



# New England District Spring Meeting

## Zoom Meeting

MINUTES Sunday, April 26, 2020

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### Attendees:

**NED** – Ray St. Pierre (Managing Director), Cheri Bonawitz (Director & SafeSport Coordinator), Tom Regan (Director), Richard Oliver (Director & Tournament Director), Chris Washburn (Director), Art Blakeslee (Treasurer), Kim Gaines (Secretary & VT VP), Barry Zalzman (RIC), Roger Grillo (ADM Coordinator), Kyle Peckham (Safety Coordinator), Mike McCullogh (Registrar), Larry Rocha (CIC), Charlie Fortier (Risk), Bobby Rodrigue (Boys Player Development), Bill Leidt (Girls Player Development), Deb Powell (Girls Player Development Admin), Keith Barrett (USA Hockey), Mauricio Rosales (??)

**VT** – John Cioffi (President), Nate Isham (V. President), Bob Greemore (Registrar), Emily Cabral-Haag (Girls Coordinator), Mike Hickey (RIC)

**CT** – Chuck Wilkerson (President), Kevin Redding (RIC), Mary Turner (Registrar), Kathy Ludwig (SafeSport)

**NH** – Matt Roy (President), Cam Stoddard (SafeSport), Chris Rousseau (RIC), Roger Gilles (Registrar)

**ME** – Mike Keaney (President), Sue Hamlin (Registrar)

**RI** – Andrew Guliano (President)

**GUESTS** – Mauricio Rosales

### General Session called to order @ 1:04pm

\*RSP announced CW to fill out KB's Director term (ending 2022) after interviewing 3 strong candidates.

#### CIC report – Larry Rocha

\*Several USA Hockey zoom meetings to discuss where we're going, lots of uncertainty about future timing, sent email to staff with updates.

\*The two June/August level 4s (Concord, NH and Hartford, CT) canceled. Earliest possible dates are October 1 and won't be posted until there is more information. Level 5 scheduled in Duluth, MN will likely be pushed to 2021.

\*Options include - Possibly level one and two online, possibly extend expiration 1 year (concern raises money for USA hockey and would mean one year of no revenue). If possible to do in person will people even want to meet in person. New proposal for CEP will be voted on at AC in June (via zoom). Level 1, 2, 3 all good for one year (passed for 21-22), Level 4 would be good for 3 years and have to do some





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continuing education. District has posted updates and “more info” to come but would like to see something communicated from the national level.

### **RIC report – Barry Zalcman**

\*2020 registration grew 2.8% nationally, 2.4% district (1770 officials total), NH +11%, CT +6%, Maine 0%, RI -5%, VT -11%

\*The 3 goals for 2019:

- improve completion rate for level 1 officials, currently 65% that register actually complete all requirements. New format tested in CT - in one day did clinic and modules - and had coordinator/buddy system that reached out to all participants.
- Offered female only seminars (in VT & CT) and development camp (MA) – increased numbers from 124 up to 156 – still opportunity there for growth.
- NEDofficials.com – new website to attract and educate officials

\*Registration for 2020 will open May 28. Seminars have not been posted/scheduled but discussing and investigating options. Level 5 Symposium still set for July 24-26 in Providence, RI – hope to make final decision by early June.

\*Futures and High Performance camps and NCAA set for the end of July (Harvard), Women’s development July 17-19.

\*AC to determine 2020-21 officiating plans for Level 1-3

\*Goals for 2020:

- Continue to increase female officiating pool (ie connect more with women’s D3 teams – utilize BL and Girls Development group for opportunities);
- Pilot program (clinic and modules same day, same place) to be full time to help increase completion rates (just NED & Mid-Atlantic tested so far)

### **Girls section & NED camp – Bill Leidt, intro of Deb Powell as camp administrator**

\*NED losing players to Mass since Mass is currently signing kids when no one knows if there will even be a 20-21 season.

