

Vancouver Island Minor Lacrosse Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2022
Via Microsoft Teams

ATTENDEES

Voting Executive

Chair	Tim Frost
Vice-Chair	Ryan Hyland (absent)
Secretary	Krista Gregory
Treasurer	Christine Mavin
Zone 6 Representative	Doug Kampen
Web Master/Scheduler Liaison	Stephanie Prizeman
Female Coordinator	Lisa Seel-Thompson

VIMLC Executive

BCLOA Rep	Tyler Boyer
Indigenous Development	Bryan Baxter
BCLCA Rep	Philip Kontouris
Mini-tyke	Phil DiBattista
Tyke	Phil DiBattista
Novice	Wendy Hall
Pee Wee	Adam Gow
Bantam	Kate Blass
U16	Allison Logan
Female	Andy Stuart

Association Representatives

Alberni Valley	Kelly Fines
Campbell River	Philip Kontouris
Comox	Francis Laplante
Cowichan Valley	Andrea Akhurst
Juan de Fuca	Gord Anderson, Niki Williams
Nanaimo	Brande Terris, Lonny Sullivan
Oceanside	Jason Hassey
Peninsula	Phil DiBattista
Saanich	Andy Stuart, James Scott
Victoria-Esquamalt	Kate Blass

1. **Call Meeting to Order: 7:02 pm**
2. **Adoption of Previous Minutes:**
Motion made by Phil DiBattista, seconded by Adam Gow **Carried**
3. **Additions and Adoptions of Agenda:**
Motion to adopt additions & adoption of Agenda made by Phil DiBattista, seconded by Doug Kampen **Carried**
4. **Business arising from old minutes** none
5. **Correspondence and Handouts:** none

6. Financial Report:

Motion to adopt financials as presented by Christine Mavin, made by Brande Terris seconded by Adam Gow **Carried**

At the end of April we had \$18,386.27 in the account. I have received the 2nd half payments from Campbell River, Comox, Nanaimo, Saanich and Cowichan (Thank you to you all). We ended up getting invoiced from Arbiter for \$1280.58 which has been paid. Reminder to all that we are UNABLE to get Etransfers to our account with the TD Bank so please make sure that all payments are sent by cheque. With the season quickly coming to an end, payments are due as soon as possible as this will be our largest payout time of the year. Attached is the banking info for April, May's will arrive in the mail sometime next week.

7. Zone 6 Reports:

A. Chair, Tim Frost: It has been a busy month of lacrosse. We are seeing an uptick in incidents of Referee Abuse and significant disciplinary events. Presidents - please take this time to remind your coaches that they are expected to set the tone - in particular with how they model appropriate behaviour in front of the minors who they are charged with coaching. Coaches should be modelling our expected behaviours as much as they should be teaching lacrosse.

Saturday - attended the Minor Directorate Meeting. The focus of the meeting was to review the scholarship applications or the player of the year award. I want to encourage our Island associations to make it a priority to submit these applications in the future. The overall number of applicants was down significantly.

We also reviewed the declarations for provincials and the decisions on how many berths will be allotted for teams by zone.

The Provincial berths are as follows;

Division	Tier	# of teams declared	# of Zone 6 teams declared	# of Zone 6 Berths	Total # of Berths
16U	A1	7	1	1	5
16U	A2	9	2	1	6
16U	B	22	7	2	8
Bantam	A1	4	1	1	4
Bantam	A2	15	3	1	8
Bantam	B	18	7	2	6
Bantam	C	7	0	0	6
Peewee	A1	7	1	1	5
Peewee	A2	13	2	1	6
Peewee	B	15	6	3	8
Peewee	C	11	0	0	6
Female Junior		9	3	1 (+wildcard Island)	6

				#2 vs LMMC #4)	
Female 16U		8	0	0	4
Female Bantam	A	4	0	0	4
Female Bantam	B	7	1	1	5
Female Peewee		8	1	1	5

Gord McIntosh (MD Chair) attended the Lacrosse Canada Meeting in PEI and had the following summary.

