



Minutes for EHMHA Members Meeting

12 January 2025, 7.00pm

Bannister Room, East Hants Sportsplex

**Board attendees: Brett, Aaron, Greg, Mark, James, Chris,
Amelia, Tyson**

Apologies: Chuck

Membership attendees: to be attached

Agenda Items

Standing items

1. **Welcome and Approval of Agenda** by Brett
2. **Presidents Update** by Brett
 - *Hockey Nova Scotia (HNS) have communicated to all Associations the requirement to ensure that we are following the rules for suspensions. We have a lot of junior coaches out there and we need to make sure they are aware of the rules. Additionally, we need to ensure that we follow respect to the referees protocols. WE can see the number of green armbands on the ice and we need to ensure we support them. It's challenging as it is keep the refs in the system so we need to do our part and respect the officials. Lots of times junior referees on the ice.*
 - *1st shift. We successfully supported and aligned with Bauer to out for this event out of East Hants in 2024/25. Excellent participation and approx 30 kids signed up. Head Coach was Gus Smith. Of the 30 registrants, 12 were from the EHMHA catchment area. 30 kids signed up of which 12 were from the EHMHA catchment area with the majority confirming that they will continue in hockey. Brett thanked the coaches for their support. Bauer were also very happy with how we ran the program. We will bid for this again but typically don't do 2 years on the bounce - but there is a chance.*
 - *Tournaments - 2 tournaments coming up. U7 jamboree numbers down from the previous year.*

Smith Ettinger - numbers are good and aligned with the expectation. These tournaments are critical to the financial success of the organization and support items such as partially funding new jerseys which will cost approx \$70k.

- *Sportsplex - under new management and is now run by the Municipality. We know the Booking system is not great as there is no visibility. we have approached the Municipality and expressed our concerns but there is no plan to change the system and there are many other ancillary programs used by the municipality running off the same software.*
- *Finally, Brett passed thanks to all of the volunteers who give up their time to support EHMHA and the players. The Association would not be able to run without the volunteers.*

3. Hockey Operations Update by Aaron

- *It was confirmed that the Sportsplex were following the League rules for the Time Clock. If the Time Clock runs out, the game finishes. This does not apply to U13AAA, U15AAA U18A. It was also confirmed that Elimination games are also excluded from this rule. Dressing rooms must also be vacated 30 minutes after the game finishes.*
 - *Q - A question was raised about an U11AA qualification game - it was confirmed that this should not be buzzed off.*
 - *Q - Another question was raised about who buzzes the clock. This is automatically linked to the clock which is reset when the door is closed.*
 - *Q - A question was raised asking if it was the refs who decided on time clock rules for a qualifier game. Aaron stated that the refs should be aware of the rules and that if it's a qualifier, the time clock rules do not apply.*
 - *Round Robin games during provincials do have the time clock rules applied.*
 - *HMS and Central Minor have the rules on their website. Coaches should familiarize themselves with the rules. Aaron will send a reminder to Coaches and Coordinators.*
 - *Q - A comment was made that Refs seem to take too much time on the ice to make decisions. This information will be fed back to RJ.*
- *Development. This is always difficult to balance to try and get maximum participation whilst being mindful of Team ice time. Unfortunately, there will always be instances where there will be schedule conflicts for some Teams. It was decided that Development would not continue through 2025. We were missing a big swathe of players as they could not be there and it was the same limited number of players attending each session.*
 - *The 3 remaining Tommy Hunter Power Skating sessions have been kept and opened up to U15. The Goalie sessions have also been kept (3pm -4pm)*

- Aaron has worked with the Development Coordinators to get them to support Team practices rather than the same players each Sunday.

4. Financial Update by James

- It was briefly touched on earlier in the meeting but as Brett alluded to, we are going to see larger expense for new jerseys as the existing jerseys are at the end of their useful life. Changes were made to the Jersey Policy for 2024/25 to try to preserve the jerseys for another season with the introduction of garment bags.
 - Looking for a static jersey sponsor so we don't add the cost into registration fees
- Year on year we are seeing better revenues and this is testament to better financial management but importantly, increased registration.
- Approx. \$30k in outstanding registration fees as of 11th January 2025.
- We are also working with a new Bookkeeper. This person has been able to find some savings and we now receive updated financials each month. We also pay \$29 less per hour than we did for the previous Bookkeeper.
- Bingo. The association have been working this initiative for a number of months and close to getting things running. Following a similar format to other associations, EHMHA and East Hants Soccer will jointly run community bingo twice per week - Wed & Thu 7-9pm. The profits will be shared equally 50:50. Net profit, based on previous years could be approx. \$30 per annum for each association. Obviously if we can drive up attendance this could increase profit.
- Questions raised
 - Q - When we go for fundraising. Can we have an association level banner with sponsors etc.? James is happy to discuss.
 - Q - Does registration fees go towards jerseys? In response yes, but very little amount. James said that what we have allotted is not enough to buy a new set of jerseys, we are likely \$50k off the need.
 - Q - Do we know what it would cost per jersey? James & Greg confirmed that we do but cost will likely have changed since we last bought jerseys. However, when ready to do so, an RFP will be sent to several suppliers so we can get competitive pricing. We have also discussed the idea of running reversible jerseys.
 - Q - Could we buy one set in jersey one year and another next - yes but we are still short
 - Q - Have there been any negotiations on ice costs. Brett and James confirmed that when we met with Scott Preston (Municipality) he did say status quo this year. There was some conversation about player rate for the future. No change at this time.

