur and business owner. Roost is also principal owner of Rooster's Harley-Davidson, LLC. For the past 26 years, Roost has been the principal owner of the baseball organization, devoted to making the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club an entertaining, marketable, and iconic franchise. Roost was part of a local investment group that purchased the Sioux City Explorers in 1997 from the original Idaho-based start-up. Over several following years, Roost acquired full ownership of the Explorers' franchise. His personal investments have ensured Sioux City residents have the opportunity to enjoy high-quality, family-friendly, game day experiences while watching professional level baseball, in a beautiful park setting.

For the operations of the Sioux City Baseball Club, LLC, proprietor John Roost employs knowledgeable and experienced persons in the sports management and sports entertainment industry. He supplements this knowledge base with persons possessing general business and marketing experience. The final component of his staffing is the cultivation of future front office talent through a well-established internship program.

All aspects of the front office and management of the team are the responsibility of Tom Backemeyer, general manager and vice president. Backemeyer is an industry veteran, possessing more than 20 years of leadership experience in Minor League Baseball. His 20+ years of senior leadership and management experience includes stints as executive vice president of the Vancouver Canadians, Everett AquaSox, and Lancaster JetHawks; and as the assistant general manager for the Rancho Cucamonga Quakes. Backemeyer is a native of Lincoln, Nebraska. He holds a Masters of Business Administration from the University of Denver – Daniels College of Business and a Bachelor's of Science in Business.

The following six individuals constitute the club's management staff and act in the following capacities. These key personnel cumulatively possess over 50 years in the professional baseball industry.

- **Cheyenne Anderson** is in her second year as assistant general manager with the Sioux City Explorers. While earning her bachelor's degree in criminal law from Briar Cliff University, she played basketball for the Chargers. Anderson's hometown is Varina, Iowa.



- **Molly Bixenman** serves the Sioux City Explorers as director of business relations. This past July, she served as the Housing CoChair for Sioux City’s RAGBRAI committee, helping to match up riders with residents who opened their homes and yards for overnight stays.
- **Tara Rethman**, director of sales and marketing, is marking her third year of service with the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club. A native of Sioux City, Rethman earned her degree in marketing with a minor in event management from Iowa State University. She began her work with the Explorers in 2021 as a promotions intern.
- **Sam Burkhart**, ticket sales and account manager, began her career with the Sioux City Explorers in 2021 as a box office intern. She is originally from Salix and is now in her third season with the ball club. Burkhart attended the University of Northwestern, where she was a four- year letter winner in golf. She also played softball for two seasons. While enrolled in college, Burkhart earned her degree in Sports Management and minored in Coaching.
- **Dan Vaughan** is the voice of the Sioux City Explorers and serves as director of broadcasting and media for the baseball club. A 23-year broadcasting veteran, he is in his eleventh season of broadcasting games in the American Association of Professional Baseball. Prior to joining the Sioux City Explorers, Vaughan did the play-by-play for the Gary SouthShore RailCats, and the Kansas City Monarchs. He hosts the daily show “X’s Expresso” to highlight the news and game play of the Sioux City Explorers.

The Explorers’ internship program provides opportunities for students to work side-by-side with the above mentioned front office team members. The interns gain hands-on, stadium-based, experiential work experiences in marketing and sports, facility, and events management. The valuable experiences provided by the Sioux City Explorers give students insights into possible careers in the sports entertainment industry. At the end of the internship period, the interns are better qualified candidates when pursuing job opportunities, including open positions with the Explorers.

Each year, approximately 5 to 6 undergraduate students from area colleges and universities participate in Explorers internships. In a typical year, the Sioux City Explorers will review dozens of applications to select interns for front office positions. The Sioux City Explorers’ internship program has provided a career pathway to the sports entertainment industry for dozens over the baseball club’s thirty years; including entering their careers with the Sioux City Explorers.

