

Michigan Amateur Hockey Association, District 8 Council

Meeting Minutes, Fall 2025

October 18, 2025

Jerzi's 41 Sports Bar, Champion, Michigan

Submitted by Walt Milligan, D8 Secretary, October 18, 2025

Attendance:

MAHA

Al Wakeham, D8 Chair
Tim Jaska, D8 Director
Kitti Loukus, D8 Director
Kevin Yohe, D8 Director
Walt Milligan, D8 Secretary

Tom Berry, MAHA President
Jason Reynolds, MAHA Director of Operations and Marketing
Judy Niemi, MAHA VP Emeritus
Bob Yohe, USA Hockey Michigan Registrar

Calumet	Jason Meneguzzo
Copper Country	Ryan Galerneau
Dickinson	Tim Jaska, Missy Jaska
Esanaba	Nick Blankenheim
Iron Range	Kristin Lystila
Iron River	Tina Brunswick, Jay Aldrich
Ironwood	Jason Bekkala
Keweenaw Bay	Dustin Lindemann
Manistique	Dale LaFoilie
Marquette	Kim Pond
Munising	Deidre Phillipson
Ontonagon	Brian Anderson
Sled Hockey UP	Allen Beauchamp
Tahquamenon	Ben Rahilly

Meeting called to order by Chair Al Wakeham at 9:15 am.

Introductions were made.

Motion (Jaska/Rahilly): Approve minutes from the Spring 2025 meeting. Approved unanimously.

In his Chair's Report, Wakeham noted that there were major changes in leadership and structure in MAHA recently. There is a new energetic President, Tom Berry. George Atkinson served as President for many years and is getting more involved with USA Hockey after stepping down.

MAHA day-to-day operations are now handled by a Board of Directors, which consists of a couple of MAHA officers and one representative from each District. Al Wakeham is the representative for District 8 currently. This structure appears to be better than the old one for our

District since all districts have equal representation and the District Representatives have a voting majority.

Wakeham thanked Judy Niemi for her many years of service to MAHA. The position that she held as VP of Officials was eliminated in the reorganization. She served the CCJHA and District 8 for many years prior to becoming a MAHA VP. She was unanimously elected by the MAHA Congress as one of the first Emeritus Members of MAHA. District Council gave her a warm round of applause.

Jason Reynolds, MAHA Director of Operations and Marketing, discussed several issues.

- Coaches need to be aware of Michigan's concussion laws and must be trained in "return to play" protocols and online record-keeping.
- SafeSport is using a 3rd party provider for all investigations and reporting. This seems to be working well.
- Any allegation of child sexual abuse must be immediately reported to SafeSport. Every volunteer involved in MAHA is a "mandatory reporter" and must report any allegation that they become aware of immediately.
- New policies and instructions/kits are being developed to help districts with hearings and other issues. They are working hard on new policies for supplemental discipline.
- The Association of the Year program is being revamped. Each district will have an Association of the Year who will be awarded \$1,000. These will automatically be entered into the Association of the Year statewide competition with prizes of \$7,500, \$5,000 and \$2,500.
- Associations should be sure to follow up and contact potential players who show up to Try Hockey for Free events. A discussion of this followed. Another discussion followed where a lot of D8 Council members complained about the trouble they have getting and keeping volunteers and coaches, due to costs and the painful training requirements.

Tom Berry, the new President of MAHA gave an overview presentation.

- His overall philosophy is to give more power to the Districts to run MAHA.
- Committee structures are being evaluated, simplified, and combined in some cases. Some new committees are being formed in areas of need.
- He wants to see much larger attendance at the Summer and Winter MAHA meetings by Association volunteers – not just the District Directors. He wants to substantially broaden participation. All are welcome.

Bob Yohe presented the Registrar/MAHA report.

- Registration numbers are too preliminary to draw any conclusions on loss or gain of players.
- USA Hockey Level 4 or 5 coaches whose credentials are expiring in December will need 5 hours of training to stay eligible. MAHA is accepting CPR training for this now. The USA Hockey procedures to track this are manual right now, and there might be issues with the timing of getting credit.
- Bob discussed the national tournament sites and dates, which are on the MAHA website.

Wakeham presented the Coaching Report that was emailed by Coaching Director Sands. The online Coaching Learning Center is very good. It is one website for all coaching credentials and training.

Jaska presented the Officiating Report.

- Erik Berglund from DAHA is the new Referee in Chief.

- Coaches need to help new young officials and give the kids a break.
- There is a huge need to recruit and mentor new officials. Associations should try to find funds to support clinic costs and equipment costs for new officials.
- MAHA has funds to buy “green arm bands” that identify first year officials, with the hope that parents and coaches will notice this and give the kids the benefit of the doubt.

