

# West Fargo Hockey Association Board Meeting

Board Meeting Minutes: Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Rustad Recreation Center: Dakota Room 601 26<sup>th</sup> Ave E West Fargo, ND 58078

## Board Members:

*Present:* Alex Aughinbaugh, Scott Haider, Brett Anderson, Adam Guy, Sarah Elkins, Kelly Kisell, Seth Rehm, Ryan Thayer, Kristen Cigelske, Eric Nelson

*Absent:* James Cailao

## Others Present:

*Executive Director:* Jeremy Jorgenson

*Hockey Director:* Mike Parnell

*Assistant Hockey Director:* Zach Feltman

*Charitable Gaming Director:* Jason Campbell

**Members Present:** See attached file

## PROCEEDINGS:

**Meeting called to order** at 6:01 p.m. by President Scott Haider

### Welcome Address & Statement

Haider

Haider welcomed all attendees to the 2022-2023 Annual Membership Meeting and shared an overview of the meeting agenda. He took a few moments to thank the board members in attendance and specifically recognize the outgoing board members Kristen Cigleske, Seth Rehm, Kelly Kisell, Alex Aughinbaugh and Sarah Elkins for their past three years of service. Board members commit extra time and service to support the organization and he expressed his appreciation for everything they have done to help West Fargo Hockey during their terms. Haider also introduced the WFHA Office Staff in attendance and called special attention to Shana Wilson to express his gratitude for her work as a board member and WFHA employee.

### Association Year in Review and A Look Ahead

Jorgenson

After introducing himself, Executive Director Jeremy Jorgenson updated members on the staffing changes for the 2023-2024 season. With the departure of Wilson, her position as the Operations Manager has been redefined and separated into two distinct positions based on the emerging needs of WFHA. There will now be two distinct roles of Hockey Operations and Internal Gaming Auditor. Clarification between the roles was necessary as our organization continues to grow and will better service both the gaming department and operations of hockey. Erica Lohse has been hired as the full-time Internal Gaming Auditor. The position of Hockey Operations is currently being reevaluated and once it is clearly defined Jorgenson will look to fill the new position.

An update was provided on the Veterans Arena Project. The work done by Jorgenson and the board over the past year has created positive working relationships with both the West Fargo School District and the West Fargo Parks District. With the Letter of Intent (LOI) in place all parties are starting to move towards the design phase. Several aspects of the project are being taken into consideration with the intent of developing a planning timeline that can guide the project and assist in moving in the right direction at the optimal time. Project costs are being shared by all parties with \$10 Million from WFHA, \$5 Million from West Fargo Parks and \$5 Million from West Fargo School District. WFHA has already pledged \$2 Million dollars of our operational income towards the cost of the project. Phase 1 of the Capital Campaign has started with an identification of 25 potential donors; conversations are taking place with the identified parties and community interest for this project and correlating support continues to grow.

As our gaming maintains a trend in a positive direction over the past few years Jorgenson stated that a long-term strategic plan will be integral to handling the financial surplus. A large, long-term project was recently completed within the gaming department. The gaming ICM (Internal Control Manual) has been completely updated over the past year comprising more than 60 hours worth of work in the 90-page document. This document is integral to sustaining our compliance with the local and state departments to ensure that our gaming business maintains a positive standing.

### **Membership Survey Summary**

**Jorgenson**

Jorgenson shared the results of the Membership Survey from 2022-2023. Parnell, Feltman and himself have thoroughly reviewed all of the responses and comments submitted by those participating in the survey. Common themes identified from the survey were related to compliance, parent & player behavior, locker room and accountability on the bench. Members specified that they would also like to have the hockey director and assistant hockey director on the ice more to support the development of the players. Based on these specific items work will begin to address those topics for the 2023-2024 season. Overall member satisfaction was at 71% which was down from 79% in the 2021-2022 season. The highest satisfaction rating for all the years they survey has been offered was at 84% in 2020-2021.

### **Review of Hockey Year 2022-2023**

**Parnell**

Parnell thanked the members for their support in attending the annual meeting and expressed his gratitude to the board for allowing him the opportunity to join the WFHA as the Hockey Director. He shared specific praise to Jorgenson, Feltman, Wilson and the Gaming staff for the success of the past season. Parnell expressed that over the season he received positive feedback from many other associations during the season. This reflects well on the respect that was showcased by our teams and speaks well to the culture that Parnell is hopeful to cultivate across the board.

