

CHEYENNE CAPITALS YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2024 MINUTES

DATE: 10/2/24 TIME: 6:01p MEETING LOCATION: Cheyenne Ice and Events Center

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

- a. Attendees include President J HESSER, Vice President D MANDEL, Secretary J GRONSKI, Registrar T SCHLAGEL, Scheduler K WASHENFELDER, Scheduler A NADEAU, Coach-in-Chief K PARKS, Fundraising Chair S CLARK, Discipline Chair B MOORE, Equipment Manager C VAUGHAN, SafeSport Liaison J COVER
- b. QUORUM ESTABLISHED

III. AUDIENCE INTRODUCTION

- a. Brianna White, Sandy Walck, Jay Walck, Layne Varland, Chad Varland, Scott Dean, Brittany LaFountaine, Shawn Ramage, Jayden Erickson; REMOTE: Abbie Connally, Rachel Christiansen, Rich Diggins, Chris Rosentreter, Dave Bush, CeeJay Pixler, Kerri Petruso, Mike Connell, Lisa Hill, Lyndie Gore

IV. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

- a. August 2024 – APPROVED with no edits (Motion: T SCHLAGEL, 2nd J COVER; passed unanimously)

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. BANTAM TEAM

- a. J HESSER shared his ground rules for the conversation, including a plan to hear first from Coach Ramage, then the board followed by open comments from attendees.
- b. S RAMAGE shared his assessment of the situation: with 25 players, there are too many for one team not enough for two, even with a second goalie.
 - i. He proposes a 14 person main squad (a total of 16 with goalies), consisting of 9 forwards and 5 defensemen. This would be the team that would play WAHL away games. There would be a 10 person practice squad—4 of whom will be “bubble players” who will play at home against weaker opponents and serve as a 3rd/4th line. These 4 bubble players would be his first choice if someone moves out of the 14 person main squad. The bottom 6 of the practice squad would be practice-only players.
 - ii. The final roster would not be set until 12/31 (the WAHL roster deadline).
 - iii. He stressed that players can move in and out of the top 14 squad until the deadline
 - iv. This plan will encourage development and competition at practice. Any negative behavior or toxicity on the bench could be grounds for moving in and out of the top 18 players. Other issues that could result in shifting the 18 rostered players includes sickness, injury, skill and practice intensity.

- v. S RAMAGE will also look for CRHL tournaments to take available players (approximately 13-18 kids) to. This would depend on player availability and interest.
- c. K PARKS voiced his support as Coach-in-Chief.
 - i. He acknowledged this is not a good situation, but is the best answer that we can come up with at this point.
 - ii. He mentioned that this will keep the kids on the ice and highlighted that S RAMAGE will need to keep an eye on players getting the 10 games necessary to play at state.
- d. T SCHLAGEL asked how many CRHL tournaments are available? Will you have enough players for a tournament team?
 - i. Per S RAMAGE, he anticipates 2-3 tournaments, depending on player/goalie availability. If no more than 5 players opt out of tournaments, they would have enough to travel.
- e. B MOORE thanked Coach Ramage for emphasizing what is best for players.
 - i. She believes this will be an opportunity for great development, the chance to show player dedication over 3-4 months.
- f. J WALCK/S WALCK comments
 - i. Have we asked WAHL if we can add a 2nd Bantam team? He also highlighted that he previously advised the board to move registration up to have time to deal with this type of situation.
 - 1. A NADEAU/K WASHENFELDER: yes, we asked, that is not an option (we were not the only team to ask, all were declined)
 - ii. Is there an option to move some players up to the HS JV team?
 - 1. S RAMAGE: No. We looked at the kids, unfortunately the HS numbers are too high (moving 6 up would give them 39 on the ice)
 - 2. S RAMAGE: The suggested plan will limit the number of times that families have to travel to only have 1-2 shifts on the ice in a weekend.
 - 3. S RAMAGE: Moving 2nd year Bantams up strips them of leadership opportunities. They may be the leaders on this team but would be middle of the pack on the JV team.
 - iii. In our previous agreement with the City of Cheyenne, we were defined as a public user—which means we cannot cut based on skill without breaking our mission statement and agreement with the City. Could we make the team based on rolling a dice rather than the top 14 vs. bottom 10?
 - 1. The Board highlighted that may not be in our current contract with the City, but regardless, this is not a cut based on skill, but attitude and all players will receive equal practice time and development
 - iv. Have we asked to add a CRHL team?
 - 1. K WASHENFELDER: will email CRHL to ask about availability, but the season is well underway at this point
 - v. He expressed frustration that the ideas presented at the Bantam parent meeting were not real options.

