

NCYHA BOARD MEETING MINUTES - 3/31/14

Meeting held at the Pennfield School



Attendees:

Board Members: Kevin Sullivan, John Stahl, Frank Toner, Todd Clark, Marilyn Stookey, Jen Lopes, Paul Grimes, (MJ Bregenhoj), (Andy Bellagamba)

Advisory Group Members: Scot West, Kristin Browne, Angelo Grilli, Colin Jackson, Gina DeSantis, Ian Clemmey

Old Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes from 3/3/14 – Kevin - Approved.

House League

- Insurance issues when a player “plays down” – John
- Current USA hockey rules prohibit playing down.
- Is it a matter of what we name it? What if the name of the group doesn’t specify an age?
- Does it make sense at times? Yes?
- There are other ways that we don’t follow USA hockey – sometimes . . .
- Does this open us up to risks? We can’t be draconian, but it is frowned up

Girls’ Program – Frank, Kevin (Beth away)

- Not much extra ice from SG next year – just some tournaments not held on weekends.
- In discussing priorities still need to consider constraints in ice time.
- After high school starts, the reality is that if we give extra ice to house or girls’ programs during the week, it will affect our travel teams – and cause more late practices.
- House league as well – an extra sheet. Give them a try in the early part of the season before the high schools start to see what happens.
- Next year SG will rotate the practice times – not letting the high schools have the earlier practices regularly.
- We can give the players a credit if the ice time doesn’t work.
- Some ice pops up from time to time – even after the high schools start.
- Motion that we commit to getting the girls and house league a shared sheet of ice each week from when SG opens until the high schools start, and evaluate available ice after that.

- Approved.

2014-2015 Travel Team Fees – Marilyn, Frank

- Up 3% from last year.
- Add \$40 to the travel fee right now. See discussion below about league management.

Spring Tryouts – All

- currently Mite A – 7 (all '06 birthdays), Squirts – 42, 3 goalies, Peewees, 43 with 1 goalie, Bantams – 20 with 4 goalies,
- Number of eligible Bantam players is lower this year than it has been – maximum of 39 skaters and 4 goalies if everyone signs up.
- Mites playing up – 6,
- What if kids at the Mite A tryouts then decide to try out for Squirts.
- Possible to start the Mite A season with 7-8 players for cross ice and recruit during the season.
- 3-4 years ago – kids played 3-4 years of Mites. Maybe that will be what happens with Squirts now – kids will play 3 years of Squirts.
- Set a minimum age for Peewees? Kids would leave.
- Portsmouth and Middletown baseball – both say no 9 year olds in majors.
- Do we treat kids playing up just the same as those who are of age and trying out – hesitant to make cuts?

Scheduling – Jim, Andy

Scheduling Questions from Jim:

- 1) When does the NCYHA board ideally want the Bantam and Midget First season ice to start (so Andy can try to find ice at other rinks since ours are not open) – my comment: This Requires ideally a date answer such as August 1st
- 2) Based on that start date – when do you want Midget Tryouts?
- 3) How many sheets a week for teams in item 1
- 4) How many teams at each level (guesstimate for Midgets / Bantams have spring tryouts so this should be known very soon)
- 5) What date does NYCHA want all the other teams to start and how many times a week on the ice until SG and PA opens

If all the answers are “same as last year” – I will write it up for Board approval

- Uncertainty with state situation right now.
- Plan on “same as last year” for now.

Jerseys – Jen

- Blue travel jerseys to be picked up at tryouts.
- Sample socks to replace this year's socks were not acceptable – waiting for a pair of knit socks.
- Will new jerseys get the patch? – no they will be silk screened.
- Logos are too large on current jerseys, can logo on patch be smaller?
- We should ask for a sample patch asap
- We could go to a smaller storage unit – without the jerseys to store.

Bylaw Change – Paul

- A change to replace House League Registrar with MDP Director on the board.
- **Approved.**

Treasurer Appointment – Paul

- Jen Lopes appointed to serve remainder of Frank Toner's term – starting at the Annual Meeting.
- **Approved.**

Procedure/Event Schedule – Kevin, John, Frank

- No discussion.

