

**Watertown Hockey
Association 2/26/2025 - 6 PM
1812 Brew Pub on the River
Meeting Minutes**

<p>Board Of Directors Vega Nutting Michael Ledoux Chris Nethers, <i>Learn to Play Liaison</i> Jordan Reber Shane Caswell Ginger Sherrill Michelle Rist Tom Eiss</p>	<p>Executive Committee Vega Nutting - <i>Board President</i> Michael Ledoux - <i>Board Vice President</i> Brian Nutting - <i>WHA Treasurer</i> Amanda Caswell- <i>Secretary</i> Michelle Rist - <i>WHA Registrar</i> Jonathan Rose - <i>Ace Coordinator</i></p>
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- Establish Quorum Present- Majority of Directors (4 or more required)
-Vega, Michael, Chris, Jordan, Shane, Ginger, Michelle, Tom
- Call Meeting to Order and Consent Agenda (*Vega*)
-5:59pm
- Approve Meeting Minutes from January 8, 2025 (*Vega*)

Motion: (**Vega**) Change 1/8/25 minutes to : Plan was approved to create a 14AA hockey team and follow up to the board with specific details.

2nd Motion: (**Jordan**) Change 1/8/25 minutes to : Plan was approved to create a 14AA hockey team and follow up to the board with specific details.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion: Accept the minutes

Public Comment

○ Referee Update and Discussion (*Mike Werner*)

-Discussion about shortage of referees was lead engaged. One idea was presented to speak to 14-18U teams to recruit. It was encouraged to reach out to girl players at these levels as well.

-The board agreed to incentivize individuals by paying for people in the organization to take the referee course.

-A discussion took place regarding scheduling issues with referees including late referee requests from teams and multiple people reaching out. It was recommended to give Mike Werner access to the WHA ice Calendar. Chris will facilitate Mike gaining access to our ice calendar for game/ice time to schedule referees.

-Discussion about the need to bring TI and WHA associations together to discuss raising fee for referees also took place. Our associations are the lowest paying in the

region. Mike will reach out to TI association about negotiating a raise for referees. Matt Cullen will facilitate the discussion.

-Mike Werner emphasized a need to have a set policy on cancellation of referees.

-Lastly, a discussion about rule changes at the 12U tournament ensued. USA hockey contacted WHA to inform them they are not permitted to change tournament rules outside of USA hockey regulations. Mike Werner stressed the need for clarification at tournaments so all, including referees were clear about rules that are USA sanctioned.

○ Valkyries Update (*Amanda & Matt Cullen*)

An overview of the Valkyries 2024-25 season was presented including challenges and solutions. It was expressed the need for more help in recruitment and suggested setting up meetings with new teams in the summer. Difficulties were highlighted specifically in scheduling around co-ed games/practices and the need for more regularly scheduled ice; waiting for ice to become available does not lend to regularly scheduled practices. A proposal of starting a full season 14U all girls team was presented; WHA said they would support taking the team in the organization if it switched to a WHA team. Snowbelt had a discussion at the February meeting about starting a 14U girls league with Fulton, Valkyries, Ithaca, and Center State. The Snowbelt team is to vote on it at the March meeting. The need for more female coaches and involvement was discussed. It was recommended to explore the possibility of hosting try hockey for free programs in April for girls.

-A supplemental program at 8/10/12U will be continued and expanded in 2025-26 season. Would like 2 practices a month and at least 1 tournament attendance during the season. The Valkyries would continue to be an affiliated team with Watertown.

• Executive Committee Reports

○ Registrar (*Michelle*)

-Need a USA Hockey number for each 14UAA Player that is going to try out this spring. Jordan and Michelle will discuss about how to get other players outside of WHA.

• Directors and Coordinator Reports

○ Ace Coordinator (*Jon*)

- A discussion took place about the need to expedite the selection of age level directors for the upcoming season. Ryan Blevins was proposed as the head coach for the 14AA select team, but the decision was left to the board. It was mentioned that there was a need to advertise for the director and head coaches positions within the next week or two. The board agreed to approve Jordan Reber as the director of the 14AA select program. 14U select AA coach will follow the same process as all WHA coaches.

• Tournament Coordinator (*Ginger Sherrill*)

○ Report that 8 and 12U tournaments were a success other than the USA hockey issue with changing from sanctioned rules. There will be no more jams scheduled in October as they have not been successful in recent years.

○ The need for a full day for future 8U tournaments was discussed instead of having a large break in the middle of the day.

- Better organization and promotion of tournaments was discussed, suggesting the formation of a committee to handle this. May was identified as an ideal time to begin advertising the 2025-26 WHA tournaments.

- Committee Reports

- Finance/Budget Committee (**Brian**)
 - No report was provided to the board. Chris and Mercedes are working through Quick Books and getting information online. A budget will be presented at March Meeting.

