BEFORE THE GATES OPENED

Brian Crawford Memorial Sports Complex - The 2021 Operating Model

A contemporaneous case study of facility governance, user groups, tournament economics, technology, sustainability, and community sports planning - documented November 24, 2021.

Historical boundary: this report separates the November 2021 record from retrospective 2026 research questions. Later findings are not projected backward into the 2021 presentations.

Executive Summary

On November 24, 2021, near the transition of the Brian Crawford Memorial Sports Complex into operational use, Kenneth R. Crawford recorded two presentations for the Seminole State College Educational Foundation. The first examined operating structures, user groups, fees, concessions, tournament economics, facility utilization, economic impact and documentation. The second explained a proposed website and Playbook 365 operating environment. Their value is that they preserve the questions being asked before the complex developed an established operating history.

1. Historical Context

The presentations are planning records, not final policy or proof of what the Foundation ultimately adopted. The speaker repeatedly frames the material as options, suggestions and visual aids for leadership. Crawford identifies December 31, 2021 as his final day working with Seminole State College and the Educational Foundation, giving this study a defined historical endpoint.

2. The Foundational Governance Question

The operations presentation begins by asking whether the process is realistically duplicable and whether another person could step in if the person running it left or retired. That makes continuity, procedures, authority, records and institutional knowledge part of the operating model - not merely event scheduling.

3. Six Operating Models Considered

Model	2021 concept
Foundation operated	No user groups; activity run through the owner/Foundation.
Multiple user groups	Facility owner plus several user groups.
Exclusive user group	Sport-specific exclusive operating access.
Community sports commission	Community interests organized around youth sports, school use and economic impact.
Flip Flop	Maximize field-use value while contracting concessions for a percentage/revenue share.
Internal institutional operation	President's office or internal designee manages operations.

4. Economic Impact vs. Facility Revenue

The 2021 presentation repeatedly frames a tradeoff between direct usage fees and broader economic impact. Tournament operators may seek lower facility costs because events can generate visitor spending, while the facility owner may need direct operating revenue. The material treats the preferred balance as a mission and sustainability question.

5. The Flip Flop Revenue Concept

The proposed model questioned the assumption that concessions must be the owner's primary profit center. It contemplated stronger field-use revenue while contracting concessions for a percentage, potentially with a benchmark and shared upside.

6. Facility Utilization as an Asset Question

The presentation estimates that scheduled college games used roughly 17 percent of available dates and assigns potential rental value to otherwise unused field time. A separate showcase illustration uses 280 games at $200 per game to produce a $56,000 gross rental scenario. These are planning calculations, not audited forecasts.

7. Operate Events or Lease the Fields?

The presentation explicitly asks whether the organization should operate showcases or lease the fields. Rental can offer predictable facility income with less event-level responsibility; self-operation can capture more event revenue while assuming registration, staffing, officiating, scheduling, awards, customer service and risk.

8. User Groups, Sanctioning Bodies and the Middle Layer

The source distinguishes among user groups, tournament directors, associations and sanctioning bodies and discusses annual team sanctions, event-level fees, scheduling leverage, rules, rankings and negotiating room. Dollar figures and organizational descriptions are preserved as 2021 statements unless independently verified.

9. The Proposed Digital Operating System

The website tutorial describes a simple public-facing site connected to Playbook 365 for specialized registration and tournament functions. It also discusses separate BCM Sports and Foundation accounts, merchant setup, processing, forms, Stripe, concessions, team displays, tournament registration and data collection.

10. Community Programming and Access

The proposed programming included conventional league opportunities, a higher-caliber competitive option and an All-Star or draft-style league intended to accept children who might not already have a team or coach. Community participation was therefore part of the planning model, not merely tournament economics.

11. Documentation as an Operating Principle

Near the end of the operations presentation, Crawford identifies documentation as a lesson from earlier youth-sports operations and emphasizes being able to provide supporting records when needed. That principle provides a historical bridge to later Baseball Heaven research without implying the later methodology already existed in 2021.

12. Historical Endpoint

The presentations capture November 24, 2021. Crawford identifies December 31, 2021 as his final day with Seminole State College and the Educational Foundation. This study does not attribute subsequent operating decisions to him unless later primary records establish that connection.

13. 2021 Questions - 2026 Research Perspective

2021 question	Retrospective research lens
Can another person step into the system?	Institutional continuity and documented procedures.
Foundation operation or user groups?	Who controls scheduling, revenue streams and access?
Exclusive user group?	What safeguards accompany exclusive or preferred access?
Usage fees or economic impact?	How are facility revenue, visitor spending and community benefit distinguished?
Run events or lease fields?	Where do revenues, costs, risks and responsibilities sit?
Keep concessions or contract them?	How are ancillary revenues documented and allocated?
Central registration/payment platform?	Can participation and financial activity be reconstructed?
Community sports commission?	Can shared governance align youth access, sustainability and economic objectives?
Document everything?	Are claims supported by records that can be independently reviewed?

This comparison is retrospective analysis. It identifies questions later Baseball Heaven research can examine; it does not claim that the 2021 presentations established later findings.

14. Primary Sources

Options-User-Groups-Fees-Operations - original video: https://youtu.be/cpBHQj_C_VQ

SSCEF Website Tutorial Explanation - original video: https://youtu.be/knvrYM82DRI

15. Conclusion

Before the Gates Opened is best understood as a preserved decision point: governance before habit, operating choices before precedent, and documentation before retrospective evaluation. Its continuing value is the ability to compare questions asked in 2021 with evidence assembled later while keeping the periods analytically separate.