

WINCHESTER YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 26, 2007

Attendees Directors - Tom Troiano, Hugh Mullin, Erik Knutzen, David Hennessey, Brud Houllahan, Jim Kiley, Bill Redler, Ed Ducharme, Denis O'Donnell, Mark Robinson, John Addonizio, Scott Fusco, Ron Martignetti and Jay Tedesco

Members – Chris Parker, Tim Locke, Mary Snow, Roland Goff

President Tom Troiano opened the meeting at 7:05 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 December Meeting

The Minutes of December meeting were reviewed. No corrections were noted. Denis O'Donnell made a motion that the Minutes as recorded be accepted. The motion was seconded by Erik Knutzen. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board and the Minutes of the December 2006 meeting were entered into the record.

Minutes from January Meeting

The Minutes of the January meeting were reviewed. Jay Tedesco noted that the total cash balance was off by two cents. The actual amount should be \$192,305.94. Tom Troiano made a motion that the Minutes be accepted with the above noted correction. The motion was seconded by Denis O'Donnell. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board and the Minutes of the January 2006 meeting (with the correction) 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 \$48,781.26. A balance in a 12 month Certificate of Deposit of \$129,769.15 and a rolling 3 month CD of \$30,176.72, for Total Cash balance of \$208,727.13
- This is the time of year where we begin to collect registration fees for the 2007-2008 season while still paying bills from the current season. Future cash flow statements will show both the current season and the 2007-2008 season. The current season's tuitions are largely collected – there is about \$2,000 outstanding, which will be collected with deferred payment arrangements.
- The registration and tuition fees collected for the current hockey season were about \$420,000. We have spent about \$374,000 season to date and Hugh estimates we will spend another \$45,000: \$9,000 for the Awards Banquet, \$4,000 for skills instructors, \$10,000 for league fees which includes estimated playoff expenses, \$20,000 for ice, and \$2,000 for tournaments. The actual amount will probably differ from these estimates based upon the various teams' playoff results.
- February 2007 revenues include Mardi Gras revenue of \$24,138. The total Mardi Gras revenue is projected to be \$40,279. Mardi Gras expenses are projected to be \$3,346 for a net addition to the endowment of \$36,933.

- Tom Troiano asked which account the Mardi Gras revenue is in. Hugh Mullin stated that it is currently in the checking account but at the appropriate time it will be moved into one of the CD accounts.

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

Mardi Gras Event

John Addonizio summarized the Mardi Gras event. John noted that in addition to raising a significant amount of money the committee had a huge amount of fun running the event. Erik Knutzen and Denis O'Donnell both commented that it was exciting to see so many new enthusiastic faces who will carry on the work of Winchester Youth Hockey. Tom Troiano thanked John, Erik and Jim Kiley and the entire team for their efforts. Tom also thanked the Board for his award. Tom said that while he doesn't feel that his contributions warranted the award that he loves the chair and he's not giving it back.

2007-2008 Placements

Tom Troiano reported that the Placement dates are set and registrations are well underway. Tom said that this season we have a situation which may require a small change to our placement process. Tom said that since the placement process is now part of our de facto policies that the Board should really vote on any change to the process.

Tom noted that when his oldest boy played at the Squirt A level we had 7 qualified head coaches for that Squirt A team (Ron Martignetti, Tom Troiano, Fred Cammon, Tim Smith, Jim Aiken, John Cianciarulo and Dave Seward). Today, we find it very difficult to find coaches. Tom said that the younger parents (who likely never saw Bobby Orr play and don't remember the 1980 Olympics) are less likely to have played hockey at a high level. In addition, some highly qualified candidates are coaching outside of our program and some simply don't want to coach. Tom said that in at least three of the boys/open age brackets we have not found a highly qualified "A" coach who's son is certain to place on the A team. Tom suggested that for this season only we not select the "A" coaches prior to the placements and the current (this season's) "A" coaches would run the placements.

Tom asked David Hennessey how many applications we'd received for "A" level coaching positions. David said that the number is 5 - one Mite, two Squirt, one Pee Wee and one Bantam.

Mark Robinson made a motion that for this season only we not select the "A" coaches until after the placements are completed. The motion was seconded by Jim Kiley and unanimously approved by the Board.

