

WINCHESTER YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, October 16, 2006

Attendees:

Board Members: Tom Trioano, Hugh Mullin, Chris Goodyear, John Addonizio, Ed Ducharme, Scott Fusco, Brud Houllahan, Jim Kiley, Erik Knutzen, Ron Martignetti, Denis O'Donnell, Bill Redler, Mark Robinson,

Members: Jamie Hintlian, Miro Predny

Minutes of September meeting

The Minutes of September 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 September 2006 meeting were entered into the record.

Treasurer's report

Hugh Mullin reported that the current check book balance is \$148,698 and the CD balance is \$128,024 for a total cash on hand of 276,722. The activity in the checking account during the prior period was as follows. We began the period with \$172,698 in the checking account and we had \$19,632 in revenue (mostly tuition) and \$43,631 in expenses (mostly league fees). We therefore ended the period with \$148,698 in the checking account.

Review of the 2006-2007 Tuitions and Budget

Hugh Mullin said that since the tuition rates were set in the spring there have been some unexpected conditions that will lead to a shortfall in this year's budget.

1. There were increases above the anticipated increases in game costs in the Valley league of about \$10 more per game – for 12 teams with 30 game season – that translates into approximately \$3,600 more in game costs, Girls league cost increase \$25 per game.
2. There are fewer skaters on a number of teams – the tuition model was based on having a minimum of 15 skaters per team. The average number per team is approx 13.6 players on the boy travel and 13.3 on the girls' teams.
3. There are currently 45 players enrolled in the Learn to Play Hockey Program versus a budget of 56 players – this is probably related to the addition of a Mite C team.

It is projected based on the above numbers there will be a \$6,000 - \$10,000 deficit. This does not take into account the refund to players the \$35 per player for USA hockey fees. Hugh highly recommends not refunding the \$35 USA hockey fee to the players, which

was included in the tuition model for the current season (versus raising the current tuition rates to cover the shortfall for the current season). Hugh said that refunding the USA Hockey fees would bring the total loss for the season to \$18,000 - \$22,000 unless the tuitions were increased. It was acknowledged that the setting of tuition was at the time the best estimate of the hockey costs for the upcoming season. The leagues set their fees well after the budgeting for the current season. Ron Martignetti suggested projecting an average team size of 13 players.

Tom Troiano added to the above comments made by Hugh relative to the deficit that the addition of three more teams (one at the Mite C level), and the addition of a Girls team also had an influence on the hockey operations budget because it lowered the number of players per team. The adoption of the girls' leagues stricter adherence to USA Hockey age classifications forced the Board to have an additional girl's team based on age. So, rather than having three teams with broader age ranges with the 48 registered girls, a second U12 team needed to be added, resulting in fewer players on each team. Adding teams adds fixed costs but doesn't increase revenue.

Hugh Mullin said that some of these costs were anticipated but some of the increased were unprecedented. League costs are by far the largest cost to the program. Hugh Mullin made a motion to keep the tuition at the current level and not refund the \$35 USA Hockey fee that was included in the tuition.

A discussion followed concerning the refund of the USA hockey fees as the Board indicated earlier in the season. Brud Houllahan commented that we said we were going to give back the \$35 and we should stick to that even if it means lowering the endowment.

There was a discussion regarding the endowment. Is it a rainy day fund to cover potential losses from unanticipated costs associated with running the program. Ron Martignetti indicated that the endowment amount of about 50% of your annual operating expenses should be available. Theoretically, the Board should have about \$210,000 for the long-term health of the corporation. Ron also suggested that, on the other hand, the costs of hockey might be keeping kids from participating in hockey. The discussion also focused on whether the members were made aware of the uncertainties in the costs related to escalating energy cost that the rinks and leagues might pass on to the youth hockey organizations. Tom Troiano said that we made it very clear to all members in the spring that there might be some upward adjustments to the tuitions (in the fall) but we probably did not communicate to our members the possibility of not refunding the USA Hockey fee. Tom noted that we could always give back the USA Hockey registration fee and then increase tuitions but that that seems silly.

Jim Kiley stated that it was not clear to him whether the USA Hockey registration fees were to be refunded. Ron Martignetti said that it may appear to our members that we don't know how to budget if we don't give back the USA Hockey registration fees. Hugh withdrew his original motion.

Tom Troiano said that it is irresponsible to go forward with a budget that will result in an operating loss of \$20,000 and he made a motion to keep the tuition at the same level (as approved in the spring), not refund the USA Hockey registration fees and inform the membership about the economic forces that caused this decision. The motion was seconded by Erik Knutzen and unanimously passed.

USA Hockey/ MA Hockey/District 9

Chris Goodyear reported that the play downs for the Midgets were underway. Traditionally Winchester has not sent a Midget team to play downs. The Tier 6 teams may have play downs before Christmas in order to feed into the Tier 5 brackets that will begin with the other brackets on Martin Luther King weekend. District 9 Registrar Steve Palmacci has been elected to serve on the Mass Hockey Board as a Vice President. He will remain District 9 Registrar until the end of this hockey season at which time Felix Costanza will become the District 9 Registrar. All signed USA hockey rosters are due ASAP.

Equipment/Jerseys

There was a complaint that the U10 girls' shirts did not match. Some numbers are red. Since we added a fourth girls' team these were the only jerseys that had a full set for the time being. An attempt will be made to make a new set with the additional ordering of shirts to fill out a new set.