Explorers Field Staff

On the field the team is lead by 10th year Manager Steve Montgomery. Montgomery has amassed over 500 wins on the field and has been an integral part of the community during his time here. In addition to leading the team on the field, he is active in the community doing speaking engagements, participating in reading programs, volunteering at the Miracle League, as well as leading numerous baseball camps and clinics.

Bobby Post is the longtime Pitching Coach for the Explorers, after having played for the team during his playing days. His commitment to Sioux City led him to permanently move his family to the Siouxland nearly a decade ago, where he and his wife also own and operate a local business to assist troubled youth. His commitment to this community is unmatched as he is a fixture around town and involved with helping improve countless organizations

Josh Hinz is the newest member of the coaching staff, serving this season as the X’s Hitting Coach. Josh and his wife have quickly become a valuable asset for the Explorers both on and off the field.



C. Lease Criteria

1. *Experience with Sports or Facility Management / Staffing and Organization*

- *The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club is clearly experienced with sports and facility management, having managed this facility and team in Sioux City for 30 years.*

The Sioux City Explorers Professional Baseball Club's unique and enduring advantage, in regard to Lewis and Clark Park, is its 30-year brand commitment to delivering a high-quality, professional, independent baseball product to spectators residing in Sioux City and the surrounding area. In the process of assembling a response to the Request for Proposal issued by the City of Sioux City, the Sioux City Explorers asked independent, outside people outside people in the baseball sector to comment on the Explorers experience with sports and facility management. Their letters are attached to this proposal as references.

The physical appearance of Lewis and Clark Park is very important. As part of its current lease with the City of Sioux City, the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club budgets expenditures each year to basic stadium maintenance, an amount that equals to about \$150,000 in the current year.

- **Chris Hasskarl** is head grounds keeper. He has overall responsibility for preparing and maintaining the playing surface (Mercy One Field) and bull pens at the highest professional level on a year-round basis. He also has oversight for maintaining the non-playing and landscaped areas in and around the ball park. Hasskarl has a Master's in Sport Management and has a background of working in athletic operations at Rice University prior to joining the Sioux City Explorers.

Hasskarl oversees a ground crew of 3 seasonal employees. During the baseball season, this crew routinely waters, mows and fertilizes the turf; edges the infield; and levels the dirt to keep the field in good playing condition. In addition to these duties, the grounds crew prepares the field for game time by chalking the playing area. The crew is also responsible for cleaning restrooms, the stands, and dugouts.

The operations of the concessions has a significant impact on the fans' game-day experiences and the effective operations of the infrastructure of Lewis and Clark Park. The Sioux City Explorers has built a replicable concessions model, whereby local nonprofits enter into an agreement with the ball club to earn revenues for their causes by staffing the concession counters and selling food and beverages. Over the past five years, many nonprofits have participated in this revenue sharing opportunity.

2. *Facility Operations and Management of a Team*

The legal and business structure of the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club is a limited liability company registered in the State of Iowa. John F. Roost, a local entrepreneur and business leader, is the sole proprietor. While he is ultimately responsible for the entire operations and fiscal vitality of the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club, Roost delegates day-to-day management responsibilities for operations to his vice president and general manager. Additional managers are employed for a wide range of duties, including offering high-quality customer service and game-day promotional activities. The general management of the players and coaches is the responsibility of the field manager, and the supervision of facility operations is the responsibility of the grounds keeper.



3. *Term of Lease Agreement*

The Explorers are proposing a 12-year Lease Agreement to remain the tenants at Lewis & Clark Park. This ensures stability for both parties and ensures the long-term future of baseball in Sioux City

4. *Lease Payment Amount: The Sioux City Explorers propose a lease payment of \$100,000 per year.*

5. *Capital Improvement Funding*

At 30 years of age, Lewis and Clark Park is a great place to watch professional level baseball and the park infrastructure remains in good condition. However, the baseball stadium will need ongoing care, repairs, and upgrades to meet the standards required by professional, minor league baseball; and to meet the game day expectations of fans.

