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HAYHA Board Meeting

Meeting Date: January 20, 2026, 05:18 pm

Attendees:

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

Board adjacent: Cory Whitmore (Tournament Coordinator), Lance Wilson (Registrar)

Rink: Jed Snyder

General Attendance: Ashlee Sheridan

Notes

Between meetings business:

- Motion to refund second session registration fees for a 12U player that moved.

Motion – James

2nd – Melissa

Motion passed unanimously

- Motion to approve Disciplinary Committee's recommendation of a Level 2 - short term suspension for Jay Smith

Motion – Joe

Did not vote - James, Adrienne

Motion passed unanimously

- Motion to approve Disciplinary Committee's recommendation of a 3 game suspension for a 14U player who received a Match penalty during game play

Motion – Chuck

Did not vote - James, Adrienne

Motion passed unanimously

Motion to approve December meeting minutes – James. 2nd – Joe. Motion passed unanimously.

Equipment Management and Facility Use

- The board decided to enforce stricter equipment cleanup rules starting **February 1st**, with a **\$20 maintenance fee** charged to the division if teams leave equipment out after practice (17:28).
- The fee will initially be charged to the division rather than individual coaches to avoid legal complications, with communication mandated from age division reps to all coaches immediately.
- Teams must put away their equipment fully, not just off the ice, to avoid fees; organizing help from parents was suggested to improve compliance.
- Failure to comply will result in fines, and state trophies will be withheld until fines are paid.
- The board approved allocating **\$600** to purchase two new shooter tutors and a package of heavy-duty cones for 6U, 8U, and 10U age groups, with a purchase deadline of **April 30th** and a plan to monitor for any price reductions before then (56:01). **Motion made by Joe and seconded by Melissa.**
- The equipment will be funded from the general fund, not specific tournament funds, justified by usage across multiple age levels.
- The board agreed to seek a possible discount from the supplier based on past orders and to replace broken cones with heavy-duty ones.
- Ice time usage was reviewed with a recommendation to provide ice through **March 15th** for all divisions, allowing teams to schedule scrimmages and parent-kid games after state tournaments (43:18).
- Coordination with rink management will ensure ice is fairly distributed and can be shared creatively among teams within divisions, provided fairness is maintained.
- The board emphasized that no team should unilaterally get more ice time than others in the same division.

Registrar Transition and Board Elections

- The board unanimously appointed **Ashley Sheridan** as the next registrar, effective next season, allowing her to shadow current registrar **Lance** over the coming months for a smooth transition (39:38). **Motion made by Chuck, seconded by Joe.**
- Ashley's strong organizational skills and team management experience were cited as key qualifications.
- The registrar position is appointed annually with a typical compensation credit of about **\$700** per season, applied as a fee credit or possibly a payout after participation ends.
- The board emphasized transparency about reappointment and clarified that compensation must be board-approved, not self-assigned.
- Board election timing was restructured to better align with the hockey season, moving announcements to **mid-February**, applications due by **end of February**, voting in early to mid-March, and new board ratification in March to allow the new board to start work in April (42:43).
- This schedule aims to improve engagement by catching members when they are most motivated post-season and enables summer planning by the new board.
- The board agreed to verify Montana nonprofit law compliance before finalizing changes.

Tournament and Event Planning

- The board discussed maintaining the **6U-8U jamboree** as a key annual fundraiser, rejecting proposals to replace it with state tournaments due to superior revenue generation (10:50).
- The jamboree generates net profits between **\$5,000 and \$10,000** depending on baskets, raffles, and merchandise sales, far exceeding expected revenue from state tournaments where ice and team fees are paid to Maha.
- The possibility of adding a **12U or 14U state tournament** alongside the jamboree was supported if ice availability allows, with high school tournaments considered less feasible due to scheduling conflicts and smaller team counts.
- Decisions on tournaments must be finalized by **late summer** to meet bid deadlines.
- The golf tournament fundraiser was tabled due to lack of suitable dates and concerns about weather, with possible rescheduling to **fall or next summer** (28:47).
- The board will explore alternate venues such as Fox Ridge to improve alignment with event style and customer preferences.
- The summer hockey committee was formally created, led by **Joe, Chuck, and Scott**, tasked with organizing summer ice sessions for 6U, 10U, 14U, and high school age groups following last year's successful format (31:50). **Motion made by Joe and Mike seconded.**
- Sessions will avoid weekends heavily booked by visiting teams like the Wolves and use evenings to maximize attendance.
- Committee members have authority to approve additional volunteers and must report progress regularly to the board.

