

**North Eastern Alberta Hockey League (NEAHL)**  
**Minutes of the AGM**  
**April 22, 2023**  
**St. Jerome's School, Vermilion AB**

**Call to Order**

AGM called to order by Randy Martin at 10:33 am.

**Introductions**

- Viking & Tofield applying to come into league. We will know by the end of May whether HA approves.
- Process to join leagues has been changed by Hockey Alberta. The members of the league vote, then the Leagues committee does a review.

**Review of Agenda**

- Overview of Agenda
- Additions to agenda
  - bring U7 & U9 into the league
  - Overage
  - Clarification on process for sending teams to Tier 1 & 2 provincials
  - Playoff format

***Bryce Balmer (St. Paul) moved to accept the agenda. Seconded by Robert Garnett (Mannville). Carried.***

**Minutes**

Minutes of the previous AGM were reviewed.

***Bryce Balmer (St. Paul) moved to accept the minutes of the April 23, 2022 AGM. Seconded by Melanie Zayak (Two Hills). Carried.***

**Financial Statements**

- Revenue is down because we reduced league fees to \$75 during covid. Travis recommends returning fees to former level.

***Margaret Bayduza (Elk Point) moved that league fees return to \$125 per team. Seconded by Derek Holte (Hughenden). Carried.***

***Frank Tremme (Kitscoty) moved to accept the 2022 year end financial statements. Seconded by Blair Molsberry (Vermilion). Carried.***

***Bryce Balmer (St. Paul) moved to appoint Hall & Associates as NEAHL accountants. Seconded by Frank Tremme (Kitscoty). Carried.***

## **Commissioner's Report**

- Few complaints
- Preliminary round went well. Retier is not perfect - there are always 1 or 2 teams that are hard to place. Focus on NBC this year. Put kids at the calibre where they can be competitive and have fun. Want teams to have meaningful games - maybe that's more interleague. It is up to associations to place teams correctly.
- Provincials - U15-3 won gold; U18-2 and U18-3 won silver.
- Ref numbers are down through the league. Issues with refs being approached by parents after the game. It is not the ref's job to police the stands; that is the responsibility of the home association.
- A few issues with affiliation for strength. Need to define what that means.
- HA & Leagues are working on Alberta One to standardize minor hockey across all 6 leagues.
- Need to work on decreasing travel especially for younger levels.
- NBC is growing in bigger centers (player size, injuries/head injuries, don't want to play BC) - it is almost as big as conventional hockey in Edmonton. Need to create opportunities for U15, U18 NBC to have meaningful games.
- We will know in May if the new associations are approved to join NEAHL.
- Thank you to governors, deputies, and managers.

## **Governors' Reports**

### **U11 (Ryan Small)**

- Registrations were down during covid, but back up to 38 teams
- Playoffs - tried a few different style formats to see what worked - there were complaints about each. Depends on the number of teams in the tier (e.g. 6 teams can do 1 weekend, but 8 teams can't). Best format seemed to be 1 weekend round robin and then top 2 play off in their home associations. Some associations complained about having to go to a second tournament, but if it was best of 3, there would have been travel involved.
- Suspensions down
  - 4 player suspensions
  - 3 over penalty minutes (50 limit) with a top kid suspended in the semi final. There is still a misunderstanding that preseason doesn't count or that it resets for playoffs.
- Issues with coaching staff - engaging refs to "educate" or show videos of what they missed. U11 is where we are developing officials.
- Few complaints about parents/fans this year.
- Teams are placed where they belong, not based on travel. Working on North/South divisions next year.
- Some associations aren't sharing information between managers and executives.

### **U13 (Tammy Ganzer)**

- Registration up to 28 teams
- Ran smoothly. Teams were pretty evenly matched. She talked to presidents about bubble teams.
- 8 suspensions all year. No coach suspensions. Player suspensions mostly due to penalty minutes (75 min).

### **U15 (Aaron Starko)**

- Most issues will be dealt with later in the meeting.
- Lots of successes. Competitive groups, competitive tiering.
- Interleague - would have liked more involvement eg. have Tier 1, 2 tournament with CAHL or NAI. With larger tiers, we have enough teams to be self-sufficient - we run out of time.
- There's value in NBC for skill development
- 56 total suspensions (not including repeats). One player hit 150 penalty minutes.
- Playoffs were provincial style. Had positive and negative feedback.
- It's a tough transition from U13 to U15, especially with suspensions. Bench staff makes a difference.
- Follow the NEAHL communication protocol.
- If you aren't sure if there's a suspension, check.

