

HAYHA Board Meeting

Meeting Date: December 16, 2025, 05:33 pm

Attendees:

Board: Chad (partial attendance), Scott, Chuck, Joe, Sabrina, Adrienne, Mike, Melissa, James

Board adjacent: Lance Wilson (Registrar)

General Attendance: Amy Deitchler, Jesse Michelson

Notes

General:

- **Motion to approve November meeting minutes – Sabrina. 2nd – Adrienne. Motion passed unanimously.**

Scheduling and Ice Time Management

- Scheduling coordination remains strict with minimal game rescheduling allowed to avoid disruption, while leveraging external resources could improve festival scheduling efficiency.
- **Joe Baumgart** confirmed that game rescheduling is rarely permitted except in exceptional cases like moving houses or tournament conflicts, emphasizing that shifting other division games is avoided due to broad impact (00:16).
- A previous exception involved coordination with **Bozeman** for a tournament reschedule.
- Rescheduling requests from teams like the **19U girls** were denied to maintain schedule integrity.
- **Grace** offered scheduling guidance based on **Missoula**'s experience, suggesting collaboration among associations such as **Missoula, Bozeman, and Great Falls** to align festival scheduling approaches (01:18).
- Scott noted that external schedulers may lack full understanding of **MAHA**'s ice block rules, which require two-hour blocks for certain divisions (02:18).
- The **Jamboree** is experiencing lower team registrations, notably with **Kalispell** joining for the first time but **Great Falls** absent due to conflicting Canadian commitments, resulting in fewer 6U and 8U teams (07:22).
- Adjustments include reducing on-ice teams from three to two per session, allowing an 8am start instead of 7am, aiming for smoother transitions and reduced early morning ice time costs (08:53).
- Ice time blocks cannot be modified without at least **30 days' notice** to the rink for staffing adjustments (09:00).
- Outreach is planned to potential towns like **Lewistown, Big Sky, and Miles City** to boost team participation, with shared communication to all contacts to maximize recruitment (10:40).

Coaching Compliance and Roster Management

- Coach certification deadlines and roster policies are strictly enforced to maintain compliance, while late roster additions are carefully regulated to balance competition and eligibility.
- Most coaches have updated their **CEP courses** by the **December 15th** deadline, with automatic **redlining** by USA Hockey occurring after **December 31st** for non-compliance, which would prevent player additions to rosters (15:33).
- Joe and Helena actively remind coaches to complete education, with some still pending age-specific modules (17:12).
- Non-certified parents are not allowed on benches during tournaments, reinforcing roster-based coaching eligibility strictly (17:44).
- The board defined a **Late Roster Additions Policy** distinguishing between **14U and below**, where late additions cannot displace existing players, and **high school levels**, where displacement is possible to encourage competition (39:03).
- Players joining late must meet USA Hockey, MAHA, and HAYHA policies, with approvals routed through age/division reps to avoid full board meetings (39:50).
- Fees for late additions will be assessed proportionally; full season fees for TSL eligibility are recommended to discourage tryout avoidance, with tournament fees assessed separately (45:12).
- High school players moving between levels (varsity, JV, house) can displace players, supporting competitive balance (41:40).
- Board agreed to address cases individually this season, with a formal handbook policy update planned for next season (50:49).
- JV roster addition is underway pending approval from MAHA registrar and enrollment form receipt, with school semester timing constraints affecting player eligibility confirmation (19:46).

Fundraising and Sponsorship Initiatives

- Fundraising efforts are evolving with a focus on clear messaging and new revenue streams, while sponsorship opportunities are being structured for better engagement and renewal.
- A **\$1,500 donation** was secured from **Blue Cross Montana** to cover medals for the 8U State Jamboree, with anticipated additional funds of \$1,000 from Cat/Griz board fundraisers (01:08:28).
- Past sponsorships from local businesses and dealerships have raised several thousand dollars annually, supporting events and team baskets (01:09:26).
- Communication with sponsors is streamlined via a standard form, improving fundraising efficiency (01:09:40).
- Discussion on a **website sponsorship program** proposed tiered pricing: **\$250 for six months and \$500 for a year**, with logos rotating biannually starting July 1st to maintain freshness and encourage renewals (34:12).
- Website receives about **1,200 weekly visits**, providing a strong marketing platform for sponsors (34:12).

Motion to display sponsors on the HAYHA website until June 30th, with renewal required thereafter – Chad. 2nd – Mike. Motion passed unanimously.

- Fundraising events such as a **golf tournament** are being explored, with limited availability (only **May 9** at Green Meadow) and potential **\$15,000 commitment**, but weather and initial costs pose risks (55:03).
- Board acknowledged that fundraising is necessary to offset rising ice and program costs, aiming to prevent fee increases (58:55).
- Emphasis placed on clear causes for fundraising requests to boost member support (57:05).

