

**Watertown Hockey
Association 1/8/2025 - 6 PM
1812 Brew Pub on the River
Meeting Minutes**

Board Of Directors	Executive Committee
Vega Nutting	Vega Nutting - <i>Board President</i>
Michael Ledoux	Michael Ledoux - <i>Board Vice President</i>
Chris Nethers, <i>Learn to Play Liaison</i>	Brian Nutting - <i>WHA Treasurer</i>
Jordan Reber	Amanda Caswell- <i>Secretary</i>
Shane Caswell	Michelle Rist - <i>WHA Registrar</i>
Ginger Sherrill	Jonathan Rose - <i>Ace Coordinator</i>
Michelle Rist	

- Establish Quorum Present- Majority of Directors (4 or more) required
 - Jordan Reber, Vega Nutting, Ginger Sherrill, Shane Caswell, Chris Nethers, Mike Ledoux, Michelle Rist

- Call Meeting to Order and Consent Agenda (*Vega*)
 - 6:20pm

- Approve Meeting Minutes from November 20, 2024 (*Vega*)
 - Meeting minutes were unanimously approved

- Watertown Hockey Program Concerns
 - The board discussed concerns presented in a parental letter of concern about the Watertown hockey program, particularly regarding the treatment of players and the allocation of ice time. Frustration was expressed with the parent who was unhappy with the program and felt that the parent had no right to complain. Through the course of the conversation a discussion about the issue of goalie training ensued. It was explained that goalie training is not provided for players who did not evaluate as goalies. It was suggested offering a free training session for players interested in trying out for goalie, with the possibility of further sessions if they showed interest. Concerns about the fairness of this approach to other goalies were expressed. A response letter was to be drafted by the board president and sent to the parent.

- QuickBooks Account Reconnection and Reporting
 - In the meeting, a need was discussed to reconnect WHA accounts to QuickBooks, a task that has been challenging due to the complexity of the system. A meeting will occur with Brian, Mercedes, and Vega to resolve this issue. It was also mentioned there were issues with the consolidation of accounts, which has affected financial reporting. It was suggested contacting the bank as they might be able to provide a file that can be imported into QuickBooks to help with the financial reconciliation. They also discussed the need for better financial reporting and the potential for fundraising to cover expenses.

- Expense Categorization and Audit Concerns
 - Concerns were expressed about potential conflicts of interest and the perception of impropriety in the categorization of expenses. It was clarified that audits had been conducted in the past and that no one had raised any questions about their finances.

It was suggested that an audit could be conducted if anyone raised concerns, but it was argued that an audit was unnecessary until someone made a complaint.

- Coach and Player Certifications
 - A discussion of the status of coach and player certifications occurred. Most of the coaches are certified with a few pending.
- Jerseys
 - An order for jerseys went into production before Christmas and were expected to be completed sometime in January.
- Tournament updates
 - Two teams dropped out of the 12U tournament but were being replaced by two Canadian teams. Preparations were underway for the February tournament.
- Vendor Selection and Tournament Services
 - Concern was expressed about the lack of vendor selection and the potential for favoritism towards Power Play Sports. It was suggested that the board should define the criteria for vendor selection and ensure a fair opportunity for vendor selection. There was agreement on the points provided and it was suggested that the board should consider soliciting proposals from local vendors to provide merchandise, trophies, and other services. It was proposed to create a list of desired services and distributing to vendors to respond to, with the board then selecting the best option. A discussion occurred about the potential for a more franchise-like approach to tournaments, with a single vendor providing all necessary services. However, it was acknowledged the need for a consistent and personalized approach to tournaments, with modifications each year.
- Tournament Series and Fundraising Discussion
 - The organization's tournament series was discussed, emphasizing the need for a standardized look and a provider for tournaments. The importance of fundraising was discussed and a suggestion for the need for a fundraising director and committee. It was agreed upon to send out a message about the cap on tournament funding and to review the organization's bylaws regarding tournament funding. It was proposed setting a cap of \$1,500 per team for the 2025-26 season, but it was suggested to wait until a fundraising director is in place and needs can be assessed. The board also discussed the need for more transparency in financial matters. A recall of the challenges of managing separate accounts for different teams was also presented.
- New Board Member and Bylaws Discussion
 - Tom Eiss was proposed as a new board member to fill a vacant position. The board discussed the bylaws and the process of filling vacancies, with a consensus that if the decision is consistent to other decisions about board position, it would be acceptable. They also discussed the terms of the current board members, with some having served for two years and others for three. The board agreed to vote on Tom's position, with the understanding that if he is accepted, he will serve for the remainder of the term. The conversation ended with a vote in favor of Tom's appointment.
- 2016 Birth Year Full-Ice Games

- It was proposed to allow the 2016 birth year players to participate in some full-ice games after their cross-ice season ends in January to help prepare them for the 10U level next season. However, there was confusion as an initial message about this opportunity went out only to the 8U White team, not to all 2016 players. Concerns were raised that this looked like an exclusive collaboration with Salmon River, which could promote players leaving for that program. After discussion, it was clarified that this is not intended as a collaboration with Salmon River, but rather an optional full-ice opportunity open to all 2016 birth year players through WHA, as long as it does not conflict with the WHA schedule. It was agreed that proper communication would occur to all applicable families.
- Independent 14U Team Presentation
 - The creation of an independent 14U team for the upcoming season, which would compete at the AA level, was presented by Jordan Reber. It was argued that this would provide Watertown Hockey Association with a competitive edge and allow for further development of the program. It was mentioned that several players who left the WHA to join other teams were interested in returning if such a team was established. However, it was pointed out that the team would need to have a different name and would need to be recognized as a separate organization. It was emphasized that they did not want to get bogged down in the details and was seeking approval for the concept.
- 14U AA Hockey Program Discussion
 - The pros and cons of establishing a separate 14U AA hockey program under the Watertown organization was discussed. It was argued that an AA program would provide a higher level of competition and attract players who have left for other organizations. Concern was expressed that an AA team may not necessarily strengthen Watertown's existing teams. It was believed an AA program must have a Watertown identity, while it was noted that such a program would require a separate board. There was debate whether getting former Watertown players back would be a bonus or was the main purpose of the program. Some wanted the existing board to oversee any new AA program, but it was stated that a separate board is required based on discussions with officials.
- Creating a New AA Team Proposal

Jordan proposed creating a new 14U AA team in addition to the existing house league teams. Some on the board expressed concerns about having enough players and coaches for both a AA team and house teams and potential negative impacts on current house league players. Plan was approved to create a 14AA hockey team and follow up to the board with specific details.

Action Items:

- Meeting with Brian, Mercedes and Vega to resolve Quick Books issue
- Brian will present updated financial report to board.
- Develop a list of create a list of desired services for tournaments to be distributed to potential vendors
- Properly communicate to all applicable 8U families regarding full ice, end of season playing opportunities.
- Jordan Reber to develop a comprehensive plan for a 14U AA team to present at the February meeting for consideration.