

WINCHESTER HOCKEY PARENTS ASSOCIATION, INC.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

August 25, 2008

Attendees Directors - Tom Troiano, Hugh Mullin, Jim Kiley, Denis O'Donnell, Steve Tucci, Bill Redler, Ed Ducharme, David Hennessey, Carl Pasciuto, Chris Parker, Steve Keating, John Addonizio

Members - Peter Albert, Jamie Hintlian

President David Hennessey opened the meeting at 6:40 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 Winchester Youth Hockey business.

Minutes from June Meeting

The Minutes of the June meeting were reviewed. Hugh Mullin noted two changes to the June Minutes. First, in the Treasurer's Report the sentence that talks about the increase in the endowment should be changed to say "estimated to increase by \$14,029". Hugh also said that Tom Troiano's statement that the money for the web site development effort could come from the endowment should be changed to "will come from the endowment". Jim Kiley made a motion to accept the Minutes of the June meeting with the two changes noted by Hugh Mullin. The motion was seconded by Hugh Mullin and unanimously approved by the Board. The Minutes of the June 2008 meeting were duly entered into the record.

Treasurer's Report

Jim Kiley presented the Treasurer's Report as follows.

The Winchester Savings Bank on-line statement showed a checking account balance of \$62,865.89. The balance in the 12 month Certificate of Deposit is \$155,130.68 and the rolling 6 month CD has a balance of \$84,640.23. The total cash on hand for the corporation is \$302,636.80.

Jim said that to date we've collected about \$154K in revenue for the 2008-2009 hockey season and spent about \$10K. Most of the revenue is from the registration fees and the first tuition payment and the expenses to date are split among league fees, web site development costs and credit card processing fees. Jim noted that only 4-5 families are delinquent with the first tuition payment.

Tom Troiano asked why the web development costs to date for the 2008-2009 hockey season don't match the two payments that we've made to Ed Interest. Jim said that there's also a web hosting fee that was paid recently and Hugh Mullin said that the first payment for the web site development effort was actually made last season.

Jim Kiley noted that he was able to lower the fee for our non American Express credit card transactions. Jim said that the fee had recently been increased for all “rewards” credit cards and Jim was able to get the lower “non rewards” rate for all of our credit card transactions. Hugh Mullin noted that he negotiated a lower rate with American Express in 2007.

David Hennessey asked if we had received any Flynn invoices. Tom Troiano noted that the Flynn Rink won't be opening until mid October and that it's a bit early for that. Tom thought that we'd receive the entire Flynn schedule and costs in about 2-3 weeks.

Finally, Jim presented a preliminary budget for the 2008-2009 hockey season which showed estimated revenues of about \$382.3K and estimated expenses of about \$383.7K. David Hennessey noted that Jim's ice budget is \$124K and to date we only have about \$118-120K in ice contracts so there's certainly some cushion in the budget numbers. Tom Troiano noted that we're close to what we think we need in terms of total hours of ice but that it is very difficult to predict how many hours we'll need for make up games this season and we may still want to add some ice if we can find some additional desirable ice. Denis O'Donnell suggested that we have to use far fewer hours for make up games this season given the one league model. Tom Troiano said that we'll still have make up games caused by the two holiday tournaments, play downs, etc. Jim Kiley noted that it was his experience last year that teams playing in a one league model are far less likely to accommodate a game trade so that could be an issue this season.

Tom Troiano noted in the budgets that were presented that the expenses for the web site development effort were, in fact, allocated to Core Hockey Operations and that since these funds are coming from the endowment this probably should be moved out of Core Hockey Operations. Hugh Mullin agreed but noted that since the costs for the web site development were not part of any hockey tuitions that regardless of the bookkeeping the funds are for all intents and purposes coming from the endowment and not tuition revenue.

David Hennessey asked Tom Troiano if he thought that Winchester Youth Hockey would be asked to pay for the Jet Ice line painting at the Flynn Rink. Tom said that this cost was in the DCR budget for this season and that Winchester Youth Hockey would not be expected to contribute to this item.