Registration, Tryouts, and Coaching Structure

- The board proposed a comprehensive shift in the annual calendar to open **registration in March** with a **\$100 deposit fee**, tryouts in the **first week of August**, and team notifications by the end of August (45:00).
- This schedule encourages early sign-up while players and families are still engaged post-season, allowing more time to finalize coaches, tournament plans, and communications before the season starts.
- A late registration fee structure was suggested to incentivize timely sign-ups, with fees fully communicated before registration closes at the end of June.
- The board agreed to consider waivers or reduced fees for 6U players but leaned towards uniform \$100 deposits with refund options before registration closes.
- The coaching selection process will start earlier with **division head coaches selected by mid-May** and **team head coaches selected after tryouts** in August, allowing division coaches to guide team coach nominations (51:52).
- Assistant coaches will be appointed closer to the season start to allow flexibility.
- This sequencing aims to improve tryout planning and reduce last-minute coaching changes, while recognizing that some coach assignments may still adjust post-tryouts.
- The proposed calendar change will be shared with the board for feedback before potential approval in February, recognizing initial pushback but emphasizing long-term benefits for organization and communication (54:30).
- The board agreed that having a fixed week annually for tryouts will help families plan vacations and avoid conflicts with other sports.

Board Representation and Committee Development

- The board discussed adding formal representation for the **YETI program** on the board due to its size and distinct tier-two hockey status, with current representation by a single member deemed inadequate (20:58).
- Options considered included creating a dedicated **at-large board position** elected by the full membership or appointing a **non-voting representative** selected by YETI to attend board meetings and advocate for their interests.
- Due to bylaw constraints requiring at-large members to be elected by the entire membership, the board favored initially pursuing an appointed non-voting role as a transitional step.
- The board will consult with YETI leadership and explore bylaws amendments for future elections with YETI-specific representation.
- A new **age division playbook committee** was formed, led by **James**, to create a clear guide for age division reps covering yearly responsibilities, best practices, and operational procedures (17:04).
- The playbook will be a living document designed to be concise with links to detailed resources, aimed for completion by **April** to assist incoming reps.
- The board approved creation of a **summer ice committee** with authority to manage summer ice sessions and programming, reporting monthly to the board (34:58).
- The committee will coordinate scheduling, coaching support, and potential new events like a 3-on-3 tournament.

Financial and Operational Updates

- The board moved a **\$17,000 CD** to a new 3-month term earning approximately **3.35% interest**, with plans to open a 6-month CD when new funds arrive to better align with operational cash flow (23:01).
- This approach aims to optimize interest earnings while preserving liquidity for seasonal expenses.
- The search for an appropriate **association credit card** continues after the preferred option was found unavailable to nonprofits, with priority given to securing one before summer tournament season (24:09).
- The board approved a **standard sponsorship contribution form** with tiered donation levels, to be posted on the website and used to track donations including via Venmo (27:00). **Motion by Joe and Seconded by Mike.**
- Donors will be asked to include notes specifying donation level to facilitate tracking and recognition.
- The form was approved with motion by Joe and second by Mike.
- The board initiated a **master account list** to centralize passwords, account details, and vendor contacts for key association services and contracts, accessible only to president and VP for security (39:37).
- Board members responsible for accounts will be asked to populate and maintain this document for operational continuity.
- Fundraising basket deadlines were set for January 24th and 26th for different divisions to improve event planning and organization (20:58).
- Sponsored baskets will be publicly acknowledged to enhance donor recognition.

- The board reviewed disciplinary updates including a current **match penalty suspension** with the committee's ruling upheld pending Maha review, affirming local authority to adjudicate promptly without delay (53:23).
- The committee will monitor Maha's response but will proceed based on USA Hockey guidelines as interpreted locally.
- The board agreed to communicate with members to clarify ice end dates and usage policies, setting **March 15th** as the default season ice end date with flexibility for extension requests (41:50).
- Age division reps will monitor and coordinate fair ice sharing and return unused ice to the rink promptly.