- Q - Could there be discount for non prime time. This will be put forward to the Municipality. Aaorn has said that \$200 would be great. In addition to meetings with the Municipality Management, Brett has also met with Councillors to put forward the case for lower ice costs.
- Q - Should we spending on jerseys. The unanimous response from the Board was yes. The Equipment Manager also confirmed that we are in desperate need for new jerseys. It was also noted that the Board have discussed the idea to use current jerseys for tryouts.
- Q - There was concern raised that there was a U9 rep Team player with no jersey. The Equipment Manager said he'd work with the Team Manager to resolve.
- Q - Where does the money that comes from tryouts go? We only have 3 ice times. In response it was stated that the income from tryouts goes towards EHMHA operating expenses and hat the Evaluators are paid.
- Q - Could we sell the jersey to a player for the old ones? Could be offered back to membership. In response, the Board confirmed that they will look at this as a potential when jerseys are being replaced.
- Q - A comment was made that Valley Wild have a good jersey replacement program. The Board confirmed that they will look at their policy. It was also noted that the Board are looking at velcro for name bars.
- Q - A comment was made to make parents accountable and cash the cheque if a jersey is damaged. In response the Board said that we will need to be stricter about applying such a rule when we get new jerseys
- Q - The U18 Manager also said that they have asked each player to take their jersey home and not into a garment bag.

5. Administration Update by Greg

- Apologies were passed to Members about the delay for this membership meeting. It should normally take place in November. We just simply missed it. However, Greg did confirm that a calendar of events was being developed to avoid such misses in the future.
- We have lots of new volunteers for 2024/25 and this brings a host of questions. We will consolidate the feedback received from Team Managers and Division Coordinators during the Manager meeting held in late 2024. We are going to do things differently to provide better support for all EHMHA volunteers.
- We moved to Grayjay last year. We certainly encountered some teething problems but we have seen great improvements as the product matures.

- *For 2024/25 season we also used the Grayjay platform to conduct all our Evaluations. Big change but the consensus amongst all involved in the Evaluation that the tools was better than using a manual process.*
- *Rafflebox integration is still a challenge. We continue to work with Rafflebox and Grayjay to have these integrated to make it easier for the end user.*
- *Some questions were raised;*
 - *Q - is there playbook? In response it was confirmed that there is one but it needs updating. This will be worked on before the commencement of the next season. The details will also be discussed at the Managers meeting. We will also develop one for Grayjay for the volunteers involved in the setup of the Teams and Rosters.*
 - *It was acknowledged that the Managers role is critical. Going to task group of Managers / ex managers to work on the playbook before next season*
- *Greg also made comment that many of the policies are old and outdated and these are in the process of being systematically updated -*
 - *Q - A comment was also made around ore clarity needed for Travel Permits and Criminal Record Check. Greg acknowledged.*
 - *Q - A comment was made that a new baseline will make it better and need to be better organized for volunteers. This comment was acknowledged.*
- *Greg also made mention of the garment bags which had previously been discussed.Garment bags.*
- *Greg also confirmed that we now have over 400 members in EHMHA. This is positive for the association. The 2024/25 season saw the largest U9 group since the association was formed.*

6. Tournaments Update by Chris

- *U7 Jamboree - renamed Braden Bannister memorial.*
- *The Ettinger Smith Tournament has 26 teams registered.*
- *Chris expressed that we really need a committee of volunteers to help with the tournaments as these are very challenging run. More support will allow us to have welcome tables, hospitality rooms etc. Chris said he will email the Division Coordinators to seek support. Some of these tournaments attract 400-500 people coming through the buildings and smooth running of the tournaments will yield positive results and repeat registrants.*
 - *Lots of questions already for the schedule until registration closes. Will try and have younger players paying earlier in the week.*
 - *Chris will make a tentative schedule. Critical for away teams.*
- *Some questions raised;*
 - *Q - can we at least give days. Chris said he will try to do this.*

- Q - U15B cant attend as they are already booked on another tournament. Other B Team were also not able to attend as they did not know the RTS Tournament was open to B Teams this year. It was acknowledged that comms of the opening of the ETS Tournament was a communication miss. This will be rectified for next year.
- Q - Is there a meeting for Tournaments? James previously had to take a week off to volunteer. We really need to improve our support to the Events Coordinator for future tournaments. It seems to be the same group of volunteers supporting the running of EHMHA. We need to expand this.
- Q - A comment was made that in the past, Teams were told this is your slot for the tournament, please support. Can other kids help out. Could Rangers help? Great suggestions that were acknowledged by the Board.