Girls-Only program

Denis O'Donnell reported that the Girls Route One league has had a number of town teams leave the league. There are other opportunities in other leagues but they require the programs give ice for games. Winchester will continue with the Route One League and look for some tournaments and/or non league games.

Coaches Committee

No issues

Valley League

Parity round is almost complete. Otherwise nothing to report

Dual State

Please remember to advise Erik or David about game cancellations. The leagues charge the teams for games not cancelled.

Learn to Skate

First session will begin on October 21. Currently 33 skaters have registered. Notices about the program were placed in the Winchester Star and flyers were sent to the schools.

Learn to Play Hockey

Scott Fusco reported that they have had 3 sessions and that they were in the process of finalizing teams. Cross ice games begin November 12. It appears that the number of players registered Winchester will only have 2 teams. Hugh suggested 3 teams for cross

ice games. We will need four coaches for each team. The question was asked regarding whether there was any thought to extending the cross ice program to the full season. Scott stated that some of the programs are not fans of the cross ice games. He also suggested that if Winchester continues to have a Mite C travel team there is less of a need to push full ice games at the Tri City level. Scott stated that it was no problem to field 3 teams of about 10 players for the cross ice games but that would be too few players for the full ice games. The teams could be reconfigured for the full ice games to run 2 teams of about 16 players. Tom Troiano asked if players would be upset about changing teams mid year. Ron Martignetti joked that his son was traded last year and he didn't seem to mind.

Skills

Tom Troiano reported that there is a wrinkle in the current boys' skills program. Christian Wright who has been retained to do the skills program informed Tom that he is being transferred to the Cape for the next 3 months for work. Christian will continue until November 1. Tom has contacted John Roderick who does the Midget program and asked if he would consider also taking over the general Sunday night Skills program. John Roderick will get back to Tom in the next few days. Tom stated that John is very competent, he runs the Stoneham skills program and he would honor the price that Christian Wright quoted.

Friends of Flynn

Nothing to report on the privatization of rinks, however, Denis and Tom met with Todd LaFleur who was very helpful with Friends of Flynn. Todd is now is not only managing the outsourced rinks for the DCR but is overseeing the all the rinks, because there is a discrepancy in quality between the outsourced rinks and the rinks run by the DCR. The goal of the meeting was to open a discussion with a DCR representative to attempt to get back the Sunday night 7 PM hour that was taken from WYH several years ago. If that hour was returned to WYH that would bring the Girls program skills to Flynn. WYH would continue to contract the Somerville rink or sell it to Belmont YH as has been done in the past. If WYH gets the hour back it would have a solid 4 hour block at Flynn and give up the 9 pm hour. Considering the political elections and climate it would appear that the rinks will be status quo. Ron Martignetti suggested that the State should be looking to make refurbishing the rinks a priority.

New Business

A proposal was distributed to the group by hockey parent Miroslav Predney. The proposal requests that the WYH Board to consider and vote on 2 propositions. The first proposition suggests that the interested player is entitled to rotate in both the offensive and defensive positions up to 25-33% of game time, the second proposition states that the position rotations are at the discretion of the head coach, but that the rotation will last uninterrupted for at least one game period, and that over the course of the season the total game position rotation will be at the 25-33 % of game time. Several points were presented to justify the 2 proposals. Miroslav stated that the Board needed to acknowledge that it is the right of the player to play a position if they desired over the course of the year 25-33% of the time.

Long discussions ensued concerning the proposals the pros and cons mandating the proposals. There seem to be support for the idea that it was important for players to rotate positions particularly at the younger age groups. The general consensus expressed was that it was not the role of the Board to mandate specific playing time at certain positions. The Board subscribes to equal playing time for all youth hockey players, the only exception is that the coach may use his discretion in the last 2 minutes of the game.

The Board felt that the recommendations regarding positional play, should be guided by coaching education, guidance, etc by the Ace Coordinator. David Hennessey the ACE coordinator was not present and did not have the benefit of seeing the proposal – but he sent an email prior to the meeting to Tom stating that he had not found any direction from USA Hockey in their coaching manuals and instruction that recommended specific skill development relative to positional play at any one level. David stated that skill development should be the focus of players especially for the younger players and that perhaps at the later youth hockey levels, specific positional skill training and game positional assignment may be indicated.

David indicated that he felt that the Board should not take any action at this time until he was able to fully review the proposal, research any recommendations from USA Hockey and make his recommendations at the next Board Meeting. The Board will examine the role of the Board in this request, vs. the role of the Ace Coordinator to give guidance and value regarding positional play etc. Encourage Parent-Coach communication to voice concern to coach. The Board also recommended that David Hennessey communicate directly with M. Predny to further discuss the proposals.

Fundraising

John Adonnizio stated that several people had emailed him regarding the fundraiser the consensus was that we should have a Casino Night, which was very successful in the past. The potential dates are Jan 19th or 26th. It was recommended that the committee look into the possibility of having the event at the town hall and providing the wine and beer with the hiring a firm to provide servers, liability etc. The committee will proceed.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Troiano and seconded by Erik Knutzen. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm

Next meeting is Monday, November 13, 2006 at the Winchester High School Cafeteria

Submitted by
Chris Goodyear
Recording Secretary