

**WINCHESTER HOCKEY PARENTS ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING**

**April 28, 2008**

**Attendees** Directors - Tom Troiano, Hugh Mullin, Jim Kiley, Denis O'Donnell, Roland Goff, Steve Tucci, Bill Redler, Brud Houllahan, Erik Knutzen, Ed Ducharme, David Hennessey, Carl Pasciuto,

**Members** Gordy Lawrence, Steve Keating, Jeff Bray, Dennis Delaney, Peter Albert, Chris Parker, Brian Sergenian, Tim Locke, Bill Goodwin

President Tom Troiano opened the meeting at 7:08 PM. By a poll of WYH Board of Directors members present, it was determined that a quorum was present to allow for the transaction of business.

**Minutes from March Meeting**

The Minutes of the March meeting were reviewed. No corrections were noted. Hugh Mullin made a motion that the Minutes as recorded be accepted. The motion was seconded by Carl Pasciuto. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board and the Minutes of the March 2008 meeting were entered into the record.

**Treasurer's Report**

Hugh Mullin presented the report as follows.

The Winchester Savings Bank on-line statement showed as of today, a checking account balance of \$11,823.07. The balance in the 12 month Certificate of Deposit is \$152,742.81 and the rolling 6 month CD has a balance of \$43,977.83. The total cash on hand is \$208,543.71.

Tom asked Hugh why we had to move \$20,000 from the CD to the checking account to cover expenses anticipated through the summer. Hugh reminded Tom that it was not money from the "static endowment" but money Hugh had deposited the money in the CD to obtain a better rate of interest than the checking account.

Hugh maintained his recent estimates that we should show a surplus of revenues minus expenses of approximately \$5,000, and maybe as high as \$10,000 for the season.

Jim Kiley made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Erik Knutzen seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board.

**Model for Boys/ Open Travel Program**

Tom Troiano presented a report showing the proposed models for the Boys/Open Travel Program Options for next season. The Presentation is attached to the minutes. The options are: the baseline model – two leagues 30 games per league, one league 45 game expanded schedule, or one league 30 game schedule.

After Tom's presentation, Hugh Mullin noted that one additional item that affects tuition is the number of players per team.

Erik Knutzen stated that he would advocate reducing the number of league games to 45 for the Pee Wee and Bantam divisions. He thought that it would be too big a change to go to 30 games. For Mites and Squirts he would lean to the 60 game schedule.

Brian Sergenian agreed that it would be better to play fewer games.

Gordy Lawrence said that his child was a Mite C last season; he thinks that the skills sessions are the best part of the program.

Brud Houllahan stated that he thought the two league, 60 game schedule, is the right model.

Roland Goff stated that he thought that going to a 30 game schedule would be a mistake. He said that next season the leagues should be able to improve their parity with the 45 game schedule.

Hugh Mullin re-capped what the Girls program will be next season – each team will play 25 games in the MYCGL and each player will have the option of playing on a team with an additional 20 Valley League games.

Steve Keating asked how would the Board make a decision and wanted to encourage everyone to think out of the box.

Denis O'Donnell stated that he had always been an advocate for more games. He thought that once the number of games is reduced that it could be a slippery slope. He has changed his opinion and views conflicts as the biggest problem, and now he would lean to the 45 league game model.

Chris Parker said that he thinks that going to a 45 games schedule may help recruit coaches to the program.

Tim Locke stated that he is for fewer games and that 45 would be OK, and that 30 games would be too little. He also said that we should think out of the box.

Hugh Mullin stated that we had experimented with longer practices last season.

Jim Kiley stated that we had the cross-ice games last season.

David Hennessey stated that he thought that all of the WYH teams should have the same model, consistent for all teams. He stated that he is in favor for the one league 30 game model. Then each team could add on tournaments as they want. Each team would have a 30 game base-line league schedule and add games. Each team could create its own model.

Jim Kiley said that he had been in favor of the two league, 60 game model, mainly for parity reasons, if a team were in a poor parity situation in one league they would have the other league to fall back on. But now he agrees that we should try the one league 45 game schedule. He thinks the leagues will improve the way they divide the teams for parity.

Brud Houllahan said that we should not try to modify our program to cater to the people that have been leaving the program.

Bill Goodwin said that every sport has become more intense and that he thinks that 30 league games is sufficient.

Denis O'Donnell made a motion that WYH go to a 45 game one league schedule for all Boys/Open Travel teams, except for the Mite C team, for next season. Hugh Mullin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the Board by a vote of 11-1.

Tom asked that we table the discussion of which league to enter each team, until later.

Peter Albert noted that he was very impressed with the people that run our skills program.

