

# UVHA Board Meeting Minutes



February 21, 2018 ~ 6:00 PM

Kinney Pike Insurance, White River Junction, Vermont

1. **Attendance:** Kylie Curtis, Sarah Morlock, Jason Spaulding, Justin Barwood, Matt Maher, Roger Gillies, Alex DeFelice, Josh Obar, Nate Dube, Bill Mann
2. **Meeting called to order:** 6:03 PM
  - a. The January 17<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were unanimously approved (motioned by Matt, seconded by Justin).
3. **Monthly Reports:**
  - a. **Webmaster-**Matt pointed out that the link to the Policies and Procedures document needs to be in working order. Jason will contact Kelly and ask him to remedy this.
  - b. **Coaching Coordinator-**Alex sent an email to all coaches after Dillon reported that the locker rooms were left in poor condition following this past weekend's games. Dillon also asked that we remind families that there is a strict "no stick" rule in the lobby and hallways. Alex also reminded tournament-bound coaches that they will need to get a check from Ryan to pay the tournament fee and to be sure that their books are in good order, including verified birth certificates and completed Consent to Treat forms. Lastly, Alex made a list of prospective and returning coaches' for next season and confirmed that there will need to be a call for coaches at the 10U level. He suggested that an association-wide email be sent in conjunction with the end-of-season survey in order to gauge interest.
  - c. **Equipment Manager-**The ice packs in the equipment box were frozen and not usable. These need to be replaced and stored in a different location so that we don't encounter the same issue. Sarah will ask John to attend to this immediately.
  - d. **SafeSport Coordinator-**No report.
  - e. **Treasurer-**Ryan wasn't able to be present. Jason reported that the UVHA incurred a number of fees for late score reporting and roster issues. These have since been paid.
  - f. **Fundraising-**Final preparations for the Skate-a-thon are underway. Sarah shared that tee shirts are on order and prize donations are rolling in. She will again soon ask coaches to bring and man grills for the event's barbeque. And, after some

delay, NHAHA confirmed that the UVHA was awarded an ADM grant. A check will be mailed post haste.

- g. Registrar**-Kylie shared next season's projected registration numbers, by team: Bantams-26, Peewees-40, Squirts-27, Travel Mites-30 (more likely 25), House Mites-19, and Termites-7. The group agreed these numbers would support two Bantam teams, three Peewee and two Squirt teams. Anticipating a need for supplemental ice to support these additional teams, Jason will reach out to Union, Proctor and Cardigan to see about securing ice at their rinks next season.
- h. Scheduler**-As he expected, Bill has had trouble scheduling out end-of-season ice. Vermont teams are generally done with play after the conclusion of their State tournament and there are few New Hampshire teams he's been able to schedule with. Bill examined the equity of games, by team. He noticed a slight disparity for Squirt 1 and is working to correct this. Alex recently learned that referees are needed for a Peewee 1 home game being hosted at Vermont Academy. Bill will reach out to Dick to see about getting refs at this game, despite the short notice. To make up for a couple of cancellations this season, Termites will be offered a sheet of ice this Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 AM. Termites will also be welcomed to join the Try Hockey for Free event on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00 AM. Sarah will reach out to Brock to inform him of these opportunities. Bill voiced that he felt it was imperative that we determine the target, total number of games each team should be playing in a season given the likely demand for ice in 2018-2019. Jason reached out to coaches, but none opted to register teams in the Pot-of-Gold. Justin pointed out that with Regionals being the same weekend, coaches with tournament-bound teams were unable to commit to the Pot-of-Gold because no refunds would be issued if teams needed to back out to attend Regionals. Finally, as of today, there's nothing on the calendar for March 12-16<sup>th</sup>, WABA's last week of ice. Justin will look at this last week of ice and propose some uses. Sarah will contact Laura Sgrecci at Dartmouth Athletics to see about renting ice at Thompson the week of the March 23<sup>rd</sup> through the 25<sup>th</sup>. She'll copy Bill on this email.

#### 4. **New Business:**

- a. Mid-season Letter**-Jason emailed his mid-season letter, communicating reminders for expectations of behavior and the need for volunteerism. He received some response, all positive.
- b. Next Season Planning-**

  - i. 8U Policy\*: Only age-appropriate players are allowed to participate in USA Hockey sanctioned 8U games and tournaments. Despite a past precedence of flexibility, the UVHA will need to adhere to this policy. This leaves a hole in programming for players coming to the game late who aren't yet ready for age-appropriate play. The Board was confident that we could find ice to accommodate these players through a

development program. Matt pointed out that our greatest obstacle is that we have not had the coaching to support this program. Going forward, players not ready to compete at a Tier V level will simply need to play Club hockey. Expectations need to be set in advance of the season and clearly communicated to families. And the Board will need to make a plea for volunteers from the membership to coach a Club team.

