



## **FC EXETER**

### **Monthly board meeting**

**February 13, 2024**

**Via Zoom**

Present: Maria Proulx (President), Patrick Garrity (Vice-President), Ben Bailey, Jon Fagan, Michael Hill, Geoff Meadville, Jessica Costa, Christie Farris, Scott Craig, Eric Kelley

Absent with regrets: Cathy Golden, Porter Hayes, Jenn Young, David Richards, Luke Martel, David Richards, Matteo Taormina, Shane Bradt

### **Welcome and meeting minutes**

Maria Proulx opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Maria asked for questions regarding the January meeting minutes. Jason Faria brought up that there were changes made to the Bylaws during the January meeting that will need to be noticed and voted on again, including a vote to suspend the bylaw capping the number of Directors at 15 and a vote to establish a new director organizational system that conflicts with the current bylaws. There may be others. Jason pointed out that the actions were well-intentioned and likely to be supported by the Board of Directors again, but the way in which it happened is in conflict with the Bylaws. Jason volunteered to stand for election as Secretary at the next meeting and also volunteered to send a proposal out with the necessary 7-day notice. This will allow the proposals made at the January meeting to be put to an appropriately noticed vote of the Board of Directors. These actions still took place so it doesn't change what took place according to the minutes, but it will need to be corrected. Jessica made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ben. The motion carried (8-0).

### **NNESL Update**

Maria covered some of the changes at NNESL with Matt Cafelle leaving as president at the last meeting and the new move over to the NECSL. Maria has asked for documentation that outlines the deal between NNESL and NECSL if NNESL moves into NECSL as well as roles and responsibilities.

NNESL may not have the reserves expected and may not be collecting enough to cover fees- waiting to learn if two clubs have paid for fall. NNESL has not raised fees in a couple years. Given the significant increase in ref fees, assignor fees, etc. there is a need to raise fees in the spring to ensure expenses are covered. A proposal was sent out. Maria had Jenn review it.

The NNESL Board is still discussing the move to NECSL. what isn't clear is how this will happen and under what Agreement. In general, NNESL would move into NECSL in the Spring, but it wouldn't be a complete move. NECSL doesn't believe they will have enough staff to put an administrator in charge of our league in Spring. We would then need to pay for a full-time administrator in the Fall. They've proposed Matt Cafelle as a paid administrator. A NNESL board member has also proposed keeping Matt on as an ad hoc director. There's an open question as to whether there's a conflict with Matt acting as an administrator and a board member.

The plan now is for fees to increase in Spring, Matt serves as administrator for Spring and then we move into NECSL fully in the Fall if NNESL Board votes to approve. The next step would be that the NNESL Board could be dissolved and be fully absorbed into NECSL, or remain intact as an advisory board.

Patrick asked if there would be a second increase in the Fall after already seeing an increase in Spring. Maria said there may need to be another increase but it depends on whether there are outstanding balances from clubs for fall as well as whether other league fees increase. Maria went through per-team fees for Spring under an "Option 1." Ranges were from \$275-\$800 per team. The fees are still lower than NHSA fees. Maria has expressed support for Option 1 after running it by Jenn Young.

Maria has requested that before full move into NECSL, all of the deal terms are laid out in writing in the form of an MOU. Without having detail in writing there are reservations. Maria pointed out that NNESL has very low costs. We pay bare bones for administration, refs, field rentals and some limited equipment for playoffs. However, playing at SUSC in Epping for playoffs costs almost as much as the full season of field rentals. Matt had said that if we move into NECSL they would wave field rental fees. This has not yet been confirmed.

Jason thanked Maria for her vigilance in asking questions and for things to be put in writing as there are a lot of concerns, and the transition needs to be in writing. Jason felt that ownership by 3Step creates a monopoly on youth soccer in this area and our communities depend on us to be the affordable place to play. Jason raised a concern about what we as a club are signing on to if we are part of NECSL. Do we cede property rights?

Patrick pointed out that we can still extract our club if necessary and that the NNESL transition shouldn't be conflated with what FC Exeter does as a club.

### **Spring Registration**

156 for youth 49 for high school. Ben is assisting Maria with an issue. Chris Andriski is trying to create a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade team to challenge FCX, like he's creating his own team and wants to

keep them together, but that's not our MO. Christie said he just wants to keep the Newfields Rec kids together.

Jessica mentioned that some of the Championship teams were aligned by town after kids were assigned to Premiership. Patrick raised that the kids' birth-years might not align with being on one team. Ben pointed out that it's a disservice to better players to be held on Championship teams. The Team Formation Committee will take this on while conversation continues with Chris.

Patrick pointed out that we had 288 last year, so we are halfway there. Jason pointed out that there was a change after our last meeting. The girls' high school division and the boys high school division had very different experiences. Jason confidently felt that the boys could field a Varsity and a JV team. The girls have a solid core of Freshman and a few 8<sup>th</sup> graders and could field one team for sure. Laura will be told to close registration when we hit caps for each of those rosters. For youth divisions, we can sign practice players.

### **Fields and equipment**

Brentwood Exeter and Stratham Memorial all have received COI's. Timberland is still available. Exeter Lacrosse has put in a request to use Brentwood. Hopefully this won't be a problem. Patrick will also put in for East Kingston. We will also get North Hampton options.

### **Evaluations**

Rob from Seacoast is assembling staff for it. Patrick will carve out the time in Brentwood. Maria said Dover is copying our evaluation process.

### **Tournaments Committee**

Scott reported that they looked at Capital Cup alternatives. Harvest Cup is a front-runner for a change. It would be \$125-175 savings. The Committee thought it would be a good idea to try Championship teams in Harvest Cup and others in the Capitol Cup. The LeVasseur Cup is an option, but the committee is waiting for information from the organizers. We talked about a Memorial Day tournament, but a lot of people go away. We discussed having an event in Exeter for younger teams rather than going to the Fall jamboree, but more discussion needs to happen. Committee members are talking to other clubs about what they do.

### **Ad Hoc**

Maria added that NNESL decided not to schedule a game on the front end of April vacation, but to move those into weekday games and only schedule on the back end of the vacation.

Ben asked if we had access to @fcexeter.com email addresses. Maria said it costs money per address, so we haven't done it.

### **Adjournment**

Ben Bailey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50pm, seconded by Jessica Costa. The motion carried. (9-0)