Governance and Policy Updates

- The board agreed to finalize the updated handbook with consolidated changes, clarifying operational policies and streamlining language for better enforcement (00:56).
- **Chad Senechal** led the review of bylaw and policy revisions, emphasizing the removal of redundant or unclear language to improve clarity and enforcement.
 - The removal of the loyalty core value was accepted as it is sufficiently covered within the code of conduct.
 - Electronic ballots remain the standard for board elections, reflecting recent practice.
 - The annual meeting timing was adjusted to July, before tryouts, to allow better financial review and budgeting.
 - Minutes will now be recorded for executive sessions but not broadly distributed to maintain confidentiality.
 - The disciplinary and Safe Sport Director role was formally clarified to align with current titles and Safe Sport updates.
- The board approved a motion to finalize the document with Chad responsible for cleaning up wording and formatting before a final review and vote.
 - This approach aims to ensure consistency and reduce confusion in operational procedures.
 - The finalized handbook is expected to streamline board and staff actions with clearer accountability.
 - Board consensus was unanimous, demonstrating alignment on governance direction.
- The updated handbook will reflect evolving organizational needs and maintain compliance with external bodies like USA Hockey, ensuring long-term stability.

Fee Structure and Registration Policies

- The fee schedule was restructured to reflect program differences, clarify inclusions, and improve payment processes, supporting financial transparency and operational efficiency (08:56).
- Changes separated fee structures by age groups and program types, including 6U, 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, and high school, with a separate section for the girls' developmental program due to its unique tournament participation and costs.
 - Girls' teams currently pay a **\$700** registration fee and participate in tournaments not fully covered by registration, prompting discussion on potential inclusion of tournament fees.

- It was agreed to keep tournament fees flexible for girls' teams, allowing adjustments as the program grows.
- Tournament participation and ice costs for girls were noted as currently covered by association overhead and team fees.
- The handbook now references USA Hockey's birth year guidelines rather than fixed ages, improving annual update ease and accuracy.
 - Digital access to USA Hockey's website will provide authoritative age group info, reducing handbook maintenance.
- Payment policies were clarified: all outstanding balances must be paid before registration, or ice privileges will be suspended.
 - The deadline to notify for season withdrawal was extended from **December 1** to **December 15** to allow better administrative response.
- The policy permits players in **14U** and high school age groups to try out for and qualify on both teams, with board approval required for exceptions.
 - This flexibility acknowledges overlapping eligibility while maintaining roster control.
- Monthly payment options were described in clearer terms to improve member understanding and compliance.

Gameplay and Tournament Participation

- The board confirmed that tournament travel is mandatory once a team commits, with clearer communication and scheduling to reduce family conflicts and ensure team cohesion (36:10).
- All travel teams except 6U, 8U, and house divisions are expected to participate in tournaments once selected.
 - The current model includes **three tournaments** in fees, with additional optional tournaments potentially added by teams.
 - Early communication and parent surveys are critical to manage travel burdens and avoid last-minute dropouts.
- Coaches hold final authority on tournament selection, balancing team needs and family constraints.
 - Team head coaches coordinate with division coaches to align tournament participation, especially when multiple teams attend the same event.
- The board discussed the challenge of balancing distant travel (e.g., 6-8 hour drives) with family availability, noting that most B teams accept one or two long trips with additional closer tournaments.
 - Real-world examples included pushback on tournaments immediately after holidays or requiring significant travel.
- The policy will explicitly state that players' attendance at tournaments impacts playing time and future participation, reinforcing commitment expectations.
- The board agreed to improve survey and communication processes before finalizing tournament schedules, reducing uncertainty and ensuring transparency.

Equipment and Uniform Management

- Uniform and equipment policies were refined to reduce costs and improve durability while providing flexible purchase options for families (24:51).

- The board agreed that players **shall not wear game jerseys to regular practices** to preserve their condition, limiting wear and tear.
 - Enforcement will focus on education rather than strict penalties, balancing practicality with cost control.
- Jerseys cost approximately **\$75** each, with a combined replacement fee of about **\$100** including restocking.
 - Families may purchase jerseys as mementos after the season directly through the vendor, with options to add names and preferred numbers.
- For 6U and 8U players, the association provides reversible game jerseys for tournaments, and families may purchase blue and white practice jerseys.
 - Jerseys for these age groups must be returned after each tournament to maintain inventory.
- Equipment rental processes remain unchanged, with direct rental from Play It Again Sports without appointments.
- The handbook now references USA Hockey's equipment standards to avoid frequent policy updates due to equipment changes, focusing on key items like neck guards and mouth guards for player safety.