Game Officiating and Referee Scheduling

- Referee shortages have led to game forfeitures, prompting urgent process improvements and clearer communication channels.
- Two separate games during a **12UB festival weekend** were affected by lack of referees, causing a **forfeit** of a Friday game and near-forfeit situations for a Sunday game.
- The board stressed the need for a clear **process for referee scheduling**, with responsibility centralized to avoid multiple managers contacting referees directly (01:13:39).
- Executive committee plans a meeting with **Amber** (scheduler) and **Robbie** (referee chief) to establish better coverage and accountability (01:13:28).

- The current system, including use of **Horizon Web Ref** software, should enable backup assignments and improved scheduling communications (01:14:45).
- Board recognizes the impact of referee no-shows on team frustration and potential fines, especially at high school levels (01:21:47).
- There is an ongoing discussion with **MAHA** about inconsistent forfeiture rulings and the need for clearer policy documentation to prevent unilateral decisions by individuals (01:17:02).
- The board plans to compile a report for MAHA leadership summarizing incidents and their attempts to mitigate issues (01:20:30).

Player Refunds and Eligibility

- Refunds are handled pragmatically with prorated amounts, balancing eligibility rules and player circumstances.
- Refund requests from a **14-year-old injured player** and a **12-year-old moving out of state** were discussed, with consensus to grant **prorated refunds** for remaining season months (01:04:00).
- **Motion to refund a prorated portion of the registration fee for 14U player who was injured – Chuck. 2nd – Mike. Motion passed unanimously.**
- For the player moving to **Iowa**, the board clarified that playing for another league requires release from HAYHA's TSL roster, which would affect eligibility for programs like **YETI** (01:06:04).
- The board agreed to follow up with families via email to confirm decisions and clarify options (01:07:40).
- Refunds are not granted for disciplinary removals, maintaining policy consistency (01:01:37).

Organizational Structure and Future Planning

- The board is considering structural changes to improve representation, communication, and program consistency.
- Proposal to restructure **division reps** into more focused roles:
- Separate reps for **6U/8U, 10U, 12/14U, High School**, with an **appointed non-voting YETI representative** to streamline oversight and engagement (01:42:50).
- This approach addresses the diverse needs and complexities of each age group and program segment (01:43:23).
- YETI's operational manager may attend meetings as a board-adjacent member without voting rights to improve communication (01:46:06).
- The board discussed revising the **season registration close date** from early September to potentially **July or August** for better planning and roster finalization, with awareness that tryout policies would require tweaks to accommodate this change (01:39:20).
- Earlier closure would allow more time to assign coaches and create teams.
- Coordination with rink schedules and other sports seasons is necessary to optimize timing (01:41:41).
- There is a strong interest in reinstating a **Hockey Director** role to provide coaching consistency, development benchmarks, and program vision oversight, replacing the less effective past **Coach in Chief** roles (01:59:52).
- This role would focus on year-to-year coaching continuity and structured player development from 10U through high school levels (02:00:14).
- Compensation is likely required to attract qualified candidates capable of dedicating sufficient time (02:03:52).
- Volunteer hour requirements remain at **four hours per family**, with potential review to better align with team needs and improve enforcement through clearer penalties (01:55:56).
- The transition to **Crossbar** software has improved tracking and accountability (01:58:33).
- Board discussed the challenge of uneven volunteer participation and the importance of enforcing penalties to encourage compliance (01:58:55).
- Communication challenges with **Crossbar notifications** were noted, with some parents missing emails and relying more on app or chat messages for timely updates (01:55:37).

HAYHA Executive Committee Board Meeting

Meeting Date: December 03, 2025, 04:44 pm

Attendees:

Board: Chad, Scott, Chuck, Joe

Board adjacent: Rachel Schanz (Treasurer)

