

Sun Prairie Youth Hockey Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2014

Audience: Joe Brickl, Sue Culbertson, Kellie Feiler, William Gilbertson, Marcie Rauls, Misi Watters, Patti Weber, David Johnson, Dan Carpiaux, and Molly Breyer

President Jen Kurtz called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Dave had indicated that he would be a little late. Jason Ledford and James Trent were absent.

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None. Jen asked for confirmation that there were no public comments, given the number of people present. There were still no public comments given.

2. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Secretary – Betsy McCrary

The March meeting minutes were approved and have been posted on the website.

Betsy reported that the alumni tournament utilized all volunteer staff f (rather than paid staff) in the concession stand. Concessions took in over \$1,000 for the one-day event, and four out of the five members of ecomm worked concession stand shifts. There was also an earlier OBHL tournament staffed by volunteers that grossed over \$700. It is important to use volunteers wherever possible to maximize profit. As the Benisch family has given up the concession stand management as of March 31, Betsy has been working on keeping it going until the concessions committee can be organized.

b. Treasurer – Gary Brendemuehl

Gary reviewed the bank account balances. Since Jan. 27, almost \$7,000 has been paid out in staffing related expenses (e.g., payroll, payroll processing, insurance, permits). It was nice to have volunteers for the last two events. Jen noted that we're not complaining about paying staff, but as the concession stand is SPYHA's main revenue source outside of dues, money paid out in wages impacts the bottom line.

It was mentioned that the second round of glass blocks are in, and there are more coming. The engraving has been done by a place in Milwaukee, but they are not very expedient, so Dave is checking into alternatives locally. Similar to the key challenges, there seem to be issues when not working locally.

c. President Elect – Karen Welling

Karen echoed the need for people to come work in the concession stand. It really wasn't too bad – the main challenge is restocking. The cash register is super easy!

d. Past President – Dave Batterman

Dave has nothing more that isn't already on the agenda.

e. President – Jen Kurtz

Jen extended her biggest thank you to Betsy, who has been here at the rink as much as she has been at home lately. She also thanked the PeeWee regional tournament volunteers. Dave and Gary spent a lot of time on clock and scoresheet duty for the PeeWee regional tournament. We received a lot of complements on the building and tournament. Lisa and Ross and Stacy Hollfelder helped out a lot at the Alumni Tournament.

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Volunteer Committee – Mary Jo Blumer and Sue Culbertson

Sue reported that they are updated on DIBS through May, and all claimed hours should be updated through today as well.

b. Annual Fundraising Committee

This will be covered a bit later.

c. Communications Committee – Steve Traut

There has been a little delay in getting some things posted, but nothing much to report.

d. ACE Director – Absent (Troy Giesegeh)

Jen explained that Troy could not make it tonight. With his current commitments, he has indicated that he feels he can't continue as ACE Director for the next season, so it will be open for the 2014-2015 season. Ecomm will be looking for applicants and will provide recommendations to the Board. This position is Board-approved, while the coaches' rep is an elected position. Leah asked for clarification on what the ACE Director does. Jen

explained that the ACE Director is a USA Hockey-required position that oversees hockey programs. The person works with the coaches rep and coaches committee and coordinates and /participates in evaluations. The hope is to teach kids from early travel ages on the same system as the varsity program. Other Sun Prairie sports follow similar development plans. Chris Finkler and Troy are absolutely willing to help and be available. We'd like to return to three ACE Directors – one head/lead, one travel, and one ADM, if we can find sufficient number of interested people. Dave noted that it is a huge job for one person. When SPYHA went to a volunteer association, Rob Wiesnewski had done it alone before it was split into three roles.

e. Region 4 Meetings

There was not a Region 4 meeting since our last Board meeting. The next meeting is Wednesday.

The Tier I games that were associated with the PeeWee regional tournament were cancelled, and there were some Tier II cancellations as well, so that will need to be worked out between SP Ice and WAHA.

Elections for Region 4 will be held at the next meeting, if anyone is interested. We currently have two SPYHA representatives on the Region 4 Board – Jen and Karen. Dave asked why we asked a Board member to go too. Jen explained that when it was made a requirement a few years ago, the thought was that it was a great way to understand more about Region 4 and WAHA, and how decisions are made. They take off from May through July, and resume meeting in August. Steve is up for the next meeting, which begins at 7 pm at MIA.

4. LEVEL REP REPORTS

a. ADM U6 / ADM U8 – Leah Phippen / Lisa Wendler

Leah said overall, U6 had a lot of love and were a very cohesive group. There have been some questions about Learn to Skate Hockey 3 & 4. Dave will try to bring Lisa Henning in to answer questions about Hockey 1-2 / 3-4, since no one on the SPYHA Board really knows what these programs, led by the skating director and SP Ice, really entail. Betsy said based on information she had received, Hockey 3-4 was intended for ADM skaters who were interested in increase stamina and skating skills, but that was just an interpretation of the flyer that came home from the schools.

Lisa didn't have anything to add.

b. Squirt – Stacy Hollfelder

Nothing to report.

c. PeeWee – Alison Veldkamp

Alison talked to Marcie, who noted that Dan was working on some summer programming for the PeeWees.

d. Bantam – Steve Traut

There was a set of jerseys turned in to Steve that he is not sure about – if anyone can provide info that would be great.

e. High School – Absent (James Trent)

Betsy noted that she has not conveyed SPYHA's intent to the league next year because we are waiting on word of how the league is handling Stevens Point's last minute cancellation. Since they haven't paid, their league bond should be forfeited to Sun Prairie. Dave asked that this be discussed at the annual meeting.

f. Coaches rep. – Absent (Jason Ledford)

Nothing

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Capital Fundraising – Jen Kurtz/Lisa Wendler

Lisa needs to schedule something. Shelley Smith has been helping to make some contacts.

The Mallards fundraiser is set for June 6 – unfortunately, that is the day before the SPLL day. Everything is ready to go.

Dave added that Lisa is an SP Ice employee dedicated to marketing, and she is doing a lot of follow-up. Lisa also is very happy for any leads.

b. 2014-2015 season: practice frequency, projected numbers, teams

Dave had initiated some discussion in January regarding team size. Unfortunately, there isn't much that we can do about it until we know how many players sign up.

From the audience, Dave Johnson asked if we can set up ranges, so if there were 9-10 kids or less, there would be two teams, but greater than 11 or 12 there would be three.

In the past, evaluators have generally tried to balance teams. This is something that could be looked at, while also keeping in mind safety and cost.

Dave (Batterman) noted he didn't believe that two practices per week were enough, but that comes with a cost. With bigger numbers the more you spread the cost.

Dave Johnson felt that you don't need to know the exact numbers, but the Board needs to explore those numbers now.

Dave Batterman explained that he brought it up so sooner because SPYHA needs to buy ice and make those commitments sooner than in the past.

Betsy added that original plans were the season were for three squirt teams and three peewee teams, but the registration numbers didn't support that, and as we had buy ice a decision had to be made fairly quickly by the Board.

Jen observed that for the PeeWee Tier II tournament, which was comprised of top youth teams (not AAA) similar to SPYHA, most rosters were 15-18 players. She feels bad that the PeeWee teams struggled this year.

Dave Batterman thought that we would need to make commitments on team numbers by June, which isn't really a lot of time. Again, this is driven by a need to make ice buying commitments. Every year it is a best guess.

Misi Watters felt the decision has to be left to parents.

Karen explained that three years ago parents made a decision to go with three teams, and two of those teams had very difficult seasons because of the small teams: injury and illness made a significant difference.

Misi Watters took exception, stating "but you are taking your experiences, what about others."

Jen brought the meeting to order, as this was a Board discussion not open to public comment at this time. She noted that there has always been an opportunity for parents to come to Board meetings and share opinions and have discussion, but often attendance is poor when these decisions are being made.

Lisa asked at what point does a decision have to be made?

Dave said it will have to be made at one of the next Board meetings. It's great that everyone is here. He noted that despite horrible experiences this year, dues can't be set at \$1800 per kid – having three teams of 10 kids can't make the sport unaffordable. Hockey is not an elitest sport, and with the new arena we need to reinforce the idea that it is affordable. Cost still has to be a factor in team decisions. Most likely it will be around annual meeting. We have a spreadsheet formula to work through, and ecomm has and will be working on it more. Soon we'll sit down and meet with Chuck to get a better idea of what options might be available for scheduling.

Betsy noted that there are also some items that will have to be factored into dues that haven't been tracked as closely before: playdowns, state, insurance, and other fees typically were off-set by other revenue sources. Previously there wasn't much visibility to this, especially playdowns. Those invoices came as a surprise right at the end of the season, too late to pass on to teams.

Dave thought maybe we could put together a working meeting to try to look at options.

Alison asked about 5:30 am practices for PeeWees and up. Certainly that would be an option. She would be okay with that three times a week, but recognizes that might not be for everyone.

Jen asked for public discussion.

Misi Watters said that with smaller teams, then practices would be more effective, so it might not be necessary to add more practice days.

The question was asked if we spend more than we make – no, we shouldn't. That's why the Board shares the costs/prices and sets dues in open meetings.

There was also a question about buyout labor and how that is allocated. Last year, no families bought out in advance. Gary said the preliminary estimate would be for volunteer penalty payments to come in at \$4,500, which will help offset some operating expenses.

Marcie Rauls felt that parents should still be involved in voting on teams sizes. She doesn't like that this is all about money, it should be about development too, and that part needs to be factored in.

Jen understood but also said the Board has the obligation to balance to make hockey affordable.

Marcie wants our kids to develop, and felt that every team that had short benches creamed them. With that in mind, she would advocate for much smaller teams, or even unbalanced teams to match skill levels.

Dave Johnson felt that with the decision made based on ice costs, the teams had players that weren't competing at a level that was appropriate.

One suggestion was to go to one less tournament, which would free up more out-of-pocket money.

Dave Batterman said the formula for dues is not a secret. SPYHA uses it every year, but there are usually about three people at the meeting to hear about it. SP Ice Arena needs to sell ice, so we have to get things figured out.

Stacy noted that while there are some strong opinions being shared, it may not be everyone's thoughts or opinions. This is one way to solicit opinions, but there should be some consideration for everyone.

Lisa said the Board tries so hard to make a decision – the right decision, and then if things don't end up great, we can't be perfect, there's criticism. She feels people should be at meetings and be involved upfront.

Karen sees benefits for smaller teams – but practices are the important thing. She is interested to see what options are / how that might work.

Jen would love to have 12 players on a team, but sometimes that just isn't possible.

Steve clarified that he is NOT looking for 10 on a bantam team. It was agreed that this goal is more appropriate for squirts and PeeWees.

We will try to schedule something to include the entire Board.

c. Coaches survey

Gary explained that since he and Nate had talked about a survey to gauge fundraising anyway, he worked on incorporating that into an overall "customer" survey on coaches/team rep/communication/Board. Jen noted that this was something previously assigned to Jason and Dave, with Lisa involved as well. Gary will send information to the Board when he gets details. It looks like there are per-email address limits, and he's working to resolve how to handle multiple players given that, but will figure it out. Steve asked who the survey results would come to. Jen thought the results would come to ecomm who would then prepare the information for the Board. Jen thanked Gary and asked the Board to stay tuned for additional information via email.

d. Committees

i. Annual Fundraising – Golf Outing

This is set for Friday, May 30 at the Oaks. The only June opening would have meant sharing an outing, so they are trying something before summer vacation. The Oaks is putting in a summer structure with a concrete base. The afternoon start will include a box lunch and then evening cocktails/light dinner.

ii. Concession Stand Committee

This committee is in dire need of volunteers, probably three or four families to take over ordering and management, which would fulfill volunteer requirements. They also enter openings in DIBS.

Misi Watters asked at what point are items pulled off DIBS. Betsy explained that typically, the paid employees would notify the concession stand managers of their availability by the Wednesday night before the weekend events, and then on Thursday paid staff would be scheduled based on remaining openings. Some openings might still remain for volunteers, depending on the overall numbers needed. Jen added that Brian and Terri Benisch were authorized by the Board to schedule paid workers when needed, because we had to have the concession stand open.

Jen added that it has been a struggle to get public skates coordinated. Betsy has been trying to get things filled, but she has concerns about safety when there is no one takes ice supervision, for example. Dave will revisit this on the SP Ice side.

iii. Jerseys

No update as James is absent.

iv. Tournament Director/Committee

Mike and Sue Culbertson have agreed to work on this committee, but there is room for additional help. Sue doesn't see this as a problem/conflict with her work on the volunteer committee.

v. Others

Mary Jo Blumer had sent Betsy an email asking for clarification about various committees. Betsy will try to create a list with information in time for the annual meeting.

e. 2014-2015 Volunteer requirements

Betsy reviewed the current buyout language based on the Board's action last month and would like to purpose some clarifications to ensure that it is clear as far as timing and advanced vs. post-season buyout, particularly of concession hours. Currently, the buyout in advance is \$15/hour for concessions. Travel families have until Oct. 31st to pay out their 30 hours for \$350, while ADM advanced payout is \$85 for the nonconcession hours. The current "penalty" is \$15/hour, which means that there isn't an incentive to buy out concessions hours in advance unless something changes. Realistically, we want people to fulfill their concession hours or pay for them in advance, because we'll have to use paid staff to cover shortfalls.

Lisa asked about one paid staff versus two paid staff. Depending on how busy things are, openings are sometimes filled with two workers, so that one can grab things for restocking or the area can remain open when a restroom break is needed. Volunteers tend to know other resources that they can call for help if necessary.

Stacy thought \$20/hour would be a reasonable increase percentage.

From the audience, Dave Johnson asked why there would have to be a penalty for not fulfilling hours, why not just charge the \$15, which should be enough to offset the labor

Jen feels there would be plenty of time for families to know and take care of requirements, and she didn't mind a penalty. There are additional costs to managing paid staff beyond just the minimum wage salary – it requires extra effort from concession stand management to coordinate staffing, the treasurer has to collect and tally hours for paychecks, which then have to be submitted, and there are also accounting and payroll costs too.

