



MLAHA

Annual Meeting Meeting Minutes

DATE:

4/13/2025

TIME:

5:30pm

MEETING LOCATION:

Moose Lake Golf Course

MEETING CALLED BY: Ashley - President (1736 hrs)

APPROVAL OF:

Meeting Minutes: Rachel, Carlee

NOTE TAKER: Jordan Collins - Secretary

OPEN FORUM:

Introductions (name, roles)

Ashley - shares goals, objectives, coach alignment

- creating a culture of positivity among the organization
- this will help put the kids first; won't always agree, have different beliefs, but can agree that we are united in front of the kids. They feed off our energy, so we model the behavior. Make the rink a fun, safe, positive environment. Know they are valued - ALL people (parents, coaches, players).
- putting an end to gossip; not at the rink, and not in front of kids.
- Board member requirement: USA Hockey Volunteer (or Coach); we all have to

complete a background check and "Safe Sport" training. Don't wait until August as the background check takes longer. Bobbi has a spreadsheet for who is due, and it's good for 2 years.

GAMBLING/FUNDRAISING (Tasha and Victoria)

Gambling:

- Review Full Year Gambling Summary
 - of the gaming, \$25k more than last year
 - \$5000 less in e-gaming with new law on Jan 1, lots of complaints from users. Law changed because e-gaming looked too much like a slot machine.
 - Lost \$3900 than the previous year but donated \$15k to the organization than the year prior
 - Brewery costs us money, but we don't want to give it up because it saves us from offages due to mistakes, etc. Route 61 and other one are more lucrative.
 - March: \$19k in the hole, but we gave \$26k to the organization last month
 - We are pausing meat raffles at Route 61 due to bowler scheduling changes. Brewery was offered to take over; we do have 2 people able to facilitate the raffle weekly on Fridays at 5p.
 - Not reasonable to have it as a volunteer position because you're doing a W4 on every person who works it
 - Stephanie is new assistant, as Dan Fitzsimmons is separated from the organization. Julie and Andy to help too. People have to be trained on how to do things, how many hours involved, etc.
 - Ashley asks to send volunteer information to Maggie to include with policy, "gambling volunteer provisions"
- Audit Inspection Results
 - Compliance audit checklist, everything cleared. FY is done; wait until end of April to collect information and get to accountant in Brooklyn Park.
- 893 pounds of inventory (kept for 3.5 years; there were items from 2015!!) were donated in Duluth.
- City of ML wants to do a 50/50 Raffle for the band this summer; we don't have to be licensed to do that. But if we have staff doing it, then we are going to get some money from it. They also want to do horse races and other things to get more money in. Looking at the last weekend in September....details to follow!

Motion to approve 50/50 Raffle, Oktoberfest, Battle of Bands (donating profits to the City): Mike, Carlee (2nd)

- Mark provided some ideas with successful fundraisers that avoid the gambling side of it, using tournaments, etc.

Fundraising:

- Raffle Ticket Policy/Prizes Proposal
 - Victoria brought Proctor raffle ticket rules to use as template for us; we need a budget to incentivize selling raffle tickets. Mike - we did 2500 tickets last year but didn't do it the way we had previously discussed. There are ~66 families in the organization. We will have each family sell 2 books. That's 132 books with 120 books left for extras and we did sell over that last year from families grabbing extra. Added \$7k to budget for prizes. If we increase to \$3k, with incentive to sell tickets (prizes, jackets, etc.).....we should increase to 3k tickets for sale. Tasha: we need to get the unsold tickets back. Mike did get them all back, families did well bringing them back. **People are buying them up front as part of registration (functions as a rebate: coupons/scholarships for registration don't count; Bobbi - yes we can set that up as a dollar amount or percentage per family).** If you sell them, you sell them. Extra books sold for prizes. But we need to include **all** families. Want to sell in August/September to avoid holiday financial crunch. Registration would open June 1. We would want them back by mid-January.
 - ensures the players/families have skin in the game
- Business Advertising Proposal
 - Amber and Victoria working on that; will have at next week.
 - Brittni - needs something to do with pucks.
- Willow River Days Proposal
 - Proposed us participating; they want us to spend \$250 to get a table at the event. They do need an organization to provide a dinner (spaghetti is fine) on Friday night (WR PTO doesn't want it this year); free will donation. Everything is messy because we are a non-profit, changes with the "Days" intentions, etc. Could do an ice cream/root beer float stand. Since no one else is doing it, there shouldn't be any conflict.
- ATV Poker/Steak Dinner Proposal
 - Victoria passed around a proposal; August 9th works the best for us. Discussion re: timing, route. Victoria is coordinating the whole thing!! She'll do the run a few times to perfect the process, timing, etc.
- Punch cards for skate sharpening; will keep cards in the sharpening room. Mike will facilitate without impacting registration.