### **Approval of 2008 -2009 Tuitions**

Hugh Mullin handed out a spreadsheet showing the proposed tuitions for next season, based on a 45 game one League model. Hugh stated that the three biggest factors that go into setting tuitions are – cost of practice ice (estimated to be \$195 per hour), the cost of league games (estimated to be \$245 per game) and the number of players per team (Boys – Open estimate 14 skaters per team and Girls estimate 13 skaters per team).

The game costs are estimates. If the cost of ice goes up or number of players per team were to go down then the tuition would have to be higher.

Tom Troiano made a motion to accept the proposed tuitions and that the Treasurer be allowed to make any final adjustments as necessary. Denis O'Donnell seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board.

### **Nomination of Directors**

Tom stated that 7 directors would be elected at next month's Annual Meeting. Jim Kiley said the following people had been nominated:

Ed Ducharme  
Brud Houllahan  
Jim Kiley  
Hugh Mullin  
Ron Martignetti  
Bill Redler  
Steve Keating  
Jamie Hintlian  
Chris Parker

Tom asked if anyone would like to nominate someone else. There was no response. Tom then stated that per our by-laws the nominations are closed.

### **By-Laws**

Tom noted that in practice the only time our By-Laws may be changed is at the Annual Meeting which is next month. This is because the members must vote on By-Laws changes and we generally do not have "Membership Meetings" other than the Annual Meeting.

At the Annual Meeting any proposed By-Laws changes will be voted upon by the membership, the Board does not approve By-Law changes. There are four proposed changes that have been discussed.

- a. Change of dates of fiscal year – Hugh Mullin stated that the State had forced us to change our accounting system to an accrual based system from a cash based system. In order to bring our fiscal year in line with our operation, the proposal is to change our fiscal year to end on June 30. The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of this change.
- b. Censure – adds a level of penalty short of dismissal from the Board. The Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of this change.
- c. Require the Board to have at least 6 Director’s with children in the program – Tom said that this number had not been changed since the Board consisted of 11 Directors and he thought that with 15 Directors the number should be changed from 4 to 6. The Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of this change.
- d. Proxy voting – Carl Pasciuto said that he thought that the Board should allow voting by proxy on major issues for which certain Directors can not attend the meeting. Denis said that he is opposed proxy voting. Tom Troiano also said that he opposes proxy voting and that it may discourage attendance. Tom noted a situation of several years ago where a Director had missed three consecutive meetings and was clearly uninformed on a particular issue. Tom said that we shouldn’t be encouraging someone like that to vote. The Board voted 9-3 not to recommend approval of this change.

### **Approval of Head Coaches**

A slate of head coaches was presented for approval. A motion was made by David Hennessey to accept the proposed coaches. The motion was seconded by Denis O’Donnell and unanimously approved by the Board.

Midget 1/2: TBD  
Midget Full: Bob Andrews

Bantam A: Tom Troiano  
Bantam B: Steve Hochtort

Pee Wee A: Jim Kiley  
Pee Wee B: Chris Parker

Squirt A: Bill Redler  
Squirt B: Jeff Bray  
Squirt C: Tim Fagan  
Squirt D: Sean Boudreault

Mite A: Rob Falso  
Mite B: Gerard Butler  
Mite C: Steve Keating

**GIRLS**

U14A: Steve Tucci

U14B: Alan McCarthy

U12: Joe O'Neil

U10: VJ Ladd

**New Business**

Denis O'Donnell noted that the Banquet was a success and thanked Ed Ducharme for another great job.

Bill Redler made a motion to give Tom Troiano and David Hennessey the Board's approval to name the TBD coaches and/or fill any openings that may arise. The motion was seconded by Hugh Mullin and unanimously approved by the Board.

Tom noted that at the banquet David Hennessey was thanked for his service as head coach of the Bantam A's for the past 13 years. Tom Troiano read the following letter from David Hennessey:

From: David Hennessey

To: The WYH Board of Directors and member families,

Dear All,

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Winchester Youth Hockey and its Directors for the very generous sendoff as the Bantam A Coach that I received at the Banquet on April 17th. While certainly unnecessary, I very much appreciated the gesture and the chance to be acknowledged by our organization. As I said that night, I have been the recipient of a lot of good fortune and great support, that have made it very easy and enjoyable to come to the rink every night with the Bantams over the past 13 years. The success of the Bantam A team simply reflects the success of our organization as a whole - a success based on a love for hockey, a willingness to volunteer one's time and energy, and a focus on creating a positive environment for our children. Thank you again for this recognition, and I look forward to my continued service to WYH.

Sincerely, David Hennessey

**Adjournment**

Hugh Mullin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Carl Pasciuto and unanimously approved by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the WYH Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday May 19, 2008 at 7:00 PM in the Winchester High School Cafeteria. This meeting is also the Annual Membership meeting.

