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Delaware Valley Hockey League

Date | time March 8, 2023 7:30 PM | In-Person Meeting was called to order by President Jay Finnigan
















Respectfully Submitted by Michael DeRose, DVHL Secretary

Attendance:




Executive Committee Members Present:

-  President – Jay Finnigan
-  Executive Vice-President – Joe D’Angelo
-  1st Vice President & Co-Commissioner (18U, 16U, 14U) – Dave Jackson
-  2nd Vice President & Co-Commissioner (12U, 10U, 8U) – Joe Spagnolo
-  Vice President Marketing – Larry Sechuk
-  Vice President Legal – Terry Wochok (Absent)
-  Treasurer – Beth Ritter (Absent)
-  Secretary & SafeSport Coordinator – Mike DeRose

Represented Member Clubs:

 Central Penn Panthers,  Chester County Cougars,  Delmarva Raptors,  Delco Phantoms,
 Dynamites,  Exton Kings Ice Hockey Club,  Genesis,  Hatfield Ice Hawks,  Hershey Jr. Bears,
 Delaware Jr. Blue Hens,  Philadelphia Little Flyers,  Pottstown Penguins,  Quakers,
 Snider Hockey, and  Wilkes-Barre Jr. Penguins


Associate Members:

-  Referee & Chief – Mike Campbell (Absent)
-  COVID Coordinator – Lisa Silvotti (Absent)
-  DVHL Scheduler – Mike Wiercinski (Absent)

Members Absent:

NONE

Guests:

-  Ken Kurz – President of the Wilmington Nighthawks




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Approval of Minutes:



- The minutes of **February 8, 2023**, DVHL monthly meeting was put to the floor for adoption by DVHL Secretary,  Michael DeRose.
 - Motion to adopt the minutes was made by: **Central Penn**
 - Motion seconded to adopt the minutes by: **Wilkes Barre Jr. Pens**
 - All in favor to adopt carried.
-

Approval of the Treasurer's Report:



- The Treasurer's report for **February 28, 2023** was put to the floor for adoption by DVHL Treasurer,  Beth Ritter.
 - Motion to adopt the Treasurer's report was made by: **Genesis.**
 - Motion seconded to adopt the Treasurer's report by: **Philadelphia Little Flyers**
 - All in favor to adopt carried.
-

Executive Vice-President's Report:



- V.P. Joe D'Angelo
 - Nothing to report.
-

1st Vice President's Report:



- V.P. Dave Jackson
 - Announced that he was able to get them down to four dollars (\$4) a game from six dollars (\$6) a game.
 - Dave asked the membership for feedback and if they want to go with Game Sheet as a scoring platform. Dave further stated that the DVHL is going to build the clubs independently by team per game. We're going to roll that into SportsEngine to start registrations.
 - Motion to accept game sheet as the mechanism to score for next year was made by: **Central Penn**
 - Motion seconded to adopt game sheet as the mechanism to score for next year by: **Snider.**
 - All in favor to adopt carried.



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2nd Vice President's Report:



- V.P. Joe Spagnolo
 - Regarding the 1st Playoff weekend (10U, 12U, 14U), everybody did a fabulous job.
 - We had eight (8) divisions playing and of those, of the eight (8), six (6) of those divisions went to a final game. So, six (6) of those games went to the 7th game, which was outstanding. That shows apparently that shows there were equally matched teams.
 - Thanked the volunteers and Ice Works for all the help and doing an outstanding job making the 1st week of Playoffs a success.
 - Secondly is the DVHL placements for our Squirts (10U) and Pee-Wee (12U).
 - That is scheduled for the weekend of May 19th thru 21st. Ice Works is going to be hosting 10U and Hatfield is going to host 12U.
 - We also have something in place right now that is based on Jason's survey results that show there is some value in having a placement tournament at 14U as well.
 - We have time and place set aside at Power Play Rink in Exton for the 14U to do the identical thing on the same weekend.
 - We're moving up as far as 14U because we had twenty-six (26) teams and next year were projecting thirty (30).
 - This year we had six (6) teams that had a winning percentage of less than 316 and six (6) teams that had a winning percentage over 700.
 - Jason will also show you that we have no interest in having it at the 16U and 18U levels.
 - Joe wants to structure the placement tournament with four (4) divisions. AA, A National, A American, and B.
 - This will better help to mirror us closer to our New Jersey Youth Hockey League (NJYHL). This will help Joe and the DVHL board a better idea of who belongs in what division.
 - With bigger divisions it sometimes is difficult, but with smaller divisions you can have better parities.
 - We're going to be adding games with New Jersey Youth Hockey League (NJYHL) and these pods so that we're not going to be overwhelmed with the number of games.
 - Joe will send an email shortly regarding that.
 - Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers stated that we have two couple of things sighting that when he looked at the projections, we only have two (2) AA teams.
 - Joe agreed and stated that we also have seventeen (17) A teams. Joe asked Stéphane what his thoughts were.
 - Stéphane stated that we're likely going to have to make teams play AA. We'll have to look at how many second-



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year players are on a particular A team and evaluate them.

- Jay stated that's why the DVHL decided on the showcases to help make that determination.
- Joe added that were going to do the same thing that the New Jersey Youth Hockey League (NJYHL) does and have a post tryout self-evaluation to show us what their competition was the year before. How many players have so much experience etc.,
- Stéphane stated the most important part is that everyone shows up so that we can make that determination. If they don't show up there is no sense in having the showcase.
- Jay stated that it was a league vote that we're going to have the showcase, so everyone is required to show up.
- Dann Rudd from Snider Youth Hockey asked that if possible that we don't schedule games until after school time on Friday. He's gotten pushback with a lot of the Eastern Junior Elite Prospects League (EJ) showcases with games being scheduled during school. He understands that it may be difficult with one (1) sheet rinks.