- **(Mark) High-Level Overview of Hockey Operational Plans for the 2025-2026**

Season

- Introduction
- Coached at every level; tons of experience, facilitating clinics, professional playing, etc.
- Believes in camps; strives to make it "worth it" for the kids
- Looking to have camps later in the summer so the kids retain what they've learned
- Creating a culture within the association that builds kids, that doesn't talk bad about players, parents. Encourages mediation with the Board, parents, a coach, etc. to ensure conflict resolution. Address issues right away to keep the wildfire down, keep feelings up, avoid the toxic culture through transparency, mediation, etc.
- Went through examples of mediation, how to address kids, parents, etc.
- When the train goes off the tracks, it's really hard to get back on track. Get to the heart of it right away to prevent people from talking badly about the organization in the stands. Have the courage to address the problems. If it's not fun, the kids won't come back.
- Expectations for coaches: emphasis on skating and not having kids standing around. He creates his own practice routines, skill drills (using USA Hockey as a secondary resource).
- Keep it simple, doesn't have to be complicated at practice. Drills are based on what a kid would experience in a game.
- Mark is happy to address any questions, provide guidance; he never stops learning! Without the history of this organization, we wouldn't be where we are today.
- Opened up for questions.
 - How are coaches being selected? Mark wants to be involved, but doesn't want to singularly select people. We define success by winning more games than lost with kids that want to come back. That is the bottom line, and the coaches will align with that.
 - Will there be try-outs? Generally, no. There aren't enough kids usually to necessitate try-outs. Navigating "kids want to stay with their friends", etc. hardships.
 - Strategic placement (using example of ride-sharing for families, logistics to place kids, but not on the basis of skill necessarily at the younger levels)
 - Timeline to select coaches - not tonight! Looking into July-ish to get a jump on the season.
 - facilitate parent meetings, try to get ahead of parents not bringing their kids (using conflict resolution techniques). The player suffers

- when the parents don't bring their kids. Look for volunteer drivers if needed (Mark volunteers, Jordan volunteers). If the kid doesn't come, they don't play. Bottom line.
- Question re: summer camps. Emphasis on letting kids be kids and not overworking them in the off-season.
- Question re: picking coaches prior to picking tournaments so coaches can be involved and choose which level they will be playing at. (**agenda item for coaching**) Coaches should be interviewed of sorts, to ensure coaches are compatible, and gather names for the age group the coach wants to play at.
- Question re: coaches getting along. If two coaches can't agree on practices, etc. then Mark steps in to facilitate. How to navigate assistant coach/head coach conflict. If the assistant coaches aren't involved, they will take their kids and leave because it's not worth the argument. Mark will ensure, to the best of our ability, that won't happen. Mark shared his experience with organizations where the head coach and assistant were in conflict. There can be politics, etc. but must be avoided at all costs. Mark would assist with creating a practice plan with coaches to ensure the teams are on course. Should be done daily between coaches, bringing ideas together. Everyone is able to provide ideas.

