

## MID AM DISTRICT BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 3 & 4, 2021 MINUTES

The Mid Am District (District) Winter Meeting was held at Marriott Tuttle Crossing. Some members attended virtually. The meeting was called to order Friday, December 3, 2021, at 6:10 pm EST, by President Paul Day. Biff Cummings (BC) performed a roll-call. A quorum was present. The meeting was suspended at 10:10 pm on Friday and resumed Saturday at 8:12 am

- 1. Minutes:** Biff Cummings corrected the June 2021 Board Meeting Minutes. He corrected the spelling for Stewart and added Rich Hixon as an attendee. Tom Cline motioned to approve the corrected minutes, and Gina Colligan seconded. The Board voted to approve.
- 2. Finance:** Tom Gawlick did a detailed presentation of the District's Financial Report. He highlighted revenue compared to last year, indicating that; the Block Grant is the same, registration fees are up \$40k, sanctioning fees are down, as are Foundation earnings, and State & District Tournament fees are coming in. Major expenses items include; tryouts, player development camps, and RSA. Overall the balance sheet looks go. Tom Cline motioned to approve the report and Roy Davis seconded. The Board voted to approve. The financial report is on file.

The Board discussed a proposal to increase State and District tournament fees. See handout. The Board voted to increase the entrance fee from \$1,100 to \$1,200 starting the 2022/2023 season. A motion to approve was made by John Folmer and seconded by Doug Losure L. The Board voted to approved.

- 3. USAH Finance:** Paul Day reported that USA Hockey is incurring higher operating costs than before. Legal fees have risen 30% over the past year, and insurance costs are up as well. He added that registration fees are likely to increase to cover the added cost. Paul also reported that the Foundation investments remain solid, but registration numbers were not totally back yet.
- 4. Youth Council, Governance, and Screening:** Kaye Pinkowski reported on the following items:

**Nationals:** Kaye reviewed a handout highlighting host locations.

**New By-Laws:** Kaye indicated she has been working with a group to develop a new USA Hockey board structure to match to requirements of USOC. One of the biggest challenges has been that the Board will need to have at least 1/3 of its members be athletes. This is problematic since there are a limited number of athletes, and most don't have extensive operational experience. Most of them will need related training to get them up to speed. A draft of the organization has been rolled out with preliminary USOC approval. The draft organization will be laid out in January and voted on in June.

**Screening:** USA Hockey has been using a national screener. Their program will be a test for future programs with SafeSport/USOC screening. There are currently 7 groups inside USAH that review screens that are flagged. The new pilot program will have SafeSport review the flags.

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- 5. Mid Am By-Laws and Rules and Regs, Local Member Agreement:** Tim O'Shaughnessy reported that no work had been performed on these documents.
- 6. Hearings:** John Karolcik provided a handout and reviewed it. He indicated that the number of match penalties in the District is on pace with 2019. John reviewed the plea process by which standard suspension ranges are applied to various levels of infractions. He indicated the process is working well and cutting down on the number of hearings. The turnaround time from penalty occurrence to deliberation is 3 days. Hearings are down considerably. Others in USA Hockey are adopting the process.
- 7. Girls/Women:** Ladd reported on activities related to regional development groups. He indicated that girls' numbers within the District are up. Cincinnati is currently a hot bed. Ladd discussed a festival scheduled for Columbus for 12U girls where the teams would represent various countries playing in the Olympics. He indicated that District Tryouts were scheduled for April 22, 2022.
- 8. Disabled Section:** Michelle Humphries reported that she is getting her feet on the ground. She touted start-up organizations in Ft Wayne and Cleveland. She reported that the District sled camp would be held this year at the end of July. She reminded us that the USA Hockey Disabled Festival, which was canceled in 2020 and 2021, will be hosted in Pittsburgh this April. The original tournament had 165 teams registered. Money was refunded to teams, but USA Hockey is still owed \$15k.  
  
Michelle is to get support from OH VPs to start a Columbus Warrior Program. Michelle's written report is on file.
- 9. Registration Growth Incentives for Growth:** Keith Kenitzer reported that youth enrollment has rebounded but that adult enrollment is lagging. Keith also reported he had not seen any USA Hockey's summary report for Try Hockey activities in the District. Tom Gawlik added that he had not received requests for ice payments. Paul Day suggested we "keep our ears to the ground" to Try Hockey activities. Paul also reported that new rink owners would register adults.
- 10. High School:** Kathy Santora provided a written report. It is on file.
- 11. State Reports:** PA, WV, and KY reported no issues. IN issued a written report. WV reported that they are hosting a Night at the Stars - the end of April 2023: \$150 per ticket. OH reported that they are considering holding a Tier II 12U tournament (Buckeye Cup) at the same time as the 14U State tournament.
- 12. State and Districts Tier II Formats:** The District discussed and clarified that State Tournaments would have no more than eight teams.
- 13. Adult Council:** Tom Cline indicated that there was nothing to update at this time.
- 14. Selects:** Tom Cline indicated that there was nothing to update at this time.