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Vice President Marketing Report:



- V.P. Larry Sechuk
 - We're going to go to the next level of podcasts. We're going to be reaching out to the presidents of the organization and what he's looking to do, is to try to get a number of these in the cans so that we could start putting additional ones out there. Larry stated that we've got good traction from the ones that are out there, we're still getting. listeners from all over including areas that he was very surprised with, so this is working.
 - I'm looking to now reach out to the presidents and want the presidents to get a coach in their organization and a player from a team that has done well in your organization to appear on an episode of the podcast to talk about their team, the season, and talk about the things that are important from a strategy standpoint that the coach used from a strategy standpoint with regard to practice planning, how they approached a game, how this player felt about the game and he felt about the strategy to coach used and get it into the mental gear that this coach and player used to prepare them for the game.
 - Larry stated that he's talking to a minor league hockey program right now in Alaska, maybe we're going to get some money from them for this podcast. Larry added that he's pushing a lot of buttons to see where we could get some funding so that the guy who's



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doing this thing is doing it for free. He does these professionally, so he's doing it for free. I'm leveraging my friendship with him. Larry thinks that if we could leverage it and get a little bit of funding from this whole thing some of that could come back to us and some could pay this gentleman for his time and things of that nature.

- Larry tried to get this guy who does a podcast to be at the rink for playoffs, unfortunately he couldn't make that work. That said, he's like to get him to come to things that are big events and interview people right there and interview coaches right there. Larry believes that this could make it a little bit in the moment type of conversations, which played well on a podcast. There's a lot that he's working on. Larry is going to reach out to the membership. He asks that they have an idea of what you'd like to discuss so that you're ready to go.
- Larry stated that as you know that we, the DVHL, wanted to do something to brand DVHL players so when they go to districts, whoever they're playing against on their helmet. There's going to be a sticker that says DVHL. Everybody knows her from DVHL, but this is kind of a way to show a little bit of branding and a little bit of the pride of the league that you're in. Larry added that he has the stickers with him to distribute to the membership so that the players can put them on their helmet. Larry asked that the players place them on the left rear of the helmet, right above the sticker that tells you the expiration date for the quality of that helmet, so this way it's uniform and everyone sees it. Now there are other leagues out there to do it and that's where he got this idea. He looked at and the placement of these looking the same spot on all helmets, which made it very uniform and really represents the league well.

Vice President Legal Report:



- V.P. Terry Wochok
 - Absent

President's Report:



- President Jay Finnigan
 - Season itself was very successful, playoffs was successful and they're able to bring back the sled hockey teams, and they had three (3) games that went over very well.
 - 2023-2024 season looks more promising at this time for our projecting if you look at the faculty projection sheet last year at this time, we're actually projections from last season were at one hundred and one (101) teams and we're projecting one hundred and twenty-four (124) for next season.
 - Back in January, the Campus Wild applied and was accepted into the DVHL.
 - We have another organization, The Night Hawks who have applied for membership into the DVHL.



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- Joe D'Angelo and Jay are currently in discussions with another organization who may potentially join the DVHL in the 2024-2025 season.
- Additionally, Joe D and Jay have a meeting scheduled in the fall with an organization who was formally with the DVHL who is interested in coming back for the 2023-2024 season. Hopefully we'll have two (2) more organizations next season.
- Jason DeAlessi from the Fuerza Strategy Group will be giving a presentation on the Survey that was sent out to the DVHL membership.
- New Jersey Youth Hockey League did basically the same survey of their membership. Some of which we are aligned with, some we have some differences with, but we're headed in the right direction based on what Jay saw.
- Jay announced that for the 1st time since he's been involved with the DVHL there were no suggestions to redo the bylaws. The rules and regulations as we modified last year will be updated once USA Hockey has their annual meeting, which is no longer a Congress.
 - The annual meeting in early June this year, and if any changes are made, then we'll be able to adapt to. Current season as opposed to being the year behind.
- Jay stated that two (2) years ago we did paperwork, sent the letters, and handed them to TD Bank, but they seem to have lost them. Jay updated it I've so there's a resolution authorizing the address of the corporation to be the IRS address, which is his address listing DVHL treasurer, Beth Ritter, and himself as account holders.
 - Jay asked for a motion concerning banking.
 - Motion made by the **Quakers**.
 - Seconded by **Delaware Jr. Blue Hens**.
 - Motion carried unanimously.
- At the January 2023 meeting we approved the Campus Wild coming in as a member of the DVHL and in the package that was sent out and provided at the March 2023 meeting a resolution that says that they were voted in unanimously and this is just formalizing it at this meeting.
 - Jay asked for a motion concerning the approval of the Campus Wild's membership under their legal name which is Chester County Sports Arena with an on-ice name of the Campus Wild.
 - Motion made by Central Penn Panthers
 - Seconded by Hershey Jr. Bears

In accordance with Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Laws, the Board of Directors ("Board") of the Delaware Valley Hockey League, Inc. ("DVHL"), a Pennsylvania non-profit non-stock corporation, hereby consents to and adopts the following resolution:



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WHEREAS, the DVHL's purpose is to promote, govern and improve organized hockey in the Delaware Valley area by authority of USA Hockey, Inc., to foster among its members, supporters and teams a general cooperative spirit; to maintain and increase interest in the game of hockey; to have and exercise a general care, supervision and direction over the playing interest of its teams and players; and

WHEREAS, the Board has carefully reviewed the membership application of the Chester County Sports Arena, Inc., on ice name of Campus Wild, and find it in the best interest of the Corporation and its members to adopt a Resolution approving the membership of the Nighthawks Youth Hockey Club.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT the Board pursuant to Article III of the DVHL Bylaws by a simple majority votes cast hereby approves and accepts the Chester County Sports Arena, Inc., as a Member of the DVHL; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board of the Chester County Sports Arena, Inc., accepts the Bylaws and Rules & Regulations of the DVHL and will comply with all so long as they shall remain members; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that any actions taken by such officers prior to the date of the forgoing resolution adopted hereby that are within the authority conferred hereby are hereby ratified, confirmed, and approved as the acts and deeds of this corporation.

The Board has passed the foregoing Resolution upon a simple majority of the Board then in office.

This Resolution is adopted by the Board of Directors of this Corporation at a regular meeting of the Board held on March 8, 2023.

