

New Prague Hockey Association
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Meeting Location: NP Fire Department Meeting Room
Wednesday, September 13th, 2023, 7:00 P.M.

Meeting called to order at 7:03pm.

1. ATTENDANCE

NPHA Board

President	Aaron Lindholm	present
Vice President	Jason Olson	present
Secretary	Miranda Vertnik	present
Treasurer	Ben Jones	present
Director of Operations	Mike Westing	present
Communication Director	Jess Snyder	present
Board Member at Large	Kirk Crabb	present
Past Board Member/BMAL	Tony Robles	present
Interim Manager Director	Amanda Will	absent

Jason notified the Board prior to the meeting that he would need to leave by 8:30pm to pick up one of his children. Amanda notified the Board that she would not be able to attend the meeting due to having a sick child at home.

Coordinator Positions

NPACC Manager	Justin Hauge	Absent
Gambling Manager	Nate Borwege	Absent
Ice Time Coordinator	Tyler Kienow	Absent
HDC Coordinator	Tim Applen	Present
Volunteer Coordinator	Aimee Bombardo	Present
Concession Stand Coordinator	Ashley Lindholm	Absent
Mite/8U Coordinator	VACANT	
Outdoor Ice Coordinator	Jeremy Denzer	Absent
Equipment Coordinator	Troy Gilbertson	Absent
Tournament Coordinator	VACANT	
Sponsorship Coordinator	Kristi Nelson	Absent
Safe Sport Coordinator	Chelsea Casey	Absent
Clothing & Apparel Coordinator	Amanda Will	Absent
Recruitment & Retention Coord	Brandy Rife	Absent

Others present: N/A

2. REPORTS

- 1. Secretary's Report (Miranda Vertnik):** Miranda shared the Meeting Minutes for August 2023 with the Board on August 15th. Minutes were co-written by Jason and Miranda, thanks Jason for helping while Miranda was attending a D6 meeting! There were no suggested revisions or changes to the minutes. A motion was made by Jason to approve the August 2023 Meeting Minutes, which was seconded by Jess. Motion carried 8-0 (with one Board member absent). Miranda will post the August 2023 Meeting Minutes to the NPHA website.

2. **Treasurer's Report (Ben Jones):** Ben shared the monthly financials with the Board prior to the meeting. He noted that the total registration revenue collected to date is \$233,273, with approximately \$78k more still owed in payment plan installments. We reviewed these numbers as compared to what we had budgeted for income and things seem to be on par with what was estimated this summer. It was noted that a couple families who have outstanding balances from last season have already registered for this year, those families will need to clear up their balances before their player can participate this season. Multiple reminders have been sent to these families already, Aaron will now reach out to those families with the reminder. Miranda made a motion to approve the August 2023 Treasurer's Report, which was seconded by Jess. Motion carried 8-0 (with one Board member absent).
3. **Gambling Report (Nate Borwege):** Nate did not attend the meeting this evening and reported to Aaron that the July 2023 Gambling Report was not ready at this time as he was awaiting information from the accountant.
3. **OLD BUSINESS**
 1. **Available Coordinator Positions:**
 1. **Gambling Manager** – As discussed in previous months, Nate will be stepping down from this role and would like to train someone to replace him. Jess will send out a communication about this position again and folks will be directed to Aaron for more information.
 2. **Website/Technology Coordinator** – On Sept 11th, Dallas Akre (new Mite/8U parent) volunteered for this position. Jess shared his bio with the group. She will be reaching out to him soon to discuss the position and then the Board will vote offline.
 3. **Tournament Coordinator** – Position posted, no interested candidates at this time. NPHA will be hosting the Pee wee B2 end of the year tournament, this position should be filled by a PWB2 parent.
 4. **Support for Sponsorship Coordinator** – Hollie Weckman's son will not be registered for this season, thus Hollie will not be able to continue in this position. Kristi Nelson has volunteered to help in this role. Aaron noted that Kristi has already been reaching out to possible sponsors. We will see how this role goes for Kristi and seek an assistant for her if needed.
 2. **Mite/8U Equipment Rental Program:** Thanks to funding received from the Matt Peterson Memorial donations and donations received from Metro Air Heating and Cooling, we were able to purchase 34 sets of Mite equipment to begin our equipment rental program. NPHA greatly appreciates these donations! Details are being worked out on how to roll out this program, equipment has not yet been delivered but will likely arrive within the next 30 days. Thanks to Aaron L, Amanda W, Anthony A, Kristi N, and Mike W for all your work getting this process started. Miranda suggested that details be listed on our website to help direct parents on how to obtain equipment. Discussion was also given to the storage of the equipment – the space at the rink is not ideal so we will look into a climate-controlled storage unit in NP.
 3. **Locked locker rooms at arena:** No updates on this as of yet.
 5. **Season Kickoff Event Updates:** The event had great attendance, out of the 267 players that were registered to play by the date of the event, there were 190 who attended the kickoff. Thank you to everyone who worked hard to put this event together! The two winners of the \$500 registration discount prize were contacted. We did not have apparel at the event, but this was due to a family emergency. We will try to set up another opportunity to have apparel at the rink for families to check out and place orders. Dan Iverson took pictures during the event and will be editing those photos in exchange for up to 10 DIBS hours. These photos can be used for marketing purposes, etc. Brandy, Ashley, and Kirk