- Minor Numbers are down Nationally by approximately 30% (consistent with BC)
- Volunteer numbers are down significantly Nationally
- There has been less travel out of province and out of country for competition
- Female Lacrosse has been growing - in particular in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Female registration has been increasing in the prairies due in part to affiliation with Girl Guides of Canada.
- 2022 Nationals (U12 4 teams confirmed, U14 5 Teams confirmed, U16 Not happening because of Canada Summer Games.)
- Confirmation of Lacrosse Canada rule change for goal keeper equipment. Note it is height based now not age based.
- Tyke Cross Floor Play has now expanded to Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Nova Scotia
- 2023 - will be some policy changes around division names. U17, U15, U13 etc. The age groups are not changing - just now what used to be 16 and under is now "Under 17" Expect more comms from BCLA on this prior to next season
- 2023 likely will be no nationals in peewee - moving to either Provincial or west/east regional competitions.
- There has been significant push to reduce and slow down the intro to contact. Alberta Lacrosse did a study and 78% of players leave when contact is introduced due to fear of injury etc.

Wilson Louie - Head referee gave a report

- It has been a bad year for referee abuse.
- Unprecedented numbers of referees are quitting
- Extremely Low rate of applications for provincials and Summer Games.
- It is really important as a zone that we recognize we need referees to have lacrosse and need more vocal support from associations dealing with parent/fan / adult behavior - especially with this behavior in front of or directed at kids.

In Wilson's discussion - he explained referees are NOT paid to referee in BC Summer Games. They have their accommodation covered and travel. I will be proposing a motion that "Island associations who are sending referees to BC Summer Games pay their referees an equivalent amount to what we would pay them for the games they referee at the Summer Games."

B. Minor Directorate Rep, Doug Kampen: The last month I have continued to help the commissioners where required, assisted in hearings and generally provided help and assistance where required

Bullet points from the Minor Directorate meeting I attended on June 4th :

In 2023 there will be name changes for all the divisions

16U – U17

Bantam - U15

Peewee - U13

Novice - U11

Tyke – U9

Minityke - U7

Rule changes for 2023: Too many men on either offence or defence will result in a minor penalty
If anyone would like to make proposed policy changes to BCLA operating policy, we have until mid August to submit the request. I can assist with this. Please reach out to me if this is something you would like to explore

A report came out of a Lacrosse Canada meeting held recently.

A survey of players who had stopped playing lacrosse after novice, revealed that almost 80% of those that quit, did it because there was too much contact.

I think everyone should be prepared for rule changes in the years to come that limit the amount of contact in the younger age groups perhaps even into peewee

As is reported in every meeting since I can remember, referee abuse is abundant. We need to think proactively about how to change the way our officials are treated. We are quick to punish offenders, but I would encourage people to come up with ideas about how we could prevent it if possible.

One idea was to put the onus on associations to ensure they have done their due diligence with regards to who represents them on the bench. The first time an association has a coach suspended for abuse of an official would be a \$100 fine, second occurrence \$500, third occurrence \$1000. Sounds harsh? So does losing 30% of our referees every year.

Summer games evaluations are being held this weekend in Victoria and Nanaimo, the team will be finalized mid week

C. BCLCTSG Rep, Philip Kontouris: Clinics

Community Development - Level 1

Tuesday, June 7th from 5:30pm - 10:00pm and Wednesday, June 8th from 6:00pm - 8:00pm at the Comox Valley Sports Centre in Courtenay.

Competitive Introduction - Level 2

Saturday, June 18th from 9:00am - 5:00pm at the Comox Valley Sports Centre in Courtenay.

Thank you Rob, Geoff and Doug for all your hard work in coordinating this!

Coaching Suspensions/Discipline

We are seeing more hearings specifically for abuse of officials which is deeply concerning.

A friendly reminder to our friends on the island, the only coach that should be addressing an official during a game is the Head Coach. If your door guy or trainer is addressing an official in an unprofessional or unbecoming manner, the officials can and will eject that coach/trainer from the game and face possible suspension.

Furthermore, NO ONE should ever swear at an official, regardless of the situation or circumstances. Most of our officials (especially in Tyke, Novice and Peewee) are minors themselves.

Please reiterate the message to your coaches that this behaviour is not going to be tolerated.