- When you came in tonight, there was a package that was distributed regarding the Wilmington Nighthawks. They are seeking membership into the DVHL. Ken Kurz is here representing the Nighthawks. They would skate out of the Wilmington Skating club. They have been around for many years, primarily doing cross-ice mites, 10U, middle school teams, and a varsity high school team. They are all USA Hockey certified coaches. They historically have played non-league games against DVHL teams. They are applying to be in the DVHL for next year. Their uniforms and logo are included in the package.
 - Ken Kurz, the president of the Wilmington Nighthawks stated that he appreciated the opportunity to speak. Ken further stated that his organization has played several



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DVHL organizations in non-league capacity over the years when ice slots were plentiful.

- Brian Pecca of the Hatfield Ice Hawks asked what levels they anticipate putting teams in the league as.
 - Ken stated that when they submitted the package, they initially anticipated 8U and 10U, but they have a group of soon to be 12U that they would like to put in as well. They still plan on doing their developmental program that they've been doing at Ice Works for years. Ken further stated that at the middle school level they have approximately ten (10) teams in the league. The players at the 12U level are primarily a low B or in-house level of player.
- Joe D'Angelo stated that the Nighthawks were approved by the Atlantic District for A and B but wanted to know what level.
 - Ken stated they're immediately planning for 8U, 10U, and 12U. Then if they can absorb older players, they'll do that as well.
- Dan Schindler of the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens stated that the Nighthawks originally applied for 8U and 10U and asked what changed that the Nighthawks are now including 12U.
- Ken stated that as a board his organization met and took some surveys and got feedback from their families as to whether this would be a good idea. They have eight (8) or nine (9) core kids who are moving up and are interested in continuing with the Nighthawks.
- Dan Schindler of the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens asked if those players are solely with the Nighthawks now or are they with another organization.
- Ken stated that they are only with the Nighthawks. Ken further stated that the Nighthawks have done the 10U independently so that they could have kids play in the DVHL, but over the last couple of years, that has really tailed off. In their middle school program, they have thirty (30) plus kids there and only 1/3 of them played club hockey.
- Don Richman from Chester County Cougars asked for a little background as to the evolution; what's the plan 8U, 10U, and 12U now, those 12U become 14U in two (2) years; is that the growth the Nighthawks are looking for?
 - Ken stated that we must look to the leadership of the club stating that "Yes, I'm the president, but I think as far as looking around with the volunteer landscape, these younger families that we have, we've got again group of kids, we got some talented kids that want to stay there. They live in Wilmington; they want to stay in Wilmington.



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They approached the board. The board was on board, the coach was on board as far as finding a higher level of competition. Usually, we play the limited travel circuit right where you've got kids going up to Aston half of the other to Harrington. You've got a group that will go to the Igloo. What we realized with the 10U particularly this year was that they were playing essentially a travel hockey schedule. Limited travel doesn't really exist anymore. The closest thing to a limited travel is our middle school team and that's down in Ice Works. That group of mites and squirts, the competition wasn't there for them, so it was more important to find a higher-level competition if we're going to keep them within the program. So, moving to the DVHL seems like the logical next step." Ken went on to state that on the administrative side, it has become infinitely harder to find non-league games with the DVHL. Ken further stated that the Atlantic Hockey Federation (AHF) is totally off the books stating that the Nighthawks use to play games against them all the time, but with their fifty (50) game schedule, there's no ice.

- Don Richman from Chester County Cougars stated that there is value in that. Do went on to state that Chester County was independent and the accountability of joining a league like the DVHL brings that game situation back up. Don then asked if the Nighthawks are going to take over ice time from the Phantoms just to support the growth of this organization.
 - Ken stated he thinks that's part of it. His case to the rink in Wilmington has been that they've been there for over decade. They're the In-house program, they're not just renting ice and his organization has been very passionate about that. Wilmington is finally taking a hard look at that perspective.
 - Brian Pecca of the Hatfield Ice Hawks asked Ken where most of his players come from.
 - Ken stated primarily from the Wilmington area.
 - Brian then asked which programs specifically.
 - Ken stated they are primarily from his rink. He stated that some kids come from their learn to skate or learn to play programs, some players go to Delco and some go to the Jr. Blue Hens or Chester County.
- Ken then exited the room which opened up discussion from the floor.
 - Jay thanked Joe for helping workout this situation with the Nighthawks.



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- Jay then announced that Joe got clarification from the District (Atlantic Amateur Hockey Association) that there are a lot of players in AHF organizations who are looking to leave. Jay further stated that the stipulation on the district rules is you could take a whole team as long as you don't take the coach. If you take the coach, only four (4) players can come from that AHF team. If the coach doesn't come, the whole team could come. Jay went on to state that it's happening in the Lancaster Area, Hershey area, Central Penn area, and in the West Chester Area because he's been getting numerous calls because the people don't want to play eighty or ninety (80 – 90) games.
- Jay then addressed the situation at hand regarding the Nighthawks.
- Don Richman from Chester County stated that it sounds like there's only so many kids playing hockey and asked if it's just lifting and shifting players from Chester County, Delco, and Delaware.
- Jay stated that the Nighthawks grow internally.
- Ian MacKenzie from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens stated to Don Richman's point that the market is so diluted that here we have another organization coming in and other kids that have left the organization to go to Jr. Blue Hens, Chester County, PNY to play that travel level and now they come back; are they going to fly right back to this program? Ian further asked if it's going to have a detrimental effect to the teams that are going to try to stay going?
- Wil Younger from Central Penn Panthers stated that approximately thirteen (13) years ago, his organization was in a similar situation. They had a cluster of approximately forty-eight (48) kids that they grew, and they were sending them to Lancaster because they didn't have any teams. These kids came through Central Penn's program under him, Kevin Kowal, Josh McCoy, myself, and Ray Ferry including Wil's own son. A number of those same kids wanted to run a limited style program similar to what Ken was talking about with the Nighthawks program currently. Wil went on to state that his organization received a lot of help from DVHL organizations. Organizations such as Chester County, Hatfield, and Warwick would play them, but the parents in the organization wanted a little bit more. Central Penn was able to get into the DVHL on a technicality. Wil further stated that there was a concern that there wasn't enough support to run two (2) clubs competing sighting that Lancaster was



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not a big area. Wil even further stated that Central Penn was producing more kids than what Lancaster was, and Central Penn was sending them all to Lancaster and they didn't want to go there, they wanted to stay because Regency has a family feel to it. Wil then stated that a third of the kids that they sent away and came back, but they continue to grow their own. They had approximately one-hundred and ten (110) kids come back in one foul swoop, there was only one (1) team that stayed. Now there up to approximately one-hundred and twenty (120) kids and they have eight (8) teams. Wil went on to state that he's sympathetic to their plight and went on to state that certain organizations are in the "honey pot" and sighted that there is not a lot of kids in his area and yet the area is still able to support two (2) clubs.

- Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers stated that if the Nighthawks are Squirt (10U) and Pee-Wee (12U) right now, it shouldn't have a negative impact of his rink or anyone in their general area.
- Ian MacKenzie from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens stated he's ok with mite (8U) and squirt (10U) but the Nighthawks adding the pee-wee (12U) is what he has issue with.
- Wil Younger from Central Penn Panthers asked Ian if the Nighthawks could pull enough kids to have a detrimental impact on the Blue Hens organization.
- Larry Schuck stated that it comes down to the quality of your program. Steel sharpened steel. So, if you got a program that that close, you can prove what you got to make it more attractive for people to stay there and that's what you have to look at. So, I don't view this as a problem for the families, he views this as an opportunity for us to make our game better for everyone.
- Chris Saitta from the Exton Kings stated that's the philosophy that the Kings went up with regarding The Campus Wild. Chris went on to state that Campus, the Quakers, and Team Philadelphia are basically right down the street from them, but it makes his organization focus internally on how they can make their program better. Chris further stated that he's gotten complaints from parents who say that they're losing player, but statistically they're right around the same number of players for the last five (5) to eight (8) years.



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Chris went on to state that it's a good opportunity and the Nighthawks are going to grow internally and pull some players, but from we're hearing now too, the AHF teams are now going to open up that bank of potential other players to come in.

- Don Richman from Chester County Cougars stated that he had no problem until he said the Ducks comment regarding that the Ducks are looking to make some changes that has nothing to do with wanting to grow organization. That led Ian to believe that Ken and the Nighthawks needs our contract to be able to invite that group over.
- Jay stated that having talked to Ken twice in person the Ducks issue started well after they approached the DVHL to come into the league.
 - Dan Schindler from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens asked when Ken approached the DVHL.
 - Jay stated that it was over a month ago.
 - Don Richman from Chester County Cougars stated that he never went out and said I need to belong to the DVHL so I can sell that move.
 - Jay stated that Ken approached him in January.
 - Don Richman from Chester County Cougars stated that Ken approached Jay to talk about Mites (8U) and Squirts (10U) but now Ken mentioned Pee-Wee (12U) and stated that there is noise about that specific group.
 - Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers stated that Ken probably mentioned Pee-Wee (12U) because he has a large majority of middle school players.
 - Dan Schindler from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens added we're all presidents, we all take calls from the guy who says he wants to bring you five (5) teams and it ends up not coming to fruition.
 - Wil Younger from Central Penn agreed with Don Richman from Chester County Cougars stating that Ken's comment about the Ducks is a little unsettling.
- Jay stated to the members "either you want to grow the league, or you don't want grow the league; don't fill out the survey stating that you want to grow the league and deny membership, don't tell the league that you don't want to play the same organization day in and



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day out.” Jay further stated that when he continues the talks with the two (2) other organizations who want to come in, they're going to be in someone's backyard.

- Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers stated that the agreement that he made with someone on the DVHL board about them coming in and now all of a sudden, the Nighthawks wants to take all the ice that was promised for the Phantoms in Wilmington.
- Jay asked Stéphane if he had a contract there.
 - Stéphane stated that he did.
 - Jay then added that they're going to have to honor the contract.
 - Stéphane then added that it's a year-to-year contract.
 - Jay replied that then Stéphane does not have a contract because it's terminated at the end of the year.
- Joe D'Angelo added the Nighthawks have been around for several years. Organizations have been taking their players through that time. Organizations are worried that they're not going to be able to take their players because they want to come into the DVHL. We want to grow this league; correct? We want to have A National and A American, but we're not going to be able to do that unless we have more organizations, they're perfect for that. Now we're going to fight them because everyone wants to take their players when they get a little bit better.
- Brian Pecca from the Hatfield Ice Hawks stated that he's outside of this target area and asked what the primary negatives of the Nighthawks joining the DVHL. The negatives that he's hearing are potential issues with Delco renting ice at Wilmington, potential issues with Chester County or the Jr. Blue Hens; is the concern about losing players to that club? If we're talking about allowing a new club in, he's looking at the positives and negatives. The positives are adding more teams, we can always use more teams. But at the same time if there's negatives to adding a club that is going to negatively affect clubs that are already in the league then that's concerned to me no different than the Exton Kings being worried about Campus or any other situation where you have a new club coming in a location that's near another club that's already in our league who may poach players.



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That is a concern to him, he doesn't want clubs to suffer because we're now allowing another club in to hurt an already existing club.

- Larry added that out of everyone in the league, Delco takes the biggest shot because we lose a huge piece of ice there that the Phantoms rent Monday thru Thursday. The Phantoms will figure it out, but we need to grow the DVHL in the same respect.
- Brian Pecca from the Hatfield Ice Hawks added that his rink supports the Wissahickon Warriors whose overflow utilizes Hatfield's ice due to Wissahickon only having one (1) sheet of ice. Every year they go to Brian and ask him what ice he can get them. Brian usually provides them with one (1) or two (2) ice slots a weekend unless they have college games. If Brian can't get them ice, then he can't get them ice and they're out of luck. So, if we're talking about a rink situation from a standpoint, the Delco Phantoms are at Ice Works, that's their home rink. Overflow rinks is a different situation, if he can't get the Wissahickon Warriors enough ice, that's not his problem.
- Dan Schindler from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens stated that he wants to grow the DVHL, but if we don't grow teams, we can have as many member clubs as we want, but they're not bringing teams.
 - Jay stated that the projections show that we're growing teams.
 - Dan Schindler from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens stated that it hasn't happened yet, what he's saying about Ken's comment about the DVHL is that none of that has happened yet, the Nighthawks don't have the teams. None of the projected teams have shown up yet. Dan pointed to what Wil Younger said that right now it's all talk, Dan doesn't want the Nighthawks taking teams from him or any other DVHL member and then we'll just have the same number of teams spread out.
- Dan Rudd from Snider Hockey asked for clarification regarding probationary members. Dan asked if the Nighthawks were only allowed three (3) players from another organization.
 - Jay clarified by stating that the Nighthawks can only take three (3) players from the DVHL, but if the team was coming from another league such as the AHF, they can take the whole team as long as the coach does not come with



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them otherwise, they're restricted to the three (3) player rule.

