



Michigan Amateur Hockey Association

Presidents Report Winter Meeting 2022

Happy New Year! I am sure you are all looking forward to a great 2022 and seeing Covid run its course as a pandemic. We were fortunate to have a much more normal season this year, without most of the major limitations we saw in 2020. Hopefully the current wave will recede soon and allow us to complete our season without any additional interruption.

The start of the 2021 -2022 season saw many new people in leadership positions. We have three new District Chairs, one returning District Chair (after a long stint in other positions), and three new Executive Board members. Overall, I feel the group is working very well together and is providing positive change as they begin their new roles. We conducted a workshop session in September for the group to allow for discussion on future strategy and build a consistent framework for handling of issues. We were also able to see Jason Reynolds settle into his role instead of dealing with Covid issues on almost a full-time basis. Jason recently underwent his annual performance review and was rated above average for his contributions thus far. As Jason continues to work into his regular responsibilities, he will be a key player in advancing our growth initiatives as well as supporting the team handling the many Safe Sport, racial and other types of complaints involving abusive or bad behavior.

USA Hockey is in the process of making a major change to their Governance structure that will be voted on in June 2022, with the transition completed by June 2023. The changes, many mandated by Congress and the USOPC, will give athletes a stronger voice and provide changes to create better representation based on the way USA Hockey has evolved over the years.

This year, MAHA launched Task Force 2021 to look at what the future of our organization should look like. You have all heard me say many times that our organization today suffers from rules and regulations from the early 2000's that were put in place to control the tremendous growth at the time. Youth sports has changed a lot since then and those rules have had some unintended consequences that have hurt our growth. The group began work in the Fall gathering input from all the associations in each district. All the information was combined and put into a plan to move these changes forward. These are sweeping changes, many of which are complicated and interrelated. While I had hoped we would be farther along in the process right now, I recognize that based on some failures we have had in the past, these things will take time to properly work through. The rules changes needed will take time to write properly and must be vetted to ensure there are no unintended consequences from the changes. It will also take time to ensure all understand the new structure. Some of the simple changes will be introduced this year, with the balance to be completed by this time next year.



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I would encourage you to attend our Task Force Presentation on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. to see the results thus far and provide feedback on the direction of the project.

In closing, I am glad we will be able to meet as a group in person for the first time in 2 years. I think this is important so we may better discuss the issues facing our organization, and together decide how to move forward. I also look forward to seeing you all at our Summer Meeting in Grand Rapids later this year.

George Atkinson
President