Voting for the 1-Year and 3-Year Term Positions:

3-Year Term:

Julie (Treasurer) - motion to approve: Mike, Carlee (2nd)

Mike (Rinks & Grounds) - motion to approve: Carlee, Julie (2nd)

Laura (At-Large) (New Nomination) - motion to approve: Rachel, Kyle (2nd)

1-Year Term:

Holly T (Rink Rat & Spooky Skate) - motion to approve: Mike, Carlee (2nd)

Abby K (Picture Day & Apparel Coordinator) - motion to approve: Mike, Carlee (2nd)

Brittni W (Tournament Director) - motion to approve: Mike, Carlee (2nd)

Amber (Webmaster) - Motion to approve: Mike, Julie (2nd)

Victoria (Fundraising) - motion to approve: Carlee, Julie (2nd)

Open Positions:

Skate with Santa (one year), Try Hockey for Free Coordinator (one year), Safesport Coordinator (one year), Flooding Coordinator (one year).

Expectations of Board Members/participants:

- TEAM – no bad talking each other, coaches.
- Professional Image
- Attending Board Meetings

Registration, Equipment (Bobbi and Stephanie)**Registration:**

- Cost Proposal for 2025-2026 Registration Fees
 - o \$200 fee for raffle tickets
 - o Option for annual skate sharpening cost
 - o Removal of volunteer hour buyout option
- Board Member Requirements for the 2025-2026 Season

Equipment -

- Proposal for Equipment Costs for the 2025-2026 Season
- Updates to Equipment Process
 - lots of interest in keeping equipment for the summer; charged \$20 for summer rental. Question re: how to charge for the year then, with this consideration. Charge until the end of April, as we still need to have time to do inventory and re-rent for the summer months but need May 1 return date to collect inventory for the next year.
 - Early ice/season would be early August but Mike needs to talk to City to ensure it doesn't conflict with any City building rentals. City wants zamboni drivers hired before August. Mike would train drivers as long as the City manages early ice. Looking at August 10-15th to start with equipment rental to ensure kids have equipment for Mark's camps, etc. Steak fry is the 9th, so we would start after that (takes 2 or 3 days).
 - keeping it at \$50 for rental from August 10 - April 30th, with a \$20 for summer rental.

Tournaments, Scheduling (Maria)

- None at this time.

FINANCE (Julie)

- Overview of year end 24-25 numbers
 - \$58k in the green, with \$138k in our accounts including one CD left at Northview. We owe the City \$14k for lease last year but City won't respond to correct it.
 - Could we apply money to the principle of the loan? Maybe in the future once we establish our financial landscape.

- Financial Process and Expectations for upcoming season
 - Need a better way to be getting receipts and paying bills. Discussion w/ Carlee re: not paying bills until we see a product in full. Carlee wants invoices sent to her house address to ensure payment. Julie will post everything in our Google drive. We only have 6 days after the start of the month to print reports and balance books.
- May meeting with their plans and what the need is for a budget.
 - Julie needs budget information for our next meeting; if someone wants to roll with the same number then that's fine, but everyone should review their budgets and make sure it's still good.

Rinks and Grounds (Mike)

- 55 people signed up for Power Skating; 35 for Bantam camp. Will keep spring "open hockey", want to keep the event free. The city isn't charging us, so we just want to expand on the opportunity.
- Skill levels were fine with camps but if more Mite kids join that can skate for an hour, we can include them for next year. They have to be able to skate.
- Will make sure we have established dates for these events moving forward. This year was kind of a hodge-podge with this new opportunity.
- Goalie camps were fantastic; 8 kids were involved. Student players worked with newer goalie recruits for additional practice. We will have 6 sessions in the fall, 5p - 8p. Will have more open hockey opportunities as well.
- May need another at-large position for flooding, grounds, scheduling these events, zamboni volunteer hours, etc. Would like a provision added to the Volunteer policy and/or be able to pick it up on Crossbar.
- Had the 3-on-3 tournament too late in the year for a good turnout; we did have an investment in the event, so will be reusing jerseys, etc. We'll want to advertise for the fall event early. Avoid September, as Cloquet does theirs in September.

