WSLA Board Retreat Minutes

Date: Saturday, September 12, 2026 **Location:** Bellevue College, Room R303 **Scheduled:** 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Attendance (per agenda): MK Benshoof, Claire Monsaas (to leave by about 1:30 pm), Tony Duck, Curtis Estes, Christy Neff, Holly Whitman, Jeanette Wake (to leave around 11:00 am), Jeanne Ballot, Toby Halbert, Allison Estes **Unable to attend:** Ryan McCloskey, Tami Tommila

Draft prepared from the retreat agenda (including the notes and motions recorded in it), the 2027 proposal documents, and the WSLA Proposal Submission Policy. No recording or transcript was available, so discussion is summarized only where it was written down. Items with no recorded outcome are listed in Section 9.

1. Future Meeting Dates

The board planned to select dates and times for the October through February board meetings. No dates were recorded in the agenda. (The November meeting was later set for Tuesday, November 17, 2026.)

2. Executive Director Updates (MK Benshoof)

MK gave updates on the WIAA, the proposals system, and roster numbers and 2027 projections (see Section 8 for the WIAA summary).

3. Board Structure and Governance

Tony Duck led this session. Topics:

- **Vision and strategic plan:** review of the 2027 draft strategic plan and the organization chart.
- **Open spots, tenure review, and recruitment:** WSLA needs more board members who will take ownership of areas of work in order to keep functioning sustainably. If additional people are not brought on, the board needs an honest conversation about what WSLA can realistically continue to do, since programs and responsibilities cannot keep growing while leadership capacity stays flat or shrinks.

- **Bylaws and handbook:** remove bylaw content from the handbook; update the bylaws to fit the new structure and vision; address out-of-season rules for tournaments, including fall tournaments or a league fall-ball schedule for high school.

Vote - bank account permissions: Jeanette moved to add Tony Duck as a signer on the Bank of America accounts; Christy seconded. **Carried**: all in favor, Tony abstained. The agenda also listed approval of adding a new bank account; no separate vote on that was recorded.

4. Budget Review

- **2027 budget:** Jeanette moved to approve the budget. **Carried**: all in favor. (The agenda noted that Claire's and Jeanette's votes were needed before they left.)
- **Fundraising update:** Jeanne and MK. No details were recorded.

5. Proposal Review

Proposals were reviewed under the WSLA Proposal Submission Policy: submissions due August 15, board review at the September meeting, written notice of the decision to the proposer's primary contact by September 30, and integration of approved items into the handbook, bylaws, and coaches' meeting materials in October.

Proposal 1 - Coach Education Funds (presented by MK). The proposal would broaden the existing coach education fund beyond the USA Lacrosse convention to cover other training, CPR certification, and USA Lacrosse membership. Key terms in the proposal: applications through an online form open rolling application window; reviewers see applications with applicant and program names removed; decisions within 30 days; maximum award of $500; recipients submit receipts to the Executive Director and bookkeeper for reimbursement and must tell the ED immediately if funds are no longer needed. In 2026, $1,500 was budgeted and $500 was used. Working notes in the document suggest splitting a $5,000 pool, with $3,000 available by December and $2,000 held for March. Christy moved to approve; Claire seconded. **Carried**: all in favor.

Proposal 2 - 12U and 10U season proposal (presented by MK and Curtis). Jeanette moved to accept the proposal as written; Christy seconded. **Carried**: all in favor, Tony abstained.

Proposal 3 - Rainier Cup (presented by MK). Discussion followed. 2027 season will move to a Friday night hosted game with the remaining games played on Saturday.

Proposal 4 - New Rule: Stadium Announcers and Audio Systems (presented by Christy). As submitted, the rule would require PA announcements and music to stop once the non-draw official signals ready and the draw official places hands on the sticks, cap music at 91 dBA, and penalize violations with a warning followed by coach misconduct for repeat violations in the same contest. Curtis moved to approve with changes; Claire seconded. all approved the changes as listed above.

Proposal 5 - Awards Process. Discussion only; the board aims to finalize the process before January. The agenda also lists a separate review of Nick's proposed changes (presented by MK), with the recorded outcome "Deny."

6. Schedule Conversations

Topics for discussion (no decisions were recorded):

- Whether to reorganize conferences.
- Whether youth divisions should return to Gold and Silver.
- Allison's updated independent contractor agreement for scheduling.
- Extending the season one week, which would move playoffs off AP testing week (tied to the larger Rainier Cup and championship discussion).
- A possible JV 'Sixes' (6v6) division, requested informally by a few coaches and not submitted as a formal proposal. Pros noted: growth for programs, more playing time for the bottom of the bench, and possibly fewer teams signing up for full JV (which is hard to match and fill). Cons noted: more to schedule and manage, and teams would still have to cover a referee cost, teams would have to put out 8ms and there could be lack of consistency/follow through. Related question: whether to set roster requirements for JV. unresolved.
- Holly: deadline for Eastern Conference schedule requests.

EASTERN CONF ONLY Dates noted: schedule forms due January 15; schedule posted January 31.

7. WWLOA and NFHS

The board discussed the NFHS item on a possible 90-second possession clock for girls lacrosse. The WWLOA budget was approved by all.

8. WIAA Update (MK)

- WSLA is in conversation with the boys' association (WSHBLA), USA Lacrosse, and the WIAA.
- Until flag football, no sport had been added in 25 years.
- Process: an amendment would need to come from a school district (not WSLA) with sign-off from five ADs. Realistic timeline: at least 2-3 years.
- Financial: districts are cutting costs (athletics, bus routes, seven-period days). Flag football was backed by $600,000 from the Seattle Seahawks.
- Nothing explicitly requires a sport to be WIAA-sanctioned for a school to take it on (RCW 28A.600.200); WSLA, as a nonprofit, would fall under the voluntary nonprofit entity language. Sanctioning would not require a school to offer lacrosse.
- A membership survey went out; results pending.
- Out-of-season coaching under WIAA rules: in summer, a school coach may coach their own students on club/select/travel teams subject to WIAA provisions; out of season, a school coach may not coach current or feeder-school students in club/select/travel activities that resemble out-of-season practices or contests in their sport.
- Eligibility (Rule 18.6): if a student's resident public school is a WIAA member that elects not to offer lacrosse, the student would have no path to play with another school; home-schooled or private-school students whose school lacks the sport may be eligible through their resident public school if it offers lacrosse.

9. Future of Lacrosse in Washington: Ideas and Open Discussion

Ideas raised for further discussion (no decisions were recorded):

- Conference representatives and regional opportunities (trainings, CPR classes, Coach the Coach).
- Format for the October and January meetings (breakout sessions, coach training).
- An end-of-season youth jamboree or honor-game weekend, modeled on the boys' program (coach-nominated players; possible revenue from entry and parking, with youth programs supplying volunteers).
- A fall league for high school girls, modeled on the boys' short fall season; this would require coaches willing to coach another team in their conference or a bylaw change creating a fall coaching window.
- All-Star or All-Conference games, possibly the Saturday after the state championship with a youth jamboree earlier that day.

- An end-of-season PNW showcase for All-Stars to support college recruiting and sponsor visibility, with a travel and hotel stipend for Eastside All-Conference players.

10. Follow-Up

- Finalize the awards process before January.

Meeting adjourned (agenda scheduled for 3:00 pm; actual time not recorded).