

West Fargo Hockey Association Board Meeting

Board Meeting Minutes: November 19, 2018

6:00 PM West Fargo Sports Arena, West Fargo, ND

Board Members:

Present: Brad Saville, Brent Kuehne, David Chapman, Drew Likness, Eric Nelson, Jessi Kuhn, Joel Honeyman, Josh Benson, Rob Otterson, Ryan Endres, Shana Wilson, Corey Moos, Anthony Houkom

Absent:

Quorum present? Yes

Others Present:

Gaming Manager: Jason Campbell

Office Manager: Julie Fraser

Other: Kristen Cigelske, Gene Astolfi, Dana Eckert, Jason Wright

PROCEEDINGS:

- **Meeting called to order** at 6:06 p.m. by President, Jessi Kuhn.
- **Minutes Approved** Motion made by Ryan Endres to approve the October 15, 2018 minutes. Seconded by Drew Likness. Approved by all and passed without dissent.

Presidents Report

Jessi Kuhn

Rostering Teams

Most teams rostered with USA Hockey with the exception of Bantam and Mites. Termites will happen when the teams have been chosen.

Fargo Force Engagement

Kuhn attended a season kickoff with the Fargo Force regarding community outreach and support of local programs. Kuhn will engage Endres of Hockey Operations and Otterson of Communications/Marketing for upcoming engagement between the two parties.

Thank You Cards

Thank you cards were received by the West Fargo Hockey Association from the Jacob Dierks family as well as Teags & Ry. These were read by Kuhn and recorded.

Financial Report

Josh Benson

October Financials

With transition of accounting services to Fiebiger, Swanson, West & Co. in October, detailed review of first financials being reviewed by partners. Once received, Benson will forward onto board members for review.

Finance Committee

Finance committee has been determined. Audit committee and process will come as a part of this discussion as well.

Gun Raffle

Benson reported that the bill received from Scheels for the gun raffle has not been paid. Discussions with Scheels has shown that a Scheels credit card had been opened in the past in the prior business manager's name, which should have created a kick-back to the association. Benson would prefer a more discussion with Scheels before putting any individuals name on the account due to liability and negative impacts to their credit. Benson does not want any further delay in payment to Scheels and will consider the credit card with kick-back in further discussions. Benson made a motion to make payment to Scheels via check. Seconded by Joel Honeyman. Approved by all and passed without dissent.

Budget

Benson's transition of accounts has found a \$29,500 fine from a prior gun raffle that was not allocated to the gun raffle which caused the fine, but rather broke down as losses/expenses between six of our gaming sites. Motion made by Benson to reduce the expenses within the budget for these six gaming sites to ensure legitimate expenses. Seconded by Likness. Approved by all and passed without dissent.

Hockey Director Report

presented by Ryan Endres

Coaching Requirements

Endres stated that Kuhn's rostering of teams has located some coaches that had not yet completed their required documentation, therefore will not be allowed to coach this upcoming weekend and will be let go if they cannot resolve. Most often, it is due to minor issues or errors and Gregoire has been working to address these items with the coaching staff.

Team Level Updates

601 total players registered.

Mites/Termite: Assigned coordinators have taken the reigns at each level, being allowed to run with their program. We only had 90 termites registered prior to Intro to Hockey, so it was hard to forecast team numbers, ice time, and other details not knowing how many would register after the intro camp. There were more than expected with Termites reaching 160 players. This went from 45 players to 70-80 players on the ice at once. These challenges are being addressed at the coordinator level in conjunction with Gregoire.

Squirt: Forecasting of Squirts normally anticipates an additional 10-15 after registration close. As this did not occur this year, the B1 level that was planning for 4 teams was limited to 3 teams. This imbalance of teams has caused challenges in practice balances as well. In addition, Minnesota Hockey implemented a 30 game limit for squirt level this year. There were teams who used to play 50 games/season and are no longer available to fill their schedule with the additional games, causing scheduling games with a limited pool of remaining teams.

Peewees: Things have been going well with limited issues.

Bantams: Building and keeping teams for this season has been a challenging. Many variables have dramatically affected this season: player injuries, some players were automatically taken to the high school teams, some tried out and moved up, some quit when they didn't make the teams they hoped, some chose not to come out at all, and some just quit.

Board Member Eric Nelson entered.

Endres felt this appeared to be a one-year incident. He doesn't foresee a big group leaving next year as there isn't a big space for them with the high school teams being freshman and sophomore strong. He will continue to work with Gregoire, the teams and NDAHA to figure out the best way to resolve this year's challenges with the Bantam level.

Hockey Director Calls & Emails

Endres reported that members are contacting Gregoire on any hockey-related topic, which calculates to an estimated 200 emails and 90 phone calls per day. He is concerned that the time spent on the smaller details has prevented him from doing the tasks he should be focusing on at this point in the season. Rob Otterson would like to communicate more clearly to the membership the chain of command as well as roles and responsibilities for coaches (head & assistant), coordinators, hockey director, team managers, team liaisons, and board members to help alleviate the contact.