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- 15. Officiating:** Jim Weaver discussed the Pilot Program for 16-year-olds and above that he and Rich Hixon introduced. They had 62 players from the Pens Elite program participate. The event was presented as a Level 1 seminar. Professional officials helped. Equipment was provided to the participants. Jim and Rich are looking to roll out similar programs throughout all of the NHL teams and lower-level professional teams. Jim's report is on file.
- 16. Coaching:** Bill Switaj reported that coaching clinics are ongoing and have all been virtual in Mid Am. He indicated that approximately 2,700 coaches would be trained in the District's clinics. More clinics are scheduled, but coaches can register in other districts' programs since they are mostly virtual.
- 17. Risk Management:** Mark Zukowski indicated that USA Hockey has a new carrier and has changed the claim process. Organizations should direct any questions to Mark.
- 18. Communication/Education with Local Member Associations:** Tim O'Shaughnessy presented and discussed a draft presentation that he proposes to use to educate member associations. The presentation is to consist of 13 slides and take about 15 to 30 minutes to go through. The presentation will explain the District's purpose and responsibilities within USA Hockey. The intention is to give this presentation to association boards on Zoom meeting conference call. It would be limited to 20 to 25 people or so at a time. Tim suggested we start with Ohio and let State VP's present it on three different dates. Tim went through the specifics covered in each slide. Tom Gawlik suggested we make a professionally developed video that can be posted on the website. Tim's presentation is on file.  
  
Tim suggested we use the same format to communicate other items we do such as: Hearings/ coaching education/refereeing/ insurance coverage/ registration/ tournaments district> nationals/ player development – tryouts-camps-select program/ RSA /USA Hockey Initiatives: Try Hockey for Free/Girls Hockey Weekend/Hat Trick Challenge/2 and 2 Challenge/etc.  
  
Tim also led a discussion about our social media presence or lack thereof. The current newsletter is only posted on the website. Tim motioned that the District hire an email distribution service at about \$50/month. Doug Losure seconded. The Board voted to approve.
- 19. Mid-State Mustangs Member Application:** The Mid-State Mustangs submitted a request to start their own programs, separate from Altoona Hockey. The District discussed their application at length. John Folmer motioned to deny the request, and Rich Hixon seconded. The Board voted to deny the application.
- 20. Indiana State Hockey Association Application (Indiana Elite):** Roy Davis presented this application. The association charter is to be a "Tier I" program at 10U and 12U. The program's goal would be to develop players inside Indiana. Players would need to play for their local association during the season. Travel teams would be registered through Fort Wayne with the association board comprised of the participating association members. Practices are all around state. The Indy Fuel supports this. There will be a tryout to field the team. Tim O'Shaughnessy motioned to approve in-season registration up to 12U, and out-of-season registration for older players. Tom Gawlik seconded it. The Board voted to approve.

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- 21. Columbus Ohio Vikings Application:** The Board discussed this application. The Viking teams were previously rostered through Athens. They previously applied to have just one team. They added another team for this new application. The two-team program is the basis for their re-application. Keith Kenitzer indicated that there are currently four associations that cover the same region as the Vikings program would. Their application was tabled following review by the Ohio Vice Presidents.
- 22. USA Coaching Program:** Scott Paluch updated the Board on the USA Hockey coaches program activities. Scott indicated that coaches in the program are back and are traveling throughout their regions. There has been some re-organization. Bob Mancini will lead the group. Other re-organization information will be rolled-out at the Winter Meetings. Given staff reductions, the group is looking to become more efficient with their activities. The group is to focus on player development and may split their attention to age groups versus regions. The group is working on a teaching module for parents. Scott added that the Model Club Program had been eliminated, not they will still have the Club Excellence Program.
- 23. SafeSport:** Murray Stall reported that he had handled 26 complaints so far this year, which is at the same pace as last. He added that complaints were typically related to racial slurs, bullying, and verbal abuse. However, he indicated that most claims were not elevated to the level of legitimate SafeSport issues. Murray's written report is on file.
- 24. Insurance Discussion:** Paul Day led a discussion and proposed that we expand our D&O Insurance to cover the Board because of a limitation of our current coverage. Mark Zukowski suggested we check to see if members' homeowners' policies cover deformation claims first. Paul requested Mark review our current coverage and report back to the Board.
- 25. State/Districts Application:** Lori Billings emailed the spreadsheet with teams who have sent in their applications and money to participate in States and Districts. The deadline was December 1. A non-refundable late fee of \$100 is to be assessed.

### **New Business**

- 26.** Tim O'Shaughnessy initiated a discussion to move back tryouts for all ages and tiers until after Nationals. There was an extended discussion. The motion was tabled for now.
- 27.** Paul Day initiated a discussion about upgrading the website. Michelle Humphries suggested we "hire" a sports management intern to maintain the website. She offered to investigate options. Tim O'Shaughnessy made a motion to start a website committee. Dalton Haas seconded. The Board voted to approve. Tim, Michelle, Dalton, and Elisa Millett offered to be on the committee. Tim is to set up Zoom meeting.
- 28.** Jim Weaver indicated that scheduling referees for the State and District Tournaments might be a struggle due to the number of games in Pittsburgh.

A motion to adjourn was made by John Folmer at 10:40 am. It was seconded by Rich Hixon and approved by the Board.

Attendance (in no particular order): Friday and Saturday: Gina Colligan, Tom Gawlik, Roy Davis, Lori Billings, Tim O'Shaughnessy, Kaye Pinkowski, Paul Day, Tom Cline, Biff Cummings, John

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Karolcik, Bill Switaj, Doug Losure, Jim Weaver, John Folmer, Mark Zukowski, Michelle Humphries, Elisa Millett, Rich Hixon, Dalton Haas, and Zach Hill.

Friday and Saturday Virtually: Ray Borkoski, Kathy Santora, and Murray Stall

Friday Only: Ladd Wagner, Scott Paluch,

Saturday Only: Keith Kenitzer

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Biff Cummings.