- Wil Younger from Central Penn stated that last year Lancaster took one-hundred and ten (110) players from his organization when they went to the AHF and had absolutely no protection. Wil added that although it stinks that the Delaware Ducks may lose a lot of players, we can't be concerned with organizations that are not in the DVHL. Wil further stated that it does in fact stink that a few of our organizations may lose a few players, but that's just how it is.
- Dan Schindler from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens stated that he really concerned about the landscape of the Delaware Valley Hockey League.
- Wil Younger from Central Penn added that when Nationals are over, all of the players become basically free agents
- Dan Schindler from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens asked Wil if Lancaster could offer all his players after Nationals a deal saying that they could pay for half price.
 - Wil Younger from Central Penn said that they could do whatever they want with pricing.
 - Dan Schindler from the Delaware Jr. Blue Hens stated that is what his organization is dealing with in Delaware. He stated that the Ducks are doing anything they can to keep their players and he doesn't want another club coming in and we don't have any teams.
- Brian Pecca from the Hatfield Ice Hawks asked how many teams the Nighthawks have.
 - Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers stated they have two (2) mite (8U) teams, a middle school team, and a high school team.
 - Brian Pecca from the Hatfield Ice Hawks stated they have Mites (8U), Squirts (10U), and potentially Pee-Wee (12U). Brian then asked can we put stipulations on them regarding the number of players.
 - Jay stated that the DVHL by-laws already protect the DVHL organizations with the number of players that a DVHL organization can take from another DVHL organization.



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- Larry suggested regarding the levels to put in a stipulation.
- Jay stated that the Atlantic Amateur Hockey Association already approved the Nighthawks for A and B at all levels, and we can't undercut the District. Jay further stated that in all the years he's been involved with Hockey, the DVHL has never put any probationary status on an organization other than what's in the by-laws.
- Joe D'Angelo added that we didn't do that with Campus.
- Jay then called for a vote to allow The Nighthawks into the DVHL as follows:

Organization Name	Logo	YES	NO
Central Penn Panthers		X	
Chester County Cougars		X	
Delaware Jr. Blue Hens			X
Delmarva Raptors		X	
Delco Phantoms		X	
Dynamites		X	
Exton Kings		X	
Genesis		X	
Hatfield Ice Hawks		X	
Hersey Jr. Bears		X	
Philadelphia Little Flyers		X	
Pottstown Penguins		X	
Quakers		X	
Snider Hockey		X	
Wilkes-Barre Jr. Penguins		X	

- Jay asked for a motion for a resolution to allow the Wilmington Nighthawks as a member of the DVHL.

In accordance with Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Laws, the Board of Directors (“Board”) of the Delaware Valley Hockey League, Inc. (“DVHL”), a Pennsylvania non-profit non-stock corporation, hereby consents to and adopts the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the DVHL’s purpose is to promote, govern and improve organized hockey in the Delaware Valley area by authority of USA Hockey, Inc., to foster among its members, supporters and teams a general cooperative spirit; to maintain and increase interest in the game of hockey; to have and exercise a general care, supervision and direction over the playing interest of its teams and players; and

WHEREAS, the Board has carefully reviewed the membership application of the Nighthawks Youth Hockey Club, on ice name of Wilmington Nighthawks, and find it in the best interest of



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the Corporation and its members to adopt a Resolution approving the membership of the Nighthawks Youth Hockey Club.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT the Board pursuant to Article III of the DVHL Bylaws by a simple majority votes cast hereby approves and accepts the Nighthawks Youth Hockey Club as a Member of the DVHL; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board of the Nighthawks Youth Hockey Club accepts the Bylaws and Rules & Regulations of the DVHL and will comply with all so long as they shall remain members; and

The Board has passed the foregoing Resolution upon a simple majority of the Board then in office.

This Resolution is adopted by the Board of Directors of this Corporation at a regular meeting of the Board held on March 8, 2023.

- Motion to adopt the resolution was made by: **Hatfield Ice Hawks**
 - Motion seconded to adopt the resolution by: **Quakers.**
 - All in favor to adopt except the Delaware Jr. Blue Huns
 - Motion was carried.
-
- Jay stated that when the members came into the meeting, they were given a sheet showing the projections for the coming 2023-2024 season. Jay asked if there is anything that is incorrect on the projection sheet, please let him know as soon as possible.
 - Jay informed the membership that the AHF purchased the PAL organization in New York. Jay further stated that the New York State Amateur Hockey Association is requiring them to play two (2) games against every member of that league meaning that they're going to have to play thirty-four (34) non-league games plus their league games. That was based on the scenario that Glenn Hefferan, president Atlantic Amateur Hockey Association presented to them.
 - Jay then addressed the election of officers to the DVHL board. Jay stated that to date no one has requested to be placed on the ballot for any of the board positions who are currently up for election (The Executive Vice President, Vice President – 6U, 8U, 10U AND 12U, Vice President Legal Affairs and Treasurer). Jay asked if anyone was interested in running and no one responded. Based on that, the current The Executive Vice President, Joe D'Angelo, Vice President – 6U, 8U, 10U AND 12U, Spagnolo, Vice



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President Legal Affairs, Terry Wochok, and Treasurer Beth Ritter will remain in their positions.

