

West Elk Hockey Association
Meeting minutes for Regular Monthly Meeting on 9-16-2026 at 7:00 AM by Zoom

Attended by BOD: Scott Reamer, Tucker Brown, Scott Shondeck, Chris Mochulsky, Jen Willett, J Wenum, Jon Schumacher, Michael Lady (ED), Joel Aslanian (DHO), John Solanik (Gunn Rink Mgr), Joey Carpenter (CB Rink Mgr)

Members/Guests: Amanda & Daren Glover, Margaux Helvey, Aimee Bielak

Call to Order at 7:01 AM

Confirmation of Quorum: Yes with all board members present

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Scott R. moved to approve, Tucker second, Approved unan.

Rink Updates: Gunnison by John S. There was a massive ammonia leak 2 weeks ago, crew has been in and refurbished one compressor and rebuilt the other compressor. Ice making will start tomorrow. Cost is relatively minor and not expected to impact budgets for City or WEHA. The alarm system associated with the mechanical room was not operational during the event, but has been repaired as part of the overall repairs.

Executive Director Report: Micheal L. opened on the financial status of WEHA. In good shape now. The Endowment fund has a current balance of \$36,554, last deposit into the account was in 2015. The fund was started in 2009, has conditions for fund release and use, includes a minimal balance of \$100,000 for fund withdrawal, and is managed by Community Foundation of Gunnison Valley. For comparison WEHA money market account has approx. \$200,000 but is in a lower interest earning status. Endowment Fund has a higher ROI than the Money Market account. It is worth considering some changes to how WEHA's accounts and funds are managed to help build financial resources.

Scott R. reminded the board that these are directed funds and must be used for specified purposes. Michael will send board members information on the funds and their allowed uses.

High school team was involved in a tournament in Grand Junction this past weekend and did fairly well. This was a non-USAH tournament. There are 2 players in HS that must comply with Safe Sport and still need to complete all the requirements for USAH compliance. The WEHA board have all completed their requirements for USAH compliance and WEHA has been approved for operation by CAHA for this season. Michael thanked all the board members for their work to complete the requirements.

Registration numbers were covered for this fall. Youth as of today had 134 participants registered with lower numbers (insufficient to field a team) at the 14U co-ed, 10U and 19U girls. 19U girls from Gunnison will be playing with Grand Junction team under the Grand Junction team name. This is different from last year where they were a combined team of Riverhawks and Wolverines.

Adult registration numbers as of this morning are 302, an increase of 20 from last fall.

Question by Scott R on feedback or complaints on increased pricing for registration for this year. Michael advised he heard some grumbling but not excessive. Michael's concerns include the need to increase youth program participation to get enough players to field WEHA teams at each age level and why is adult hockey helping fund youth hockey. He would like the Finance committee to review and propose how to make adjustments to registration fees and develop a scholarship program for youth hockey and those involved needing additional financial help. That is a topic later in the agenda.

Draft for A league is tonight and Michael will have team rosters out for B and C leagues next week to allow time for people to figure out their team, carpooling, and other needs.

Sponsor outreach-Michael has been reviewing the sponsorship program and making adjustments to it. He warned the board that sponsorship costs will increase drastically this year to ensure that WEHA is meeting its legal and financial obligations to sponsors and supporters. This includes removing sponsors that are no longer in business or have not paid fees. For those who are active he wants to ensure that the products (jerseys, banners) and services (advertisements) sponsor's support are in place and acknowledge the active sponsors. As an example, ½ of the jerseys used during the fall 2025 season were from sponsors who were not paying or no longer in existence.

Michael is working with Solanik on the fall ice schedule.

All bank accounts and signature authorities are now completed and up to date. WCU has been a big sponsor in the recent past with in-ice logos and wraps on Zamboni. He has been informed by the new Club Sports coordinator that their budget does not allow for funding at the level it has provided in the past. Therefore the Zam Wraps and in ice logos will be available for others if interested.

Director of Hockey Operations: Joel A. has been contacting prospective coaches and encouraging them to get their USAH requirements completed for certification. Moms and dads will no longer be allowed on the ice to assist with practices unless they complete the USAH requirements as volunteers including signup with USAH (no charge as a volunteer), background check and Safe Sport.