David Hennessey made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Chris Parker seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board.

Coaches Committee

Tom Troiano said that there were no Coaches Committee issues at this time. All teams have coaching staffs in place and the Annual Coaches Meeting has been scheduled for September 8th at the high school. Tom noted that all coaches must register with USA Hockey and enter their confirmation number on the Winchester Youth Hockey web site.

David Hennessey noted that all coaches should review the certification requirements and make plans to attend the certification clinics as appropriate.

Jamie Hintlian asked if the level 3 recertification could still be done online. Tom Troiano answered “yes”.

Steve Keating asked if all Tri City coaches needed to register with USA Hockey. Hugh Mullin said that they must, largely for insurance reasons.

David Hennessey noted that all head coaches and assistant coaches have been entered into the Winchester Youth Hockey database so that those who are coaches may register on the Winchester Youth Hockey web site and provide their USA Hockey confirmation number.

Dual State League

David Hennessey said that the Dual State League’s schedule pick up is on Thursday August 28th.

Jim Kiley asked if there would be a significant reduction in games at Hockey Town since the Dual State League gave up ice there. Tom Troiano said that its was his understanding that the Dual State League gave up ice at Hockey Town in proportion to their overall size reduction and that the percent of ice that the league has at hockey Town should not change much. David Hennessey agreed.

David Hennessey noted that Erik Knutzen could not attend the Board Meeting but that new Dual State League representative, Chris Parker, would present Erik’s concerns regarding our Bantam A team. Chris Parker noted that Erik was very concerned about the competition that our Bantam A team would face in the league. Given the migration of many District 9 teams to the Valley League Erik thought that the overall competition would be significantly weaker and that we wouldn’t have District 9 games to use in the seeding of the Bantam A’s for the District 9 Play Downs. David Hennessey noted that the Dual State League has, in fact, given up trying to compete with the Valley League for teams in the Merrimack Valley and Middlesex County and that the league is expanding west. That said, David noted that some of the new programs have had strong teams and that it’s premature to make any decisions on the Bantam A’s at this time. David noted that the Board voted to put the Bantam A’s in the Dual State League and that a Board vote would be required to move them.

Denis O’Donnell noted that we certainly aren’t going to move a team out of a league before any games have been played. New Bantam A coach, Tom Troiano, said that he asked David privately if we could generically ask the Valley League if it’s possible to move teams into the league in October for the second schedule of Valley League games. Denis O’Donnell and Hugh Mullin both agreed that this was a good idea. David Hennessey expressed some concern that we could put ourselves in an awkward position if we ask now and the Valley Leagues comes back to us saying that we’d have to move into the league now.

Tom Troiano noted in response to Jim Kiley’s question about games at Hockey Town that some teams from “out west” may not want to play at Hockey Town so it will be interesting to see how this plays out.

Valley League

No report.

Mass Hockey/District 9

David Hennessey said that the number one administrative priority right now is to get everyone's USA Hockey confirmation number entered into our system so that Erik Knutzen can start building USA Hockey rosters.

Boys/Open Travel Hockey

David Hennessey said that although all Boys/Open Travel teams are healthy in terms of size that we could use an additional player or two on many teams. Denis O'Donnell asked if we could put a notice in any electronic newsletters in the schools.

Girls-Only Travel Hockey

Steve Tucci said that he attended the Middlesex Yankee Conference Girls League (MYCG) kick off meeting and that we've enrolled four teams (two U14, one U12 and one U10) in the league for an early October start.

Steve said that based on the numbers it looks like we'll have one U14 team playing an additional 20 games in the Valley League. Jim Kiley noted that about 13 U14s are signed on for the additional Valley League games and that we could supplement the roster with a few girls from Melrose Youth Hockey and/or our U12 team. Denis O'Donnell said that he thought that the additional Valley League games are a great idea because it helps keep girls who want more games from leaving Winchester Youth Hockey.

