

West Fargo Hockey Association Board Meeting

Board Meeting Minutes: Monday, May 17th, 2021 at 6 p.m.

West Fargo Sports Arena 520 32nd Ave W West Fargo, ND

Board Members:

Present: Alex Aughinbaugh, Scott Haider, Jareb Raan, Sarah Elkins, Kelly Kisell, James Cailao, Seth Rehm, Kayla Goebel, Ryan Thayer, Brent Kuehne, Kristen Cigelske, Eric Nelson

Absent: Josh Benson

Others Present:

Hockey Director: Jason Gregoire

Hockey Scheduler: Shana Wilson

Gaming Manager: Jason Campbell

Members Present: None

PROCEEDINGS:

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Alex Aughinbaugh.

Minutes Approval

Aughinbaugh

Haider made a motion to approve the April 19, 2021 Regular Board Meeting minutes as provided to the board of directors. Motion was seconded by Thayer. Approved by all; motion was passed without dissent.

March 2021 Financials

Raan

Raan reported on the continued growth of all the gaming sites and the positive financial position of income as compared to this time last year. In comparison to the 2020-2021 budget the recent numbers appear to be within the projections made for the financial year. All of the gaming sites have either met or surpassed their projected growth for the current financial year. Campbell noted that there will be an adjustment reflected on next month's financials with Fort Knox due to an error in reporting correct e-tab income for the wrong site. Gun raffle expenses will also appear on the April financials. There will also be one more ice payment reflected on the upcoming monthly reports as well.

Quarter 3 Gaming Tax Return Review

Nelson/Campbell

Campbell presented the board with information and documents for the Quarter 3 gaming tax returns. He noted to the board that the numbers reflected on the gaming returns are exceptional and have not been seen before. E-tabs revenue continues to account for a large portion of the income. Aughinbaugh requested clarification on the differences in gross proceeds and adjusted gross proceeds for the sites which Campbell provided. Campbell reported that the new tax bill will take effect on July 1st and after that point we will see positive changes for WFHA in the taxes we pay based on income and revenue from gaming sites.

Old Business: Executive Director Search

Benson/Aughinbaugh

Aughinbaugh provided an update to the board on the Executive Director search. To date the association has received 20 applicants and the committee has narrowed down the pool to 4 strong candidates for interviews with the possibility of adding an additional 2 or 3 potential applicants to the interview selection process as well. The position has been posted on our WFHA Website, Indeed and the North Dakota Job Board. Aughinbaugh plans to have the Hiring Committee meet by the end of this week and conduct initial interviews within the next month. Ideally the timeline for final interviews

with the board would be at the next meeting on June 21st, 2021 with a potential acceptance by July. This allows for the Executive Director to be involved with the planning and operations of the upcoming 2021-2022 hockey season and financial year.

Old Business: Additional Ice Options

Benson/Aughinbaugh

As we have begun to explore options for additional ice, Aughinbaugh has reached out to the Angels Hockey organization to see where they are in the process of building their own arena. Gregoire reported that the Angels would eventually begin the process of building with a decision to construct one sheet of ice. Their potential location would be in the Brooks Harbor area in West Fargo. At this point they have one more year at their current facility and have not yet started construction.

Aughinbaugh has access to the potential plans for a 3rd sheet of ice at the West Fargo Sports Arena. If we were to proceed in partnering with them it appears that we would not have the option to set up a contract for terms of pricing and rental in advance but would be on a year-to-year basis. Current concerns and risks about building our own arena were discussed in relation to incurring risk, maintenance costs and service needs that come along with ownership versus rental. Several board members suggested that we continue to look at ways to partnership with the West Fargo School District and the West Fargo Park District to build more sheets of ice through the contribution of funds to those facilities rather than our organization taking on additional risks with building our own facility. Aughinbaugh would like to gather the committee together for a meeting with Levi from WFPS and Mike Amundson for the purpose of engaging in further discussions of future ice options.

Old Business: Tournament – The Lights

Aughinbaugh/Cailao

Cailao and Aughinbaugh met with Mike Amundson from West Fargo Events to define more details of the tournament to be held in December 2021 & January 2022. Discussions included the cost and amount of ice needed, the number of teams and the benefits of gaining potential sponsorships that could help offset the cost of the ice. Any funds that are brought in from our organization would go directly to WFHA. Amundson is looking to make this a yearly event for The Lights. There might also be potential to use some of the tournament work, concessions and planning as Dibs for our members. Gregoire would like to initiate another meeting with the committee and Amundson in the near future to finalize more details in order to coordinate our hosting with the upcoming “tournament push” from other organizations which typically happens around June 1st. We could potentially host 2 tournaments with a Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Friday, Saturday, Sunday scheduling of games. Amundson would also like to have a “glo-skate” on Saturday which would be free for participating teams. Wilson asked for clarification on who the contract would be drawn up with as this involves both WFSA and The Lights venue to different extents. A final decision on the level of teams that we would host is still being discussed and will be determined soon.