- vi. With 25 kids, there are enough players for 2 teams
 - 1. S RAMAGE: 12 is too thin for a team. You would have to forfeit if someone is sick, injured or kicked out of a game. Often the bottom 12 on a roster does not provide enough commitment to travel. You need a minimum of 14 players + goalie for roster.
- vii. Expressed that we need to get the kids on the ice, not just practice where there's no focus and it's not a game situation—asked that we look at additional options.
 - 1. S RAMAGE: He has been working on this and exploring options since the day after sign ups (which was also the day we had to declare teams)
- g. B LEFOUNTAIN comments
 - i. She acknowledged that this is an unfortunate situation, and expressed frustration that there was not enough notification for parents and players. Her child saved and spent his own money on new gear and invested in a custom jersey, only to learn he may not actually play. At this point it is too late to even find another club to play for.
 - ii. She also pointed out that kids do not play hockey to practice—they want to play in game.
 - iii. She encourages the board to do better next year.
 - iv. Is there an option to play up Peewees?
 - 1. K PARKS: The Peewees are not ready—the shift between Peewee and Bantam is significant.
 - 2. We can ask the 14u Girls to gauge their interest
- h. L VARLAND comments
 - i. Wonders if <Bantam-aged Girls Team Goalie> is still an option (as mentioned at the parent meeting?
 - 1. This player may be interested in some tournaments but has declared Girls Team as her team;
 - ii. How long will this be in limbo?
 - 1. K PARKS: we will give the decision as much time as possible to see how kids develop
 - iii. Would like to make sure we have confirmed every potential avenue before we “cut kids”.
- i. B MORE question: how much overlap is there with the Girls Team schedule?
 - i. A NADEAU: As of right now, they have conflicts for all but 2 games before 12/31.
- j. A CONNALLY comments
 - i. Would like to see us avoid spreading the rosters too thin
- k. R CHRISTIANSEN comments
 - i. She shared that her son has played on a team of 10 kids and they made it work
- l. C ROSENTRETER comments

- i. Has concerns about sending players to Colorado league where Bantams do not check. This will be a step back for players. Additionally, several years ago CCYHA was not allowed to play at the Colorado State tournament.
- ii. Highlighted that Bantam year is a decision year for players—sending them to CRHL means we may lose players permanently.
- iii. He supports moving his kid up if that is what needs to happen. Many of these players are eligible to play high school sports and should understand the pecking order.
 - 1. They need to be developmentally ready to move up and will need to understand the risk of lesser playing time. The current situation is fostering a negative environment and not setting the program up for success.
 - 2. Moving kids up would give current 9th graders a super senior year.
 - 3. Hopes the coaches will talk to the individual players
 - 4. K PARKS/J HESSER: The HS coach has his hands full with the team he currently has.

m. C PIXLER comments

- i. Appreciates what the board is trying to do, seems like we are “damned if we do and damned if we don’t”
- ii. Wonders what happens if a player isn’t the top 14 and plays on a travel team (and therefore couldn’t go to tournaments)? Would they have no game options?
 - 1. S RAMGE: no answer for that at this time
- iii. She says their family will support the board, they just want their kid to play hockey.
- iv. Sent a special thank you to Shawn for working so hard to find a suitable solution.

n. D BUSH comments

- i. Thanked the board for their efforts, clearly there is no easy answer.
- ii. Concerned about the team culture of starters vs. practice squad—it will happen, their teenagers. Wants to make sure there is equitable locker room treatment for all players.
 - 1. S RAMAGE: Assured that he would take care of this appropriately, including moving players that treat others poorly down. He is also optimistic that Locker Room Monitors will help address this situation.
- iii. He mentioned that he has talked to his player about the possibility that he could be a practice only player to get ahead of things.

o. M CONNELL comments

- i. Is concerned about the number of kids who will walk away from CCYHA over this. Wants to see a team solution, even though there is no right answer.

p. L HILL comments

- i. Reminded all in attendance that 5 years ago we had no Bantams team and had to form a 16u team, our numbers are improving.