The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club is willing to work with partner organizations, such as the Sioux City Minor League Baseball Foundation, to build or upgrade the infrastructure and amenities necessary to provide and continue to improve the playing field and game-day experiences for fans, such as a modernized hospitality area located down the 3rd base line in which to provide entertainment options for companies from throughout Siouxland both during the Explorers’ season as well as for off season event the provide benefits to the community.

The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club completed several major upgrades to Lewis and Clark Park ahead of this lease proposal, including:

2020	Infield Replacement	\$108,000
2016-2017	Video Equipment/Wiring	\$195,569
2016	Scoreboard	<u>\$95,342</u>
	Total Investment	\$398,911

Explorers’ fans love the new scoreboard and the upgraded video features it provides. This new scoreboard helps keep fans engaged with the plays on the field. It provides opportunities for fans to be informed of upcoming events at Lewis and Clark Park. The coordination behind the installation of the new scoreboard is just **one of several projects growing out of the long-term partnership** between the City of Sioux City and the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club.

The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club strives to provide family-friendly, fun, and safe game-day experiences. Eventually, with new and updated amenities in place, it’s very likely that entire new niche target markets may develop as part of the fan base.

6. *City of Sioux City’s use of the Facility for Non-Tenant Activities or Events*

As has been done in the past, the Sioux City Explorers will assure the City of Sioux City a minimum of 15 calendar days for non-tenant events during each year of the lease, in order to allow for community programming or other events the City may deem beneficial. The Explorers will remain flexible on this and will work with the City as other needs arise.

Under the operations of the Sioux City Explorers organization, the entertainment value and multi-purpose use of Lewis and Clark Park must and will continue to be compatible with its intended purpose as a stadium for baseball. The formation of the Sioux City Explorers franchise as part of the 1993 expansion of independent baseball across the country, allowed the City of Sioux City to gain a marketable position as a hub for sporting events, recreation, and entertainment.



In addition to making the Lewis and Clark Park (i.e. Stadium) a destination for baseball entertainment, because of the investments by the City and John Roost in the stadium and team, the area surrounding the stadium has evolved into one of the community's trendiest landscapes for recreation (passive and active), retailing, lodging, restaurants, fast-food establishments, automobile sales and services, healthcare, and banking and finance. This area is one of the largest areas of commercial growth in the City over the past 20 years. Part of the reason is the infrastructure that was required to facilitate the development of the stadium and the baseball club.

Other recreational attractions in this area include Rush Lanes, IBP Ice Center, and Cone Park; coming soon is the Mountain Bike Trail. Scattered in the area are franchised, mega brand fast-food establishments such as Taco Bell, Popeye's, KFC, and Fazio's and three hotels. As the first recreational and tourism entity in the area, the Sioux City Explorers played a critical role in the shaping of the Singing Hills development area. All of the previously mentioned are no more than 8 to 10 blocks away from the Sioux City Explorers and Lewis and Clark Park.

While baseball is the primary use for the stadium, Lewis and Clark Park lends itself for multiple types of events not related to the lease. The front office staff participate with Major League Baseball to put on the "X's Play Ball Weekend" where Siouxland Kids take swings in the batter's box on the field with pitches thrown by staff. Another event the Explorers host with the City of Sioux City is the Siouxland Homeless Sleepout to raise awareness of homelessness in the community.

7. Partnerships and Community Outreach Activities

Advertising methods used for the attraction of fans and spectators include a focus on radio, print, billboards, and signage. The marketing campaign is designed to reach fans and potential spectators in the Sioux City community, as well as rural residents residing in the 22-county Sioux City Designated Marketing Area defined by Nielsen Ratings. The advertising and promotional activities are intended to reach each target market and to allow overlap for complete coverage across the region.

For the attraction of baseball fans and game spectators, the Sioux City Explorers has chosen to advertise on local radio and television Medias. The broadcast ads depict the game-day experience that fans can expect to be engaged in. Complementing the ads, is the live broadcast on KSCJ radio and the video stream on American Association Baseball TV. Well-known broadcaster Dan Vaughan brings fans all the play-by-play action as he announces each game. As part of each radio broadcast the Explorers organization and fans also donate funds to the local Ronald McDonald House by pledging money for each Explorers stolen base.