\*U18 camp in August is still on the calendar (6-8 eligible from NED), all other camps at the National level have been canceled. Strategic planning taking place for Girls/Women section that effect ice hockey (ie, social media, leadership for female coaches, communication tactics).

\*District did not have CT March tryout, disappointed they didn’t get to experiment with new look/format utilizing new model from Central District (3 ice sessions and equal look for all players).





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\*Was to be BL final tryout with KK (Kristi Kehoe), who will now come back in March 2021 and continue to look for replacements.

\*Continue to grow, each state showing progress with 6,000+ players (5<sup>th</sup> largest district)

\*Time and patience is critical right now – no one knows what's happening with rinks, getting kids back in the rink, affordability and more. BL not inclined to look at alternate camp options on the girls side with looming concerns around assembling a staff, managing health precautions, accommodations.

\*FYI - i.e. University of MN is NOT opening this summer

### **Boys NED camp update – Bobby Rodrigue**

\*Select 16 and 17 – postponed and then canceled camps (originally scheduled March then May), when nationals asked everyone to do the same thing, districts were all asked to cancel.

\*Holding out for Select 14 and 15 (originally June/July) – trying to get a sense of hosting feasibility or should postpone or cancel. For consideration - facilities/campus availability, district leadership availability and player interest

- No grant money available

- Consider basing it off of CT's options but they won't have new info until May 20 when state reassess re-open date.

- Consider minicamp without lodging based on ice availability? May all be optimistic and unrealistic for late summer? No consequence but can we provide an opportunity/service to our players?

\*\*\*\*\*NH makes a motion to cancel remaining camps – CT seconds – ALL IN FAVOR (motion carried, no discussion)

\*\*\*\*\*RI makes a motion to look at other options for summer – NH seconds – ALL IN FAVOR (motion carried after discussion)

- BR first or second week of August - MK (Maine) and JC (Vermont) notes this might be an exercise in futility to pull this off – but is ok putting a little work in to draft options to consider. BR will send communication that canceled and looking at summer options. Going to see about virtual webinar opportunities like RG & KW did for Futures Camp participants.

- KB mentions that a handful of rinks are reopening and doing the work shows constituents that we are TRYING to bring these opportunities to people even if they don't work out.

- BR will report back by May 10





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### Tournament report – Richard Oliver

- \*Bypassing rotation and 2021 state hosts will stay in effect from 2020 (moved back 1 year)
- \*Leave on website – confirm rinks in the fall / Keep pins (still good) / Keep medals (buy new plates) / Replace Banners (have the year on them) / District to pay for 2020 banners and medals
- \*NH/CT – still looking for State TDs, Keep Presidents overseeing these responsibilities for now
- \*Regional dates being proposed for 2021 – BOYS will be November 13, 14, 15 & GIRLS November 20, 21, 22 (confirm with Mass by mid-May) / SPRING TOURNAMENTS March 12, 13, 14

### Disabled report – Richard Oliver

- \*Looking to the future to increase numbers
- \*Will need to vote for disabled athlete of the year after districts make recommendations
- \*Each state should be confirming reps and RO would like to bring (more) reps to USA Hockey meetings

### Registrar report – Mike McCullough

- \*Off season so not too much to report
- \*Waiting for registration numbers to become final from 2019-20 – usually released at AC in June
- \*All registrars will be invited to AC Zoom meeting
- \*July/August registrar meetings are up in the air and will likely be virtual
  
- \*New registration platform was re-released April 1 (after pulled last year). Open for one month, numbers are down as we might expect. Families aren't forced to register early because of the lack of tryouts. Will continue to be monitored as time goes on.
  
- \*EVERYONE (with NED) NEEDS TO REGISTER WITH USA HOCKEY AS A VOLUNTEER – can go back and register as coach/official later if needed! <https://membership.usahockey.com/>
  
- \*2019-20 sanctioned tournaments have been wrapped up and report given to AB. NED sanctioned 123 invitational tournaments (approx. the same as previous year) but change in percentage for profit vs. non-profit registrations accounts for decrease in year over year received fees.
  