Tier 2 Midget Team

Tom Troiano asked the Board to consider the possibility of putting together a U16 Tier II National Bound half season midget team for the fall. This team would be made up of 1991 and 1992 birth year players. Tom asked the Board to consider this for three reasons:

1. We have a large number of 1991 and 1992 players in our program.
2. The opportunities outside our program for these players are small.
3. Several of our members have approached Tom regarding such a team.

Tom said that recently, the EMASS Senators have received approval from Mass Hockey to manage a new Tier II National Bound League. The Senators have invited Winchester to participate in the league. Some of the other league members are: South Boston 16U & 18U, Dorchester 18U, Western Mass Blades 16U,

Quincy 16U & 18U, Winchester 16U, South Shore Dynamos 16U, R.I. Saints 16U & 18U, Eastern Mass Senators 16U & 18U, Medford 16U, Valley Jr. Warriors 16U & 18U, Wellesley 18U, District 10 Bulldogs 16U & 18U and the District 5 Mariners 16U.

The league would play 12 games between mid September and early November. There will be a State Tournament (for those who qualify) in mid November. Tom said that he would like to try to have one team practice, one two-hour session with John Roderick and one game per week.

Tom said that he expects that most players on this team would have Bantam A experience and/or Winchester High School varsity experience. Winchester High School head coach John Messuri sent Tom an email saying:

“I would love for the kids to play on that team. I also was thinking right after the season getting together and coordinating more ice time in the off season for the kids”.

Ron Martignetti, who supported the idea, warned that we’ve tried this before and it’s difficult to make happen. Ron said that the team will always be viewed as second to other hockey. Denis O’Donnell responded to Ron by saying that there’s a major difference now in that we have far more players than in those years where we tried to do this. The Board agreed to consider this as long as there is ice available and interest from current/former Bantam A players.

Model for 2007-2008 Boys/Open Travel Program

Tom Troiano said that the Dual State League had recently submitted a proposal for an expanded game schedule (similar to the Valley League) and Tom presented the slide below as potential options for the 2007-2008 season.

Boys/Open Travel Options for 2007-2008

Uses 2006-2007 prices. Actual tuitions will be slightly higher

| Option | Dual State | Valley | Cost Per Player | Comment |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|----------------------|---|
| 2006-2007 | 32-34 games* | 30 games* | \$1,700 | About 63 games |
| A | 28-30 games* | 27 games* | \$1,600** | Status Quo Option – Reduces games to about 56 |
| B | None | 42 games* | \$1,400** | Valley 42 Game Model |
| C | 40-45 games* | None | \$1,300 to \$1,400** | Dual State 40-45 Game Model |

* Plus playoffs

** Estimate for comparison only; final tuitions will be set in Spring

Tom noted that at Hugh Mullin's request the dollar amounts represent 2006-2007 pricing so the actual 2007-2008 tuitions would be slightly higher.

Tom noted that the "baseline option" will result in a reduction of about 7 games. Tom noted that one concern with the 40-45 game options would be parity. Scott Fusco noted that the parity could be slightly weaker at the top and bottom but for the vast majority the parity shouldn't change much. Denis O'Donnell cautioned the Board that options B and C could produce extremely unbalanced brackets and Denis urged the Board to take extreme caution with moving to option B or C.

Erik Knutzen noted that perhaps the B and C options are better for Pee Wees and Bantams (given more outside conflicts) and the A option is better for Mites and Squirts. Hugh Mullin said that we shouldn't ignore the fact that some of our members want less hockey.

Denis O'Donnell said that our current model is excellent and we should not change our model based on other hockey, other sports or other activities.

Mark Robinson noted that we really set our model based on the parameters set by the rink owners and the leagues and this is a concern that he has. Mark also said that we're losing three groups of players by not reducing the number of games:

1. children who want to do something else (e.g., other sport or music),
2. children who want a shorter season,
3. children who want to do other hockey (e.g., Metro).

Mark added that a Division 1 hockey program like BU plays a 36 game schedule and a college level junior program like the Greater Boston Jr. Bruins plays a 45 game schedule and a reduction to the B or C model would still have our children playing over 50 games, not over 60 games if we stay opt for the A level. The other two programs are for hockey players that are dedicating 100% of their athletic life to hockey. We shouldn't be forcing that many games on our children. For the first time in a very long time, we as a Board have the chance to make this program right.