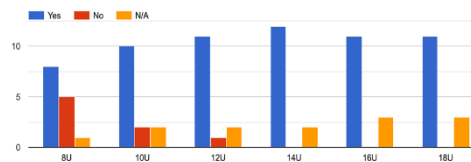
DVHL Survey Report:



- Jason DeAlessi Managing Director of the Fuerza Strategy Group spoke on the DVHL survey that was sent out to the membership.
 - All of the DVHL organizations were sent the survey.
 - There were fourteen (14) responses.
 - It broke down with who participated, what the approximate number of players are,
 - Something that makes the DVHL unique is that our associations are a lot smaller than the New Jersey Youth Hockey League and the Atlantic Youth Hockey League in terms of the number of players for the most part. Then the number of teams and levels, the initial projections are a lot more accurate, but they were collected after the survey was returned.

- Topic #1

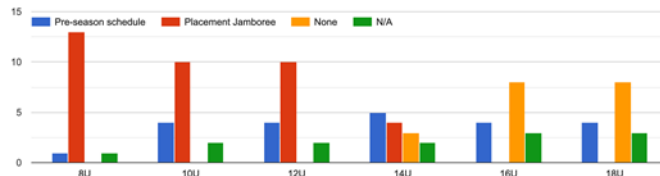
Is there an interest in playing opponents from outside the DVHL during the regular season as a part of a regular season schedule?



- Based on the responses from the membership there is clearly an interest in doing so at every level except at 8U.

- Topic #2

Please select your interest in a placement pre-season placement schedule or placement jamboree.



- We're already planning one at 10U and 12U with the possibility of 14U.



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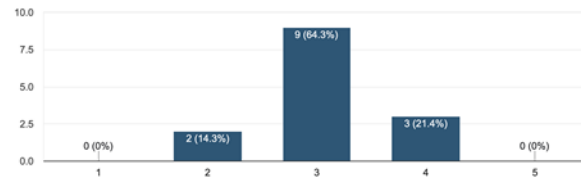
- Topic #3

How many League meetings are needed during each year?
14 responses



- Topic #4

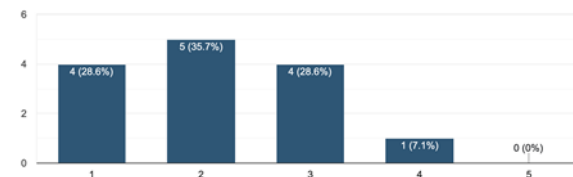
Rate the DVHL website - 1 = needs improvement, 5 = excellent
14 responses



- Based on the results the DVHL get a little higher than neutral marks.

- Topic #5

Rate the DVHL scorekeeping tool (SportsEngine) - 1 = needs improvement, 5 = excellent
14 responses



- There appears to be a distain for SportsEngine as the scoring platform. Jason added that the DVHL is aware of that and have already implemented an alternative to correct that for next season.

- Topic #6 – Technology

- Jason stated that a lot of people brings up that they want Game Sheet with the use of iPads or tablets whether it's for live scoring or instantaneous scoring.
- The EJEPL uses is, MyHockey Rankings ties into it, and there is some connection with LiveBarn as well.

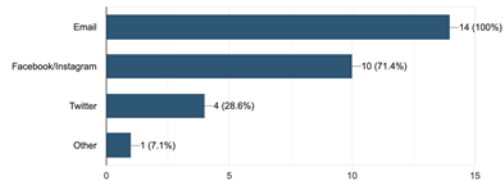


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- Topic # 7 – Communication

Communications - How would you like to see communications shared by the league (check all that apply)?
14 responses



- The preferred way appears to be email.
 - The DVHL has upped the social media presence for communicating with the general DVHL members.
- Jason added that there needs to be some reflection on what the role of the league is vs what the role of the individual organizations is.
 - The organizations must communicate with their members. Jason sighted that it was brought up in a previous discussion that everyone is a free agent at the end of the season. Your members can go anywhere, so it's the organizations' role to communicate with the individual members to be marketing their programs. The league, in this case the DVHL is a vehicle for the organizations to come together and play games. The league can't be communicating one on one as to what your program offers because it varies between each organization.
 - Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers stated that he agrees but the reason the individual organizations aren't communicating with their respective membership is because we didn't know what was going to happen and in fact, they still don't know what is going to happen until we get the information from the league who is waiting on the information from the Atlantic District.



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- Jason stated that we need to find a way to talk around that sighting that the AHF goes out with promises and then they don't follow through. The AHF over promises and under delivers. The non-profit leagues and the sanctioned leagues have always gone out with the community focus, the family focus and not profit driven and we have to find a way to communicate with the individual parents and families that we're going to have games for them, we're going to deliver. We're not going to stand out here and put-up fancy graphics that say you're going to play ninety (90) games, we're going to force you into tournaments that you're not going to like, that aren't going to be well staffed. We're not going to beat another league by trying to be that other league.
- Topic #8 – DVHL Leadership
 - Jason stated of all the leagues that he deals with, the DVHL board shows up to events. They show up to tournaments and jamborees. This is not the case with other leagues. The DVHL board shows up to play-offs to work the front table and resolve any issues. Jason asked that the organizations recognize that there is leadership here in the DVHL.
 - There was a comment that the DVHL board needs to be more present during the season at different rinks, Jason says that more of an optics thing and need to work more with on the digital side. Jason went on to state that there is cost to that, but Jason believes that is something worthwhile.
- Topic # 9 – Describing what the DVHL does well.