- q. R DIGGINS comments
 - i. Acknowledged that Coach Ramage is doing the best with a bad situation.
 - ii. Wonders if we have asked about Laramie/Douglas numbers?
 - 1. K WASHENFELDER: have asked Laramie about their numbers and will follow up with answer
- r. A NADEAU question: when will the top 14 be presented?
 - i. S RAMAGE: Oct. 14
- s. J HESSER comment: When we made the WAHL declaration, we only had one goalie. This 2nd goalie situation is new in recent days
 - i. We want what's best for the kids first, the club next and the bottom line last (the money isn't even a consideration).
 - ii. There will be a lower fee for the practice squad
- t. K WASHENFELDER comment: She would be happy to set up scrimmages, but they would be on weekdays.
- u. J GRONSKI comment: Is there a possibility to decide who your top 14 are sooner?
 - i. S RAMAGE: Says he could name the top 18 by 10/14, which would allow players to play another winter sport if they so desire.
- v. S DEAN comments
 - i. Practice is not the same as a game for players. Being needed as a member of the team helps with confidence and being told he's not play is likely to deflate my kid.
 - ii. He highlighted the money their family spent in preparation for the season.
 - iii. Not making this team is going to hinder players—they will feel like they are not good enough.
 - 1. J ERICKSON: bottom players would already be limited in game time, practices and drop-ins are where development happens
- w. K PETRUSO comments
 - i. She highlighted that their family is new to the organization and her child is excited to play, is looking forward to games and travel with his new teammates.
 - ii. She believes the CRHL option would be a good choice—not checking is not a deal breaker for her family.
- x. J HESSER after seeking any remaining comments wrapped up with a plan. S RAMAGE will decide his top 14 and bubble 4 by 10/14. The board will meet 10/16 for an open meeting make final decision.
- y. T SCHLAGEL thanked everyone for attending.

b. DONATION

- a. S WALCK presented a check for a percentage of the sales she made featuring Capitals gear in the past year.
 - i. She also inquired about the date of the Mites tournament
- c. PRACTICING ON OTHER TEAMS—SET FEE

- a. J HESSER presented the challenge—CCYHA does not have a policy for charging players that want to practice-only on a secondary team. Players do this for increased completion or physicality and for college prep and it typically only applies to Girls Team members.
 - i. K PARKS supports this if both coaches are on board
 - ii. B MOORE drafted a policy
 - iii. K WASHENFELDER suggested we charge the same as a cross-rostering fee (\$150 this year)
 - iv. L HILL highlighted that the club already has this policy (the player movement guide, listed as a practice player)
 - 1. J HESSER confirmed the player movement guide does not have a fee assigned for practice-only players.
 - v. J GRONSKI asked for clarification—are we saying any player could practice with another age-appropriate team? Or is this just to allow Girls Team players to practice with the High School team?
 - 1. Consensus—would only apply to female players.
 - 2. J GRONSKI clarified that her no vote would only be because this opportunity is not available to all club members.
 - vi. J GRONSKI put forward a motion to allow a female player to participate as a practice-only player on an age-appropriate team at the annual cost of \$150.
 - 1. B MOORE seconded the motion; passed, 10-1, with dissenting vote from J GRONSKI.

VI. REPORTS

- a. PRESIDENT'S REPORT
 - a. J HESSER thanked coaches, the new team managers and everyone who helped with try hockey for free day. Approximately 50 kids participated.
- b. TREASURER'S REPORT
 - a. K KECHTER shared that Steve Strunk is confirmed for clinics on Monday, October 21 and Monday, October 28.
- c. SCHEDULER REPORTS
 - a. K WASHENFELDER shared that the first half of CRHL games are scheduled and will be in Game Sheet by this weekend.
 - b. A NADEAU highlighted that there is one additional change to WAHL today, otherwise the dates are set. We will not have times until 10-14 days before games (although times for our rink are set and correct).
 - c. K WASHENFELDER mentioned that Game Sheet no longer allows schedulers to use a 12a placeholder, so some games are in at “realistic” times (6 or 7am) that are not correct. She will make sure team managers are aware of this and share with their teams.
- d. COACH-IN-CHIEF REPORT

- a. K PARKS celebrated the first 2 weeks of the season being under our belt, while acknowledging that the season hits hard and fast. He especially wanted to thank all the locker room monitors.
- e. SAFESPORT COORDINATOR REPORT
 - a. J COVER shared that he is in the early stages of a SafeSport investigation. More information to come.
- f. EQUIPMENT MANAGER'S REPORT
 - a. C VAUGHAN reminded everyone that jersey orders are due to her by this weekend. She will send one final reminder via Crossbar. She anticipates needing help placing the order but plans to work with L HILL to get it all sorted.
 - b. In addition, C VAUGHAN is working with team managers to make sure they're all squared away, especially on Game Sheet system.
- g. FUNDRAISING CHAIR REPORT
 - a. S CLARK shared that wreath packets are coming soon. Players will have 3 weeks to sell. She will need help setting up the packets when they come in.
 - b. On the horizon is a 3-date fundraiser with Vintages. The club will get 15% back from sales at the three tastings in October, November and January. She also anticipates Vintages will sign on as a club sponsor.
 - c. J HESSER highlighted that we can announce sponsors during warm ups and that the sponsorship form will be up on the website this week.
 - d. S CLARK is working on a banner (that would only be up during games) as well as a signature block for all club emails highlighting our sponsors

VII. Moved into Executive Session (Motion J GRONSKI; 2nd A NADEAU; passed unanimously)

VIII. ADJOURNED 8:03p (Motion J GRONSKI; 2nd J COVER; passed unanimously)