Old Business: Treadmill Sale Update

Aughinbaugh

Aughinbaugh and several board members assessed the construction of the treadmill and the platform in more detail. They would be able to remove the wood platform surrounding the treadmill, however the machine itself will need to be taken out in 4 sections in order to fully remove it. The potential buyer is still interested in purchasing the equipment. Aughinbaugh will continue to work on the removal and sale of the item. He will provide updates in the future as needed.

Old Business: Welcome Packet/Stampede Apparel Update

Goebel/ Wilson

Goebel gave a brief report to the board on the implementation of a welcome packet for the 2021-2022 season to all members of West Fargo Hockey Association. She has been in contact with other associations across the state to gather information about special projects similar to this that they may incorporate for their members. Her initial ideas would be to include an apparel item or a credit with Go Promo, our new apparel vendor for the upcoming season, along with a small item such as a refrigerator magnet that could include a QR code to direct members to specific sites and information that are relevant for the hockey season. Other options included an information packet, vinyl stickers for

vehicles and coupons for local vendors with new/current partnerships. These packets would be distributed to each individual member and player of the association versus each family. Goebel has been working with Cigelske and Wilson on how to make this the most effective and useful for our association. Goebel has a meeting set up with Go Promo on June 7th to discuss more details and options from the merchandise standpoint. Gregoire also noted that in conjunction with the distribution of the welcome packets he would like to have a membership kick-off week to celebrate the launch of the new season.

Hockey Operations

Gregoire/Kisell

Gregoire presented the board with the status of summer camps and registrations. Currently the Girls, Goalies and Mites camps are full and registration has closed. Other mini-camps have some registrations but have not filled. The registration to the June mini-camps have closed. Current plans are to keep registration open for a month prior to the starts dates throughout the summer. July camps will have registration open until June and August camps will have registration open until July. This allows for more flexibility of families to add camps throughout the summer as their schedule allows. No changes will be made to the camps going forward in terms of dates, times or combining sessions.

He has been working with Wilson on reviewing and updating the handbook for the 2021-2022 season. It will be presented for review by the board at the next meeting. Gregoire also continues to work on improving the locker room protocols to enhance player's experience. He is proposing to keep the time limit of 15 minutes prior to practices with the suggested limit of 30 minutes before games. Coaches should still enforce the locker room protocols on game days but have the discretion of adapting times to the needs of their team. These proposed updates will be added to the handbook for the upcoming season.

After attending the most recent State hockey meeting Gregoire was informed that West Fargo was awarded the opportunity to host the 19U, 15U or a combination of those levels for the state hockey tournaments in March 2022. The levels we host will be determined based on what the state decides to do with those levels and their respective tournaments. Gregoire feels positive that it will most likely be both age levels that we would host as a combined tournament. He recommended that we consider hosting the tournament at Veterans Memorial Arena based on past experiences with other venues and locations.

Gregoire is proposing that no changes be made to the budget and registration fees for the 2021-2022 season. The current budget and registration costs appear to be sufficient for the needs of the association at this point in time.

Zach Feltman was offered and accepted the position of Hockey Operations Assistant. He will begin the transition to this new position on May 24th, 2021 as a full-time employee of West Fargo Hockey Association. Wilson has also fully transitioned from the Hockey Scheduler to her new role as the Operations Manager.

Gaming Operations

Campbell/Nelson

Campbell reported that we are required to provide our Quarterly Gaming Tax returns to the membership. In prior years, before Campbell was with WFHA, it was posted on the wall in Veterans Memorial Arena. The city auditor provided clarification to Campbell that information posted on the website for membership to request access to see the document would be sufficient. As this is public information, any member can contact Campbell or Tyson Nelson to view the document at anytime and it will be made available to them.

Campbell discussed the current cost of gaming employees in consideration of the upcoming budget. Presently the base pay rate begins at \$4.90, not including tips. He stated that the board may need to consider raising the hourly wages for gaming employees to retain current staff. Some other charities with gaming have recently raised wages to an hourly rate between \$7.25 and \$8.00. Currently there are 25 employees with our gaming sites and they receive no other benefits or work incentives aside from customer tips. Considering the recent job market, we have been fortunate not to have to close any tables due to lack of dealers. Our retention rate over the past year has been stable with only recent changes in

resignations and hiring of new staff. This will be discussed further as the budget for the 2021-2022 season and financial year is developed.

Campbell has been in contact with Scheels regarding the gun raffle for 2022 as we would begin selling tickets within the next three months for the raffle. The date for the next gun raffle will be April 8th, 2022 as this allows for the fundraising revenue to be recorded in a new financial quarter which simplifies the accounting process and allows any loose ends to be finalized without crossing between quarters as compared to a raffle date in late March.