Joel emphasized that some of the age levels have had challenges the past several years. Quality coaches will help grow the youth programs. Joel will be working to recruit the best coaches available.

There will be a gear swap on 9-26-26 at the outdoor rink in Gunnison. Tables will be available to help move equipment to the folks needing it.

On Oct. 3 there is a "Learn to Play Hockey" opportunity.

Joel and Jen attended a "Back to school Bash" to promote WEHA youth opportunities. Joel is open to ways to help attract youth to WEHA's programs and how to best get the word out.

He has been sorting gear and setting up loaner gear bags and equipment for the "Learn to Play Hockey" day on 10-3.

Joel advised there is a need for a scholarship program and he has been contacted by several players/families seeking assistance.

Jen advised that Bantams are struggling and need to increase their player numbers and getting timely information on who will be coaching the Bantams would be very helpful. Joel acknowledged that the past several years have had lots of changes at that age level and faced challenges. He considers this year to be a “coaching he coaches” year of growth.

The idea of a Financial Aid Committee was discussed. Jen offered to help and then Scott R and Chris M. were suggested. The idea is to keep the committee a bit smaller in size to establish criteria and review applications and for discretion. Michael suggested some requirements to help clarify eligibility.

Treasurer’s Report: Checking has \$158,000 and the Money Market account sits about \$200,000. Scott reports that Treasury funds are currently at 4.1% He suggested considering moving funds to increase their growth and accessibility. He requested to work with Jen to develop 3 options to present to the board to increase the rate of return.

NEW Business: Financial aid has been discussed several times in this meeting. Jen and Scott R. will work on developing a financial aid policy, application and process including submitting 2 years of tax return for submission. Michael advised in the WCHL all the other leagues but Gunnison, have a financial aid program. It was suggested that the ED and Treasurer review and approve applications and funding.

Question on who was involved in the past if there was a program. No one was certain but some thought Rob Bramwell and Gary Huresky were involved.

Michael brought up USAH registration requirements for adult leagues and Facility Use agreements between Town of CB and City of Gunnison and WEHA that require USAH participation. The \$55 registration fee is an additional expense that provides no significant benefit to adult players. Michael did not find any record of a vote to remove WEHA from the USAH requirement. He suggests further discussion on the issue and research into the possible removal of the USAH registration for adult hockey. Chris M. advised there are a couple of work around options for excluding the adult programs from USAH.

Member Comments: Jen asked if WEHA could sell older/outdated youth jerseys at the equipment swap. Discussion on that led to Joel and Michael agreeing to meet to determine how to address the outdated uniform items and possible fund raising opportunities.

Amanda G. did a presentation on Hockey Boosters (formerly Hockey Moms) and included funding amounts from the past 6 years and planned funding through Boosters for the coming season. In 2025-26 Booster provided \$15,500 to WEHA. The presentation included a break down on the distribution.

Boosters will host their annual Hockey Moms lasagna dinner at Fred Field Center on Nov. 22, 2026, the weekend before Thanksgiving. This event has always been well attended and provided significant funding for WEHA. Help spread the word on the event date and on possible donors, door prizes, auction item donations. Boosters would like to have WEHA board members present to welcome guests and support this community event.

Amanda requested to coordinate with WEHA on their sponsors list while being conscious of not conflicting or overlapping with requests.

Boosters would also like to revise the MOU between Boosters and WEHA.

A suggestion for a meet and greet for Michael and Joel was made. When and where to do this was discussed and will be further refined but general agreement was for informal meet and greet at the rink during the first week of hockey and possibly a more formal get together at Tully's.

Daren advised that Gene Taylor's is bringing some hockey equipment in for retail sale, mainly to youth players and it will include lower cost protective equipment and sticks. Gear should be available starting next week.

Joel requested that people or someone specific for each team take lots of pictures at practices, games and tournaments for posting on social media. There was discussion of involving local newspapers as well.

Motion by Tucker B to adjourn the meeting, second by J Wenum. Adjourned at 8:29 AM.