- \*Continuing issues with coaches saying “I didn't know”, MM working with MT on coaches checklist (ie roster requirements, how to keep a game sheet) in addition to CEP requirements. States should reach out to MT with any ideas on what can be in that document. Help bring education to coaching REQUIREMENTS (USA Hockey CEP) vs. RESPONSIBILITIES (admin)
  
- \*Affiliate Presidents update on current states:
  - MAINE (MK) – Governor shut down until May 15. Most completed tryouts for T2/T3 teams before





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things were shut down so in decent shape. All rinks are currently closed and most (if not all) have no ice. Plans to have Tier 1 teams this upcoming season and have not had their tryouts, more following junior rules after invitation summer camps.

- NEW HAMPSHIRE (MK) – Governor shut down until May 4, and may get extended. Most associations held tryouts before stay at home orders. A couple of programs have signed pre-existing players in lieu of tryouts, but not sure how they're handling T1 teams.

- Rhode Island (AG) – Governor shut down until May 8. Most rinks are municipalities that will decide when they can reopen. Some tryouts done, most teams are signing players without in person tryouts, some with video evaluations. Doesn't want to stand in the way of committing players.

- Vermont (JC) – Governor shut down until May 15. 1 for profit squeezed in tryouts before rinks closed. Still finding out what (potential) T1 and T2 programs established teams with no tryouts occurred. We think most are waiting for summer ice and rinks to open.

- Connecticut (CW) – Governor shut down until May 20. There are grumbings about signing players sight unseen, don't love but can't police. State mandates for hockey shutdown seems to be holding. Ongoing conversations with NY and Atlantic Districts in an attempt to hold a unified front.

### **SafeSport report – Cheri Bonawitz/Ray St. Pierre**

\*CB created PPT (see ATTACHED)

\*Maine/Vermont/New Hampshire/Connecticut - Coaches are paying for background checks, carry across all sports so best to be maintained by the individual.

\*Rhode Island - Coaches are paying for background checks with the exception of state board members who will be covered by RI.

\*Looking for NED or NED/RIC to pay for officials background screening. Invoice would go to one account – estimates \$12,000 and BZ believes the budget can afford this for two seasons and then get reevaluated. Currently investigating options and discussing pros/cons of coaches v. officials as well as how this effects or may effect affiliate fees for each group.

\*Maine is putting in an immediate 30 day suspension to parents/coach (without hearing) for abuse of an official. It's hard to police but put faith in coaches/other parents to hold them accountable and report

\*KB commented general concern about use of LiveBarn

### **Safety Coordinator – introduction of Kyle Peckham**

\*Newly elected, exciting resume

\*Athletic Trainer at Rice Prep in Vermont





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- \*Main goal from national office – distribute educational information to affiliates/members
  - \*Mandate “return to play” protocol that currently varies between states – form created by USA Hockey will be asked to fill out and submit. Trying to align more with what school sports are already doing.
  - \*KP to act as resource with ‘safety’ information and questions and direct link to national office with additional questions with overall goal to keep players safe. Can consult but not handing out suspensions or repercussions for not following.
  - \*Once a player Safety Coordinator is elected in every district, then want to see one in each affiliate to help drive compliance and distribute information, hoping to have before this upcoming season begins
  - \*End goal is the additional data to help future decisions/protocols in keeping players safe.
  
  - \*For 2020-21 season, once the platform is up - form completed locally / coach submits to local PS official / local PS official submits / KP oversees district tracking system and compliance
  - \*KP creating a concussion/player safety webinar and will share once it’s done and hopes to have a tab on the NED website and educate appropriate individuals on procedure
  - \*If states don’t have someone they want to see in this role, KP offered to reach out to Athletic Trainers in each of the states to perhaps find someone outside the hockey community.
  - \*Communicate to and remind coaches that they are putting themselves in a tough situation, from a liability standpoint, if a player gets on the ice before they’re cleared by a medical professional
  
  - \*KB reminds group it’s a rule change year and ANYONE can submit something as a rule change – Concussion Management may be worth proposing penalties as enforcement.