will be meeting to debrief this event and the upcoming Dozinky parade and will provide more detailed information to the Board for planning ahead for next year.

6. **All-Association Meeting:** Aaron revised the power point presentation, and it was sent out to families on Sept 4th (after the registration deadline) since we will not be requiring returning families to attend an All-Association Meeting. He will email any new upper-level families directly to connect with them about the program and any questions they might have. We will still hold a meeting with our incoming Mite/8U families since there are so many more of them.

7. **Registration Updates**

1. **Preseason Development Camp:** On 8/16 it was communicated to registered families that they could opt for a partial camp participation option. Since then, 7 families switched from full to partial and 0 switched from tryout/eval preview session only to partial camp participation. In total we have 94 upper level and 37 Mite/8U players registered for the full camp, 18 upper level and 9 Mite/8U registered for the partial camp, and 18 upper level and 2 Mite/8U registered for the tryout/evaluation preview only. The grand total of players involved in the Preseason Camp, at this time, in some capacity is 178. We are continuing to have Mite/8U players sign up – their sessions don't begin until mid-October.
2. **Regular Season Registration:** We currently have 272 active registered players. The registration deadline was Sept 1st, any returning player registrations (except for Junior Gold) that come in since that date have a \$50 late fee applied. Players interested in participating in upper-level tryouts need to register by Sept 23rd. To date, we have 238 returning players and 34 new players (1 new JG, 1 new BA, 2 new 10U, and 2 new SQ, the rest are new Mite/8U players).
3. **Coaching Applications:** Since the application link was opened, we have had 52 coaches apply. We currently have 44 parent coach applicants, and 8 non-parent coach applicants. Miranda has been in communication with all coaching applicants about the status of their coaching training requirements and will continue to send regular updates. We will need more coaches to apply, we usually have something around 75 – 80 coaches. Jess will send out another reminder.
4. **Hardship Applications:** NPHA accepted hardship assistance applications through Aug 22nd. The Board met on 8/23 to review applications and make assistance determinations. There was a total of 10 families that applied (13 players total) – this is a big increase from previous years. The Board offered a \$300 discount to all upper-level players (there were no Mite/8U applicants) as well as an extended payment plan option (7 months instead of the normal 5 months). Miranda has communicated the offers with all 10 families, 9 families have accepted the assistance (both the discount and the extended payment plan). She is just waiting to hear back from one family to see if the assistance offered is enough to help support their child playing hockey.