Volunteering (Maggie)

- Review of Volunteer Policy
 - highlighted major updates, updating semester fee to \$500 (\$1000/year per family). Buyout option is still available but hoping to discourage this over the year.
 - updating to 40 volunteer hours. Reasoning: empty shifts, always short-handed flooding, no one for tournaments, requests for more than just concessions available to include penalty box clock and book (adding diverse shifts from past); trying to balance out hours across the whole season (full in beginning, empty at end). Deadline will be 20 hours by Dec 31; other 20 by March 31.
 - Discussion re: volunteering and having kids play/not play
 - 40 hours will include home and away games. With 20 home games, there are 5 - 7 open positions per home game. Consideration also for early/late ice, gambling, summer events - ample volunteer opportunities throughout the year.
 - we really don't prioritize the money, as we are solid there; we need people to help out around the organization.

- Additional discussion re: negative reinforcement, if we are “punishing”, being “passive aggressive” with families? with the high fee. “Positive Reinforcement” didn’t work. Parents meeting at the beginning of the year can be a place to communicate the expectation re: volunteering.
- We will always be eager to collaborate with families who have a hardship, including siblings/extended family members, donating hours between families, etc. Discounts offered for active military families, etc.
- MLAHA will connect with families that are close to the cutoff to prevent them from paying the fee (or families connect with MLAHA too); the fee will only affect ~ 5 or less families across the organization.
- Gambling will be a paid position with additional volunteer hour contributions
- Locker room monitor (10U level and above): 2 to 4 per team that can sign up, no changes to approval needed before volunteering (i.e. safe sport). Will be available in Crossbar.
- Implementing a no-show fee for vacated shifts; ensuring person gets their shift covered or “at least let someone know if your kid is throwing up”. We really need to prioritize our own home tournaments - it’s a bad look for our organization as a host team.
- Reiterating that it’s not about the money; we need people.

Motion to approve Volunteer Policy:

First - Mike

Second - Julie

Approved

- Goalie Reimbursement (registration, camp)

Recruitment, Retention and Webmaster (Amber)

- Opportunities coming through USA HOckey and the MN Wild.
- Wants to plan a “welcome back” event with equipment pick up to generate excitement. Beer garden will be welcomed!
- Don’t want to have a booth at the county fair, as it doesn’t attract the right recruits.
- Want to see more Goalie trainings or host Iron Range Goalie camp.
- Recognition for players who do well in school, having a special dinner, etc. Jamie Lund to put something in the newspaper.
- Want to do better connecting older players with younger students - reading to younger classes, etc. to emulate older players.
- Youth game nights with varsity; have the school comp entrance for players wearing their jersey.
- Should probably be doing something for the July 4th parade. Not sure yet what that would look like.
- Set a table up at the student open houses/“Back to School” events with local schools.

Agenda item for next meeting: how to recruit and retain goalies, reward the position in a different way? Have a specific goalie coach? Ensure 15 minutes of specialized training during team practice.

Concessions (Carlee)

- Discussion of Proposal to Switch to Square
- Associated Costs for the Changeover

Tournament Director (Brittni)

- one home tournament, 2 or 4 away - 2 with a hotel stay, 2 within driving distance?
- Scheduling will be conducted in collaboration with coaches.
- Coaches are meeting with Mark in June to align, put it on the docket to pick tournaments.
- We had a tournament denied last season due to be outside 100 mile radius (to ensure we're investing in our own hockey district)
- Tournament costs - we will circle back to discuss this once we know what ones we will sign up for. Anywhere from \$600 - \$1000+. We'll do a better job with not refunding a tournament due to backing out at the last minute.
- Each team will have a tournament director/designee to ensure continuity.
- Discussion re: using white boards on tournament weekends. Will be posted next to main doors at arena. Will prevent printing/re-printing/scribbling brackets.

ALL COMMITTEE (including Grievances)

NEXT MEETING

Sunday, May 18, 2025

TIME:

6p

MEETING LOCATION:

TBD

MOTION TO ADJOURN: