

# UVHA Board Meeting Minutes



November 15, 2017 ~ 6:00 PM

Kinney Pike Insurance, White River Junction, Vermont

1. **Attendance:** Sarah Morlock, Mindy Dube, Nate Dube, Jason Spaulding, Justin Barwood, Roger Gillies, Josh Obar, Bill Mann, Matt Maher
2. **Meeting called to order:** 6:02 PM
  - a. The October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were unanimously approved (motioned by Justin, seconded by Ryan).
3. **Monthly Reports:**
  - a. **Webmaster**-Members have mentioned an interest in having a forum for connecting to buy, sell and/or donate used equipment. Bill previously looked to other associations' websites for a model and learned that we should have the capability to easily set something up through SportsEngine. Jason will work with Kelly to explore adding this feature and, again, to remove old content.
  - b. **Coaching Coordinator**-Alex reported that all coaches are in good standing until December 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - c. **Equipment Manager**-Since the start of the season, coaches have made a number of requests for equipment. John shared with Jason that many were interested in practice jerseys, puck bags, game pucks, first-aid kits and stick-handling balls. Ryan pointed out that some coaches had already acquired practice jerseys, with parent aid. Given this season's purchase of tryout jerseys, the Board opted to not make any further expenditures for jerseys. However, Bill made a motion to allow the equipment manager to purchase each team a puck bag and first-aid kit. Ryan seconded his motion. All voted in favor. Sarah will ask John to check the bin for cold packs and to check with coaches to see who is in need of a new med kit. Matt will purchase a new combination lock for the UVHA equipment bin since the old combination has long since been compromised and pucks, in particular, have continued to go missing.
  - d. **SafeSport Coordinator**-Teams have identified their required Locker Room Monitors and are sharing proof of SafeSport completion and background checks with Mindy. Sarah asked for clarification regarding the monitoring rules for co-ed teams. A peewee parent recently voiced that one male and female coach is needed for monitoring the co-ed locker room and that both should be present at all times. However, coaches appreciate having

time to talk with their teams without distractions before and after practices. Mindy will research this and get back to the group. Roni had been asked about the qualifications and approval of a new coach at the Termite level. Mindy will reach out to Brock to find out more about this gentleman who has been on the ice with the learn-to-skate group.

**e. Treasurer**-Ryan shared that after a number of years of service on the UVHA Board, he is ready to step down from the Treasurer position next season. The Treasurer's role is involved and vital to the organization's operation. Ryan suggested training any interested individual between now and the Annual meeting in order to properly prepare him/her for the job. One possible candidate has expressed interest, and Ryan is confident in his capacity to handle the position. Sarah will draft an announcement for this opening officer's seat and ask Kelly to post it to the website and Facebook.

**f. Fundraising**-Roni worked with *The Graphic Edge* to put together this season's apparel sale, which opened on Sunday. To date, he reported that there were already 11 orders and over \$100 in funds raised. The sale will close November 26<sup>th</sup>. Kelly will post a banner on the website and reminder emails will be sent via the company's platform. Ryan made his presentation for assistance at the City of Lebanon Budget request meeting. The City of Lebanon has been generous in offering assistance to the UVHA for a number of consecutive years. Ryan was hopeful that their support would continue. Sarah reached out to Mite coaches, inquiring as to any equipment needs that could possibly be fulfilled through the NHAHA ADM grant. Coaches don't feel they are lacking anything, but are rather well equipped. She's happy to write the grant request if coaches change their minds. Christmas tree sale planning is well underway. We'll again have 100 trees and 50 wreaths to sell. Sarah has filed our vendor application with the Town and will forward them proof of liability insurance once this season's tree sale specific COI has been prepared and received. Finally, Matt had a colleague interested in "sponsoring" a skater. The Board agreed that the best way to accommodate this would be to offer their registration assistance as a randomly drawn Skate-a-thon prize and to share only with the sponsor the player's team, instead of the winning player's name.

**g. Registrar**-Kylie wasn't present. Jason shared on her behalf that there were two families requesting refunds: one new Termite who tried skating once but is not yet ready for a skating program and a House Mite who would like to transfer to play with classmates at a neighboring association. Bill made a motion to refund in full the Termite skater and to offer a 50% refund to the House Mite family. Sarah seconded his motion. All voted in favor.

**h. Scheduler**-Jason briefed the Board on a recent incident in which email communications from a couple of UVHA coaches were not crafted with care and, consequently, were a poor representation of the Storm. Following the embarrassing fallout from this incident, he and Bill felt it prudent to remind coaches of the appropriate pathways to schedule games. Bill prepared a thorough synopsis of the scheduler's position, clearly outlining how coaches should proceed if they choose to participate in the scheduling of games for their teams (see Appendix I). Jason also made clear that any communications sent out on behalf of the Board should, at a minimum, at least be run

past the Board for approval before being dispersed. Sarah suggested that Alex email coaches Bill's guide to the scheduler position so that they are aware of the expectations/process of coaches interfacing with other associations to schedule games. Bill then reported that there are a number of unused home sheets left after the changing from fielding two to one Bantam team. He learned that Hartford High School is interested in purchasing that ice. The Board agreed to sell that excess, beginning of season ice to the high school. Bill then proposed making use of the end of season ice for a tournament. The group was in agreement; planning should soon follow. Finally, Roni identified a mistake with the Travel Mite calendar; some game locations seem to have been incorrectly noted. Jason and Bill will take a look to be sure that the game locations are correct.

#### **4. New Business:**

**a. Tryout Debrief-**Jason began by expressing that the feedback he was privy to regarding this season's tryout process was positive overall. He felt that in the future, the Board and Tryout Committees could better communicate in advance the expectations for and skill-sets necessary at each level. As in years past, the Storm again faced the challenge of appropriately placing squirt-aged players whose skills were not yet ready for age-appropriate play. The Board agreed that while it has been the practice of the organization, some parents were unaware of the possibility of the recommendation that their player spend another season at the Mite level. The group discussed the downfalls of not having a true House program for children coming late to the game of hockey. Jason too shared that an independent evaluator voiced his preference for a point scale. Tryout Committees may consider going back to that system the next time around.

**b. Mite Definition Proposal-**Matt has urged the Board to address a shortcoming in the definition of the UVHA's Mite programming. We do not currently have protocol for the placement of 8U players; parents have just self-selected Termites, House Mites or Travel Mites up to this point. Matt proposed a written protocol to remedy this (see Appendix II). The Board agreed that the jump from learn-to-skate (Termites), learn-to-play (House Mites) and cross-ice scrimmage play (Travel Mites) should be determined by skills progression, not merely a parent's desire for their player to move up. The Board will consider Matt's proposal and vote at a future meeting with the goal of having protocol in place prior to the start of the 2018-2019 season.

**c. Girls' Clinics-**The Storm will assume responsibility for the ice time and organization of the Girls' Clinics starting November 27<sup>th</sup>. Justin shared a slate of shared, Monday night Termite ice available for girls' development. Sarah will draft a communication including these dates; Jason will pass this information along to Bill and work with him to draft another flyer.

#### **5. NH State Meeting Report:**

a. The next NHAHA meeting is December 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### **6. Meeting Adjourned: 8:37 PM**

## **Appendix I: Scheduler Tasks**

The UVHA scheduler is responsible for scheduling both GSL league games and games with non-GSL opponents. The GSL requires that each team play all the other teams within their tier. The tier declarations are made by each association at the start of the season predicting what level of play their teams will have parity at based on the previous season results and team player composition. After the tier designation is provided to the scheduler and the weekend ice schedule is made available to them the scheduling of games can begin.

Once games have been scheduled they will need to be added to the UVHA and GSL websites. In order to do that the webmaster will have to have the 2 sites linked with the appropriate number of teams for the current season set up prior to the scheduler's attempted posting.

There is typically a set range of the number of games each UVHA team should have by age level. This is set by the UVHA board based on USAH guidelines, number of teams, and available ice. The GSL tier assignments define the number of priority games needed to satisfy the home and away requirements to the GSL. After that, the scheduler will fill in around the booked games to bring each team to the Board define game numbers.

The GSL allows teams to move up or down within tiers until the second week of December. They also want each GSL team to have played 6 games with teams in their own tier by a certain point in November. When a team moves to another tier level all the games played within the GSL up to that point are rendered moot and any GSL tier games to be played are cancelled. A home and away series will need to be scheduled with each team in the new tier before the designated level close (normally 2 weeks before the GSL State Tournament). This could require multiple games in a day or even mid-week games to reach the required games needed. Often you will be required to cancel non-GSL games to make room for the GSL games.

If teams in your tier but not from your association move your will have those games stricken or cancelled and if new teams join your tier you will be responsible for fitting in the home and away pair with them. On rare occasions, with prior GSL approval, you might be able to play a single 4 point game rather than the normal pair of 2 point games.

During the course of the season there will probably be games with non-GSL opponents that will not be a good fit due to variations in team strengths. This disparity is usually discovered after playing the first game in series of scheduled games. The coaches will then advise the scheduler of the miss-match and ask that the remaining games be cancelled and other opponents scheduled in their place.

If this occurs the scheduler should reach out to the other association and express the coaches concerns and suggest the rest of the games be cancelled. In virtually all cases,

the request is agreed to immediately. If it is not then a brief back and forth may occur but so long as there is a reasonable amount of time before the next games there is no reason not to decline a request to keep them. The scheduler should do what is best for both teams in their own judgment.