West Fargo Parks Meeting Update

Cigelske/Haider

Aughinbaugh updated the board on several items discussed during a recent West Fargo Parks meeting. The addition of flooring around the rink in Veterans Arena 2 has received three cost quotes with an average of \$72,000. Billing with the vendor and the auditor is proving to be a bit complicated with the sharing of costs between the West Fargo Park District and West Fargo Hockey Association. It was requested that we pay the full amount for the flooring and then be reimbursed by the West Fargo Parks District for their portion.

The ice for Veterans Arena 2 has been reinstalled for the upcoming season with the addition of the Stampede Logo at center ice. Jamie is also making small upgrades to the arena for our organization and will be repurposing the wood currently surrounding the skating treadmill to build benches for extra seating in Vets 1 & 2. This will be at no cost to WFHA. Currently Vets 2 has a large green stripe that runs the perimeter of the arena. The green paint in the arena, with the exception of the scoreboard, will be repainted in a blue shade that matches the Stampede colors. Aughinbaugh requested that we provide a paint code to the facility to ensure that the color is a match to our logo. The materials and labor to make these additional changes will be provided at no cost to us as well.

Center Ice

Nelson

Nelson provided the board with a background of the function and purpose of Center Ice. It is provided to our members as a celebration and kick-off to the season as opposed to a fundraiser. In 2020 the event was cancelled due to COVID and will be reinstated for the upcoming season. It will be held on October 8, 2021 as a pre-season event. The event will be held at the Hartl Building at the West Fargo Fairgrounds. Tickets are not yet available for sale but it is planned to allow the purchase of tickets along with player registration. Registration will open on July 1st and planning for Center Ice will begin as soon as possible to allow for the sale of tickets with this. This event will be 21 and over with a DJ, food and silent auction with donated items. Nelson has not yet assembled a committee but will be seeking members soon to begin planning the event.

2021-2022 Fiscal Year Budget

Aughinbaugh/Raan/Thayer

Aughinbaugh, Raan and Benson have been working to compile a preliminary budget. A finalized budget for 2021-2022 will be presented at the June 21st, 2021 board meeting for review and approval. Preliminary copies of the budget will be distributed to board members in advance of the meeting. The budget for the upcoming 2021-2022 financial year must be approved by July 1st, 2021.

Board Member Annual Certifications

Elkins

Elkins provided an overview of the annual certifications required of board members. In order to remain in good standing with the board each elected member is to complete registration with USA Hockey, a bi-annual background check and core training or refresher training with Safesport. Once these requirements are finished, each member is to complete a registration form that is then submitted electronically to the Operations Manager. Wilson will review the forms and track the completion of the requirements for each board member. All board members are to complete the annual certification requirements by the next board meeting on June 21st.

Annual Membership Survey

Cigelske

Cigelske reviewed the annual survey results for the 2020-2021 season with the board and provided comparisons with prior years. She also mentioned some slight changes and clarifications to the survey that would be helpful for the 2021-2022 season. Gregoire commented that some positive changes have occurred over the past few years and as a whole the organization has made great strides in providing players with a positive experience. He also stated that these survey results help us to continue to examine the current policies, improve our processes and maintain overall member satisfaction for each subsequent season.

Raan exited the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Office Lease Update

Aughinbaugh

Aughinbaugh provided an update to the board on the lease of the current West Fargo Hockey Office. The building that our office is currently located in is being sold to a former tenant. Our current lease runs through March 2022. The owner of our current office building also owns the property across the street to the east which is presently a dance studio. Those tenants will be vacating the location in early fall and we have the option to lease a space at that building. The new location will only have the capacity to house 3 renters versus the current capacity in the present building of 5 renters. If we choose to pursue the new adjacent location, they would be able to reconfigure the office space to our organizations needs starting in October. It would be ready for occupancy by January 2022. This timeline allows us to slowly transition between the locations within those 2 months. Aughinbaugh commented that we would be able to have offices in the new location and also create a space that could serve as a conference room with multiple purposes. The potential new location would also have the benefit of an additional 400 square feet of space at a comparable cost to the current location and still be in close proximity to Veterans Arena. Wilson requested that a moving company be retained to assist with transition process when the time comes to vacate the present property. Kuehne suggested that with this impending move and new space, the board consider adding the expense of furniture items to the upcoming budget for 2021-2022 with the intent to properly outfit the space with functional, multi-purpose pieces that can meet a variety of needs.

Adjournment

Aughinbaugh

Kuehne made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Haider. Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m. by President Alex Aughinbaugh.

Board of Directors

Alex Aughinbaugh, President

Josh Benson, Past President

Scott Haider, Executive Vice President

Jareb Raan, Treasurer

Sarah Elkins, Secretary

Kelly Kisell, Director of Hockey Operations

James Cailao, Director of Tournaments

Seth Rehm, Director of Compliance & Safe Sport

Kayla Goebel, Director of Membership & Recruitment

Ryan Thayer, Director of Business Operations

Brent Kuehne, Director of Facilities & Equipment

Kristen Cigelske, Director of Communications & Marketing

Eric Nelson, Director of Fund Raising & Gaming