D. BCLOTSG Rep, Tyler Boyer: As others have already said, it does appear that the Official Abuse has increased as the season wanes on. This is unfortunate to hear, but I

believe that the proposed idea may have an effect on reducing this. I would like to kindly remind people that it is the Association's responsibility to try and be proactive in reducing abuse to try and get ahead of it as best as possible. If we are proactive, rather than reactive, it should have a more positive impact on things. As well, it also can be hopefully worked on by mending relationships between all parties that may have been strained in the past so we can all contribute what we have to this game we love, for the kids. We all have the same goal with our roles in this game. I must say that I have had some really great conversations with folks in this group and that makes me feel hopeful for the future of the game so long as others follow leads and we act as we preach - I am looking forward to finishing this season strong with you all.

We are all very, very busy as officials covering both Minor and Senior and up-and-down the Island, and as tiring as it is, it seems like we are making it work and sharing referees between Associations as required to ensure games are filled. **As far as I am aware, we have not had to cancel any games due to no officials available for a game.** This is a massive win so far and I hope this trend continues. Fingers crossed and a huge thank you to all the official's for their time and commitment to this season.

I feel like division rules and the headaches that came with them have gone away for the most part now. We have ironed out kinks and things that needed to be done, and I believe that there has been a much better understanding moving forward. Positively, I have not heard many complaints about there being a difference between "South and North" for how the games are being called, which is great as we strive to have the most consistency (as best as we can) across the Island.

Moving forward I would like to get more in-person, formal evaluations completed on more officials - which I will need to be completed prior to the end of the season for the Provincial applicants. Head Refs are currently doing this, but it would be good to get more eyes on them. It proves to be a challenging task for myself and others - who I try and lean on at times - due to the needs of the Minor and Senior on-floor commitments, as well as having to potentially commute up and down the island to complete this. I will try and schedule accordingly. As games are winding down in Port Alberni, I should be able to travel out of town to assess and evaluate more often when Alberni doesn't need me on the floor.

In the future, I am planning to put forward a budget and system for VIMLC Referee Development across the Island for Sr Officials to mentor and evaluate. My hope is this budget would cover things like the On-Floor session for Entry Level and 1st year Level 1 officials, as well as travel to Associations who do not get as much development time from Sr officials. If anyone has any input regarding this I would be more than happy to take thoughts and ideas. From my talks with Wilson, there was a similar thing that the Island Commission had in the past and I would like to re-implement something along the lines of this. I think it would be great to have as many Sr officials going around and giving others their perspectives to develop. The more sets of eyes and perspectives they have, the better they will develop.

E. Indigenous Development Coordinator, Bryan Baxter: Courtenay. June 7 will be classroom only from 5:30 - 10:00 and June 8 will be on floor from 6:00-8:00. Both sessions must be attended to get credit and both take place at the Comox Valley Sport Centre.

A CPI clinic will take place on June 18 from 9:00-5:00 at the same venue.

Cheers and stay safe.

F. Female Rep, Lisa Seed-Thompson: In addition to what Andy already shared...

Despite best efforts on the island side of things, several mainland exhibition games have

been canceled altogether and some rescheduled. We discovered early on that the Lower Mainland Female divisions were experiencing communication issues combined with what appears to be a loss in the historical memory of how things were done pre-covid. Most teams we contacted that had been scheduled to travel over had no idea they were and in some cases were completely unaware that traveling over was even something teams were expected to do. I instructed island teams to be in touch as early as possible to try and manage this, in some cases we were successful and rescheduling was able to happen or a new mainland team was scheduled. Rescheduling similarly to what others have already said has been challenging for various reasons- competing with tourney schedules, coach schedules, grad for the older teams, lack of floor availability, commitment from players affecting roster sizes, and refs.

That being said overall we figured it out in most cases and have only had one game day that was a bit of a scheduling mess but that has now been resolved as well- thanks to everyone who played a role in making that happen. All teams minus the Saanich U16 Female team have played games, although for some not as many games as they would have liked because they have no other island teams to play in their division and have relied on Mainland teams traveling over or going to tournaments. The U16 manager and I are continuing to work on a couple of opportunities to get a game or two in for those girls, this includes exhibition games against the Bantam girls, and the Bantam boys teams, we are also trying to still have a mainland team travel over and this is now dependent on the playdown schedule. The JDF junior team is also planning to call up some U16 players as they need additional players for a few games coming up. All Island female teams again except for the U16s have traveled over to the mainland for a tournament or two.