Notes

Financial Oversight and Expense Management

- The team agreed to increase transparency on monthly and year-to-date expenses by reviewing summarized payments with clear categories to ensure financial integrity and board visibility (00:00).
- **Chad Senechal** emphasized showing categorized expenses like **\$21,000 for ICE, \$430 for Jim, and \$600 for referees** to provide a clear check against bank statements.
- This approach avoids reading individual transactions aloud but keeps the board informed to prevent misuse or fraudulent expenses.
- **Rachel Schanz** will continue delivering monthly P&L statements and include detailed expense lists to the executive committee via email for review.
- The executive committee retains payment approval authority, with spending access limited to **Joe, Corey, Rachel, and Chad**, maintaining control over bank withdrawals.
- The board plans to optimize use of donated funds by placing the **\$10,000 coach compensation donations** into a high-yield account to earn interest over the six-month period before disbursement (05:47).
- **Chad** requested Rachel research if **First Interstate Bank or Value Bank** offer flexible high-yield savings or short-term CDs with competitive rates to maximize returns without locking funds.
- This strategy aims to prudently grow funds during the hockey season's cash flow fluctuations, which can reach a typical **\$80,000 balance**.
- The research is expected within a week to decide on account setup or potential fund transfers.
- The team will develop a system to allocate overhead expenses to partners such as **YETI** by identifying relevant shared costs like insurance, music services, and web references (11:42).
- Rachel is tasked with tracking overhead expenses over the next **30 to 60 days** to create a secondary list for executive review and billing decisions.
- This will ensure fair cost distribution while remaining conservative by rounding down estimates to avoid overcharging partners.
- No overhead costs from YETI's bond payment have been billed yet, indicating room for improved cost accounting.
- Fundraising income from platforms like **PledgeStar** will be tracked as a general fundraising category, simplifying reporting and usage without segmenting by event (09:20).
- The board supports grouping Stripe payments and other donations under this umbrella to streamline financial management.

Disciplinary Policy Enforcement and Player Conduct

- The board confirmed that Corey's suspension from last year was considered served despite his resignation during the penalty week, maintaining policy consistency without reopening disciplinary action (14:12).
- **Chad Senechal** advocated holding Corey to the existing code of conduct, with any future violations escalating consequences.
- A mandatory pre-practice meeting will be held before his potential return, involving **Chuck and Mike**, to review the code and disciplinary expectations.

- This meeting will be documented and summarized for the executive committee to maintain formal compliance records.
- The protocol requires two representatives to attend, ensuring fairness and accountability.

Coaching Compensation and Expense Reporting

- The rollout of **Expensify** for coach expense reimbursements is underway, with an expected setup time of less than one week (18:37).
- The coaching compensation and reimbursement policy will be finalized and communicated to compensated coaches within the week by **Scott**.
- The communication will include a simplified guide on submitting receipts and using Expensify to streamline reimbursements.
- This process improvement aims to clarify expectations and reduce reimbursement delays.

Equipment and Facility Resource Management

- The board approved allowing **Ability Montana** to use the cross-ice boards for up to **five sessions** this hockey season at no cost, in exchange for advertising exposure on their website (22:39).
- Chad established terms requiring Ability Montana volunteers to learn and manage board setup independently without rink staff assistance.
- A usage agreement will include a damage liability clause to protect assets, though the boards are expected to be durable and low-risk.
- The timing is coordinated to avoid conflicts with Hay Ha practices, with sessions scheduled mostly in March and early April.
- This partnership is viewed as an opportunity for brand visibility and community engagement without financial burden.
- The board agreed to purchase **blue pucks** for the **6U age group** at an estimated cost of **\$100 to \$110 per 110-puck pack**, fulfilling rink requirements (26:03).
- Bailey, overseeing equipment, will handle coordination with the rink and manage purchasing logistics to avoid reimbursement complications.
- The board will confirm with rink manager **Jed** that purchasing directly aligns with rink preferences before proceeding.
- The purchase is prioritized for immediate action to meet program needs.

Player Eligibility and Roster Management

- The board decided to defer the **girls' play-up request** to **MAHA** for approval, recognizing it as the lowest resistance path and standard procedure (27:20).
- Communication will clarify that the exception is not approved until Maha confirms, ensuring compliance with governing bodies.
- Regarding the **girls backup goalie request**, the board expressed frustration over frequent similar requests but agreed to seek clarification on the player's status and fee structure before voting (28:35).
- The player is from Idaho and not registered with Maha, requiring release from the Idaho association and Maha approval.
- Mike's proposed **\$260 fee** for the player's participation was noted, with discussion suggesting emergency goalie provisions might exempt fees if the player's role is purely backup.
- Chad will request details from Mike to clarify the nature of the request before opening a formal vote.
- The board will maintain a clear line on fees for out-of-area players and emergency goalie exceptions to manage precedent and fairness.

Privacy and Communication Protocols

- The board agreed to send a communication reinforcing that **age reps and team managers** must not distribute player or parent personal emails to external vendors without explicit family consent (33:14).
- The preferred communication method is for managers to send a single link from photographers rather than sharing individual emails, protecting privacy.
- This measure responds to unauthorized sharing of emails by managers to photographers, which led to unsolicited solicitations.
- The communication will clarify privacy expectations to all age reps and managers to prevent further incidents and protect member trust.