Well established vendor partnerships and contracting are critical to the operations of Lewis and Clark Park and the baseball club. The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club has a sound vender management process for purchasing products and services, using a network of +9 major local vendors for lodging traveling teams, bus transportation, marketing and advertising, promotional products, team and fan apparel, concession items, event fireworks, and janitorial services. The Sioux City Explorers annually spends around **\$325,000** in contracts for goods, services, and daily park maintenance.

The Explorers have a long-standing partnership with Morningside University and their baseball program. Each year, the Explorers share the facility with Morningside, allowing them to call Lewis & Clark home for their practices and regular season games. Giving student athletes the chance to play at a professional facility is a great benefit to Morningside and the growth of their players and program.



Proprietor John Roost makes “commitment to the community” a part of his core business strategy through a strong community relations and charitable giving program. During the 2023 season, the Explorers provided game-day tickets, cash contributions, and in-kind donations of souvenirs and swag to 66 non-profit entities. These non-profits utilized the Explorer contributions to support their fundraising events or to bring clients and donors to the games. The non-profits represent many different sectors (human services, education, the Arts, and cultural institutions) spanning the tri-state area.

The Sioux City Explorers Children’s Foundation makes contributions to youth programs throughout the tri-state Siouxland region. Over the past 30 years, the Foundation has contributed thousands of dollars to Mr. Goodfellow Charities administered by the Sioux City Journal. In 1993, the Explorers teamed up with Bob Roes Point After restaurant to form the “Knot Hole” gang, a group of businesses who purchase and donate Explorer tickets to local nonprofit organizations. Some of which include the Boys & Girls Club, MidStep Services, Camp High Hopes, and Opportunities Unlimited.

This community commitment also means the Explorers’ players often spend time performing service in the community. Throughout the year, the staff, players, coaches, and team mascot make hundreds of visits to schools and area hospitals, and appearances at community events. There are numerous examples of how the team players participate in community outreach activities.

Held twice during the summer season is a youth baseball camp targeting kids aged 6 to 14 years old. The Explorers Baseball Camp allows the kids to team up with Explorer players in groups to learn and build their bunting skills; learn base running with the team manager; and participate in batting practice and field work.

One of the heartwarming, traditional special games to annually take place at Lewis and Clark Park is when a group of players from the Miracle League (predecessor: Challenger Division of Morningside Little League) form two teams to play on the diamond. These adaptive baseball programs are for individuals with physical and intellectual challenges. The players are generally youth under 22 years of age. Once a year, the Explorers invite these special players to take the field. Each team member gets to hit, run around the bases, and gets a buddy helper from the Explorers team. At the conclusion of this game, the Sioux City Explorers gift each player a souvenir item, such as a T-shirt. This event draws a sizeable crowd of families and spectators. This partnership has existed for over twelve years.

The Sioux City Explorers utilizes **experiential marketing or engagement marketing** as one of its community outreach strategies. John Roost tasks a director of sales and marketing with creating and executing this strategy to attract spectators and fans to the ball park. The following themed-game days are examples of the experiential marketing the Explorers use to engage with its fan base. At the forefront is the season-long salute to veterans. Each Sunday is set aside as Military Sunday with BOGO tickets for veterans and their families. The play-by-play announcer recognizes the veterans throughout the game.

Over the past 30 years, the Sioux City Explorers has built many notable game-day promotions into special traditions for Lewis and Clark Park: family-fun day with free hot dogs and canned soda, bark in the park, and run the bases. Since 1993, the Explorers Baseball Team has hosted a special game day for First Responders and Local Hero’s Night to support the Sioux City Police and Fire Departments.

Other events are aimed to bring awareness and support to families and causes with special needs. Jersey Auction helps raise funds for the June E. Nylen Cancer Center (special game worn jerseys are auctioned off); Blood Donation Drive Night for LifeServe (participants receive a free t-shirt for their donation), and Pirates and Princess Night (free t-shirts thrown out during the game).