- Old Business

- Coach and Player Certification status (**Michelle**)
 - Coaches have all been resolved
- Jersey Order (**Michelle**)
 - All orders have been received and distributed.
- Fundraising Ideas (**Vega**)
 - Meat raffle was presented. Vega will coordinate and organize as the large WHA fundraiser for 25-26 season.
 - A gun raffle was also suggested.
- Fundraising Director (**Ginger**)
 - There are people interested in the position. Vega and Ginger will follow up to identify a director and potentially a committee.
- Golf Tournament Plan 2025 (**Vega**)
 - Cancelled for 2025
- Quick Books and Financial Report Overview (**Brian**)
 - No report. Chris and Mercedes have taken over the finances and will be presenting at the March meeting.
- 2025/2026 season 14U AA team proposal (**Jordan**)
 - The creation of a 14U AA caliber team in Watertown was presented, contingent on the success of tryouts. Eligibility criteria was outlined, which includes players demonstrating skills beyond the tier 3 house level and having a history of success against higher-level teams. It was also mentioned the possibility of recruiting players from other 14AA teams who may not be performing well. It was emphasized the importance of not forcing a team if it doesn't meet the required standards. The team would be overseen by a director who would report to the WHA Board of Directors. The selection process would involve an initial fee, with further costs upon selection. The team would have a standard roster size, with additional affiliate players. The potential for dual rostering was discussed and the need for players to commit within 48 hours of selection.
 - The cost of running a program was estimating it at \$1,795 per skater. Ice scheduling was discussed, mentioning that they would need to purchase ice outside of Watertown Municipal Arena.

-Concern was expressed about the potential impact on the 14U coed teams if they were to create a select team, suggesting that there might not be enough ice for all teams. It was mentioned the need to ensure that kids who don't make the select team still have a positive hockey experience.

- Spare Socks (*Amanda*)
 - Power Play Sports will stock for purchase.
- Collaborations Salmon River (*Vega & Chris*)
 - Tabled
- Website updates (*Ginger*)
 - Tabled
- Communication with 8U families about full ice opportunities
 - Tabled
- New Business
 - Failed Payments (*Vega*)
 - Tabled
 - 16/18U Select Program (*Jon & Chris*)
 - A discussion about advertising teams as AA level occurred. It was agreed for perception to use this terminology.
 - Spring Evaluations (*Vega*)
 - Needs evaluations for 14-18U before ice is pulled in Watertown.
 - 10U Program in 2025-26 Season (*Ginger*)
 - A question was raised about 10U players that played up in 24-25 season and their placement in 25-26 season. It was decided 10U players will not be staying at 12U level.
 - Ice Contract (*Vega*)
 - Tabled
 - WHA Prospect Day (*Chris*)
 - A proposal was presented to “Meet coaches” in April for a skate to encourage enrollment in WHA. It would be considered a WHA Prospect Day. Once age level directors are selected a date and advertisement will be developed for the event.
 - End of Year Banquets (*Vega*)
 - Tabled
 - Process and Procedures of Association (*Amanda*)
 - Tabled

- Advertisement of Board Positions and Executive Committee Positions (*Amanda*)
-Tabled
- Tournament Planning for 25-26 season (*Chris*)
-Tabled
- Discipline Issues (*Ginger*)
 - A discussion occurred regarding the need for consistency in disciplinary actions within the organization. An issue was highlighted where a player was given a two-game suspension for a similar infraction that had previously resulted in a one-game suspension. It was questioned where the guidelines for disciplinary actions were documented, suggesting that the disciplinary committee should be involved in cases of multiple-game suspensions. The bylaws are the first level of documentation for disciplinary cases.
 - As a side discussion, it was proposed listing the committees and their members on the website for transparency. The team agreed to consider these suggestions and to update the website accordingly.
- End of Season Survey for WHA Families (*Amanda*)
-Tabled
- iPad Procedures for 25/26 season (*Amanda*)
-Tabled
- Manager Position Procedures (*Amanda*)
-Tabled
- Board Meeting Communication (*Amanda*)
-Tabled
- Other Business:
- Action Items from last meeting
 - Mercedes and Chris to resolve Quick Books issue and present budget to board in March meeting.
 - Ginger update website with committee members.
 - Chris will select a date and develop an advertisement for the WHA Prospect day after age level directors are chosen.
 - Vega and Ginger will meet to identify a fundraising director as well as a committee.
 - Vega will organize the meat raffle fundraiser.
 - Jordan and Michelle will meet to get USA Hockey numbers for all 14U AA players trying out for team.
 - Vega and board to develop a referee cancellation policy for 25-26 season.
 - Mike will contact TI to discuss raising fee for referees; Matt Cullen can help facilitate discussion.
 - Chris and Mercedes will add Mike Werner to the ice scheduling sports engine page.
- Meeting Adjournment
-8:46pm

