

Minnesota Hockey – District 8

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes



Meeting Date: April 15, 2026

Meeting Time: 8:00

Meeting Location: Moose Lodge, Inver Grove Heights

I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

D8 Board Members:

Present: Rak, Dave, Paul, Kate, Mickey, Elliot, Kent, Julie

Absent: Andy, Zac, Bill, Jamie, Chris

Association Representation:

Present: Apple Valley/ Burnsville, Cottage Grove, Eagan, Eastview, Hastings, IGH, Lakeville, Red Wing, Rosemount, SSP, WSP

Absent: Farmington, Woodbury

III. Previous Meeting Minutes Approved

A. Passed

IV. New Business:

A. Minnesota Hockey Rule Changes

i. **By-law Changes** for Minnesota Hockey

- **Article 6** has been modified to *require an offer* of a hearing rather than the *requirement of a hearing*. In cases where an Association refuses registration to a party, a hearing as outlined in this Article (6) must be offered to the party who was refused membership. (In this situation, the association must offer a waiver to play elsewhere.)

ii. **Youth Rules and Regulation Change** – clarifying what “first year of Squirts/10U for purposes of Mandatory Waivers” means.

- For purposes of this rule, the first year of Squirts or 10U shall mean *the first year the player is age eligible* for Squirts or 10U. A player that has moved up early to play as a squirt or 10U shall still be allowed to seek a Mandatory Waiver despite their early participation in squirts or 10U.
- Junior Gold aged skaters get mandatory school waivers. (Note this does not include bantams that are playing up)
- Definition of residence has been modified to include “market rate” for any lease or purchases. (This would be confirmed by cancelled checks, receipts, etc.)
- A waiver must be obtained before a player can participate outside of their home association.
 - Trying out for an association is considered participating.
 - A player that participates with another team or association is considered an ineligible player.
- District Director Committee: In cases where a decision is to be made by a District Director Committee, the District Director shall appoint two other persons besides themselves as the designated committee, one of which will be either the Maroon or Gold Vice President.
 - If the District Director either made or was involved in the original decisions being appealed, neither the District Director nor any district administration

members shall be on the District Director Committee. In the case where the District Director was involved in the decision being appealed, the District Director committee shall be appointed by the applicable Vice President. (Pursuant to USAH Bylaw 10 E (1) (b).)

**Current Eligibility Period for the 2026/ 2027 Season:
Birthdates between 06/01/2016 to 05/31/2017**

V. D8 BOARD REPORTS:

A. Director (Rak): MH Meeting Update (March 2026)

- i. Registrars need to pay special attention to the addresses that players are giving for Association hockey and their USAH registration. There have been several situations where the addresses do not match. The address a player uses for Association hockey must be the same as the address used to register for USAH.
- ii. Associations are not allowed to refuse membership of any player except for players that have gone through a Grievance process and the outcome dictated that the player in question is no longer allowed to play for that association.
- iii. Requests have been made for the following exceptions from MH-
 - 10-full ice games for Mites starting in January
 - Offsides/ Tag-up rule for Bantams
- iv. USAH will be sending SafeSport agreements out to each association for signatures. The content is unavailable as of now.
- v. Concussion protocol needs to be followed.
 - If a player is pulled from a game, communication lines need to be open.
 - A Return to Play note is required from a doctor clearing that skater to play. The Return to Play note needs to go to Rak.
 - All coaches should have gone through concussion training and have the responsibility of the skater's health. It is the responsibility of the Association to collect the Concussion Protocol Completion Certificates for their coaches.
 - Refs cannot remove skaters from the game, that is the coach's responsibility.
 - The Associations have the right to hold players off the ice until they have been professionally cleared.
- vi. RULE CHANGE: Team credentialing for tournaments must require the USAH T-1 Roster (current link).
 - Only coaches rostered can be on the bench. Tournaments need to do a better job of enforcing this rule.
- vii. Approved rosters are required for any game with referees. Roster deadlines are Dec 31. Roster changes will be handled directly with Rak, and minimal approval will be given. "Think of rosters as being frozen once approved"
- viii. Page 30 bottom line clarification:

"If team plays it's games with players from their own team" – if a team has used other teammates throughout the season to cover as substitute goalies, then they are not able to use an e-bug for post season tournaments.

 - If a skater is playing as goalie, their role in GS needs to be updated. Same if a goalie is skating out- they need to be changed to skater for that game.
- ix. For any Game Misconduct or Match Penalty, the report needs to be sent to the referees. These reports are required to be filed within 24 hours of the incident.
 - Referees will be encouraged to add their emails when signing in and checking off the box that automatically emails copies of the games they have officiated.

- In the situation where this did not happen, the Scorekeeper will need to ensure the referees receive that report

