

The Natick Comets Hockey Club

Board of Directors

Natick Police Station
7:00 pm

February 9, 2026

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: David Cogliano, Mike Balcom, Alicia Deig, Teddy Efstathiou, Andrew Ballow, Aaron Souza, John Smutko, Teddy Efstathiou, Tony Fireman, Kristian Efstathiou, Meg Whalen, Andrew Reid, Dave Mangan, Andrea Smith, Chris Boyer, Bob Michaud, Russel Webber

I. **Call to Order**

II. **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes**

The minutes for the January Board meeting were approved.

III. **Board Updates**

Mr. Balcom led a discussion on a number of discussions impacting both the Board and the Club.

- **2026/2027 Board Composition.** Mr. Balcom observed that there will be a large number of board vacancies beginning in May 2026. Mr. Balcom observed that although he would be stepping down he would be available for consultation. Mr. Balcom stressed that the work of the Board should be done at the committee level and that the Board function should be more of oversight. Mr. Balcom emphasized that an individual does not need to be on the Board to be a member of a committee. Governance should be based on collaboration. Several Board members expressed the view that there was a need to update the By-Laws. Board members did not offer specifics as to what provisions need to be amended; rather, expressed a general need to “update.” Similarly several Board members offered that the Comets Handbook should be “updated.”
- **Board Code of Conduct.** Mr. Balcom expressed that he had not received any feedback on the draft Board Code of Conduct he previously distributed. Mr. Ballow recommended reducing the document to one page. Mr. Souza reiterated that the Code

was in large part redundant and the most important function was to amend the bylaws. Ms. Efstathiou expressed concern that Board members are not fulfilling their commitments and there is a need for repercussions if a Board member does not fulfill his or her responsibilities. Mr. Balcom was going to make some revisions and share an amended version.

- **Anthony Fireman Board Participation.** After briefly resigning, Anthony was voted back on to the Board as a member at large.
- **Status of Executive Action Plan.** Mr. Balcom led a discussion related to the status of the Executive Action Plan, specifically the 30 day priority list. Discussion focused on sending an email to the Comets community regarding the survey results. In that regard, Mr. Balcom is intending on sending a revised email to the Board for review. There was also discussion of the need for timely communication with the community and responding to parents within 48 hours. Also, it was recognized that we need to notify why schedules change. Ms. Efstathiou emphasized that late or no communications erodes trust, which she believes is a significant problem with the Comets community. To that end, Mr. Souza and Ms. Efstathiou emphasized the need to develop “email business rules when it comes to how the Board will interact via email.” Finally there was a consensus that we communicate tuition offerings for next season as soon as practicable.

IV. **Player Evaluation Committee Update**

Mr. Souza provided an update on the work of the Player Evaluation Committee. Mr. Souza reported that the Committee has procured a sufficient number of coaches to perform the evaluations and purchased the Skill Shark software for digital evaluation. The Committee has reached out to the High School Program to obtain pinnies. Mr. Souza indicated that the Committee would be drafting a “tryout manual” for publication on the Comets website.

V. **Scholarship Update**

Mr. Balcom reported that the work of the Scholarship Committee is on track.

VI. **End of Year Celebrations**

Mr. Balcom led a discussion regarding the end of the year celebrations. There was discussion about reverting back to the community wide celebration in the High School auditorium. Others expressed a desire to keep the team specific or age specific on ice celebration. For this year, Mr. Ballow agreed to be responsible for coordinating the on ice celebrations after the end of the season

VII. **Try Hockey for Free Event**

Ms. Smith led a discussion regarding the Try Hockey for Free Event scheduled for March 7th. Ms. Smith emphasized that the Club needs volunteers to help on the ice and in the lobby. She asked Board members to volunteer to assist. The Board approved a motion to purchase up to 20 sticks and issue \$50 coupons to families that sign up for Learn to Play during the 2026-2027 season after participating in the Try Hockey for Free Event.

VIII. **Comets 2026/2027 Program Proposal**

Mr. Ballow walked through a proposal that he presented to the Board related 2026-2027 Program recommendations. After extensive and robust conversation, the Board approved:

- \$125 non refundable tryout fee;
- \$150 Late registration fee for signing up after tryouts.

Coed Travel Hockey

- 8U (2018 to 2020): \$1700
- 10U (2016 & 2017): \$1800
- 12U (2014 & 2015): \$1900
- 14U (2012 & 2013): \$2000
- 18U Fall: (2008 to 2011): \$640
- 18U Winter: (2008 to 2011): \$640
- Goalies: \$0 *must be full time goalie*

Girls Travel Hockey:

- G8U (2018 to 2020): \$1500
- G10U (2016 & 2017): \$1600
- G12U (2014 & 2015): \$1700
- G14U (2012 & 2013) \$1800
- G19U: (2007 to 2011): \$640
- **Goalies: \$0 *must be full time goalie***

The Board decided to abstain from issuing a decision on tuition for House League and Learn to Play until a future Board meeting.

IX. Request for Testimonial from Stop It Goaltending

Mr. Smutko requested that the Comets submit a testimonial on behalf of Stop It Goaltending. There was no objection to the request.

X. Next Meeting: March 16, 2026

XI. Adjournment