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- The pre-season jamborees have been effective at 8U level and we're already working on that at the 10U, 12U, and possibly the 14U levels.
- Promoting youth hockey and providing an environment for Tier 2 hockey at all ages.
 - That's what we need to focus on "what brings people to the DVHL and to the non-profit clubs or the clubs that are community focused and not profit driven."
- Topic #10 – What the DVHL need to improve.
 - There are some logistics things here with being cognizant of playoff conflicts with other leagues.
 - This was a big problem across the board this year between the AHF and the EJ.
 - New Jersey Youth had teams that were half in and half out with AHF and bailed at the last minute. On Wednesday before they told New Jersey Youth that they weren't showing up to playoffs.
 - The DVHL did well in that respect because we didn't have a situation like that.
 - Jason added that the issue regarding Squirts (10U) with the Super Bowl, the double elimination format that the membership voted for made it even worse because had we gone with a round robin that led to a championship game (we didn't know that the Eagles were going to be in the Super Bowl), but we would not have had those evening games.
 - Governance



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- Sending out the addenda before meetings
- Sending out the minutes shortly after the meetings
- Restoring National and American divisions for competition.
 - In order to do that we need more teams.
 - We need to start thinking about long term growth strategies.
 - How are we getting teams in. 14U, 16U, and 18U is short term planning. We need to look at 8U and 10U.
 - What is your feeder program?
 - How many of the organizations are holding “try hockey for free events.”
 - Are we offering a family fun day where you invite siblings and parents to come in and get on the ice and have some fun.
- Topic #11 – The DVHL’s mission
 - Thinking about the DVHL in terms of community-based student athletes developing well-rounded players. Jason thinks that's really a core mission and something that on the social and digital front we're going to want to really utilize next year. Focusing on how our players are giving back to the community. Just like our organizations are nonprofits of community organizations, not profit driven. We want to showcase our players that are doing similar type of work, giving back.
 - Maybe celebrate someone's 16U or 18U players who are getting their college acceptances or where they committed



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or going into the military or trade school to show that type of success, and really reflecting that hockey is not just about what happens on the ice, but developing camaraderie, developing lifelong friendships, which type of thing.

- Wil Younger from Central Penn Panthers stated that he would really like to see us maybe at playoffs, having like a media date style event where all the teams that made the playoffs get together all the age groups at one (1) singular location and have a meet and greet. Have people from the league, the district, whoever there to talk to the players and coaches, and have the opportunity for players to get introduced to each other, other than smashing into each other on the ice.
- Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers added to basically host an event like the Flyers Cup
 - Wil added that the Flyers Cup did a great job with having the event on YouTube TV. They had stuff going out all over the place. Teams went out. They did live feeds from different locations. Wil suggested that if having it at one (1) singular location is prohibitive, then possible having different satellite locations could work too. Wil also stated that he thinks it's stuff like that that would really help to sell our product and show that that we do care and it's not all about money and it's not just hockey all the time. Its community and it's a matter of getting these kids together. He went on to say that he knows for a fact, his team (18U AA) and they know 99% of the kids that they played against through social media and whatnot. Wil thinks it would be nice for



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them to meet these kids and it might make the game play a little bit different.

- Jason agreed and stated that he'd like to see a way to do that not just at the end with playoffs, but toward the end of the season because it could help in preventing some problems over the season.
- Topic #12 – Out of the box ideas.
 - All Stars, I think that's a good idea.
 - Opening the podcast to include players from organizations.
 - Larry stated that is the next level of programming.
 - Stars of the week
 - With players and stars of the week. Participation by associations is critical. It's every single league, we have this problem, including the AYHL. We ask for nominations for player of the week or star of the week, and nobody responds.
 - It makes it impossible to do. It starts out great. We're doing fine. September, October, November, December, the holidays. We're getting a couple and it's not enough and then by January it fizzles out completely.
 - Jay stated that we didn't make it as far as January.
 - Big splash at playoffs.
 - Larry and Jason discussed this year about how we can make some changes. Obviously try and get the Flyers caravan there to make it more of an event.
 - DVHL, hanging banner each rink.



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- Outdoor league games would be great. If organizations can do that, absolutely let us know and then we can mark that. That's something that we can start to showcase, but it's not something that necessarily could be to be able to put together.
 - Wil Younger from Central Penn Panthers asked if it were possible for the league to not dictate that and just say, hey, you're playing an outdoor game? And you're playing at Spring Mountain at whatever age level at this date. And then we just know to block it out.
 - Chris Saitta from the Exton Kings stated that because it's new at Spring Mountain, it's a bit of a challenge. Making it scheduled due to its consistency would be a challenge.
- Some quick wins
 - We added more teams to play.
 - Club previews, a quick video, wonderful DVHL T-shirts, but there's an expense to all this that we must evaluate.
- Mid-season, All Star weekend, that's been explored in the past or has been done in the past and there were some challenges.
- Battle across the Delaware expanded.
 - Jason was at the NJYHL meeting last night. They didn't talk about it that much.
 - Jason cautioned us regarding collaboration with them as far as crossovers and whatnot, they are not willing / able to commit to anything until tryouts are over and their team declarations are done. Jason believes that is something similar here on this side of the river as well.



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- They need to know how many teams they have in each division. How many teams the DVHL has?
- It's not they it's not that they don't want work with us, they're absolutely looking to work with the DVHL. They need to know what that looks like. They can't commit to somethings.
- The looking at this past year, I believe it was Delco and Genesis played in the NJYHL at 10U AA. Jason asked Maureen, and as far as she knew the history NJYHL has never turned away DVHL teams that want to play in New Jersey Youth divisions in a situation like that, so she's relatively confident that that won't be a problem.
- The one aspect. There's a line, though, as far as what number of teams could go across the river and just playing it New Jersey Youth versus having crossover games and that's what Jason has laid out. In a case where you only have two (2) 10U AA teams, just put them into New Jersey youth as far as the 10U, 12U and 14U A and B, the reality is that a 12U B team out of Bayonne is not going to want to travel Hershey, PA to play one game, so that type of crossover schedule isn't going to work. Instead, what could be looked at is doing a series of tournaments that ultimately lead to a battle across the Delaware.
- Wil Younger from Central Penn stated in a situation like that where you have a distance to drive; could we or could we not schedule like we do, lose games with the EJ, and play twice in the same day, would that be an option?
- Jason stated that living in North Jersey, he still doesn't see a team from Bayonne wanting to travel at Hershey, PA for two (2) days or for two (2)



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games in the day. It's the reality of it that that's a potentially a long, long day. That's why Jason thinks it's more realistic and what he can sell to them is doing a series of tournaments where you're packing in a weekend around some holidays, looking at doing something around Halloween at Hershey around MLK day in the Philly area, building around some holidays and doing some semi-local tournaments for these families.