# *Winchester Youth Hockey Summary of Boys/Open Travel Options for 2008-2009 Season*

28 April 2008  
Tom Troiano



*Winchester Youth Hockey  
Established: 1954  
Celebrating Over 50 Years of Service to the Youth of Winchester*

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## Introduction

- WYH Board has asked for a presentation showing proposed models for Boys/Open Travel Hockey including costs, strengths and weaknesses of models and league comparisons.
- This is extremely difficult without including some personal observations and recommendations.

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# Boys/Open Travel Options for 2008-2009

*2007-2008 tuition was  
\$1,665 for Option 1\**

Option	League1	League2	Add'l Games**	Cost Per Player*	Comment
1	30 games	30 games	10-12	\$1,870	Baseline Option
2	45 games	None	12-15	\$1,620 -\$250	45 Game Option
3	30 games	None	12-15	\$1,335 -\$535	30 Game Option

\* Plus \$125 registration fee

\*\* Tournaments, Play Downs, Play Offs

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## Summary of Options

- Option 1 is baseline - 60 regular season games plus about a dozen or so other games (tournaments, play downs, play offs, etc.)
- Option 2 reduces regular season league games to 45
  - Adds one tournament versus Option 1
  - Estimated 55 to 60 total games.
  - Saves over \$250 versus Option 1
  - Could introduce Strength and Conditioning component to Option 2 without increasing price from 2007-2008 season

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## Summary of Options (concluded)

- Option 3 reduces regular season league games to 30
  - Adds one tournament versus Option 1
  - About 45 total games.
  - Saves \$535 versus Option 1
  - Could introduce Strength and Conditioning component to Option C and still save significantly from Option 1
  - Option 3 represents a significant reduction in WYH's product

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## Some Observations About the Models

	Pros	Cons
Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better chance for good parity by playing in two leagues               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added play offs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Better diversity of opponents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest Cost</li> <li>• Game Conflicts between leagues</li> <li>• May be little benefit (and negative value) to games 55-72</li> </ul>
Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheaper than Option 1</li> <li>• Most game conflicts eliminated</li> <li>• Likely viewed by members as more manageable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parity weaker than Option 1</li> <li>• Less diversity of opponents</li> <li>• Only one play off round</li> </ul>
Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheaper than Option 2</li> <li>• Most game conflicts eliminated</li> <li>• Certainly viewed by members as more manageable               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Might be more desirable for Select/EHF/Metro players</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Likely viewed as highly desirable by those families who are less enthusiastic about hockey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parity weaker than Option 1</li> <li>• Less diversity of opponents</li> <li>• Kids love games - less games means less fun               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only one play off round</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Disadvantages those who want more hockey but can't get it.</li> </ul>

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# Summary of Member Survey

## 161 total respondents

Option 1: Elect the 30-game schedule in both the Dual State and Valley Leagues and maintain the "Other" games - approximate total of 71 games. Estimated tuition: \$1,870 (this is our current model) (about 10 games per month) **38** (24%)

Option 2: Elect the 45-game schedule in only one League (DS or VL) and maintain the "Other" games - approximate total of 56 games. Estimated tuition: \$1,620 (about 8 games per month) **60** (37%)

Option 3: Elect the 30-game schedule in only one League (DS or VL) and maintain the "Other" games - approximate total of 41 games. Estimated tuition: \$1,335 (about 6 games per month) **63** (39%)

76% of our members prefer a model with fewer games than we're currently playing.  
61% of our members prefer a model with more games than Option 3.

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# Summary of Boys/Open Leagues

	Dual State	Valley
2008-2009 Estimated Costs	\$255/game	\$260/game
Key Rinks	<b>HockeyTown, Chelmsford, Skate3, SuperSkills, BIP, Methuen, IceCenter</b>	<b>Malden, Lawrence, Haverhill, Merrimack College, Wilmington, Nashua, BIP, Woburn</b>
Parity	One major parity adjustment but willing to look at special cases prior to other rounds.  Parity good but large brackets can cause parity problems.	Initial parity based on history. Parity adjustments all season.  Parity good but large brackets can cause parity problems.  Larger league so more brackets available for parity
Referees	Mixed. Some good and some poor.  No major issues with age Inappropriate referees	Mixed. Some good and some poor.  No major issues with age Inappropriate referees

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## Summary of Leagues (cont.)