Beauchamp gave the Disabled/Sled Hockey Report. He had surgery this year and is trying to keep the program going but is unable to play. Numbers are down substantially. The new Houghton team may not have enough players to continue and will probably not register with USA Hockey.

Association representatives gave their reports. The smaller associations are really struggling with player numbers and having their players move to other associations. The larger associations seem to be stable or slightly growing.

Wakeham reminded people that every team needs to register their intent to enter the State Tournament by November 1. There will be no exceptions or extensions granted to this. Teams that fail to register by November 1 will not be allowed to play in the District or State Tournaments.

Dates and locations for Regional and District Tournaments were confirmed and approved by unanimous vote (K. Yohe/Jaska). Sites and dates are on the District 8 website and are attached at the end of this document.

Milligan and K. Yohe gave the CUP League report. Gamesheets is set up. Associations should send their CUP League teams to Kevin this week. The scheduling meeting will be on Saturday, November 1. There will be a vote about what to do for trophies.

Speaking of Gamesheets, it has been problematic when coaches try to contest a scoresheet weeks or months after a game is completed. The officials will not be able to remember the events. Coaches can see the sheets very soon after the game and should look every time to see if there was a mistake. Game misconducts are the biggest issue.

Motion (Rahilly/K. Yohe): Scoresheets cannot be challenged or modified more than 7 days after the game. Approved unanimously.

Brian Anderson volunteered to serve on the new MAHA Committee on Mental Health.

Tentative date was selected for the MAHA District 8 Spring Meeting: April 18, 2026.

Motion (K. Yohe/Rahilly): Adjourn. Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.

Blind Draw for 2025-2026 Regional and District Seeding

Held at MAHA District 8 Spring Meeting, April 12, 2025

Ironwood Polar Bear Youth Hockey

Escanaba Area Junior Hockey

Tahquamenon Area Hockey

Manistique Hockey Assn

Iron Amateur Hockey Association

Copper Country Junior Hockey Association

Munising Hockey Association

Marquette Junior Hockey Corp

Dickinson Amateur Hockey Association

Calumet Hockey Association

Iron Range Hockey Association

Ontonagon Amateur Hockey Association

Keweenaw Bay Hockey Association

Bidding for State Tournaments, April 12, 2025

The District is hosting 10U State Tournaments this year.

Association	Tournament
Keweenaw Bay	
Ontonagon	
Manistique	10UB
Tahquamenon	
Munising	
Escanaba	
Iron River	
Calumet	10U AA
Iron Range	
Ironwood	
Copper Country	
Marquette	
DAHA	

Priority List for next time.

Association	Tournament
Keweenaw Bay	
Ontonagon	
Tahquamenon	
Munising	
Escanaba	
Iron River	
Iron Range	
Ironwood	
Copper Country	
Marquette	
DAHA	
Calumet	
Manistique	

Bidding for District Tournaments, April 12, 2025

Association	Tournament
Ontonagon	
Tahquamenon	
Copper Country	
Marquette	10U B, Feb 6-8, 2026
Munising	14U B, Feb 6-8, 2026
Keweenaw Bay	
DAHA	
Iron Range	
Ironwood	12U B, Feb 6-8, 2026
Iron River	
Escanaba	
Manistique	
Calumet	

Priority list for next time

Association	Tournament
Ontonagon	
Tahquamenon	
Copper Country	
Keweenaw Bay	
DAHA	
Iron Range	
Iron River	
Escanaba	
Manistique	
Calumet	
Ironwood	
Munising	
Marquette	

AA District Tournaments, April 12, 2025

There are too many AA teams in the District now to hold all ages at the same site, and associations with AA teams not in Marquette, Calumet or Copper Country want to be able to host these tournaments sometimes.

A committee is being formed to come up with a new system. For this year:

Association	Result
Marquette	10U AA and 14U AA, Jan 30 – Feb 1, 2026
Calumet	12U A and AA, Jan 30 – Feb 1, 2026

Bidding for Regional Tournaments, April 12, 2025

Association	Tournament
Iron Range	
Copper Country	
Calumet	
Marquette	
Ontonagon	
Tahquamenon	
Manistique	
Iron River	
Munising	East Regionals, Jan 16-18, 2026
Keweenaw Bay	
DAHA	
Escanaba	
Ironwood	West Regionals, Jan 16-18, 2026

Swing teams:

- 10U – Iron Range
- 12U – Dickinson
- 14U – Dickinson

Priority list for next time

Association	Tournament
Iron Range	
Copper Country	
Calumet	
Marquette	
Ontonagon	
Tahquamenon	
Manistique	
Iron River	
Keweenaw Bay	
DAHA	
Escanaba	
Ironwood	
Munising	