Many people have asked me this season where have all the female players gone? I don't have the answer, I have guesses and have also taken note I have seen a growing number of female players return to playing co-ed, I think it would be interesting to know how many female players across the divisions on the island are playing co-ed in comparison to female only. I think we continue to be at a crucial juncture with female lacrosse and have to commit to looking at ways to make girl's lacrosse accessible & attractive (borrowing your words Andy) to ensure we do not only have retention but grow this sport. That needs to be our focus and we need to make some changes to get there. As Andy mentioned we have proposed a female division meeting at the end of the season, I am hopeful we will have some good feedback and solutions to take into consideration for the 2023 season.

G. Webmaster, Stephanie Prizeman: There have been over 100 game changes this season and counting. Scheduling continues to take up a great deal of many people's time, even now as we are firmly into June. Everyone involved works a day/night or day and night job, and As of the time of writing this report, the website is up to date with all changes to the schedule (minus any illness cancellations from this past weekend - waiting to see if rescheduled before making changes). I will post the May minutes after they are approved at the meeting on Monday.

Thank you to all the hard-working volunteers - commissioners, presidents, executive, and teams for doing their best to try to keep up with all of this throughout the season - it has been a tough and trying few months, but hopefully the players have enjoyed being back at it!

Dallas and I do have some suggestions and feedback for next season regarding scheduling - I would like to propose that the executive meet once the season is over and, with feedback from both the scheduler and commissioners, create a procedure for next

season that we can propose to the entire group long before the season starts next year. The purpose would be to make the entire process easier for everyone.

8. Commissioner Reports:

A. Mini Tyke Phil DiBattista: Not much to report, Smiles, Red Faces, Skinned knees, repeat!!!. I've been working with new managers with regards to game sheets so they are filled out correctly. Having to reschedule games due to weather but that's the life of a Mini-Tyke team.

B. Tyke Phil DiBattista: Lots of games rescheduled due to the upcoming Peninsula Fathers Day Tournament. and of course a bunch due to weather. Teams have also been switching games indoors where possible which I support but with the time/ location changes, it's still a game change, which has made more work for Dallas and Steph (HUGE thanks by the way!!)

We have set some rules out about use of the hard ball versus soft ball in Tyke and so far that has resolved the issue (Thank goodness) Probably 70 % of games are played with a hard ball the rest are using soft balls.

Selecting Rules and which options we decided to use from which rule sheet is going to have to be a very clear conversation next year to avoid issues

C. Novice Wendy Hall: Novice continues with 12 teams, divided into North (5 teams) and South (7 teams).

A total of 27 regular games were scheduled in May: 9 games for Novice North and 18 games for Novice South.

The Ice Breaker Tournament was held May 6th to 8th in Port Alberni, and 5 teams participated.

The Travis Bateman Memorial Tournament was held May 27th to 29th in the Colwood area of Victoria, and 10 teams participated.

During the month of May there were 9 major penalties (6 high stick, 2 boarding, 1 back check); there were 2 game misconducts, and 2 of the majors each resulted in an automatic one game suspension.

There was 1 multi-game suspension assessed against a coach.

Completion of game sheets is slowly improving, and I contact team managers as need be. The learning is on-going for me and I appreciate all the support I continue to receive.

D. Pee wee Adam Gow: Since last meeting

Games Played 44 (A=9 / B=35), 76 for season.

Majors 35 (A=8 / B=27), 54 for season.

Suspensions 13 (A=4 / B=9), 20 for season. 29 games have been assessed.

JDF Pee wee tournament is this coming weekend June 10-12. All island B teams make up the two pools "B Fast" and "B Awesome", pool names was a nice touch from the tourney hosts I thought. Most teams have 2 or 3 games remaining, 6 of 8 B teams declared, last play down spot still up for grabs.

