

**Helena Area Youth Hockey Association
Special Meeting Minutes
September 25, 2019
8:00 p.m. Helena Ice Arena**

HAYHA Board Members:

Kurt Moser – President and PeeWee Rep
Ryan Lilletvedt – Vice President and Bantam Rep
Sarah Garcia – Treasurer and High School Rep
Judy Merickel – Secretary and 8U Rep
Lance Wilson – Registrar
Scott Petersen – Member at Large / SafeSport Coordinator
Randy Boysen – Member at Large / Program Development (Girls and Goalies)
Allison Riddle – 8U Rep (via phone)
Darryl James – Squirt Rep
Jon Flynn – House Rep
Mekell Lybbert – MAHA Rep

Absent Board Members:

None

Guests:

Shawn Schroeder – Coach-in-Chief, HS Parent, Bantam Parent
Ryan Srenar – High School Parent
Trent Sobeck – High School Coach
Troy Green – High School Coach
Todd Young – MAHA High School Commissioner – on the phone

Meeting Called to Order 8:02 p.m.

High School Varsity and High School JV Team Discussion

Todd Young was on the phone. He said it is up to the schedulers how they want to schedule the HS JV games. The suggestion was offered to do it on black out weekends, but that was a just a suggestion. The JV team is allowed 10 home and 10 away games and there will be a Montana Cup State Tournament for the High School JV teams in the state. He said cities can cross-roster between Bantam and High School and allowed to cross roster between High School JV and HS Varsity, wherever coaches decide kids fit the best. He confirmed that from a MAHA perspective Freshmen are eligible to play high school hockey and that there is no restrictions whether they play Varsity or JV.

Sarah Garcia asked Todd if anything else changed because she said a week and a half ago MAHA said it was only to be 16 games and to schedule on blackout weekends. Todd Young said nothing has changed, those were just recommendations. He said he had a call with Great Falls

yesterday to discuss their participation as a JV team. There are 5 JV teams who have committed in the state – Missoula, Flathead, Great Falls, Salmon and Helena. Sarah questioned how it is going to be possible to schedule 40 games between Varsity and JV. As far as number of players, here were the estimates given:

Helena – 21 players total between V and JV

Missoula – has a full varsity team and 15 kids for JV team

Flathead – has a full varsity team and 14 kids for JV team

Great Falls – is only fielding a JV team with a total of 20 kids, some of these are bantam freshmen who are moving up

Salmon – 13-15 kids who are going to play JV only

Todd said the goal for creating a JV division is because they want to see more kids playing, more puck touches, more playing time. Todd said the only cross-rostering they will not allow is top varsity players playing on the JV team. There will be 8 varsity teams in the state and 5 JV teams.

Judy asked Todd if he feels it's possible for Varsity and JV teams to play in the same towns the same weekends, so kids can travel together, and cross-rostered kids' families don't have additional hotel costs and travel costs. Todd said that would be a win-win if schedulers can do that at the scheduling meeting. There is a 12-hour overnight break for high school players and games during the day should be 4 hours apart. Todd then told the HAYHA board to email him with other questions and he left the meeting.

Mekell passed around the high school schedule from last season, which showed 6 open weekends the high school did not have scheduled games. Two of these weekends were Thanksgiving and Christmas, leaving four weekends open. Sarah said the schedule didn't accurately show that the high school team traveled to Salmon twice for tournaments and to another additional tournament elsewhere. She also said that families' travel costs will still increase because they would need to stay Friday nights, instead of just Saturday nights. And since they pay for the coaches' hotel rooms, that would increase as well.

Trent said there is no way he would allow his Varsity players to play four games in the weekend with the cross-rostering. He doesn't want to burn them out. The High School coaches said 21 kids is enough for one team of 18 skaters, 2 goalies and then a plus one player. One player would have to sit out each game and not be rostered. But with injuries and such, both high school coaches feel that the HAYHA numbers allow for only one team this season.

Allison asked about last season complaint's about playing time and how 3 players were cut every week and families traveling long distances and not playing. Kurt said the reason the board had been pursuing the two-team option was for more playing time for kids. Ryan Srenar has a sophomore this year and last year his son was a freshman and didn't receive a lot of

playing time. He said that was fine, he didn't complain, that's how it goes with most freshmen. He said the high school parents and kids want one team, they want to keep the kids together and not divided. Ryan never heard about the two-team idea until two weeks ago, so it feels like this was just something the board did spontaneously. Kurt told Ryan that the board has been talking about this since last spring and there was even a high school committee recommendation a couple months ago in support of the two teams.

Kurt said the board and guests have talked about scheduling and roster size, now he'd like the to discuss coaching and parental buy-in.

Trent and Troy said they could not commit to coaching all of the JV and Varsity games as it would amount to nearly 50 games between the two leagues and tournaments. Next, the board and guests discussed parental buy-in. Sarah said there is very little parent buy-in. She did a poll and 11 do not want a JV team. 6 said yes to a JV team, but 2 didn't want to travel on blackout/holiday weekends. 1 responded indifferent. She said the 11 no's are from parents of players she would estimate are likely to comprise a JV team. She feels they are not committed to the JV team and that could lead to forfeiting games.

Darryl talked about what has changed since last week when the board voted for two teams. Kurt said we no longer have coaches for the JV team. Darryl said we thought more HS players would register when the board re-opened registration and that potentially 5 bantam freshmen could have moved up. Neither of those things happened.

Scott motioned for one high school team. Lance seconded. Motion carries with 9 yes votes and 1 no vote. There will be one high school team this season.

Meeting Adjourned. The Board entered Executive Session to discuss a 2005 birth year play up request from Bantams to High School.

Signed by President: _____ Date: _____

Signed by Secretary: _____ Date: _____