Travel Team Injury Survey – Paul

- Survey completed, but weakness was that it did not cover instances when a player was hurt during a game, but did not stay out for subsequent weeks of hockey.
 - Also should have encouraged more comments from coaches.
 - One concussion missed in Peewee A – player out 2 weeks.
 - USA hockey wants coaches teaching contact at younger ages.
- Questions brought up in conversations with coaches and comments:
- Should we screen players for skating ability and discourage some from playing Bantams?
 - Should we have a procedure for return to play – doctor's clearance?
 - Are we doing enough to prepare players for full checking?

New Business**Annual Meeting Plans - Kevin**

- Would like to make it into more of an event
- Would be good to get more people there.
- Upstairs at Aquidneck Pizza or at the Newport Beach Hotel.
- Pizza and Beer usually.
- Monday May 5th (Cinco de Mayo . . .)

Bantam Practice Times – John

- See ice time discussions above – times will rotate with high schools next year.

A Branded Whalers Web App – Kristen

- Sports Ngin can do a branded web app.
- \$1400 setup – could be waived, \$995 per year
- Right now, they collect .99 if you add more than one team.
- Functionality is the same – just branded and we give the app to everyone
- The current app works well – not sure we want to spend the \$1000 to get the Whalers logo.
- Either do it and not charge for it, or stay the same.
- Current thought is to stay the same – not pay more.

RI/SNEHC Hockey Update – Kevin

- Proposal to “privatize” our league. To allow it to be run more efficiently.
- New owners would take care of schedules, playoffs.
- They would try to recruit additional programs
- League would still be mites – midgets
- Season would run from the week after labor day – first week of march
- Minimum of 28 games per team.
- Mites would have 8 full ice games after first of year
- Mite jamborees would still be organized by RI hockey.
- They would cover the cost of all playoff games. Top 4 teams make the playoffs.
- Need ice time from organizations by July 1
- Division directors – would be a coach in each level.
- They would have players of the week, weekly give-aways, etc.
- Some all-star component to the league.
- Cost would be \$550 per team squirts/peewees, Midgets/Bantams – around 250-270, Mites 250
- League becomes a privately owned organization.
- So the money goes where?
- For profit? Not sure.

- We as a state have trouble running a league. We have gotten by for years as a volunteer organization – now competing against professionally run organizations.
- Lots of questions/discussion last night at the state meeting.
- Concerns – cost, representation.
- Valley league is the model for this.
- What will the representation of the Member Associations? MA's will be the customers.
- What guarantees are there in price for coming years?
- What is the problem this is trying to solve?
- What if the state league hires its own scheduler, commissioner, PR person?
- Lots of positive feelings about this in the room at the state meeting.
- Is there a contract involved? What if they don't do a good job? Can we take it back?
- If they have total control, where does it end?
- If they want to grow the league – what if they add teams in northern states?
- RI hockey now focuses on Yankee Conference, etc, rather than running a league. That is why the league and the state were separated.
- Would this include the Saints as well? No - they would still be the RI hockey Tier 1 rep.
- Could affect travel fees to some extent – about \$40 per player.
- EHF – for example, is a paid league, runs well, schedule comes out Aug. 1st.
- They would schedule as many weekend games as possible.
- We have concerns that starting the week after labor day is too early.
- How does this help keep teams? – present as a well-run organization, can do a better job running the league, can generate more excitement, they have developed good connections.
- What do they want to get out of this – can't be philanthropic – If it's to make money, then their incentives could be different than what we want.
- How are they going to set up divisions? Are they going to have parity rounds? Are they going to allow teams to sandbag?
- What if they sell the league? Clause saying that they can't sell it?
- What about a 1 year trial?
- Woonsocket now paying \$1800 per kid to play in a league with 3 teams in NH and 1 in Enfield CT.
- What to do? We have a week to submit questions/concerns to the league.
- The control issue is key.
- Newport can only be as good as the other organizations and the league we're in.

Coaching Evaluations

- Need to see the evaluations now.

Next Board Meeting Date/Time/Place – Paul

- April 14th – 6:30 – Post-tryout meeting for board of directors only. Always a tough meeting – approving coaches and number of teams.
- May meeting on May 5th – 5:30
- Annual meeting at 7:00 on May 5th.