A number of promotional activities help account for the Explorer's success. One of its strong emphasis is on the Post-Game Fireworks super show during the 4th of July holiday period, which helps both the baseball club and the City of Sioux City to attract tens of thousands of spectators over two nights to view a spectacular fireworks display. Residents of Sioux City gather with their children and family in the parking lots of Southern Hills Mall, Walmart, and other businesses in the Singing Hills area to watch the fireworks. The Explorers fireworks spectacular is now a tradition celebrating the 4th of July. Another is its emphasis on Pack the Park, an effort in partnership with Powell Broadcasting that provides free admission to everyone who attends the specially designated game. The third is throwing t-shirts or t-shirt give-away nights in partnership with Absolute Screen Art.

D. Related Experience

The Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club LLC is highly qualified to lease and operate Lewis and Clark Park as a baseball stadium. John Roost, principal owner, and the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club LLC have over 30 years' experience leasing and operating the stadium.

1. *Operational Feasibility*

The Sioux City Explorers and its owner have the demonstrated experience, capacity, and operational infrastructure to continue daily management and operations of Lewis and Clark Park; and to provide the City with a professional baseball team upon the execution of the new lease agreement.

John Roost has a seasoned and experienced management team and coaching staff in place. The Explorers have recorded 500 combined regular season and playoff victories since 2014, including 5 playoff appearances and 2 Championship series appearances. Explorers' Manager Steve Montgomery recorded his 500th career win as a manager in the final home game of the 2023 regular season.

The Sioux City Explorers have built a strong reputation for feeding players to the next level of baseball, including having 44 players sign Major League Baseball contracts since 2006. Many local collegiate players begin pursuing their professional baseball careers by signing contracts with the Sioux City Explorers. It is not uncommon to see a collegiate player from Morningside University or Briar Cliff University take the field during the Explorers regular season.

A little-known but important piece of the Sioux City Explorers is the local host families who provide free lodging for players during the season. Each year 15 to 20 families provide the players with room and board; many of the families have provided this service each season since 1993. In many cases, the families have become lifelong friends of the players. The players become part of the family. **This well-established network of host families is integral to the operational success of the Sioux City Explorers.** The host families that share their home do not get a monetary reimbursement from the Explorers – each family hosts on a voluntary basis.

2. *Integrated Ticket Sales Feasibility*

The most important revenue stream in the operation of Lewis and Clark Park and the Sioux City Explorers is ticket sales. The ticket sales and account manager oversees the daily sales operations of the full- and part-time ticket sales staff. The Explorers utilizes an event ticket sales management information system, ETix, to process ticket purchases and issue the tickets. The ticket sales software platform is integrated to all virtual purchases through online sales channels or the mobile app. The sales information gathered is backed-up daily to multiple servers. The system generates daily sales reports and can provide the team's management staff with financial information and just-in-time queries and reports. This ticket management information system has been part of the Explorers operations since 2006.



E. References Please see attached documentation and letters.

F. Additional Information | Beneficial Experiences and Capabilities

1. *Geographical Location of Individual(s) and Organization*

John Roost is the principal owner of the Sioux City Explorers Baseball Club. He is a Sioux City native and has kept the ownership of the baseball club in local hands. The vast majority of front office, ground crew, and support staff reside in Sioux City and surrounding towns. Several former players have chosen to call Sioux City their home. The players include Bobby Post, Leonardo Pitino, Alex Llanos, Jay Kirkpatrick, David Kerian, and Mike Phelps. These individuals are very active in the community with several now being local business owners.

2. *Economic Impact of the Sioux City Explorers*

Lewis and Clark Park was a critical component of a decades-long strategy to help the Singing Hills corridor evolve from underutilized farmland into the next level of economic productivity. The Sioux City Explorers have generated substantial economic and sales tax benefits since the team began playing at the Park in 1993.