Coaching Changes

Gregoire has previously reported the challenges with getting paid coaches not only in West Fargo, but in all regional associations. Endres confirmed that this isn't new, but is new for West Fargo Hockey again and we need to adapt and grow with the concept. We must be fiscally responsible to our members, but those who are able to do the job we need are often not willing to take the pay. Otterson clarified that nonprofit volunteers are the basis of most youth foundations and we were fortunate in the past to have had great paid coaches. Kuhn recommended Endres review paid vs. parent/volunteer coaches as well as their responsibilities during the season and in preparation for next season.

Hockey Operations Improvements

Endres feels the board had taken over a million dollar business with no transition plan. Endres hopes things will be much different next year with the tryout schedule. Bantams would go first, each group or set of groups having their own week, or will come after rather than pushing to do them all at once. He also confirmed that all of the higher level tournaments are right away, therefore getting the teams together sooner is very important to a successful season.

Honeyman reported the documenting, timeline, and tracking being done in a project plan as to what needs to be done for next season. It was obvious that we need to find a better way to schedule our season: putting enough time between tryouts, team announcements, etc. We are rushing teams and the details that follow are falling through the cracks. Kuhn stated that in past we have done as much as we could to accommodate the schedules of kids playing other sports to our own detriment. She feels that we need to make season changes that are the best for our sport and our association.

Introduction of Julie Fraser, Office Manager

Julie Fraser, newly hired Office Manager for the West Fargo Hockey Association, attended the meeting and re-introduced herself to the board with about one month under her belt. In addition to starting her role and creating new processes with HR, payroll, bookkeeping, and office management, Julie has been a stop gap on many areas requiring assistance such as tournament hotels, NDAHA reporting, and referee scheduling to name a few. Julie's shared her observations with the board on successes, areas of improvement and where she could best see her role supporting those opportunities. Honeyman indicated he would engage Julie further on the policies and procedures started regarding the association, as well as the Compensation Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Task List

Shana Wilson

With the exception of fund raisers and team manager tasks, very little of the information and procedures performed were transitioned to the new board. Wilson started a Task List with priorities to keep board members aware of outstanding items. A brief review and discussion of the items for the upcoming 7 days was done ensuring board members were aware of outstanding items. Kuhn stressed the need for board members to be aware and responsible to complete their tasks on time.

Winter Raffle Expenses

Eric Nelson

Prizes for this year's raffle will be revamped. Nelson plans to drop the ice house and do the cash prize instead as it appeals to more individuals. Out of 324 single player families and 145 multi-player families, a total of 18 families took advantage of the buyout option this year. Based off of the membership, estimated gross for the raffle would be \$217,500 with an estimated \$56,000 for prizes. Working to streamline vendors and eliminate warranty issues seen in the past.

Gaming Apparel Request

Eric Nelson

Gaming manager requested for replacement uniforms for gaming employees. Current staff have apparel that is well worn, therefore is requesting replacement for all current staff and a small back stock for new hires. Nelson made a motion to increase budget from \$1000 to \$2500. Seconded by Honeyman. Approved by all and passed without dissent.

Gaming Holiday Party

Eric Nelson

Eric Nelson requested \$3000 for the gaming staff holiday party. Benson confirmed that this was included in the previously approved budget as it had been done in the past and would not require approval.

Vets 1 Memorial Arena Ice Conditions

Brent Kuehne

Prior to the increase in Vets 1 rink size, valves were located behind the goal and on the other side of the boards. With the larger rink, the valves have been covered, causing softer ice behind the goals. Due to the estimated \$20,000 to repair the issue, the WF Park board has not approved the repair. This is an issue and the association should be aware of the potential safety hazard.

Vets Parking Lot Attendant

Brent Kuehne

Kuehne reported that things are going smoothly with the Vets parking lot drop off area, but the Vets arena staff is not always able to put out the signage in time on the days needed. He was looking for open feedback on how to proceed to best support our goal with safety at Vets. Otterson reported a

video that has been in the works to help the membership better understand, but for the time being would get communication out. Honeyman felt that if we are able to do this for a year, our membership will be aware how to be successful so season-start is key. It's also most important to be done on the nights when the younger groups are in attendance. Kuehne will talk with Northstar to see what permanent solutions they could come up with, as they had provided the cones on the original layout. Honeyman relayed that he has heard this year's solution is the best one they have seen so far. Kudos to Kuehne and the Vets staff!!

WFSA Ice Contact Status

Brent Kuehne

Kuehne has continued to work through ice contract negotiations with West Fargo Sports Arena, but they are not going as well as anticipated. Struggling with clear and consistent communication. Endres reported a possible disconnect between the management company and the intent of the facility and suggested a meeting be set up with West Fargo School District Business Manager, Mark Lemer, to resolve some of the disconnect.

