

St. Marys Minor Hockey Association Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday December 5th, 2023 – 7pm – PRC Endzone

In attendance: Sarah Jeffrey, Pat McLean, Vanessa Lively, Amanda Boemer, Jeff Richardson, Jocelyne Gall, Ryan Harris, Paul Williams, Bob Davis, Burton Pickel, Laurie McCutcheon, Holly Seok, Amy Crummer, Adam Haight, Brayden Lord, Eric Sampson, Greg St. Clair, Mike Kittmer, Allan Wilson, Jayden Rooney, Jayden Ropp, Adam Zurbrigg, Eileen Matheson, Brandon Boyd, Mark Brintnell, Mike Johnson, Katharine Found, Rich Ballantyne

Regrets: Jessica Chateauvert, Joe Wilhelm

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm by SMMHA President, Mark Brintnell

Attendance was taken for all of those in attendance and attendees were asked to note which team they were representing at the meeting.

Acknowledgement of the land and territory for which we meet on was made by Amy Crummer.

Motion to approve the agenda

- Made by Mike Johnson. Seconded by Paul Williams
Carried.

Minutes from the November 7th, 2023 Meeting:

- Katharine Found amended minutes to reflect the fact that Mark Brintnell (not Mike Johnson) called the meeting to order and that the meeting was adjourned at 7:54pm (not 7:74pm)
- Minutes approved as amended by Joceylne Gall. Seconded by Eileen Matheson.
Carried.

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: presented by Rich Ballantyne

- Account balances were presented by Rich B.
- Account balances as of December 5, 2023:
 - o Operating Account (chequing): \$169,426.97
 - o E-transfer/Registration Account (Savings): \$203,851.91
 - o Trust Account: \$43,934.32
- Profit – Loss statement was presented, current for the fiscal year. Ice time costs (\$50K) have not come out of the current statement.

Registrar's Report: Jocelyne Gall (report read by Mark Brintnell)

- 5 new players have registered over the past month – 3 at U5; 1 at U7; 1 at U13

OMHA: Mike Johnson

- Hockey Canada has announced playing rule changes for next season, however there are no details at this time
- Hockey Canada has also passed the Dressing Room policy with modifications, but once again, no details yet. Mike will share updates once they become available.
- U9 is now eligible for full ice games as of January 12, 2024. OMHA is working towards changing the rules to state “2nd Saturday of January” vs. a set date (January 15th)
- Starting next season, Vulnerable Sector Checks will not be handled internally at the association level and everything will be handled by Ontario Hockey Federation.
- OMHA is currently updating their Code of Conduct Policy to be more efficient – the updates will also include an updated Social Media Policy.
- ATM (Authorization to Move) Policy will also be amended to include U16 players
- Playdown locations have been announced as Halton, Kingston and Whitby. Dates and divisions for each location will be announced within the next few weeks.
- Amalgamation between Paris-St. George and Burford has been approved – will be known as Brant Minor Hockey and will join the Shamrock A loop for 2024-2025
- Current OMHA President, Craig Lane, will not be seeking a 2nd term. Under his leadership, OMHA has shown significant interest in preserving “small town” hockey, so we will need to stay vigilant with the direction that new leadership takes the OMHA.
- A decision must be made at this time, to determine what our association wants to do in terms of base category classification for next season. We also need to determine our longer term vision. Can we remain a viable A center on our own? Can we survive as a B center? If we remain A, can we do it without NRP players?
 - **Question: When does this decision need to be made?** An appeal must be made by the end of December each season if you want to appeal a base category change.
 - **Comment:** Given the proposed amalgamation between Lucan-Ilderton-Parkhill for 2025-2026 season, and given the fact that 2/3 of our NRP players have come from that area, we must be realistic that these players would not be eligible for us.
 - **Question:** Is it possible to re-categorize certain teams, regardless whether we stay A or appeal to go B? If we go B we can ask for certain team recategorization to A. If we stay A, we can elect not to run a minor team and have player play in the Shamrock 2nd entry rep team loop (formerly AE). But if we stay A and we can’t run a competitive “major” team, those player would not have access to Rep level hockey that season.
 - **Question:** Have we spoken to surrounding centers about potential amalgamation? Dorchester and South Huron have had communication. Tavistock is not currently looking at amalgamation.
 - **Comment:** If we appeal to move back to B, our players would be eligible to try out for surrounding A centers as NRP players, therefore we risk loosing our top talent to surrounding centers.
 - **Question: What happens to the Local League? Or to Girls Hockey?** Most centers amalgamate only their Rep level programs, and maintain their local league and girls programing separately. But any amalgamation discussions would include discussions about all 3 programs in St.Marys (Girls, Boys LL and Boys Rep). There is no mandated

amalgamation set up – we choose and negotiate for what is best for our players and our families.