Tom Troiano cautioned the Board against putting girls from four birth years on the Valley League team. The current MYCGL teams have at most three birth years on any one team. Tom said that during his presidency he heard from a handful of parents who were concerned about age-appropriate issues when you have girls entering high school and girls in 5th or 6th grade in the same locker room. Jamie Hintlian agreed with Tom saying that four years is a big gap and that we should try to avoid that.

Hugh Mullin reminded the Board that male coaches need to be very careful around girls' locker rooms. Denis O'Donnell noted that when he coached girls teams in Winchester that he always required something like pajama bottoms and T shirts on the girls. Denis said that it probably is a bit unfair but that it is not appropriate for girls to be in our locker rooms in underwear.

Ice Committee

Tom Troiano said that there are several changes to the ice program for this season and all are positive. Tom said that:

1. We've replaced expensive Chelmsford Forum ice on Saturdays with less expensive ice as Hockey Town which will be used primarily for make up games. We'll have one hour per week on Saturday mornings.
2. In addition, until the Flynn opens we'll have a second hour on Saturday mornings at Hockey Town.
3. We've been able to move two of three days per week in Malden from 4 PM to 5 PM.

4. We've added two 5 PM hours in Cambridge before and after the high school hockey season. This ice gets replaced by BBN and Belmont Hill ice during the high school hockey season.
5. We've changed our Flynn hours on Sunday evenings from 5, 6, 7 and 9 PM to 4, 5, 6 and 7 PM.

Tom noted that the 9 PM hour on Sundays was very difficult for our Bantams who already have two 9 PM practices and one or two 9 PM games per week. Tom said that our normal policy of skating the youngest first would put Girls Skills at 4 PM (instead of 5 PM) and that may conflict with some MYCGL games. Tom asked Steve Tucci if he could look into that and see if there's an issue there. Hugh Mullin and Denis O'Donnell both agreed that it was reasonable in this case to "violate" our ice usage guidelines and skate the Bantams at 4 PM and keep the boys and girls skills at the same times as in past seasons. Tom Troiano noted that even if his Bantam A team had a 9 PM game on a Sunday evening he could use the 4 PM ice for a light pre game skate.

David Hennessey thanked Tom Troiano for all his efforts over the Summer to secure new ice and improve our overall portfolio of ice.

New Business

David Hennessey noted that Bob Rotondo has moved his Puck Stoppers training facility to North Andover and that despite a slightly longer commute that we'd be continuing with Puck Stoppers goalie training on Wednesday evenings at 7 PM for this hockey season. David also noted that the price is unchanged from last season.

David Hennessey noted that a letter describing our Learn to Skate and Learn to Play Hockey programs will be distributed at the elementary schools and that we'll develop a similar letter for our Cheever Grant Introduction to Hockey Program. David said that Linda Eberth and Lynda Murphy will run the Learn to Skate Program for us again this year. David said that Linda Eberth suggested moving the time to 3:00 PM because some of the younger children seemed really tired by 5:30 PM. We will accommodate this request and move Learn to Skate to 3:00 PM.

John Addonizio asked about the age of the children for the Cheever Program. Tom Troiano said that our partner, Sports, Etc., put together a \$100 equipment package and it's a "junior" package so we expect the kids to be 10 and under.

Hugh Mullin asked whether we'd hire Kerstin Mathews for our Girls-Only skills program and John Roderick for our Boys/Open skills program. David Hennessey confirmed that we had, in fact, retained both contractors for the upcoming hockey season.

David Hennessey said that the socks and pucks have been picked up from Sports, Etc. and that all head coaches should get their game jerseys from last season's head coach.

David Hennessey said that he's asked Steve Keating, Carl Pasciuto, Brud Houllahan and Hugh Mullin to be part of a new marketing committee that would be chartered with finding new and innovative ways to attract and retain players.

David Hennessey mentioned the new web site development effort and noted that other than schedule information the existing web site is functioning and members can still make payments and enter their USA Hockey confirmation number on the existing site.