Tryouts and Team Selection

- The tryout process was streamlined with clear team formation preferences and simplified policies to reduce confusion and ensure fair player placement (52:11).
- The organization prefers to field at least one **A team and one B team** in divisions 10U, 12U, 14U, and high school when numbers allow.
 - This preference aims to provide competitive balance and accommodate a range of skill levels.
- A play-up form is now required for players moving between House 1 and House 2, allowing the board to manage requests and reduce coach conflicts.
 - The form acts as a formal request rather than a unilateral decision, improving oversight.
- Age classifications and player eligibility will follow USA Hockey guidelines without exceptions for play-downs.
- The tryout policy language was simplified to remove fluff and clearly state objectives, supporting enforcement and reducing parental disputes.
- High school player eligibility requires two letters per semester to confirm enrollment, with the association handling communication to schools.
- The board committed to standing behind the updated tryout policies to ensure consistency and fairness across divisions.

HAYHA Executive Committee Board Meeting

Meeting Date: January 07, 2026, 04:30 pm

Attendees:

Board: Chad, Chuck, Joe

Board adjacent: Rachel Schanz (Treasurer)

Notes

Financial Management and Reporting

- The team confirmed clear financial protocols and ongoing tracking practices to ensure transparency and accuracy in revenue and expenses.
- **Refund policy for mid-season cancellations** was clarified to refund only for the second half of the season, not partial days, based on Chuck's explanation and Chad's agreement (01:05).
 - This approach balances fairness to families and the organization's financial stability.
 - The refund amounts closely match the remaining payments due, streamlining administration.
 - Lance and Chuck are responsible for managing these refunds.
- **Fundraising income totaled approximately \$16,921 year-to-date**, with a significant portion from the Shropshires, categorized under general fundraising and admin (17:01).
 - Chuck and Rachel agreed to maintain fundraising income separate from program fees for clarity.
 - Rachel is prepared to further break down fundraising by age groups if needed for better financial tracking.
- **Deposit of \$2,400 plus remaining fees from Yeti** was approved to proceed without awaiting additional confirmation, reflecting consensus among Chuck, Chad, and Rachel (18:56).
 - Joe will complete the deposit promptly to maintain cash flow.
- **Expense reimbursement process via Expensify** is under review, with Chad volunteering to lead approvals for the next month to understand submission patterns and compliance (13:01).
 - Current submissions are often fragmented, increasing administrative work.
 - Chad aims to establish a standard review and payment cycle to limit reimbursement delays to 30 days maximum.
 - Rachel highlighted concerns about verifying legitimacy of travel claims, but Chad prefers trusting volunteers unless clear discrepancies arise.

Program Operations and Participant Policies

- Key decisions were made regarding participant engagement, attendance policies, and communication strategies to support program integrity and smooth operations.
- **Tournament fee classification** was agreed to include participant payments as program fees, while external organization fees remain in tournament income for clearer budgeting and year-over-year tracking (09:10).
 - Expenses related to tournaments will be tracked separately to maintain financial accuracy.
- **Requirement for TSL teams to donate baskets for the 6&8U jamboree** remains a soft request rather than a firm mandate due to parental concerns over additional costs (23:15).
 - Chuck confirmed tradition is one basket per team for the entire jamboree, not per age group.

- Chad will monitor if resistance increases and consider formalizing the policy if needed.
 - The fundraising impact of the baskets justifies maintaining some level of contribution expectation.
- **Late roster policy** was successfully tested with two last-minute player additions before Christmas, with no negative feedback from parents reported (45:00).
 - Chad will circulate the policy draft to the exec committee for feedback before presenting it for full board adoption in January.
- **Refunds for withdrawal from the goalie clinic** were not entertained since the decision to leave was voluntary and participants had full access (29:23).
 - The group agreed not to respond to the email about the goalie clinic withdrawal to avoid escalating a non-issue.
 - However, a brief, clarifying response will be sent regarding miscommunication about extra ice times to maintain good relationships.
- **10U team attendance and travel expectations** were reinforced as part of a competitive program where participation influences ice time (31:26).
 - Chad and Chuck agreed that communication and planning ahead of absences are critical and that last-minute changes negatively impact team dynamics.
 - The scheduling approach will be revisited to allow more parent input on tournament selection and travel preferences to reduce conflicts (34:44).
 - A message emphasizing nuance in attendance impact will be drafted by Chad and reviewed by Chuck to ensure consistency.

