



MASSACHUSETTS HOCKEY MONTHLY MEETING

March 5, 2018
MEETING MINUTES

The Meeting was called to order at 7:32PM

John Tobin presented his opening remarks and commented on how well the various state tournaments ran and gave commendation to the efforts of Kevin Kavanagh, Liz Cohen and Mike D'Orio.

John Tobin asked for various committee updates.

Nick McCummings advised the board on his efforts in adaptive hockey and educated the board on the five disciplines of adaptive hockey: sled, deaf/hearing impaired; blind/vision impaired, standup amputee and special hockey. Nick advised that a recent seminar was run at the Carroll School and two clinics were to be run at the Perkins School involving blind/vision impaired hockey and was looking for volunteers as many of the disciplines require a 1 to 1 player to assistant ratio. John Tobin commended Nick on his efforts.

Dave Moses and Tim McMahon updated the board on the upcoming Association Leadership Conference is scheduled for May 5, 2018 at the Sheraton in Needham from 7am-1pm and there are currently 6 breakout sessions scheduled.

DJ Briggs advised the board on the goaltending initiative and advised that the program participation level in the goaltending initiative is not where they want it to be. They are adding a CEP on how to deal with goalies and DJ advised the board to spread the word that they are offering free clinics.

Phil Zona advised the board that the Hall of Fame Candidates had been selected and, to date, 30 applications for the sportsmanship award had been received.

Steve Palmacci discussed the issue of the need for redistricting due to imbalance in size of many of the districts. Steve discussed that it is presently being suggested that Milton, Quincy, Brookline and Dedham be moved into District 1, District 7 & 8 be merged, District 5 & 6's are too distant and sparsely populated to address their numbers. Jeff Brown inquired on the process of merging or realigning districts and whether this was permissible under the bylaws. Steve Palmacci and John Tobin stated there is no rule on this and Jeff may want to consider proposing one and John Tobin assured the BOD that it would vote on any proposal to realign districts.

Mark Lissner advised the board on the candidates for election at the annual meeting and advised that for the USA Hockey Director At-Large Positions there were 7 candidates: John Tobin, Chip Bradbury, David Young, Jim Maimone, Christine Mayer Pat Bohan and Steve Rizzo. Mark advised that there were two candidates Jim Maimone and Tim McMahon. A nomination from the floor was made for Dave Young. Chip Bradbury made a motion to close the nominations and the nominations were closed.

Jeff Brown advised the board that the deadline for rules proposals was within the next thirty days.

Kevin Kavanagh advised the board that the state tournaments being run in Marlboro provided a positive atmosphere and having multiple tournaments under one roof allowed for towns to root for other teams in their program. Canton won 3 titles. Kevin advised that Pro Ambitions is now a Mass Hockey sponsor adding content to the newsletter similar to Greg Carter. Kevin advised that he is meeting with representatives of the Future Stars Summer League which is currently unsanctioned about bring them under the Mass Hockey umbrella. Kevin advised that the player development numbers are ahead of last years' numbers and the 01 & 02 girls' selections have been posted and the 03 & 04 girls' lists will be posted after this weekend. Kevin advised that the boys' player development was involved with affording up to 3 players from boys town Bantam teams participating at states with access to the player development program.

District Updates DJ Briggs from District 7 was puzzled on how his teams could earn direct entry into the states and was in support of District 7 being combined with District 8.

Kevin Donovan provided updates on official certification levels and said the issue of creating a tenure status for officials to avoid certifications is being explored.

A motion was made to move to executive session which was seconded and approved.

John Tobin advised the board on the Mike Bonish matter and provided the board with the history and background. John advised that the board that an initial complaint was received by Mass Hockey and it was then put into a formal complaint which was brought to the Executive Board. Upon receiving the formal complaint it was determined that the matter should be investigated by a disinterested independent investigative panel. Representatives from Michigan, the Mid-American District and Connecticut were brought in and 9-10 questions for the panel were formulated. The investigators met in Boston and conducted interviews of Mike Bonish and others associated with the investigation. Based upon the investigation and questions posed, a report prepared by the investigative committee concluded that rules had been broken. As a result, the Executive Board voted to proceed with discipline. Two hearings were conducted an initial disciplinary hearing and then a subsequent appeals board. In September a decision was issued by the disciplinary committee which found that Mike Bonish violated Massachusetts and USA Hockey rules and regulations and imposed a penalty of a three year suspension plus two years' probation. A subsequent Massachusetts appeals committee agreed to reduce the penalty to the end of his current term minus one day plus a two year probation. USA Hockey recently reviewed and upheld the decision. The matter has been ongoing on for 11 months and it has created a substantial record. The decision of USA Hockey unanimously and unequivocally supported the decision.

The facts determined and established from the investigations and hearings determined that from 2014-2017 while the elected director from Massachusetts for US Hockey. Mike Bonish sent emails to USA Hockey asking for the names, ages and email addresses of Massachusetts hockey players and did not disclose to USA Hockey the basis for his request. It was determined that as a result of his actions confidential information on 14,394 Massachusetts hockey players was obtained and this information was used as the basis for soliciting players for tryouts for the Eastern Mass Senators program. In 2017 – over 1,000 emails were sent and ultimately 41 of 55 players selected for the Eastern Mass Senators program had received an email. It was determined that Mike Bonish's efforts provided his program with an advantage not available to other teams. It was determined that Mike had violated both USA Hockey's rules and his fiduciary duties. Specifically, it was decided that Mike had violated confidentiality, code of conduct rules and his fiduciary duties owed as a director of Massachusetts hockey. Throughout the process Mike Bonish attempted to blame others and did not accept responsibility for his actions, and

claimed he had not been apprised of his conflict of interest disclosure obligations. The USA Hockey panel rejected his arguments. It was determined by USA Hockey that the suspension was appropriate and fair. John advised that if anyone wants to review the decision arrangements can be made to obtain a copy of the decision from the executive office. If anyone wants to review the voluminous transcript they can arrange to visit the office and do so, but no copies will be permitted to be made.

Questions were posed from the floor including the costs to Massachusetts Hockey and it was discussed that the majority of the costs were covered by insurance. A question was posed on whether there are any further rights of appeal and Maura Sheehan advised that she was not aware what Mike Bonish's plans were.

A Motion was made to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2018 meeting, which was approved unanimously.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and approved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:54pm.