On the flip side schedulers should enlist any input that the coaches might have in choosing potential opponents throughout the season for games that are not required by the GSL tiers. Coaches requests should be scheduled whenever reasonable possible, but after the start of October most associations teams are nearly fully books so coaches should be aware that their request might not be met for any number of reasons.

Coaches might also request to contact other associations to inquire about adding games either home or away. This is something that is possible as long as the following is understood and adhered to.

It is very possible that the scheduler is already seeking to fill open ice slots or days and that a coach might be thinking is unoccupied.

There might be reasons related to other open teams needing the ice for GSL games, ice sheet parity defined by the Board, or other factors such as lack of Referees that prevent their team from playing in a particular spot.

Generally speaking the best way for a team's coaches to add or remove games is to ask the scheduler to do so for them. If the scheduler agrees to coaches reaching out to other associations, the coaches should both request a list of open dates from the other associations and know what their own open dates are prior to the request to minimize the amount of back and forth especially when it would involve the scheduler.

Since the UVHA scheduler is the only one who has the total picture of all the UVHA team's requirements and they are responsible for maintaining the relationships with the other associations schedulers the final decisions made related to adding or removing games should be the UVHA schedulers.

The scheduler will provide the reason(s) for being unable to accommodate a coach's particular request but the inability to do so should not lead to a debate.

## **Appendix II: Mite Policy Draft**

### **Mite Program Definitions**

- a. Proposal to rename Termites/House Mites/Travel Mites to Learn-to-Skate/Learn-to-Play/8U Travel Mites. I'm not really married to the specifics of the name change, rather I'd like to remove

language that implies progression is age-based for the earliest levels and re-brand using terms that emphasize skills-based advancement up to the point of travel teams, where age-appropriate hockey becomes mandatory.

### **Learn-to-Skate Participation**

- b. Participation in the Learn-to-Skate programs has no strict age limits. Instead, the inclusion or exclusion of skaters within these two groups will be made based on the preservation of a safe environment for the majority of the participants. Coaches at these two levels are to consider such elements as relative size, body control, coordination, temperament, and aggressiveness when assessing the overall safety within a group of skaters spanning a broad range of ages.
- c. Participation in Learn-to-Skate requires no prior skating experience and has no minimum age requirement, although skaters should be able to take direction from a non-parent adult, follow-instructions, and generally stay on-task for 1 hour without parent intervention.
- d. Advancement from Learn-to-Skate to Learn-to-Play requires the recommendation of the Learn-to-Skate coaching team. The Learn-to-Skate coaching team should evaluate the advancement readiness of each participant on or before the end of the season and clearly communicate the status to the player's parents. In the case of a determination that a player is not ready to advance, the coaching team should clearly communicate the areas of improvement required for future advancement.

### **Learn-to-Play Participation**

- e. Participation in the Learn-to-Play programs has no strict age limits. Instead, the inclusion or exclusion of skaters within these two groups will be made based on the preservation of a safe environment for the majority of the participants. Coaches at these two levels are to consider such elements as relative size, body control, coordination, temperament, and aggressiveness when assessing the overall safety within a group of skaters spanning a broad range of ages.
- f. Participation in Learn-to-Play requires previous participation in Learn-to-Skate. Players who have not previously participated in Learn-to-Skate must demonstrate skating proficiency consistent with the USA Hockey Skill Progression for 8U players. Proficiency assessments will be assessed by the Learn-to-Play coaching team.
- g. Advancement from Learn-to-Play to 8U Travel Mites or any other travel team requires the recommendation of the Learn-to-Play coaching team. The Learn-to-Play coaching team should evaluate the advancement readiness of each participant on or before the end of the season and communicate the status to the player's parents. In the case of a determination that a player is not ready to advance, the coaching team should clearly communicate the areas of improvement required for advancement.

### **8U Travel Mite Participation**

- h. Participation in 8U Travel Mites requires previous participation in Learn-to-Play. Players who have not previously participated in Learn-to-Play must demonstrate skating and game-play proficiency consistent with the USA Hockey Skill Progression for 8U players. Proficiency will be assessed by the 8U Travel Mite coaching team, and the coaching team may make exceptions to this policy in the interest of generating sufficient numbers to complete a team.

i. Participation in full-ice 8U Travel Mites is limited to second-year 8U Travel Mite players. The 8U Travel Mite coaching team may make exceptions to this policy in the interest of generating sufficient numbers to complete a team. The age of all full-ice Travel Mite players must be consistent with any standing exemption granted by USA Hockey to sanction full-ice 8U play. This has typically been limited to players who are either age 7 or age 8 as of December 31 in the current season.