E. Bantam Kate Blass: I'd like to preface this report with a brief warning that this division has been nothing short of a dumpster fire this season. After the Tim White tournament nearly every single game was rescheduled or canceled for the following 2 weeks because each Island team that attended went home with covid and/or a virus. There were many confirmed cases of covid. The kids were dropping like flies. The teams have started

making up those rescheduled games and will continue over the next few days. Trying to confirm how many games have been played for this report tested my sanity since some games have been rescheduled twice before being canceled. It's mayhem. Dallas and Stephanie have performed miracles. Some of the organizations have amazing Bantam managers.

Even though illness is unpredictable (that situation not being the norm), perhaps we evaluate the number of games played per season. Tournaments, illness, referees are all valid reschedule requests and those were the only reasons I approved. However, it still ended up being too much effort for all parties involved. It gets to the point that it's not enjoyable for the players when the make up games are stacked/rushed.

Lastly, the abuse of officials has been gross in Bantam and then folks wonder why we don't have any referees. I'm not sure of a solution but I'd like to help find one.

11/12 Bantam teams declared.

49 majors.

10 game misconducts.

10 player suspensions.

5 coach suspensions.

1 hearing.

And, a partridge in a pear tree.

F. U16 Allison Logan: Over the month of May there were 10 suspensions issued to 9 players and 1 coach. 3 of the suspensions were for abuse of an official, 2 for receiving a match penalty in the last 10 minutes and 5 for receiving a major penalty in the last 10 minutes.

There are 6 games remaining for the A teams and 12 for the B teams. Final games for both tiers will be played on June 19th.

G. Female Andy Stuart: The female division has had some great success and some challenges.

Starting with the successes, most of the teams travelled to Vancouver tournaments.

Notably, the Nanaimo Bantam team won gold in a very close overtime gold medal game so we will be watching them as they move towards the provincials. Almost all the teams have declared for the provincials which is great to see. We have had a few teams travel from the mainland and play our island teams.

The challenges continue to be low numbers, making a proper league impossible and teams with sufficiently rostered players, however, lack commitment so the team has also been an issue for games.

The mainland teams have been difficult to engage and create buy-in from the lower mainland. We are proposing to have a female division meeting at the end of the season to prepare for the 2023 season.

Suspensions have not been an issue with only a handful issued.

9. Association Reports:

A. Alberni Valley: not much to report from the Alberni Valley. The season is winding down and for the most part the kids are happy to be back playing. We will have our work cut out for us for next year to get our numbers back up and replace executive members that are moving on due to their kids aging out (me included). Two teams have declared for provincials.

B. Campbell River: We have 2 teams declaring for provincials; U14 & U16
We have had a few hiccups with scheduling, as to be expected after being off for 2 years.
All and all, morale is up and everyone is excited to play lacrosse in Campbell River!

B. Comox Valley: After a disappointing start to the season we have managed to attract enough players to travel up to Campbell River for a tyke exhibition. A good time was had by all so thanks very much to our northern neighbours. I believe another weekend is being arranged at our I arena and possibly with Oceanside if my intel is correct.

Also I was going to pass on a big thank you to Bryan Baxter for arranging one last level 1 and one last level 2 in the North Island. It has been a real challenge for us to attract volunteers after the big break and I would like to introduce a discussion that would have level 1 delivered electronically so as to make it as easy as possible for volunteers to attend this initial level that is crucial for our teams to practice and participate.

Through this pandemic these electronic interfaces have been a proven option for many things and I would like to ask for our commission to advocate for this tool.

I am not clear as to the technical requirements as it relates to the certification so not sure if this is possible from the governing body. I have also not have any formal discussions with Tim or other presidents so likely not the best way to bring this up when I can't attend the meeting.

I am raising this initially now however knowing how long these kind of discussions take to implement.

Thanks to all of the commissioners and officials who have had to shoulder the burden of a group of players, coaches and parents who have been out of the arena for so long that they appear to have backslid into old habits.

Comox Valley has declared at the B level for both Pee Wee and Bantam. Glad to see through Tim's report that by there is strong interest on the island to compete at provincials.

C. Cowichan Valley: All is well in the valley. As the season is winding down the teams are still competing and having fun. Our Pee wee, Bantam and U16 have all declared for provincials.

D. Juan de Fuca: At JDF we have hosted our Travis Bateman tournament that went well except for some parental issues that we had to clear the stands for which solved the problem right away. otherwise, I believe all teams had a good time. Our Captain cook is our next tournament coming up and we have teams in the b division but no A division this year. That is all I have to report at the moment.