B. Financial Update (Dave): n/a

C. President (Dave): n/a

D. Officials (Moen):

- i. A discussion was had with the leadership of the MAC arena regarding the bar inside. The conduct of the spectators will need to be monitored by the staff of the arena. Referees will not be and should not be expected to deal with off-ice situation.
- ii. Referee Complaints: Coaches can fill out the form on the D8 website and get it submitted that way. Paul investigates each one and will talk to the referee crew, the assigner, and coaches from both teams if necessary.
- iii. Coaches that file a complaint after receiving a Misconduct Penalty must recognize that D8 is unable to make any changes to the official game log. Misconduct Penalties are automatically registered with USAH.
- iv. The penalty for Misconduct Penalties of coaches and players fighting is a 1-game suspension. D8's policy is a 3-game suspension for both.
- v. The following D8 teams were ranked in the top 10 in the state with the most incident reports (Misconduct Penalties) recorded.
 - Rosemount JG B (1st)
 - Rosemount Youth (2nd)
 - Red Wing Bantam B1 (4th)
 - XXXX (9th)
- ii. Referee rates will be going up for the 2026/27 season. There are several factors that are driving this decision. USAH registration costs have increased, and D8 needs to pay competitively with D2 and D6 as they border our District and refs can go between them.
- iii. Game change requests need to be limited. Many of the game change requests are happening because of ice scheduler errors and high school programs taking ice from the youth programs. It is a lot of work to make those changes and involves several different people.
 - District 6 charges a \$300 game change fee. Is D8's fee high enough at \$50?
 - Current Game Change fees go into the D8 account for referee training and ice for seminars.
 - If D8 does increase the fee, there is talk about putting some of that money into the scholarship fund.
- iv. USAH is still against on-ice seminars. However, it has been noted that the referees that are given on-ice training vs. the 6-hour online course are better trained.
 - In 2025, MH was allowed to host 5 on-ice seminars which filled up quickly. Only 17% of attendees were from Minnesota. For the 2026/27 season, MH will be allowed to host 2 with one of them being in District 8. This will be hosted the week after the MH State meetings on Sept 20.
- v. MH is considering a possible rule change that would require mouthguards to be tethered to the cage/ bubble for all ages. May be decided at the June meeting.

E. Girls Program (Jamie): n/a

F. Coach in Chief (Bill) – n/a

G. Tournaments (Zac):

- i. District 8 will be hosting 3 Regional Tournaments for the 2026/27 Season
 - Bantam A South
 - Bantam B South
 - 15U B South
- ii. Reminder that all invitational tournaments need to be approved by Zac and Paul *prior to getting sanctioned by MH.*
- iii. Get tournament requests in soon; there have already been requests for refs for the upcoming season
- iv. In the 2025/26 season there were a handful of tournaments that were not sanctioned by MH until after the tournament started. Starting this upcoming season, if a tournament is not sanctioned by the start of the tournament- MH will NOT be approving sanctions and any teams that play in such a tournament will be subjected to fees and fines as laid out by Minnesota Hockey and District 8 Rules.
- v. Any “for profit tournament sponsors will need to follow MH rules regarding referee counts. This includes providing the rules they will be following for that tournament.
- vi. Tournament hosts that are not affiliated with a D8 association will be approved provided there are enough referees to staff any District games and D8 Association Tournaments.

H. Director of Coaching (Elliot):

- i. The MH Leadership Conference will be May 1 to 3 at the Marriott Minneapolis West. This is open for anyone that is involved in some way (Presidents, Operations, etc.) Registration is open on the MH website.
- ii. Phase 3 of the Spring HP program just kicked off with Spring Festivals starting the weekend of April 24 – 26. D8 girls recently beat D5- Nice Work!
- iii. Kudos to the Associations for focusing on development. The results are apparent with the number of skilled players that compete for the limited number of spots.
- iv. Fall HP – Tier 1 registration opens May 1. Tryouts will be held in June and league play will begin in August. Once dates are finalized, they will be posted on the D8 website.

I. Bantams (Mickey):

- i. Thank you to all associations who hosted tournaments.
- ii. This year has had a lot more misconduct penalties than in past years and it would be great to see that number decrease next year.

J. Peewees (Chris): n/a

K. Squirts (Julie):

- i. Squirts had a good season!
- ii. Associations- please remind parents that only the coach or referee can request changes to GameSheet.

L. Goalie Director (Andy):

- i. Potentially running goalie training in the fall and may need donated ice. More information to come.

M. Junior Gold (Kent):

- i. Season went well. The process of moving teams from B to A worked well. Farmington JG B was moved to A last year and they finished 2nd in the state this year.
- ii. 3 Associations were moved up: Hill-Murray, Mahtomedi, and Moorhead. Possible appeals.

VI. Discussion Topics

- A. GameSheet Changes. Changes should only be requested by coaches or referees and will be handled in accordance with District rules.
- B. Coach Misconduct Penalties- these are sent directly to USAH after the game, so it is out of D8's hands to make changes. Coaches can file an appeal, but D8 will not be able to change the game sheet.
- C. 2026-27 Season Dates:
 - i. **State-Advancing Teams:**
 - League play begins on October 31 and ends on February 15
 - District Tournaments will be February 26 – 27
 - Regional Tournaments will be March 5 – 7
 - State Tournament will be March 19 – 21
 - ii. **Non-State Advancing Teams:**
 - League play begins November 8 and ends on March 7
 - Post Season Tournaments will be March 15 – 21
- D. Associations are asked to discuss the possibility of moving Bantams/ 15Us to 90 minutes.
 - i. Options:
 - Keep current play rules in place
 - Move Bantam/ 15U B1 and above teams to 90-minutes and keep B2 & C teams at 75 minutes
 - Move all Bantam/15U teams to 90-minutes
 - ii. Considerations:
 - Additional cost with more ice needed and higher referee costs
 - Periods would be 15 minutes with resurfacing done after the 2nd period
- E. 19U team took 1st place in state!! Congrats!!
 - i. Lots of excitement and energy with this age group. 2 new teams were added this past year.
 - ii. Many of the girls from this year's team will be back for next year's season.
 - iii. Lakeville is happy to host but is asking for some support with ice and other items. Reach out to Katie Neu for more.
- F. Zoom Meetings: D8 will consider offering the option for Zoom Attendance

VII. Close

Next D8 Board Meeting: May 27, 2026, 7:00pm @ TBD

May- Board Elections:

Positions up for re-election-

VP of tournaments: Zac is interested in another term

VP of Girls: Jamie is interested in another term

VP of Squirts: Julie is interested in another term