- ii. Girls' Options: The response to the Girls' Clinics was extremely positive. There's certainly interest from the Storm, Hartford High School girls and clinic participants to have this continue and grow in the future. Jason assured the group that ice could be made available. Again, volunteers are needed to champion this program.
- c. **Setting Cost Structure**-While we'll see an increase in the cost of ice next season, the Board concurred that, if possible, we would not impose an increase in registration fees. We'll need to examine operational costs, by level. Matt has already built out the Mite budget. Sarah will email Ryan and ask that this be done expeditiously, before next season's rates need to be set and communicated in April.
- d. **School Suspensions**-Jason explained that a Storm player was recently suspended from school. Parents asked whether or not the UVHA would also impose any consequence. Coaches responded by following the guidelines explicitly set forth by USA Hockey. The group determined that coaches took an appropriate course of action and that, in the unfortunate event of future Code of Conduct breaches, we'll again adhere to USA Hockey protocol.
- e. **Rink Funding Update**-Scott Hausler presented a budget proposal for the upkeep of WABA, including an allowance for the replacement of the refrigeration unit. Jason and Justin were in attendance and shared the Select Board's response was less than supportive. It was even suggested that WABA no longer function as an ice rink, but a year-round turf facility. The Select Board has requested a feasibility study. Justin and Jason will attend the next meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Hartford High School also plans to send representation in support of WABA continuing to function as an ice rink. Both HYHA and the Friends of WABA are willing to pledge funds to support the purchase of a new refrigeration unit. Sarah will reach out to Kylie to obtain some data to be shared with the Select Board at this next meeting. Zack suggested noting the number of girl skaters in addition to the total registration number.
- f. **USA Hockey vs AAU Hockey**-Jason recently had a conversation with a New Hampshire State representative who explained that there were a number of NH teams considering leaving the GSL for AAU. It is rumored that many current GSL associations will transition their Tier III, IV and V teams to the AAU, only leaving their Tier I and II teams in the GSL. A significant drop in GSL teams would greatly impact UVHA programming. Jason will discuss this possible shift with neighboring associations.

- g. Parking Lot Vandalism-**Between 8:15 and 9:15 AM on Sunday morning (February 18<sup>th</sup>), it was reported to coaches that a number of cars were vandalized: windshields were broken and it appeared as though rocks were thrown at these vehicles. Parents need to manage their children's behavior at the rink. Another email will be sent to parents reminding them of their responsibility.

**5. NH State Meeting Report:**

- a.** The next NHAHA meeting is May 19<sup>th</sup>. This will be their Annual Meeting.

**6. Meeting Adjourned: 8:08 PM**

*\*3/5/18 Addendum-Jason made an email motion to accept the proposed "Mite Program Definitions and Policies for Participation and Advancement" (copied below). Sarah seconded his motion. Following some minor changes in language, five members of the Board voted in favor of the proposal, none opposed (MM, BM, SM, AD, KC).*

*Purpose of Proposal: Proposal to rename Termites/House Mites/Travel Mites to Learn-to-Skate/Learn-to-Play/8U Travel and set guidelines for participation and advancement. In doing so we should remove language that implies progression is age-based for the earliest levels and rebrand using terms that emphasize skills-based advancement up to the point of travel teams, where age-appropriate hockey becomes mandatory.*

## **Mite Program Definitions & Policies for Participation and Advancement**

### **Learn-to-Skate Participation (previously Termites)**

- a. Participation in the Learn-to-Skate program has no strict age limits. Instead, the inclusion or exclusion of skaters within this program will be made based on the preservation of a safe environment for the majority of the participants. Coaches at this level are to consider such elements as relative size, body control, coordination, temperament, and aggressiveness when assessing the overall safety within a group of skaters spanning a broad range of ages.
- b. Participation in Learn-to-Skate requires no prior skating experience and has no minimum age requirement, although skaters should be able to take direction from a non-parent adult, follow-instructions, and generally stay on-task for 1 hour without parent intervention.
- c. Advancement from Learn-to-Skate to Learn-to-Play requires the recommendation of the Learn-to-Skate coaching team. The Learn-to-Skate coaching team should evaluate the advancement readiness of each participant on or before the end of the season and clearly communicate the status to the player's parents. In the case of a determination that a player is not ready to advance, the coaching team should clearly communicate the areas of improvement required for future advancement.

### **Learn-to-Play Participation (previously House Mites)**

- a. Participation in the Learn-to-Play program has no strict age limits. Instead, the inclusion or exclusion of skaters within this program will be made based on the preservation of a safe environment for the majority of the participants. Coaches at this level are to consider such elements as relative size, body control, coordination, temperament, and aggressiveness when assessing the overall safety within a group of skaters spanning a broad range of ages.
- b. Participation in Learn-to-Play requires previous participation in Learn-to-Skate. Alternatively, players who have not previously participated in Learn-to-Skate must demonstrate skating proficiency consistent with the

USA Hockey Skill Progression for 8U players. Proficiency assessments will be made by the Learn-to-Play coaching team.

c. Should coaches elect to participate in cross-ice games or tournaments with the Learn-to-Play group, then only players meeting the age requirements of the games or tournaments may participate. Historically, most of the Learn-to-Play group has consisted of 8U players and the Learn-to-Play group has participated in a limited number of games and 1-2 tournaments at the 8U level. Families of players who are not 8U (10U or 12U for example), should be notified both at registration and again at the beginning of the season that they are ineligible to participate in such events to set expectations appropriately.

d. Advancement from Learn-to-Play to 8U, 10U, or 12U Travel teams requires the recommendation of the Learn-to-Play coaching team. The Learn-to-Play coaching team should evaluate the advancement readiness of each participant on or before the end of the season and communicate the status to the player's parents. In the case of a determination that a player is not ready to advance, the coaching team should clearly communicate the areas of improvement required for advancement.

### **8U Travel Participation (previously Travel Mites)**

a. Participation in 8U Travel requires previous participation in Learn-to-Play. Players who have not previously participated in Learn-to-Play must demonstrate skating and game-play proficiency consistent with the USA Hockey Skill Progression for 8U players. Proficiency will be assessed by the 8U Travel coaching team, and the coaching team may make exceptions to this policy in the interest of generating sufficient numbers to complete a team.

b. Participation in full-ice 8U Travel is limited to final-year 8U Travel players who will be advancing to 10U in the following season. The 8U Travel coaching team may make exceptions to this policy in the interest of generating sufficient numbers to complete a team or if a younger player has demonstrated the skill necessary to participate safely and competitively as determined by a majority of the coaching team. The age of all full-ice 8U Travel players must be consistent with any standing exemption granted by USA Hockey to sanction full-ice 8U play.