Tim Locke said that he came to make a case for a smaller number of games and that he is in full agreement with what Mark said. Neal Hanson said that the Squirt B's are having a miserable experience given the number of games and that there's no benefit to 20 additional games.

Ron Martignetti said that we should be very leery when a member says the number of games is crazy (and then that member participates in other hockey). Ron said that he disagrees that not moving to the lower number of games is abusive to children. Ron said that it's not our job to tailor our program to others who are playing other hockey.

Mark Robinson commented that when he explains to a parent who asks about youth hockey for their child and they hear that our program runs 7 ½ months from Sept. 1 through the end of April vacation, with typically 5 events per week including two practices a week, one skills session and two games that total over 70 games, that a lot of people do think its crazy and they don't want their child to join.

Chris Parker said that many kids on his team want to do something else and that family life shouldn't always have to yield to hockey. Chris said there are simply too many games. Chris said this is the reason that you can't find coaches. Tom Troiano noted that many of us who strongly support our current model also strongly support in-house hockey at the C level. David Hennessey said that we've never had the ice for that. Tom Troiano disagreed saying that we have a lot of underutilized weekend ice which could be

used for in-house hockey. Ron Martignetti noted that he's often proposed to this Board an in-house model for C players that included one practice and one in-house game per week over a shorter period of time (i.e., shorter season).

Jim Kiley noted that his Squirt C1 team has great attendance and the families are quite happy with the current number of games.

David Hennessey said that while we historically have made decisions without regard to other hockey that we need to stop making decisions in a vacuum. David said that Mass Hockey has shifted focus to Tier 1 and we should be changing.

Mary Snow said that her boys have played 16 seasons in WYH and that one of her boys is having a far better experience this year in a Select program with significantly less hockey. She said that her son is much more enthusiastic about going to hockey. Mary said that the parents want less and the Board is not listening.

Scott Fusco said that the two practices and one skills session per week are the reason that WYH is superior not the number games. Scott said that a reduction in games from 60 to 45 would have no impact on the quality of the program as long as the practices don't change. Tom Troiano said that the thing that would change is the amount of fun. Tom said that the children that he's coached have a lot of fun playing the games. Tom said that we need to balance development and fun.

John Addonizio said that there is a lot of respect and admiration for WYH in the youth hockey community and we should be very cautious about making any changes. Denis O'Donnell said that nothing is broken; why are we talking about change? Denis noted that we were extremely cautious about leaving the Middlesex League and he's concerned that we're being less cautious with this current situation.

Ron Martignetti said that he is very concerned that any reduction in program content will lead to deterioration over time.

Erik Knutzen noted that a 42-45 game model may help retain some of our top players.

Tom Troiano noted that this decision probably shouldn't be made strictly on the number of games. If we agree that a two-league team will likely drop 5 games during the season due to conflicts then the 56 game two-league model may be 51 games in reality. Options B and C will likely offer 42-45 games so the actual difference between A and B or C may only be about 8 games. Tom said that the decision should be made based on overall quality/parity not the number of games. Options B and C have the potential to have poorer overall parity than option A.

Ed Ducharme said that option A offers a 10% reduction in games and selecting this model would certainly send the message that the Board is listening and that we do agree that a small reduction in the number of games is reasonable.

Ron Martignetti asked if any Director needed to hear more on this topic. All agreed that it wasn't necessary to have further discussion.

Denis O'Donnell made a motion to go with option A (status quo) for the 2007-2008 season. The motion was seconded by Jim Kiley and approved by a vote of 8-6.

New Business

Ed Ducharme confirmed that he's on-board to run the Annual Awards Banquet. Denis O'Donnell will handle the trophies. Tom Troiano asked John Addonizio if his IT person could help us again this year with a slide show.

Tom Troiano mentioned that there may be a Coaches Committee issue regarding an allegation that a coach put a player at risk. Tom said that he would follow up with the Coaches Committee.

Mark Robinson suggested that we continue to evolve our thinking and procedures regarding concussions. Denis O'Donnell, Ron Martignetti and Mary Snow made several comments about concussions and when a player should return to the ice. Tom Troiano noted that we spend quite a bit of time on this topic in our Annual Coaches Meeting but that we will continue monitor the state of the practice and change our procedures as necessary.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the WYH Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday March 19, 2007 at 7:00 PM in the Winchester High School Cafeteria.

Adjournment:

Tom Troiano made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Denis O'Donnell and unanimously approved by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.