A review of the 2022-2023 season was given with emphasis on coaching recruitment, direction and development. At the travel level WFHA has doubled the number of female coaches with the most female coaching representation in the state. He felt the most positive outcome of the coaching development initiatives implemented this year was the camaraderie of the coaches across levels. Parnell shared a unique highlight of WFHA as we were the only association in the state to have a team at every offered/available level of play.

### **2023-2024 Hockey Season**

**Parnell**

Looking ahead to the upcoming season, Parnell shared details of "The Vision". This is a strategic plan intended to focus on the short-term and long-term improvement and development across specific hockey areas. The strategic plan was crafted from the membership survey results, coaching survey results, team manager survey results and the specific comments shared in each of those forums. A master list was then created through which areas of growth were identified that helped to form "The Vision" and to guide the direction of development in order to create ongoing consistency and continuity.

He highlighted the area of coach retention which is one of his top focuses. Staying in contact and building upon the existing relationships is a top priority as he identified the challenges coaches face in their roles and the time commitment required. Work and planning are also being completed to recruit new hires and forecast the needs for the new season. Planning for and executing the recruiting process properly is important to find those that will have the most impact on the organization and our player development.

Preparations for the Stampede Summer Academy began in January through the creation of a separate strategic plan. Parnell is excited to get back on the ice with the players in a few months. The focus will be to build on fundamentals and techniques that can carryover directly into the 2023-2024 season. Over the course of the next few months Parnell and Feltman will also begin working on some internal restructuring in order to be more available to teams during the seasons for both practices and games. They are excited for the opportunity to have more dedicated time to being on the ice with the players and assisting coaches in a hands-on way with player development.

Nelson introduced himself and shared an overview of his role as Director of Fundraising and Gaming. In his duties he shares a responsibility for the Winter Raffle and the Gun Raffle. The Gun Raffle for the 2022-2023 season will be held tomorrow, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in the Hartl Building at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds. Nelson gave an overview of the current gaming sites supporting West Fargo Hockey. Recently there has been the addition of two new sites, Pit 88 in Amenia added in the summer of 2022 and Top Shelf Tavern added last month. Nelson commended Jason Campbell, Charitable Gaming Director and Tyson Nelson, Assistant Gaming Director for their attentiveness to all of the gaming sites. As gaming sites expand so does the work required to maintain the sites which also requires an increase in gaming staff as well. With the exception of Fort Knox, all sites have e-tabs; Bingo is also offered at M&J Saloon and Traditions.

Nelson spoke to audience regarding the legislative sessions and their impact on charitable gaming. Changes that take place legislatively at the state level have a direct impact on the charitable gaming for WFHA. Gaming is a very large business for West Fargo Hockey, is integral to our association and is run accordingly. Maintaining a good standing with the state and the local gaming sites is imperative for the continued support of WFHA. Gaming helps to support our current ice, is critical for pursuing future ice, helps us to increase the offerings to our members and allows us to help maintain the costs of registration and play for our membership.

**Election for Open Board Positions****Haider**

Haider opened the floor for potential board candidates to introduce themselves, share their background and explain their perspective of wanting to be involved as a member of the WFHA Board. All candidates were present and invited to present themselves to the meeting attendees. Running for Executive Vice-President were David Benson and Josh Benson; Alex Christiansen, Nicole Farley and Billy Gierszewski for Vice-President of Hockey Operations; Jordan Lill, Jenni Peters and Judy Solberg for Secretary. After candidates completed their introductions all WFHA members were given the chance to cast their votes via private ballots and the individual ballots were tallied; a total of 62 ballots were cast. The results of the election were presented to the membership by President Scott Haider:

- *Executive Vice-President:* Josh Benson
- *Secretary:* Jordan Lill
- *Vice-President of Hockey Operations:* Alex Christiansen

All elected members will serve a 3-year term ending in April 2026. Haider thanked all candidates for applying and wanting to serve WFHA in the capacity as a board member. Congratulations were extended to all the newly elected board members.

**Meeting Adjournment****Haider**

Haider adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

**Board of Directors**

*Scott Haider, President*

*Alex Aughinbaugh, Past President*

*Brett Anderson, Executive Vice President*

*Adam Guy, Treasurer*

*Sarah Elkins, Secretary*

*Kelly Kisell, Director of Hockey Operations*

*James Cailao, Director of Tournaments*

*Seth Rehm, Director of Compliance & Safe Sport*

*Ryan Thayer, Director of Business Operations*

*Kristen Cigelske, Director of Communications & Marketing*

*Eric Nelson, Director of Fund Raising & Gaming*