7. AOB / Q&A

- Q -Jackie (U15AA) Fundraising. Put in intent for fundraiser. Nov / Dec. Found out recently that we had 3 teams from the Assoc. that went out last weekend and covered the (U15AA) the areas which we had listed for the past 6-7 weeks. What are the rules around fundraising? Additionally if Teams are one week apart is this fare? Greg responded that James and Greg approve of events. Greg confirmed that we need to take it away to improve for the future. Greg also noted that one team did not follow policy and were told that they could not go to the same subdivision as the U15AA Team.

Q - Jamie. We need a Team meeting with all coaches. We are not competitive as an association. Certainly U15B. Kids are getting frustrated. Association rules stipulate that the bench cannot be shortened or create power play lines. Why can't we make lines which are stranger. Should EHMHA remove their policies with regard to fair play .A response was provided that policies are restrictive and not specific to EHMHA, and follow those set out by HNS.

Q - U15 Manager? Only 1 practice every other week. Not enough.

Q - Is this an issue of fair play? Or kids needing more development? Comments by membership said both. U15B should not have happened? Should have left the Teams balanced. The addition of a U15B Team was a last minute decision. On reflection, this should not have happened.

Q - Can we get more development for the Teams. In response the Board is fully supportive and is one of the reasons for changing the Sunday development sessions. The Development Coordinators will spend more time directly with individual Teams.

Q - A member asked to discuss the recent Team suspensions. Bret said that he would not discuss these as they were confidential.

Q - A comment was made that Mike Boyd was running Goalie Development, not Brian. The comment was acknowledged by the Board.

Q - There was a comment made that some Coaches refused the support of the Development Coordinators. Further comments were made that the Coaches should not refuse to have development.

Q - Kyle made the comment that development needs to focus on the lower levels.

Q - Director at Large - Amelia read from a statement that she was at the meeting to represent the members of the association which is her role as a Director at Large. It was said that most of the complaints that she receives are the same as last year and believes as an association that we can do better. She requested a Special Meeting to change the current association bylaws. Additionally wanted Aaron removed from the board and his position of VP Hockey Ops. The Board responded that if there was an issues with a member of the board then this should be directed to the President, Brett. Amelia confirmed that she will email the request for a Special Meeting and what needed to be discussed to Brett.

Q - A question was asked will we know what happened. In response the Board said that specific details surrounding the complaints would not be made public.

Q - Jen. Exhibition games. only allowed 4. How do other Teams have more? In response the Board said that they buy additional ice outside, likely outside EHMHA. One of the greatest challenges is having available Refs.

Q - Ice schedule. Challenging to trade. This was acknowledged. The Board will continue to review how best to deal with these situations. It was confirmed that Teams can hand their practice ice times back to the Sportsplex with a minimum of 14 days notice. Obviously, this will impact the available ice that a Team receives.

Q - A comment was made that Hockey Canada rules state that a Team can't have more games than practice. This certainly isn't the case for the U15C Team. The Board acknowledged and will take this away.

Q - Can we start everything earlier in the season. The association is bound by Hockey Canada rules as to when we can commence the season.

Q - Bank accounts. It was confirmed that this is the Manager and Treasurer duty for each Team. The Board dis comment that we are looking at a different bank for next season. Part of the improvements we are looking for is having a bank representative onsite at the commencement of the season to support the opening of bank accounts. Managers duty.

Q - One of our top level teams in turmoil. Needs to be discussed. Brett confirmed that a Parents meeting will be held in the next couple of days.

Q - Tracey - communications. Tryouts U18. Evals not set up. Can we do something for next year and have support for rec hockey during the evals. Need to be here for the kids and having fun. Not losing every game. The Board acknowledged the comment and agreed that further support was required for Rec balancing in the future.

Q - A comment was made that more focus on C teams needed. Comment acknowledged.

Q - A comment was made around the Evaluation process and that if Coordinators support was needed then they needed to be involved earlier. Comment acknowledged.

Q - Younger age group. Development. Need more focus here, it's the foundation of their skill development. Comment acknowledged.

Q - With the municipality keeping ice in, can we start earlier. Not Allowed as per Hockey Canada rules?

Q - Now that Ice Pad B is staying in, could EHMHA put something on during the Spring / Summer? We will discuss it as a board.

Meeting concluded 8.52pm