E. Nanaimo: NDLA has declared a total of 9 teams for provincials out of 10 possible. Teams have been attending tournaments and having a great time so I feel we have done well this year with regards to retention and our numbers should go up next year. There have been lots of bumps in the road this year with coaches and parents seeming to forget the rules or the correct behaviour but all in all we have been able to manage these adults and their expectations without major issues. There have been far too many game change requests for what used to be invalid reasons and going forward I would like to see the only game change requests approved for a tournament, no officials or Covid outbreak on a team. Game cancellations should be done at least 24 hours ahead. Overall for a regular season after 2 seasons off it has been a lot of fun, but also exhausting.

F. Oceanside: Thanks to Nanaimo for hosting our mini tykes on Sunday mornings for games.

Last time I talked to our peewee team they were going to declare for provincials.

A couple of concerns have been forwarded to me that I will be looking into later this week as

I have been away and need to get more information/ clarification.

As we have mostly new coaches and managers, our head manager and I been fielding lots of questions.

G. Peninsula: Lots going on across all the divisions. All our competitive teams declared for provincials. We have 12 teams coming to our Tyke Tourney in 2 weeks which is great. Hopefully a weekend full of smiles and Candy Bags!!!!

Sounds like most associations are experiencing the same things now that we are back into a full season of lacrosse. We have been messaging parents and have gone so far as to re-send out the rule book with all the characters and hand signals so parents know the calls the officials are making which I think/ hope has helped.

H. Saanich: So far the feeling I am sensing is everyone is enjoying being back to lacrosse. Granted this brings with it some issues but I would rather tackle issues than have no league or tournament play.

We hosted our internal 3 on 3 showcase. This has not happened since 2019 so it was a great weekend for the players and families to get out and enjoy the event.

We are focused on making lacrosse accessible and attractive to retain players as this could be argued the greatest challenge to the game at this moment. We had reduced fees for MT and Tyke and provided coverage for one tournament entry fee to each team.

The Saanich facilities continue to be an issue, we don't receive the dry floor until mid May and we were disappointed to find the arena in poor condition - shot clock not working, slippery surface and very tight penalty box doors. We are working with the District of Saanich to make this right for next season well in advance of the start of games.

Our U16 A, Bantam A & B and Pee Wee A all declared for provincials.

I. Victoria/Esquimalt: Nothing new to report. If anyone has tips or resources for updating Association policies please let me know.

10. New Business:

A. Banners: All competitive divisions will have a League Play Banner (for the team at the top of the standings at the end of the regular season) and an Island Champion Banner (for the winner of the playdowns)

B. Playdowns: PeeWee and U16 will be held June 17-27, Bantam and Female divisions will be June 24-July 4. There can be no more games rescheduled into these time frames.

On Thursday, June 9 the executive and commissioners will meet to decide the formats for each division. Generally there will be a best of 3 series when a provincials berth is at stake, and single elimination games when a berth is not at stake. Only the top 4 teams in each division will participate in playdowns. Teams must be ready to play on short notice as games cannot be rescheduled. Most games will be in Cowichan, unless the two teams are from the same area, then a location change will be considered, depending on refs and floor time. For tie breaker rules please refer to VIMLC policy.

C. Automatic Suspensions: Everyone should have received the disciplinary guidelines which outline suspensions. It may take a day or two for a commissioner to review a game sheet and contact a team regarding a suspension, but this does not mean the suspension isn't still in place. When in doubt, sit it out!

D. BC Summer Games referee fees: Referees are not paid to ref at the BC Summer Games, they are

reimbursed for expenses and travel costs. **Motion** made by Tim Frost, seconded by Doug Kampen
“*Vancouver Island Associations agree to pay referees the equivalent fees they would earn for league play
for games reffed at BC Summer Games*” **Carried**

Note: other zones are planning to put forward similar motions

Good luck to all teams in playdowns! Association executive are encouraged to attend these games if possible.

11. **Next meeting: July 4 at 7 pm**

12. **Motion to adjourn at 7:31 pm** made by Tyler Boyer, seconded by Christine Mavin **Carried**