### **U18 (Kevin Galloway)**

- 17 teams. 7 in tier 2 (St. Paul won), 7 in tier 3 (Provost hosted, so Vegreville also went to provincials), 2 in tier 4, so they played with tier 3.
- Interleague did not happen as we had hoped.
- Playoffs for Tier 2 were best of three. Tier 3 - round robin cross over. Tier 4 had a playoff with CAHL and NAI tier 4 teams.
- Suspensions
  - Tier 2 - 4 coach, 36 player (17 fights, 3 accumulation of penalty minutes)
  - Tier 3/4 - 3 coach for harassment, 65 player (majority for fighting, 3 accumulation of penalty minutes)
  - suspensions are based on ref reports.
- game times - would like to have teams home by midnight.
- Full season was played. Dwell on the highs, learn from the lows.

### **Indigenous Liason (Julia Collins)**

- She can help if someone is new and needs help with administration.
- Native provincials were same weekend as U18 provincials.
- Information about grants
- She will also assist non-indigenous associations.
- Julie spent the season communicating with individual associations.
- Plans for 2023/24 are to have face to face meetings, support managers with Ramp. She'd like to have monthly meetings.

### **Interleague (Ashley Whelen)**

U11 - went well

U13 - distance, tiering eliminated match ups

U15, U18 - resistance experienced

- created a small non-contact league for U18 tier 4 that played for a banner
- eliminating distance and replace with east/west games important especially for U11
- consider interleague tournament weekends

- Issues - Who creates the matches? Do the points count or not?
- Randy Martin - recommends it for U11, U13 and NBC tiers. We can't fill 6 tiers, so we have teams grouped, and a 2,3,4 goal spread is competitive.

### **Hockey Alberta Updates**

#### Regulations & policies

- looking at rules between Alberta One and leagues to get consistency. Our policies have to follow Alberta one.
- could potentially do a consolation final weekend the before provincials

### **New Business**

#### **Inter League Update**

- meet approximately monthly
- All Peace - because of distance, are moving to more tournament style play, double knock out.
- U15 & U18 - tiers are being renamed tier 1,2,3, Tier 1 NBC, tier 2 NBC, Tier 3 NBC - changing the perception and stigma against NBC.
- U11 elite pilot program in Alberta

### **Off Ice Management**

- Towards the end of the season, had to put in place a policy where if there was an altercation, the association had 24-48 hours to deal with it.

Do we want to implement that policy for league?

Some associations have their own policies. Some said it helped to have it coming from NEAHL. In most associations, it's a small number (3,4,5) and everyone knows who they are but no one wants to police it.

Randy will write something and send it out for comment, revision and then for a vote. If it passes, it will be part of our operating procedures.

### **Association Accountability**

**Penalty Management** - Associations need to keep on top of players reaching the limit and get involved with that kid and their families.

**Parent / Coach Management** - Many don't understand affiliations, rules & regulations, communication protocol

**Coach / Manager Training** - more emphasis on training coaches and managers on rules and regulations.

- managers need to enter game sheets correctly.

**Referee Recruitment / Treatment** - There is a ref shortage. Book games on weekdays to alleviate ref issues. HA is looking at 4 man system for Tier 1 & 2 provincials.

### **Playoff Review**

- Information has to be communicated in a timely manner.
- League has to take playoff proposals to HA in mid January.
- Question from floor why not have tier 2 (no tier 1), and send 1st to Tier 1 provincials and 2nd to Tier 2 provincials. Randy responds that NEAHL has proposed this but HA will not allow it.

Therefore, either we do not send teams to Tier 1 provincials (we did not for U18-1), or we split off the top group of tier 2 to play off for tier 1 provincials.

- suggestion to have an operations contact for each association to receive information.
- U11 playoffs will be tournament style. Target Jan 15 to communicate format and look for hosts.
- HA has mandated that all teams make playoffs.

***Bryce Balmer (St. Paul) moved to rescind Policy 11.0 A and replace it with:***

***11.0 A - The Playoff format shall be all teams will make playoffs. Playoff format will be determined by January 15 and communicated to associations. Seconded by Frank Tremme (Kitscoty). Carried.***

### **Affiliations**

HA Bylaw 7.10 states "Minor Hockey Leagues and the CEO, or designate reserve the right to revoke the approval of an affiliate player at any time should that player be deemed to strengthen the team in which he or she is affiliated." This wording is copied into Alberta One.