Since 2010, nearly 800,000 fans have attended Explorers games at Lewis and Clark Park. Since the 2018 season (not including COVID year 2020), the Sioux City Explorers expended over \$1.28 million with local vendors for products and goods needed for game day operations, which equates on average over 58.7% of the club's annual operating budget. If we apply a conservative 1.2 multiplier on these expenditures, which occur outside the ball park to reflect the indirect spending that vendors have for payroll and goods, the rollover is an additional \$1.53 million generated in the local economy. A total of \$110,205 has been collected in sales tax since 2018 as a result of ticket sales and concessions sold at Explorers' games.

G. Proposal Summary

Since 1993, the Sioux City Explorers have been a staple of this community, providing lifelong memories for fans of all ages. During this time the team's ownership, staff and players have constantly strived to provide affordable family entertainment for our community while at the same time being outstanding corporate citizens. The above proposal summarizes just some of those efforts as well as the impact the Explorers have had on the Siouxland over the years. We appreciate the long-standing, mutually beneficial partnership the team has had with the City of Sioux City and look forward to continuing that for many more years to come. Should you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.

LANDSCAPE OF PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL





AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter of recommendation on behalf of John Roost and the Sioux City Explorers. My name is Josh Schaub and I am the Commissioner of the American Association of Professional Baseball. The Sioux City Explorers, as they have since the inception of the American Association, are members in good standing and one of the most stable members of our league. John Roost, who has over 26 years of management and ownership in professional baseball, is an exemplary Director who represents the Explorers in American Association relations.

The Sioux City Explorers are ideal members of the American Association. A model of consistency, the organization has been playing professional baseball since 1993. That is an accomplishment not held by many organizations in professional baseball and definitely not summer collegiate baseball. Further, and what is more relevant to today, the organization has elevated the level of performance on the business side and is now positioned to achieve its greatest successes in the coming years. With the addition of Tom Backemeyer, a much sought after executive in professional baseball, we anticipate Sioux City to become one of our strongest and economically impactful members. Tom's long history in professional baseball is well documented having made stops in six different locations of affiliated baseball showing record breaking success at all stops. It should be noted, the Explorers have likely never had a sales leader like him. Tom has instituted a great sales strategy across both ticketing and sponsorship, to which, we will see the results in the coming years. His track record speaks for itself and Sioux City should be excited about the future with him at the helm.

The Explorers are also a product to be proud of on the field. Having been in the playoffs 5 of the last 7 years, they continue to represent Sioux City in the best way possible. This includes producing numerous players transferred to MLB. The Explorers, like other members of the American Association, feature professional players with 75% of those players having reached Double-A status or above. This year, the American Association featured 25 players on opening day rosters who had played at the Major League level. One player having already been an MLB All Star. The average age of the American Association player is 26.3. This product, compared to other contemporary leagues is superior, as players are more refined, hit more home runs and make less errors, providing for a far superior viewing product for fans.

The Explorers are also part of the premier MLB Partner League in the American Association. Having been promoted in the Fall of 2020, the American Association has continued to turn out marketing initiatives once reserved only for affiliated teams. The American Association is also set for the first time in league history, to participate in MLB Winter Meetings alongside affiliated teams starting in 2023. The American Association is currently broadcasting its games coast to coast on linear, OTA, and OTT platforms. In addition, the American Association now participates in international play, scheduled to begin this year when the 2022 AA champion heads to Mexico to play the Mexican, Cuban, and Colombian league champions. This tournament titled Baseball Champions League will be broadcast on ESPN Mexico and on cable channels across the United States and Canada, in addition to aabaseball.tv. The Explorers are strong contenders to host this tournament in years to come as they continue inching closer to winning an American Association Championship. It should further be noted that the Explorers are strong contenders to host the 2024 or 2026 American Association All Star game which could bring scores of visitors and media attention.