- Wil Younger from Central Penn then asked if maybe they would be agreeable to a centralized location somewhere within there to do three (3) game showcase or four (4) game showcase; would that be something acceptable to all parties?
- Jason stated that's what we're looking out with the tournaments. Jason added that he knows that USA Hockey will not be using the word showcase eventually at 10U, 12U and 14U. We're not showcasing them to anyone. 16U and 18U, sure but at but 10U, 12U, and 14U not realistic.
- As far as the AA 12U, 13U, and 14U, looking towards some form of balance schedule that is a world where he thinks New Jersey is open to that as far as traveling for one (1) game in a day or two (2) games. Now 16U and 18U AA and A, the reality is that most of the New Jersey Youth teams that are left are a short season, fully short season because of North Jersey Teams and North Jersey is non-USA Hockey for high school season so the teams disband in or around November 20th. So, Jason doesn't see that we'll be able to do anything at 16U and 18U with New Jersey aside from if there's summer tournaments, if that's something that we want to do.
- Dan Rudd from Snider Hockey asked if we ever approached the Flyers Youth formally or informally



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about sliding over the DVHL, being formally from Jersey Youth and given the footprint they have there and most of their players don't play in the North Jersey High School League; is that something the DVHL would consider?

- Jay stated that when I talked to them, they were involved in the Tiering issue.
 - Jason stated that he thinks it's something we're exploring again this year because they're on an island over there. Jason added that as far as this crossover type arrangement, New Jersey Youth is not willing to commit to anything until post tryouts. The broad strokes have it as something like what he has presented here. Jason further added that to Stéphane's question regarding how we communicate with parents of 10U AA, that there's only two (2) teams, New Jersey Youth has never rejected DVHL teams playing in their league.
 - Stéphane Charbonneau from the Philadelphia Little Flyers added that as of right now we have seventeen (17) A teams, somebody is going to have to move to make the AA fair. We cannot go with this again. It's impossible.
 - Jason stated that it creates a challenge because we don't want to artificially inflate teams either because let's say that we're going to have teams that can go and skate in some form of crossover with New Jersey Youth and you're going to have AA teams that aren't competitive with New Jersey Youth. That doesn't make the DVHL look good, and that doesn't help.
- Solidifying the schedule early.



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- Topic #13 - Long term changes
 - Join Maryland with the DVHL and NJYHL.
 - Jason was glad that's in the long-term changes because he thinks not just Maryland but also there's the possibility of Hudson Valley is what's right over the border of New York. So, I think there's potential there. We're talking about DVHL and NJYHL starting to grow the footprint a little larger for crossover games.
 - Focus on the kids.
 - The experience should be meaningful for everyone.
 - That's a clear difference from the competitor and something that Jason thinks we always must remember is that's what we're here for, the kids in the game.
 - Hosting one or two showcases each year.
 - Partnership with NJYHL.
- Topic #14 – Changes in progress
 - #1 – Game Sheet
 - Jason said that in his opinion game sheet is wonderful.
 - We're using it for the ballot across the Delaware this week which DVHL teams are participating in. It's been super easy to set up, but there's a learning curve and it still doesn't resolve the issue that if you have parents' scorekeepers who don't know what they're doing, you can still get into trouble.
 - That's where some of the issues have happened, is that there's no physical record of the score sheet where sometimes when it's just a transposing error, but there was still a notation down there you could figure it out when it's just done on the iPad,



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whatever's report on the iPad is recorded, and that's it. So, there are some challenges there. Along with just the general learning curve that you must teach parents how to actually score keep.

- Topic # 15 – Branding and marketing.
 - There's a lot of suggestions as far as website upgrades, overhaul, Game Sheet implementation, podcast expansion, banners, dashboards, running an All-Star game; it all costs money. Jason posed a question to the membership stating that it's wonderful to do all off this, but is the membership prepared for a fee assessment to accomplish it? Keep in mind AHF is running with a massive payroll.
 - Jason stated that change is incremental. The worst thing we can do is try to take on every single problem that we have and go with every single solution. We're not going to get anywhere we're going to spend. So really chipping away a little thing that can make some substantive change over time. That's his recommendation moving forward, really looking at what we can do little by little. He thinks we'll see that people are disappointed with the for profit model and that they're going to want they like their nonprofit community based organizations, and we'll see how they come back to us little by little there.
 - Brian Pecca from the Hatfield Ice Hawks stated that the AHF is always tweeting nonsense out every day. You look at Districts this past week in the qualifies. They're pointing out on their Twitter feed how AHF teams are beating DVHL teams, it has nothing to do with AHF versus DVHL. It's team Philadelphia vs Genesis or it's Lehigh Valley vs The Quakers or Snider, whoever it is. It's the clubs vs the clubs. Brian thinks that we need to continue to emphasize that it's about the clubs. It's not about the DVHL vs the AHF.



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- Jay stated that if we follow the AHF model, we will fail.
- Larry added we need to force our rinks that when people come to an event, whether it's a Jamboree or tournament, the rink has to do something to make it a little bit socially exciting for the parents. It must be nice for them. It's got to be comfortable for them. They must make sure you've got Internet. We need to make sure that we have all the things the parent looks for so that they could be comfortable there while their kids out there playing. We're talking about these jamborees. We just can't have these parents come get their kids on the ice, play a game, get them off, take them home. There's has to be something that's going on in the parking lot; there's a tent set up with a BBQ, cornhole, little games for the kids to play so that we all can gather and create a family fun environment.
- Wil Younger from Central Penn added to Larry's point by asking "who in the room made accommodations during 2020-2021 during the COVID era. His organization bought small tents and outdoor TVs to make it a bit comfortable for parents. Wil added that he has no problem with telling his rink staff that we must roll these things out, we have to stream then games so that the parents can hangout side and watch the game together to make the best of a bad situation. They even had a local bar that streamed games for the parents so that they could enjoy the game and a few libations while staying warm.



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Adjournment:



- A motion to adjourn the March meeting was made by: **Genesis.**
 - The motion seconded by: **Central Penn**
 - All in favor to adopt carried at

Next Meeting:

The April meeting will be virtually via ZOOM on April 12, 2023, at 7 pm.

DRAFT