- **Comment:** Amalgamation is too entertaining – life is busy and many families do not have time to travel an extra 20-30 minutes for practices or games. Amalgamation would not seem appealing to younger families.
- **Question: What are we allowed to do to attract NRP players?** We can advertise on our website and word of mouth to say we are open to NRP players but the association, or coaching staff can not target recruit NRP players.
- **Question: if we were to vote on amalgamation, who is allowed/invited?** Anyone who has a member in minor hockey is allowed to vote
- **Comment:** Written reports, like last month and last season, are informative and very useful and should be continued to be distributed to membership.
- Executive feel that this point, for stability, it is recommended to remain an A center. In the new year, a committee will need to be formed (of general members, board members and executive representation) to look at the 2025-2026 season, to map out a realistic future for SMMHA.

Shamrock Report: Brandon Boyd

- Several A centers would like to form a new league, independent of Shamrock, but will hold off until 2025-2026.
- Reminder that if games need to be rescheduled to contact Brandon/league rep to ensure the most efficient communication and possible rescheduling.
- U9 MD will be eligible to go to full ice as of January 12, 2024

LMML: vacant (Report provided by interim rep Mark Brintnell)

- A new rep is still needed.
- First half of the season ends before Christmas and the re-seeding schedule for the second half will be released soon after.
 - Question: How does re-seeding work? They will look at each situation, but generally speaking, top teams will be seeded together, and bottom teams will be seeded together.
- U9 LL will stay half ice until January 15, 2024.

OWHA: Amy Crummer

- Next meeting to take place December 14. Amy will be in attendance.

WOGL: Eileen Matheson

- Reminder to coaches that there are no timeouts in league games
- Coaches have 24 hours to get their game results posted to the SMMHA website
- U9 will remain half ice until January 15th
- All Star Game voting will be happening shortly, coaches will be sent information

Ice Convenor: Mark Brintnell

- If scheduled need to move around, reach out to the league rep or to Mark – do not just reach out to the other coach.

Old Business

- None

New Business:

- Discussion lead by Laurie McCutcheon, RN, would like to see stiffer penalties/more serious consequences for intentional body contact in non-body contact leagues. As a nurse she witnesses too many kids suffering from concussions or other injuries due to contact that should not be happening.
 - o Hockey Canada does have accumulating suspension for repeat offenders, but ultimately it comes down to the referees having the subjectivity of making the call for how a penalty or suspension will be assessed.
 - o Statistics of number of players injured will need to be substantiated before taking any discussion to OMHA or OWHA.
 - o We would have a voice, and potential impact by advocating for change at the LMLL level, as leagues can put rules in place that are above and beyond what Hockey Canada rule book calls for.
 - o Question: Is there a system in place that alerts referees to “repeat offenders”? No, as we don’t want to create bias in the refs.
 - o **Comment:** Adam Zurbrigg has offered to teach body checking to players, to prepare them to take and receive contact. This ideal is tabled for now.
 - o Executive will follow up with Laurie after this meeting to think through all points before we take any comments or recommendations to the league. Any recommendations would also first need to go through SMMHA membership. Proposed timeline is discussion in January and February to have everything in place for June’s LMLL AGM.
 - o Comment: Stratford Rotary does have a zero tolerance for contact that might be a good reference for potential consequences recommendations.
 - o **Question:** is OMHA still considering the elimination of body contact at B contact and below? At this time, there is no further conversation.
- Question raised by Vanessa Lively whether it’s possible to get a 2nd weekly ice time for U5 programs, as Dorchester does offer two sessions per week at that age. U5 Program Coordinator will discuss the suggestion and other program recommendations.

Motion to Adjourn:

- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Paul W at 8:19pm. Seconded by Mike J.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday January 9th, 2024 – 7:00pm at the PRC Endzone