Finally, the American Association brings with it incredible brand power. By being a part of the American Association, Sioux City positions itself along the likes of Kansas City, Chicago, Milwaukee, Lincoln, Winnipeg, and Fargo and brings with it energy around Sioux City's own brand. Contra this with the potential alternative options of



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aligning with the likes of Wilmer, MN, Wisconsin Rapids, WI, Wausau, WI, Mankato, MN, Minot, ND, or Waterloo, IA if a summer collegiate league is chosen. Every city's baseball product is seen as the "front porch", or first impression, of that city's proverbial "house". Sioux City's front porch should be professional baseball as the perception from employers, future employees, or visitors is important and makes clear that Sioux City should remain a professional baseball city. The Explorers, led by John Roost and Tom Backmeyer, being in the American Association, is the correct choice for Sioux City.



September 5, 2023

Dear Selection Committee:

I understand that the City of Sioux City with the help of the Selection Committee is considering several options for renewal of the lease on the baseball stadium. I would hope that the renewal with the Sioux City Explorers of the American Association would be high on the list of options.

When I first came to Sioux City in 1992, there was no baseball facility in the city. I was proposing starting a new independent professional league in the Upper Midwest. Sioux City had the courage and vision to consider my proposal and commit to a new stadium. Because of this decision, the Northern League was able to organize and flourish, and I dare to say that without Sioux City, there would be no independent professional baseball as we know it today.

The American Association has the top cities in the Upper Midwest as members, and it puts Sioux City in that same league. Sioux City has a 30 year history as part of the Northern League and American Association with a dozen players having made the major leagues (MLB). With the recent decision of MLB to name the American Association as a partner league, it gives the league even greater stability and recognition.

Every time I visit Sioux City and see the development around the ballpark, I am amazed at the changes from the time I looked at an empty plot of land some three decades ago. I certainly hope that the Sioux City Explorers stay as an important part of your community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Miles Wolff

Former Commissioner, American Association and Northern League



During the 2023 season, the Explorers have made cash or in-kind donations to the following local organizations, showing their on-going commitment to helping the Siouxland community:

Aiden John Strand Benefit group

Akron-Westfield Athletic Booster Club

Alton Public Library

Alton St. Mary's

American Legion Auxiliary McNiff Unite 3F9

Angie DeRoin Benefit Golf Tournament

Bickford Senior Living

Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools

Big Game Conservation Association

Cedar County Catholic Schools

The Center

Charter Oak-Ute extended learning program

Crittenton Center

Dakota Valley After Prom

East High Baseball

Elk Point Community Ambulance

Elk Point United Parish Global Methodist Church

Golden Horizons Assisted Living

Heartland Counseling Services

Heelan Auction

Hope Christian Reformed Church

Huntington's Disease Society of America
Ida Grove Chamber of Commerce
Iowa SIDS foundation/Siouxland
JDRF - Nebraska/Iowa Chapter
Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Middle School
Lawton Bronson Football
Learning for life - Burgess health center
Morningside University Psi Chi Chapter
MVP United 14U Volleyball Team
NOAH'S Hope
Orange City Public Library
The Pier Center for Autism
Pink Ladies of Siouxland
Ponca Frog Days
Ponca Summer Recr.
River Valley After Prom Committee
Rock Rapids Fire Fighters
Ronald McDonald House of Charities of Siouxland
Rosecrance Jackson Center
Sam's Club
SGT. Floyd River Museum & Welcome center
Sheldon Christian School
SGT. Bluff Schools After Prom
Siouxland Habitat for Humanity
Siouxland Junior Darts
Siouxland Youth Chorus
Sioux City Mites Shoot Out
Sioux Center Public Library
Remen's St. Mary's Church

St. Patrick's School
Sunnybrook Community Church
Sunnybrook MOPS/MOMSnext
Swing For a Cure
Unity Way of Siouxland - Young Leaders Society
Wet-Nose Rescue
Women Aware
Norm Waitt Sr. YMCA
Zion St. John Lutheran School
Boys and Girls Club
Mary J. Treglia Community House
Sacred Heart School Foundation
Siouxland Center Active Generations
Siouxland Senior Center
Sunnybrook MOPS
Pub 52 Golf Tournament