- The Hockey Alberta grid restricts affiliations for small associations that don't have teams at every level.
- An issue is that we don't have stats for U9 players who are affiliated to U11.
- Associations have to take responsibility and not bring up a top U9 player to play in U11 tier 5. Associations have to monitor impact players and flag it if there's a potential violation.
- Rule of thumb - if the player is in the top 20%, then that's for strength.

### **Association Play Management**

- We don't have enough teams for 6 tiers.
- Associations talk to associations and create teams with kids of similar calibre on teams.
- Looking at Interleague to mitigate travel.
- If you have the teams, look at smaller groups north/south or east/west, and then come together for playoffs.

### **U7 and U9 Coming Into The League**

- U7 is off the table.
- U9 - was discussed. A benefit would be not having to get game sanctions from HA. A negative would be more travel and more league volunteers required. A show of hands vote was taken whether to bring U9 into the league. Vote failed.
- NEAHL will post a contact page for U9 managers on our website.

### **Overage**

- overage player applications go to Randy to look at info, calibre, size, is there a team for that player. We monitor excessive penalties, goal scorers. About half a dozen players had OA status revoked due to excessive penalties or goals.
- Number of OA players across the league has doubled. In smaller communities, sometimes if you don't have the OA players, you don't have a team.

### **Home Team Live**

- League has been asked to make associations aware of this option for live streaming games (similar to Live Barn).
- they will put cameras in the rink, costs nothing to install. Rink/association can earn advertising revenue. Company makes money off the subscriptions. After cameras are paid for, a % of revenue goes to whoever holds the contract

### **Elections**

U13 - Tammy Ganzer nominated for Governor, no other nominations.

U15 - Aaron Starko is stepping down. NEAHL puts forward Jennifer Severyn, no other nominations

Interleague chair - Ashley Whelen is stepping down. Meets 3-4 times per year, look at schedules, work with the 3 leagues. No nominations - position remains VACANT.

Commissioner - Randy Martin stands for commissioner, no other nominations. Note - new directive - Hockey Alberta must approve the league commissioners.

U13 governor, U15 governor, Commissioner filled by acclamation.

NEAHL executive is:

Commissioner - Randy Travis

Secretary Treasurer - Travis Hall

Director of Indigenous Relations - Julia Collins

Interleague Committee Chair - VACANT

U18 Governor - Kevin Galloway

U15 Governor - Jennifer Severyn

U13 Governor - Tammy Ganzer

U11 Governor - Ryan Small

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

### **Attendance:**

Scott Forbes, Executive, Lloydminster

Troy Ruttan, VP, Mannville

Robert Garnett, President, Mannville

Blair Molsberry, President, Vermilion

Colin Klassen, President, Vegreville

Garett Wiebe, League Liaison, Vegreville

Brent Elliott, President, Paradise Valley

Frank Tremme, President, Kitscoty

Tracy Miller, President, Cold Lake

Shane Pacholok, RIC, Cold Lake

Amy Young, Deputy Governor U11 Tier 5  
Hannah Grant, VP, Boyle  
Brad Grant, Boyle  
Nathan Saunders, VP, Marwayne/Dewberry  
Art Tupper, Past President, Marwayne/Dewberry  
Trevor Digneau, President, Meadow Lake  
Natasha Plamondon, President, Plamondon  
Elisha Sturges, Vice President, Lac La Biche  
Kristine Parrott, Deputy Governor, U15 Tier 2  
Melanie Zayak, President, Two Hills  
Russell Campbell, U15 Director, Wainwright  
Ian Bergerud, President, Edgerton  
Courtney Dallyn, Vice President, Provost  
Bryan Skinner, President, Chauvin  
Aaron Starko, Vermilion, U15 Governor  
Ryan Small, Cold Lake, U11 Governor  
Jennifer Severyn, Bonnyville, U15 Deputy Governor  
Kevin Gallaway, Consort, 3Cs, U18 Governor  
Tammy Ganser, U13 Governor, Glendon  
Margaret Bayduza, Treasurer, Elk Point, Deputy Governor U18 Tier 2  
Laurier Jodoin, President, Mallaig  
Melantha Abraham, Frog Lake  
Chennae Lapatak, Saddle Lake  
Zowie Steinhauer, Saddle Lake  
Travis Saskiw, St. Paul  
Bryce Balmer, St. Paul  
Terry Rupp, Bonnyville  
Jeff Bird, Viking  
Tim Parchewsky, Wainwright  
Derek Holte, Hughenden  
Jaren Dillen, Onion Lake  
Kathy Kretschmer, Lloydminster  
Tracy Matthews, Lloydminster  
Randy Martin, NEAHL Commissioner