



Massachusetts State Soccer Association

*A proud member of the United States Adult Soccer Association
Affiliated with US Soccer and FIFA*

Minutes of the Semi-Annual General Meeting

5 December 2015

Hampton Inn, Natick, MA

Meeting called to order by Andy Weiss, President at 1:00pm

I. Roll call/Credential check

Leagues and Officers Attending: Diana McKee (MSSL), Kevin Griffith (BSSL), Craig Hibbert (CMO-35), Nuria Silva (USAfrica), Steve Siniscalchi (VFA), Doug Anneser (OTHSL), Antonio C. Tavares (NELASA), President Andy Weiss, Vice President Logan Wangsgard, Treasurer Robert Akie, Secretary Nadia Sussman,

Others Attending: Joao Pereira (NELASA), Maria “Nilda” Morris (USAfrica), Jim Antonakas (NECL), Del Rainho (SRA), Moulay Ridaoui (Appeals), Chris Camille (Dir of Coaching), Andrea Cardarelli (Operations Manager), Past President Cezar Wislocki-Wasecki

Total Votes: 19 Quorum present.

Guests attending: Bob Trudeau (Mass Youth Soccer), John Stack (Guest)

II: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Approved unanimously

III: Unfinished Business

- Election of Logan as VP – motion to approve, no opposition.
- Election of Nadia as Secretary – motion to approve, no opposition.

Effective until Spring 2016 AGM Meeting in April

IV: Reports of Officers

President (Andy): Andy reported that he was elated that the Champions Cup went well. There were 18 teams from 6 different leagues. Noted the new Mass Soccer website server, Sportngin, and that the “mobile” readiness is still in progress. He brought up the first Newsletter and said he was happy about it. There was mention about how to get the Newsletter to everyone who is registered for Mass Soccer. It was brought up that people may have opted out of the Newsletter by accident when registering and how do we get those people back? Should we give them the option or not? He mentioned to group present that he would like members of the Executive Committee to go to the league meetings and let the league representatives know they can ask for this. A question was posed to Andy about the privacy policy for which the person was directed to the bottom of the website. Possible option to move it to a different part of the website. Focus until the next meeting – newsletter, communication, supporting the leagues and making Mass Soccer better than before.

Vice President (Logan): Logan reported that he felt the Champions Cup was awesome. He stated that JP was very helpful. He said it helped him to think about how to make improvements for tournaments in the future and



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how to increase participation in the National Cup. He asked if the State Cup was gone and it was confirmed yes. He reported on the US Soccer AGM in San Francisco and said that it was really beneficial to have all of the Regional representatives together and helped to see how Mass Soccer can better fit into the USASA. Lastly he mentioned that the website would continue to be worked on.

Treasurer (Rob): Rob stated more would be discussed in the budget discussion. The balance sheet and the P&L has been distributed, see it for details. He mentioned that \$100,000 was moved from PayPal to our checking account. Question about Fidelity account and investment options. Consider moving the money elsewhere. Current funds in the account \$442,48. Rob discussed the idea of a 2 year budget cycle vs. a yearly cycle. Topic came up about no longer receiving money from International games.

Secretary (Nadia): Nadia said hello, introduced herself and thanked the group for accepting her into the position. Looking forward to working with Mass Soccer.

V. Standing Committee Reports

Rules Committee (Steve Siniscalchi) – nothing to report

Appeals (Moulay Ridaoui) – Moulay reports an appeal made by USAfrica. He reports that due to a lack of timely paperwork, there was no hearing.

Coaching Director (Chris Camille) – Chris reports that he has not accomplished as much as he had hoped since the last meeting. He is hoping to work on educational opportunities for players through Mass Soccer and US Soccer and he wants to be more of a support on the educational side. Brought up the idea of trying to figure out a way to discover new players who move to different geographical areas, get them meeting up and playing together. Had an idea that team managers should work to combine efforts to help these geographical moves go more smoothly.

Tournament Director (Cezar) – Cezar reported on NESO; felt it was flat this year, less attendance. There were some new teams and some unaffiliated teams. He thinks there should be a committee for each age group to get attendance up and a point person to recruit and manage the age groups within those committees. Looking for someone from the EMWSL to get 4 or 5 teams into the tournament for 2016. Need more volunteers across the board for tournaments and need to advertise better. Statement made about using three referees per game so intense tournament games can be better controlled. Regarding the facilities for the tournament, the MYSA grass fields were great. Gave thanks to Mass Youth Soccer for letting them be used for the tournament. Regarding an indoor tournament, there has been approval from the Region for an indoor tournament. Idea of a South vs. North tournament was bought up with interest from the group.

--Notes on ideas for future tournaments: 1day tournament, idea about during February school vacation? Feb 14th vs. Feb 21st. Other ideas, March 19th or the Last two Saturday's in March (19th, 26th). Again, need for volunteers and work on organizing the South vs. North tournament.

SRA (Del) – 5,500 refs currently registered with Mass Ref. Overall a good year and two of the refs were chosen to referee the National Finals (Ian McKay and Mike Dee). Four referees awarded National badge, three



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more expected in 2016. Del mentioned that it is grade 6 and 7 recertification tomorrow. In working on making referee training better, they are moving towards less classroom time and more field time to teach the refs. Ref retention is difficult, not just in soccer but other sports as well. Physical assaults to refs have increased which makes people reluctant to return. Some refs will report incidents, others will not. Barriers to reporting incidents include retaliation from the teams at further games, concern about future assignments being affected. Discussions started around the table about how to protect refs and make this less of a concern. Representatives from NELASA reported that there is a lot of “passion towards the referees” during the games. Discussion was had around tolerance for this behavior and how leagues, managers, coaches need to set a higher standard and display a greater lack of tolerance of this behavior. Discussion was had regarding the lack of standard for the field conditions that help refs such as no corner flags, uniforms not matching, players not showing up on time, etc. A question came up about when to pay the refs regarding reporting and payment. Should refs be paid after the game or after the game report is submitted? Timely reports will enable the leagues to address the negative behavior towards refs faster. Discussion came up regarding a ref rating system so that refs who are not controlling the game can be addressed and given further training as well. How to deal with people giving a ref a bad rating for personal reasons. How can Mass Soccer get involved? Talk directly to players? Etc? How to engage players to behave better? Del mentioned suspensions are based on the reports, so refs need to be able to report accurately without fear. Discussion was had about more referees from certain specific cultures that are more relevant to certain leagues. Refs are welcome to come from all places, how to encourage people, get them information about becoming adult refs. Can Mass Soccer help with this? Are/should leagues be obligated to help with this? A question was asked about International certifications and it was answered that refs from other countries' certifications are accepted. Questions were brought up regarding state suspensions vs. league suspensions? If a referee is assaulted, then the state retains jurisdiction to handle it. More conversation was brought up about issues in USAfrica and suspensions. Greater discussion will be had about this on a smaller scale and revisited at the next AGM.

VI: Financial Statement by Treasurer

Rob gave clarification regarding the registration expense. He said there was one year that was a loss and a second year that was a profit. Motion to approve – all in favor, no opposition.

VII: Approval of Budget

Andy stated that we will no longer budget for International game revenue. Andy mentioned the new website and how it was changed to be more user friendly and better in general (Sport ngin.) How do we get consumer input? Regarding the cards, some stated they were against the cards. Should the team be billed instead of individuals? It's up to the leagues to bring cards to each game or not. Reported overall loss of \$13,000. Motion to approve the budget, all in favor.

VIII: Amendments to the Bylaws

No changes.



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IX: New Business

A: New mission statement – Mass Soccer provides quality and meaningful opportunities for adult players to participate in and enjoy the game of soccer. Motion to accept – yes.

B: National Cup 2016 dates – get the dates out in early spring vs. later in the spring/early summer to increase awareness and attendance. Discussion regarding the final and Thanksgiving weekend was agreed regarding the date of the final. Really need more involvement from a volunteer perspective.

C: NESO Dates for 2016 – need committee to help work on this.

D: NE Champions League – Jimmy represents the new league he is trying to form. It would be a men's open league, ONLY on Wednesday nights. It would run from March to the end of June with 10 games guaranteed. The first year would be by invitation only to create a quality level of play. This would not expand into the fall. His goal is for the minimum standard of soccer to be higher. He sees this as a place for new players to mix with the consistent players and they will pull from unaffiliated leagues. Their goal is to shoot for 1 unaffiliated team this year, shoot for 3 to 4 next year. The goal is for 12 teams; they expect 10 to 12. They are looking to play on 3 to 4 fields, all within a 10 to 12 mile radius. This league will stay around Boston for now and if it is successful, they will expand down to Taunton for the future. He is currently in negotiations regarding the fields. Jimmy was asked who would be on the board of this league? He stated himself, his wife, MSSL and Ergis. JP would be the commissioner of the league. They would have the players go through the Mass Soccer registration system. He would charge each team \$1,000 for 10 games. Jimmy holds the rights to the name "New England Champions League." He was asked if he sees the week night changing and he said no. Jimmy left the room while there was discussion. It was agreed that the league could be approved with the following provisions – the night of play does not change, status is approved – pending approval of Bylaws which came in late last night. Jimmy returned to the room and was told that his league was provisionally approved based upon approval of the Bylaws.

E: SRA Appointment: Del was asked to leave the room. It was asked if all were in favor of reappointing Del; motion was given to reappoint Del and the motion was approved. Del was brought back into the room and was told he was reapproved. He thanked the group.

F: Guest Bob Trudeau from Mass Youth Soccer – He thanked the group for having him as a speaker. He said there is going to be a meeting in January where there will be more votes. He wants to know how MYSA and Mass Soccer can work better together. Ideas that came up 1) Advertising – how can the "graduating" players from MYSA find out about Mass Soccer. Bob mentioned that there are changes to the background check (CORI) system going into place, so all coaches and volunteers need to have a CORI in order to be involved with the kids. He mentioned the US Soccer Player Development initiative that will have children put on teams based upon birth year and not grade. This is how the rest of the world takes care of it. A question came up about what to do with small towns where the numbers are smaller and there aren't enough kids to join teams? Will there be waivers? He brought up the concussion awareness that is going on R2R (Recognize to Recover), talk about not letting kids head the ball 10 and under. Disagreements went around about this, what about education and better training as the rest of the world does not limit this? 160,000 youth soccer players registered in MA, 30,000 play in club leagues as well. Mentioned the National Championship series. What about these rules for the MAPLE league? They have a 2 year limit on integrating the new



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policies, the town leagues will decide.

G: Vet's Cup in Denver, Colorado the 14th to the 19th of July at the MLS Park Stadium.

H: COPA America will be had in June 2016. How to get Mass Soccer seen at this?

X: Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadia Sussman, Secretary