Tom Troiano gave a brief overview of the new web site development effort. Tom said that the basic goal of the effort was to develop a new web site that was easier for us to use (e.g., easier to enter schedule information) and provide all the information that our member families need using simple, easy to follow navigation. Tom highlighted some of the new features. They include:

- Central upload of schedules,
- Better display of sponsors,
- Sections for both program news and team news,
- Ability to place key program info (e.g., the Flynn Rink is closed today) on all team pages,
- A family schedule calendar that shows all events for your family,
- Navigation menus that can be easily changed as new items come up or old items become obsolete,
- All rink names will have a clickable link to a Google map,
- The display of hockey news from around the globe.

Tom said that the new website will be up and running no later than Friday September 5th and perhaps even sooner. Chris Parker raised a concern that some members may be confused by the old web site which doesn't have updated schedule information. Tom asked that all schedule information be transmitted via email for the next week or so. Carl Pasciuto said that based on what he saw that perhaps the new web site could be rolled out today. Tom Troiano said that there's a few key components of the new web site that users don't see that need to be completed (e.g., a tool for editing any schedule that was centrally uploaded). Tom said that it would be at least several days before we rolled out the new site.

Carl Pasciuto noted that web sites can be used for marketing purposes and that at some point we may want to consider changing the web site to add new functionality geared mainly towards children. Carl noted that multi media content can create excitement among children and that may be a good tool for creating enthusiasm about our program. Carl said that it's certainly too early to get into this in any significant detail but that the new marketing committee would like to give some thought to a new web site or at least some new web site components for children. Carl said that this will likely require significant time and money and that the committee will meet to develop a plan that is the best fit for the organization.

Jim Kiley suggested spending some of our endowment on a gift for all players. Jim suggested an embroidered sweat shirt or sweat suit. David Hennessey noted that at \$40-50 per player that we may be talking about \$10,000. Jim said that the kids would love it and that it might create some excitement and stop kids from leaving our program because they like the bags and jackets that they get on select teams. Several Board Members thought that this was a good idea and asked

Jim to come back to the September Board Meeting with some ideas and prices. Carl Pasciuto said that he had several apparel vendors that we could work with.

Tom Troiano said that since Ron Martignetti is no longer here that he would like to say what Ron certainly would have said. Tom said that a number of people in this room and in our program have spent a significant amount of time and money over the last five years working towards increasing our endowment. The result has been double digit annual revenue growth every year. Tom said that Denis O'Donnell and Ron Martignetti will tell you that the Flynn Rink could be closed at any time (and it has closed) and that if we were required to step up and purchase a Zamboni, for example, that this could be \$80,000. Tom said that while he is not fundamentally opposed to the idea of buying a gift for all players that we can't be frivolous with our endowment. You can be frivolous with your own money if you chose but this isn't our money and we have to be very careful how we spend our endowment. Tom said that we may not want to set a precedent of using the endowment to buy gifts for players.

Peter Albert asked if we could simply bury the cost of something like this in our tuition. David Hennessey replied that we are very concerned about the price of hockey and that we work very hard to keep our tuitions as low as possible and that he would not support that.

Denis O'Donnell agreed with Tom's general point about the endowment and said that while he is not opposed to the idea of buying sweat shirts that Tom's point is important.

Bill Redler asked Tom Troiano if there had been any progress on the two software development activities that involved upgrading the security of the online payment system. Tom said that this will be completed after the new web site is complete.

Tom Troiano said that Melrose Youth Hockey has kindly agreed to switch a Tuesday night for a Wednesday night at the Flynn so that we could all go see former Winchester Youth Hockey player John Paul Martignetti and Holy Cross play at Boston University on Tuesday November 25th. The Board agreed that we should make this a Winchester Youth Hockey activity and try to arrange for busses.

Adjournment

Jim Kiley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Hugh Mullin and unanimously approved by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Winchester Youth Hockey Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday September 22, 2008 in the conference room at the Winchester Public Library.