Betsy added that when she answers volunteer questions, she mentions that the association is all the more successful when people are willing to do more than just the absolute minimum. For example, if coaches walked away after just putting in their 30 hours, how would people feel? Same with the Board – many people put in many, many more hours than the minimum requirements. Without that level of commitment, we would have a tough time as an association!

Stacy made a motion to set the volunteer penalty for concession hours at \$20 hour. Leah seconded the motion.

Jen asked if there was any public comment. Misi Watters wondered if there would be better response if the hours were broken down into a certain amount per session, or a percentage to be done each method.

Jen thought that was an interesting idea – to require a percentage per segment of time. Karen suggested maybe assigning each team a month to cover would be an idea. Jen asked the age level reps to reach out for some feedback on that thought.

Karen also noted that perhaps a weekend could be assigned to a particular team to cover, maybe managed by the team or level rep. This could also be suggested at the team rep meeting.

Molly Breyer was sad that this is something that has to be mandated, that more people aren't willing to step up to help.

Steve asked if there would be a public shame list of those who don't do their hours . . . if something like that would motivate people to help.

Marcie Rauls added that she felt Dave Johnson was right – there wasn't really a need to increase the late penalty.

There was no further public or Board discussion. Motion passed 9-0.

f. ADM equipment needs

There are still four crates of equipment to evaluate – no one is sure exactly what is in there, and until it is unpacked we don't want to order more equipment.

This will stay on the agenda until addressed.

g. U6 Dane County League Participation

Jen has checked into things further using her Region 4 contacts, and there is no formal Dane County League for U6. A few local teams just contacted one another. Jen has the name of the unofficial coordinator and will share it with Casey Rufener and Paul Vilwock. The six organizations were Middleton, Southwest, McFarland, Waunakee, Patriots, and Polar Caps. Like U8, there are multiple games going on – probably three games. It is similar to a jamboree. Casey Rufener didn't see a downfall of this.

Leah noted that she hasn't talked to parents about this, and wasn't sure that it was something that everyone would be interested in, particularly those newer to hockey. Gary could try to incorporate something into the survey.

Dave asked questions about ensuring any distance was local, and if there was a similar 10 am to 3 pm Sunday ice requirement? Could they use existing practice ice?

It was thought that maybe they could end the season earlier, or make 1 hour optional.

Lisa asked how something could be completely optional when there was cost involved that would have to be addressed somehow. Casey wasn't sure about flexibility/adding teams, but they were able to do that half way through for U8. He has made contact with a coach from McFarland. Maybe it could be separated by level.

Lisa suggested maybe something like this could be pursued instead of a jamboree. Their previous experience with one has been challenging, with a pretty awful schedule. Leah said they charged \$30/skater for jamborees. Lisa asked if she should make a motion that U6 be allowed to explore this more?

Dave thought the Board had already given informal support to collect information. Jen agreed that we should continue to gather information. It looks like the new season would start up around Nov. 10, after Try Hockey for Free. We can keep it as old business. Betsy asked for confirmation that it would stay in the Madison area, too, rather than the Janesville, Beloit, Monroe trips that the U8's are making.

Discussion ended with those interested asked to email the Board with any additional information they may have.

6. New Business

a. Annual Elections/Membership Meeting

We need to set the date for the annual membership meeting with elections. Typically the Board meeting happens after the membership meeting, however, several people are not available May 18. Moving it up would bring it to Mother's Day, which isn't great, but meetings typically do fall on Father's Day.

Dave made a motion to set the annual elections/membership meeting for June 1 at 5 pm, with the June meeting moved to June 22 at 6 pm. Schedule would return to normal in July. All approved and motion passed.

Steve will update the website.

In conjunction with the elections, a nomination committee needs to be formed. This committee would field nominations and collect biographies, forwarding them to Steve for posting on the website. Alison and Lisa agreed to form the nominations committee, with Board endorsement.

b. Other business

Jen shared some general information about a HS2 playdown request. A player who just finished his second year of bantams – his only travel hockey experience, would like to petition WAHA to play down. This would need Board approval. A doctor's recommendation is also required. He would be a freshman. Beyond that, no additional information will be divulged without going to closed session.

WAHA does receive requests like this from time to time.

Dave made a motion to allow said player to petition WAHA to play a third year at the bantam level. Alison seconded the motion. All approved.

Karen made a motion to adjourn. Stacy seconded the motion. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Post meeting Board action via email vote:

Gary made a motion that: 1) the attached survey be approved for distribution to all families that participated in SPYHA's youth programs during the 2013/2014 season; and 2) approve spending approximately \$100 to purchase two months of Survey Monkey Pro. Dave seconded the motion. Motion passed 11-0.