4. **COORDINATOR UPDATES**

1. **President**

1. **NPACC Manager (Justin Hauge):** Aaron reported that he was unable to attend the recent arena meeting and hasn't received the recap from that meeting yet. Things are still being ironed out at the arena with Justin coming in as the new manager.
2. **Gambling Coordinator (Nate Borwege):** NPHA was approached by Smoke & Fire with a request to hold meat raffles at their establishment. We are interested in pursuing this, but likely will be unable to start this program until October. Details are still being worked out. We will need to find a team of members to take this on.

3. **Safe Sport Coordinator (Chelsea Casey):** An email went out to the association a few days ago about requirements for LRM. So far, a few families have sent their USA Hockey numbers to Miranda, and she's connected with each of those folks on whether they need to update their background screening etc. All LRM volunteers need to be claimed in the USA Hockey portal. Miranda has started a spreadsheet that will be shared with our Chelsea and all Team Managers so they can confirm whether someone is cleared for locker room monitoring duties. Ideally, we will have one parent from every family who can help with this role. NPHA has budgeted to reimburse each family for one background screening.
2. **Vice President**
 1. **HDC Coordinator (Tim Applen):** Tim shared that the HDC has finalized the upper-level tryout times, we will plan to send that out very soon so that families can plan accordingly. Discussion was given to Junior Gold estimates, at this point we estimate a possible 25 players who may register for JG. This is too many players for one team, but not enough for two teams. The HDC will be talking through how to handle a surplus of players (tryout vs first come first serve registration). Dan Rogers is reaching out to JG families to see who will commit to JG. As of today, we have 5 JG players registered. We can roster a maximum of 18 skaters and 2 goalies at the JG level. Tim asked if the association was planning to fill the Girls Program Coordinator role that we had advertised in the spring. Aaron noted that at this time we do not anticipate filling the role since there is a new HS Girls Head Coach who seems very engaged in bridging the youth and high school hockey programs. We will see how things go and fill that role in the future if necessary. Tim shared that the HDC has meetings scheduled for each level of play the week after tryouts. We plan to send those dates out ahead of time as well. He said that they plan to have an official attend the meeting to talk about sportsmanship and conduct. Tim then shared the upper-level teams to be declared with the district (due 9/15 – Jason will send the info to D6). These include the following: Bantam: A, B1, and C; Pee wee: A, B2, and C; Squirt: B1, B2, and C; and Girls 10U: B1 and B2. Discussion was given to why a Girls 10U A team was not recommended. Tim shared that the HDC has spent countless hours over the past six months discussing this. They have reviewed Live Barn video of 10U players, talked with coaches, talked with other associations both inside and outside of the district. Ultimately, it was recommended to make the step up to B1 rather than A as a jump to A would be 2 steps up and we do not have the team composition ready to make that jump. There are few A or AA players in the girls program, but as a whole, there is not an A level team at this time. We hope to host an A team in the future, and maybe this group of players can play at the A level as 12Us, but it is important not to jump so high so quickly. Tim noted that the team last year had played against a B1 team in tournament and the teams appeared evenly matched. That is a good place to be, one that is challenging but not heavily one-sided in either direction. Discussion was also given to the Bantam B1 designation as we had some parents voice concern about this level the past two seasons. It was noted that our Bantam B1 team has had some extra challenges in the district because other associations have hosted AA teams without hosting an A team. This is against MN Hockey policy, but the district has allowed it for some reason. We hope that the district will enforce the rules and require these teams to host an A team when they also have an AA team, so that their B1 teams are a true B1 team. Tim noted that our intention as an association is to play according to the rules and declare teams at our true level of play. Tim noted that looking at our projected Bantam players he anticipates the bubble between A and B1 to be a tough distinction and feels we will have a true