Vets Ice Schedule and Early Morning Practices

Brent Kuehne

Scheduling of events managed by the West Fargo Park District at Vets 1 and 2 such as Learn to Skate caused the Monday night slot on one sheet of ice to be unavailable to us to rent. Based on the current year's schedule, we would not have had to skate at 6 am for any team if that conflict had not been there. We will continue to work with West Fargo Parks to get ahead of their park guide schedule and ensure we can utilize our season at Vets to the best of our ability.

Dasher Boards, Banners & Facility Branding

Brent Kuehne

Dasher boards: Bobbi Kuehne has been calling the dasher board accounts and getting a good response. There has been some pushback, but has been collecting unpaid balances, as well as renewing accounts for the season. It has been taken a lot of time as there are often multiple calls and emails per account, but she has good traction with these calls. Wilson asked that her hours are tracked so that this can be considered in future forecasts with volunteer/dib hours.

Banners: Kuehne is continuing to work the branding of Vets with Mark Fossaa with one banner sale so far, Bremer Bank. Also working through estimates of the duration to put this up and will coordinate with Jamie Olson at Vets. Clarification on who receives the dibs for the dasher board and banners needs to be addressed as there seems to be conflict surrounding this topic.

Facility Technology

Brent Kuehne

Finalizing upgrade to internet and phone at gaming office, as well as phone service at Vets office with Midcontinent Communications. Plan to have call routing capability allowing one number with options for gaming office, hockey office, etc.

Future Ice

Brad Saville

With the approval of the referendum to build a third high school in West Fargo, Brad would like to request the develop a committee consisting of board members, hockey director, community, business members, park board, school board members, and Association members that will start exploring future ice options and develop an action plan to address the issue with the goal of conducting the 1st meeting within the next 6 months. Endres felt that next year will not be as big of a concern as 2021, so the timing of this is important. Kuehne feels that our contract negotiations are also important to secure ice

for those future years while we discuss the future ice. Wilson will add this to the board's strategic planning discussion topics.

Apparel and Branding

Rob Otterson

From a branding standpoint, our brand is copy written and trademarked therefore if you give it to anyone, you no longer own it. Although our logo was not used, when we allowed Teags & Ry to sell products on behalf of West Fargo Hockey Association, it opened the door for parties interested in selling our brand. Otterson reports that inquiries have come in from individuals looking to sell hand-crafted items to opening a new apparel store wanting to sell our products and feels the board needs to clarify how we want to use our brand. Kuhn reported her current work with SquadLocker, an online retailer via SportsEngine. Endres recommended that the overall review of apparel and branding is imperative as we do not want to impact our relationship with our local vendors such as Scheels and Play It Again Sports. Wilson will add this as well to the strategic planning board agenda topics.

Communication

Rob Otterson

Any board member who sends communication out to the membership should be including Otterson via the Communications&Marketing@stampede hockey.club email so he is aware of the communication and can support via Question of the Day, Facebook, etc.

Girls/Squirt International

Shana Wilson

With WFHA not hosting any tournaments with the exception of the NDAHA State tournaments, Wilson asked Corey Moos to take the lead on behalf of WFHA for the Girls & Squirt International to which Moos agreed.

Off-Ice Duties for Spouses

Shana Wilson

Wilson has received multiple inquiries about dibs and off-ice duties in regards to the spouse of coaches and is looking for board clarification. It is reported that some teams in the past have agreed that the spouse of the coach should not have to do any off-ice duties for multiple reasons: kids not allowed in the box, coach already gives so much time, etc. The board agreed that there is no exception for the spouse of any coach, team manager, board member, etc. to be relieved of their off-ice duties. If any one individual on a team or the team parents as a whole agree to take the duties on behalf of those individuals, that would be a season-by-season decision on that team only and would not transfer to the next season.

OTHER BUSINESS

Communication Options

Association member, Jason Wright, introduced himself and offered to support the board with his background and experience regarding our technology and communication needs. Honeyman will pull together this information and connect with Wright.

Gaming Request at Ole & Lena's

Jason Campbell, Gaming Manager, shared that Ole and Lena's inquired to support WFHA with gaming. He will engage them further and report in the future.

Motion to adjourn by Benson. Seconded by Endres. Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Board of Directors

Jessi Kuhn, President

Drew Likness, Past President

Joel Honeyman, Executive Vice President

Josh Benson, Treasurer

Shana Wilson, Secretary

Ryan Endres, Director of Hockey Operations

Corey Moos, Director of Tournaments

Brad Saville, Director of Compliance & Safe Sport

David Chapman, Director of Membership & Recruitment

Anthony Houkom, Director of Business Operations

Brent Kuehne, Director of Facilities & Equipment

Rob Otterson, Director of Communications & Marketing

Eric Nelson, Director of Fund Raising & Gaming

Next Board Meeting: Monday, Dec 17, 2018 at 6 p.m.