	Dual State	Valley
League Admin.	Brian Ferraro has assumed role of full time league manager and referee supervisor.	Full time professional staff – scheduler, finance, web admin, Referee in chief, etc.
Web Site	Schedules, standings, rules, notices, coaches email/phone list.	Schedules, standings, rules, notices, game postponement form, game swap form, referee evaluation form, online monitoring of forfeits, coaches email/phone lists.
Select Hockey	High quality Select Program	High quality Select Program
Game Scheduling	More weekday games than Valley. High % of games at HockeyTown	Games on school vacation days generally viewed as negative. Significant % of games at Malden
Competition	Generally good	Generally good

## Summary of Leagues (concl.)

	Dual State	Valley
Depth of League	<p>DS League much smaller than Valley:</p> <p>7 Bantam brackets 8 Pee Wee brackets 8 Squirt brackets 5 Mite brackets</p> <p>Some teams in 45 game model played 10 games against a single opponent.</p>	<p>Bigger league with more depth in each age bracket:</p> <p>15 Bantam brackets 18 Pee Wee brackets 20 Squirt brackets 15 Mite brackets</p> <p>(note: Valley brackets tend to be bit smaller than DS)</p> <p>Some teams in 45 game model played 7-8 games against a single opponent.</p>

# Valley League Input

- One of the great successes of this past year was the debut of the 45-game schedule American Conference. Teams enjoyed the experience so much that the VHL has announced that the American Conference will double in size for the 2008-09 season. Programs joining the American Conference in 2008-09 are Chelmsford, Salem N.H. and Burlington.
- Last season American Conference teams enjoyed the opportunity to play between 12 and 18 different opponents, including 12-15 highly competitive divisional crossover games. The level of parity across the board in the American conference for 2007-08 season was unprecedented. However, the level of competition and parity will be even deeper in the 2008-09 season, with close to 50% of all teams in the VHL participating in the American Conference.

Source: Valley League Web Site

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## President's Recommendations

- Parity is a major issue in the new environment of youth hockey
  - Parity has been somewhat weakened in both leagues due to larger brackets required to maintain 45/30 game models within the same framework. The days of guaranteed good/crisp parity may be gone.
  - Weaker parity is also driven by disparate youth programs given player migration out of youth hockey.
  - Moving to one league increases probability of weaker parity but the problem may not be significant and may improve over time.
  - The single biggest reason for "lack of fun" is poor parity. No Squirt wants to play on a team that is 5-40.
- There is no evidence that moving from 70 total games to 50-55 total games reduces development or fun. We played 50-55 games 6-10 years ago when we played in the Middlesex and Dual State Leagues and we had more players playing college hockey than we do now.
- Adding strength and conditioning component may be viewed positively by members

**It is imperative that we put our teams in the best potential parity situation possible given cost and length of season.**

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# President's Recommendations

- Price and time commitment are big issues for our members right now. Eliminating some games (and reducing the number of sheets required for make ups) will lower prices and time commitment. Games have "biggest bang for buck" for reducing cost since they are much more expensive than practices.
  - Do not underestimate the economic times. The number of WYH members struggling to make tuitions payments is not insignificant. Gas could be \$4/gallon in Sept.
- Consider moving away from "one model for all" approach to youth hockey.
  - Our C players are not going to play at the varsity level at Winchester High School and the players and parents may not want the same as A players.
  - Pee Wees and Bantams have far more options outside our program than Mites and Squirts. One parent wrote:  
*"Did the Board consider the issue of whether it makes sense to have the younger age brackets play in 2 leagues and having the older kids play in only one league? Many of the town's strongest players are leaving Winchester once they become Pee Wees because they play select hockey and it is too expensive or too time consuming to continue to play both town and select. I suspect far more players would stay with Winchester if Pee Wee and above was only in one league. This is especially true for families with multiple players. Also, students in the middle school and above have much more school work. Not all kids can handle such a rigorous game schedule and school work. Anyone who thinks one league isn't enough can play middle school, select, or Igor, etc. The point is, Winchester is losing too many kids to select teams. I think we would find many more kids playing at the upper levels of youth hockey if we cut back on the number of games while keeping tournament and practices the same".*

**Board should consider lowering the number of regular season league games and alternative models for different segments of the program.**

## Closing Observations

- We may be overly focused on the number of games played as a lever for solving all of our problems. Reducing games played may not solve all of our problems and may create new ones. For example, why would a player who expects to miss 50% of the games sign up for our lowest game model?
- We need to look at all the issues facing our program and consider out of the box solutions in some cases
- Major issues
  - Cost
  - Time commitment
  - Proliferation of other hockey programs
  - How do we retain our best players
- Other ideas to think about
  - Allowing part time players (similar but different from alternates)
  - Other services (e.g., strength and conditioning)

We need to think about **both** lowering cost and commitment and retaining our best players. Changing the number of games may not solve both problems.

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