Strategic Scheduling and Board Governance

- A proposed shift in scheduling and governance timelines aims to improve workload distribution, increase engagement, and align board activities with the hockey season rhythm.
- **Proposal to move board term and election cycle to April-April** was introduced to better align with the hockey season and reduce the rush of work between tryouts and declarations (39:06).
 - Chad emphasized benefits of engaging motivated members right after the season ends and giving the new board the summer to plan changes.
 - Chuck agreed this breaks from the fiscal year but aligns better with operational needs (40:07).
- **Tryouts proposed to be held in July, ideally the third weekend, with registration closing June 30** to secure team rosters early and allow ample time for planning (40:15).
 - This shift aims to avoid compressed timelines and enable early coach and manager assignments.
 - Chuck flagged potential challenges in finding evaluators due to summer vacations, but Chad argued summer has more availability than fall.
 - Consistency in timing year over year will help families plan around tryouts.
- **August and early September would be dedicated to parent engagement around tournaments and ice rental needs** to improve scheduling and participation decisions (41:37).
 - This adjustment supports a more collaborative and flexible approach to team activities.

- **Handbook and bylaw changes are being reviewed to accommodate these schedule shifts** with an eye toward minimizing disruption and easing implementation (43:25).

Community Engagement and Program Enhancements

- Discussion focused on potential new offerings and partnerships to enrich player development and community value while managing resource demands.
- **Nutrition guidance offering from Sharon Brown, a collegiate athlete and VA dietitian, is under exploration** (46:57).
 - Chad will request more details on whether this would be a volunteer service or paid proposal.
 - Chuck prefers free, age-specific nutrition resources but is open to paid services if tailored by age group for practical impact.
- **Power skating camp proposal from Robbie Glantz, a recognized coach, was discussed as a potential partnership** (50:31).
 - Chad noted the program would require the organization to handle registration, ice rental, and payments, making it more admin-heavy than previous camps.
 - Chuck supports scheduling this around existing summer ice sessions to maximize efficiency.
 - No summer ice committee exists yet; Chad assigned Chuck to form one and lead summer ice planning immediately (51:07).
- **Increased summer ice demand expected due to Bozeman's closure and Wolves booking Helena ice** necessitates proactive scheduling and resource management (51:30).

Competitive Events and Revenue Strategy

- The group discussed balancing traditional revenue-generating events with new tournament opportunities to optimize financial and community outcomes.
- **The board prioritizes retaining the 6&8U jamboree due to its guaranteed revenue despite interest in adding a state tournament** (52:59).
 - Chad challenged Jed's proposal to replace the jamboree, emphasizing the financial risk of losing a reliable income source.
 - Jed suggested hosting a 12U state tournament concurrently with Bighorns games using their locker rooms, possibly starting Thursday and ending Sunday morning.
 - High school level tournaments could follow but might require giving up the jamboree in the long term.
- **Co-bidding on the state tournament with Butte or negotiating shorter bids was proposed to balance revenue and community access** (55:12).
 - Chuck supported alternating hosting years with Butte to share financial and logistical burdens.
 - Maintaining jamboree revenue while testing state tournament viability is the current strategic position.
- **The group plans to push back on a MAHA fine related to referee absence at a 12U game, aligning with Mike Smith's ruling that a forfeit should not be assessed and points should be equalized** (20:06, 57:39).
 - Chad will draft an argument for review by Chuck and Scott before formal submission.

- This action aims to protect the organization's competitive standing and avoid unfair penalties.

Communications and Sponsorship Efforts

- Efforts to improve external communications and fundraising infrastructure are underway, with a focus on clarity and professionalism.
- **Sponsorship form created by Chuck received positive feedback with minor wording adjustments suggested by Chad (56:00).**
 - Chuck will present the finalized form at the January full board meeting for approval.
 - Upon approval, the form will be posted online to streamline sponsorship outreach and tracking.
- **Chad plans to follow up on the fine dispute and other pending communications to ensure timely resolution and maintain positive stakeholder relationships (57:50).**