### **Risk Manager update – Charlie Fortier**

- \*COI requests need to be done in a timely manner – ideally 2 weeks
- \*If a rink is asking an association to be added as additionally insured, it’s imperative associations can provide evidence and copies of contracts with their rinks.
- \*Contracts are good for the year 9/1-8/31

### **Website – Mike McCullough**

- \*No changes at this point
- \*Discussions with account rep to stay or move to sportsengine
- \*Lots of complaints about merchant fees but same on both platforms
- \*No tournaments so not active these past few months





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### Financial report – Art Blakeslee, Treasurer

- \*Significant time spent on refunds for camps
- \*Significant lost revenue and reduced expenses for the cancelation of end of season events
- \*Report (SEE ATTACHED)

### ADM – Roger Grillo

- \*With the cancelation of Future Camp – RG & KW hosted Zoom presentations for registered participants (11&12 yos) regarding player development .
- \*Chatted with BR about other webinar opportunities for now or potentially late summer
- \*Currently USA Hockey ADM group is hosting 4 webinars/week around 3pm – staying in touch with players/coaches/parents
- \*More than willing to reach out to specific groups that the district or states want to reach
- \*CB stated appreciation from NED and lots of positive feedback from participants
- \*KB stated appreciation for short video RG and group made <https://youtu.be/goj3WXRzBfs>

### Legal Council – Tom Regan

- \*For the last 3 years, 90%+ of this group's time has been reacting to SafeSport and OIC changes
- \*Lost focus on a lot of other initiatives so back to 3 core things for strategic planning
  - Make guidebook more user friendly and focus significantly on Bylaw 10 (changes to arbitration section)
  - Working with the council to make sure its members are available and involved with the local affiliates, not every district has access to a member of the council (like NED does with TR)
  - Work on standards and best practices nationally to help minimize risk management and legal costs
- \*Want to meet more often than twice a year, group was engaged quickly this year, virtual meetings seem to work well

### Youth Council – Keith Barrett/Richard Oliver

- \*RO wants to publicly thank KB for time/dedication in VT, NED and USA Hockey
- \*RO sitting on last 3 calls, KB (USA Hockey) trying to help put a plan together for the future and direction understanding there is a current damper on things.
- \*Committees have been formed to tackle (ie tryout violations, blue sky national tournaments, plus others).
- \*Winter meeting ended January 19, within two weeks the world was drastically changing – things moving VERY quickly by early March. Concern of numbers, staying in business, rink openings, costs of





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programs – all being evaluated.

\*KB trying to lead thinking about what's best for the kids in general, no matter where they are from, with a continued focus on the middle band of kids that play. Too much time and resources can be spent on the elite players and not enough on the grassroots and middle band participants.

### **Junior Council update – Cheri Bonawitz**

\*Junior season ended abruptly and working on strategic planning

\*3 biggest components

- Communication – what is Juniors and available paths for players, more education to younger ages
- Potential expansion out west more
- Concern with the number of players coming out of this situation

\*MR adds

- EHL looking for new director
- New teams coming to NH, based out of Keene (two levels)

### **Elections:**

**Tom Regan – Director – 3 yr term**

**Cheri Bonawitz – Director – 3 yr term**

**Ray St Pierre – Managing Director – 1 yr term**

**Kim Gaines – Secretary – 2 yr term**

**Announcement of Director (Chris Washburn) appointed to finish the balance of Keith Barrett's term which is up in 2022**

\*\*\*\*\*NH makes a motion to approve above slate of nominations - RI seconds - no nominations from the floor, ALL IN FAVOR (motion approved, no discussion)

\*\*\*\*\*ME makes a motion to accept January's minutes as presented – VT seconds - ALL IN FAVOR (motion approved, no discussion)

Old Business N/A

New Business N/A

Adjournment @ 4:10pm