B1 team. Jason agreed as a coach of that team last season. Miranda made a motion to approve the upper-level teams as recommended by the HDC, which was seconded by Tony. Motion carried 7-0 (with two Board members absent). Tim then shared the HDCs thoughts on two players with the potential to playdown a level this season. The first is a player whose DOB places him at the SQ level, but he has medical/physical concerns and developmental delays that qualify him to playdown if the family would like. This player joined Tim and some of our other coaches on the ice recently and Tim spent some time talking with the player's mother. Tim shared that he feels this player can play with our SQ C team this season based on his ability, but let the mom know it is up to her on whether she feels he should play down due to his medical condition. Tim also provided her with some info on various programs for players with disabilities as another option (but those opportunities are up in St. Paul). Miranda reported that this player was recently registered at the Squirt level – he will not be participating in tryouts so he will be placed on the C team. It will be important to communicate this player's needs with the coaches on the SQ C team when those are assigned. Tim shared concern he has about one other player in the association whose DOB places her at the Bantam level, but she is new to the sport (this will be her second year) and playing at a level with checking may be unsafe. He noted that he shared these concerns with the players parents and encouraged them to reach out to Madison Drazan with the high school hockey program to talk about what playing at the high school level might look like for her. Miranda also noted that D6 is willing to allow this player to play at the PW C level for the upcoming season in the spirit of the play down exception this season that is being piloted by MN Hockey for 13-year-old players to allow them to play an additional year at 12U if the program does not have a 15U team (which we do not). She will communicate this option with the family as well. We would like to see this player continue playing hockey, but Bantam hockey will not be the best option for her development as a hockey player. Miranda reminded the rest of the Board that we still need to approve the revisions to the Handbook Appendix B that were suggested by the HDC to help clarify the extended evaluation process. Miranda made a motion to approve the tryout addendum to the Handbook as recommended by the HDC, which was seconded by Ben. Motion carried 7-0 (with two Board members absent). Jess will include this information in the email to the association with the tryout schedule.

2. **Mite/8U Coordinator (Anthony Anderson & Brad Breggemann):** Jason reported that we have the opportunity to add 3 more scrimmages for our Mite teams this season as long as we have a minimum of two association members (coaches and Board representation) attend the Mite Summit in Mankato on Oct 28th. Registration for the summit hasn't opened yet, but we will be sure to send enough folks.
 3. **Ice Time Coordinator (Tyler Kienow):** No updates at this time.
3. **Treasurer**
1. **Concession Stand Coordinator (Ashley Lindholm):** On Sept 6th, Ashley recommended the following individuals to be approved as Concession Stand Managers: Jenna Nygaard, Kristina Emerson, Tara Stutheit, and Angie Gjerde. Ben made a motion to approve these members as Concession Stand Managers, which was seconded by Kirk. Motion carried 7-0. Ashley was unable to attend the meeting tonight but sent the following updates: She will be providing Jess some communications to send out regarding concession training nights within a week and that the stand is on track to open the weekend of October 13th.

2. **Fundraising Coordinator (Kristina Dillon):** Packets were available for pick up during the season kickoff event and then again yesterday evening at the arena. Anyone else who needs to pick up their packet will need to reach out to Kristina to make arrangements.
4. **Secretary**
 1. **Registrar (Miranda Vertnik):** Miranda provided the following updates regarding waivers: Thus far, we have 6 waivers into NPHA (all of them are Mite/8U players), four of them are fully processed and two need to be sent TCU. We also have 8 waivers out of NPHA (six of these are for 12U, one is for Squirt, and one is for 15U) these are mostly fully processed, just waiting on district approval for three of them.
 2. **Volunteer Coordinator (Aimee Bombardo):** Aimee reported that DIBS hours are being posted and claimed. Hours have been available to fundraiser support and locker room monitoring. Concession stand shifts will begin on October 14th. She noted that we currently have 8 approved high school workers that can be paid \$15/hour to cover a concession stand shift for families (this rate is considerably lower than the buyout rate so it is a good option for families who may need it). Tim will send her the tryout hours so that she can post LRM shifts.
5. **Director of Operations**
 1. **Equipment Coordinator (Troy Gilbertson):** No further updates.
 2. **Outdoor Ice Coordinator (Jeremy Denzer):** Mike still waiting to hear back from potential buyers of our broken Zamboni. Reminder that the ODR will be closed for the 2023-24 season.
 3. **Tournament Coordinator (VACANT):** No updates.
6. **Communications Director**
 1. **Sponsorship Coordinator (Kristi Nelson):** Jess will reach out to Kristi for updates.
 2. **Website & Technology Coordinator (VACANT):** No further updates.
7. **Board Member at Large**
 1. **Recruitment & Retention Coordinator (Brandy Rife):** Kirk shared Brandy's updates. It was noted that the season kick off went very well and that she and the other organizers will be meeting soon after the Dozinky parade to talk about what went well and what could/should be changed for next year. Dozinky parade is this coming weekend, we have a good amount of people signed up, but would be good to send out a reminder. Participation waivers will be required for all players. Only SQ/10U and older have the option to rollerblade during the parade. We are float #48. We also have 9 people signed up to work the Beer Garden at Dozinky on Saturday from 1:30-3:30.
8. **Past Board Member:**
 1. **Clothing & Apparel Coordinator (Amanda Will):** Tony shared Amanda's updates. It was noted that Amanda is waiting to hear back from the rink on some dates that we can have our apparel vendors on site so that families can check out some NPHA apparel since we were unable to do so during the season kick off event.
9. **Manager Director:** N/A

5. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Special Session Scheduling for Upper - Level Team Approval:** The Board and HDC Coordinator will hold a virtual meeting on Monday, Oct 9th to review and approve upper-level teams (minus JG). Miranda will send out a Google Meet invitation.

2. **Record Keeping – Filing of contracts, etc.:** All were reminded to send any contracts or other important documents to the Secretary to be filed in the association records.
3. **ATM Status:** We are still running into dead ends in finding the key to the ATM. NPHA owns the unit and would like to get rid of it, but need to ensure that there is no money inside. Ben will continue to look into this.
4. **Concession Stand Bank Account Change:** Carrie Herbeck may be stepping down from her duties as Concession Stand Manager, her son is undecided about playing this season. If she is to step down from this position, we will need to have her removed from bank account access privileges. Update to be discussed next month.

6. **BOARD MEMBER UPDATES**

1. **Interim Manager Director (Amanda Will):** No further updates.
2. **Director of Operations (Mike Westing):** Mike shared the mockup upper-level jerseys from our new jersey supplier. The jerseys themselves look great and are much heavier weight than expected at that price point. Mike shared that he would like to offer some gift of appreciation for our coaches who are facilitating the Preseason Camp sessions. He is thinking about giving these folks a gift card to a local establishment with amounts varying depending upon the number of sessions they covered. He would like to see a higher amount go to those who instructed sessions that their own children were not participants. He noted that we have lower numbers for our sessions coming up on Sunday and that he would like to combine the two groups for each level that day to help cut down on expenses.
3. **Board Member at Large (Kirk Crabb):** No further updates.
4. **Communications Director (Jess Snyder):** No further updates.
5. **Past Board Member (Tony Robles):** No further updates.
6. **Treasurer (Ben Jones):** No further updates.
7. **Secretary (Miranda Vertnik):** Miranda reminded Board members to send her their new USA Hockey membership numbers to that all can be claimed in the USA Hockey portal. She noted that the Fire Department meeting room is already booked for what would be our November meeting, all agreed to push that meeting out to Nov 15th. She will update the website and Jess will send out a communication.
8. **Vice President (Jason Olson):** No further updates.
9. **President (Aaron Lindholm):** No further updates.

Jess made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Tony. Motion carried 7-0 (with two Board members absent). Meeting adjourned at 9:58pm.

Meeting minutes prepared by Miranda Vertnik, NPHA Secretary/Registrar.