



**2021 USA Hockey
Pacific District Board of Directors Meeting**

Saturday – October 16, 2021
9:00 am – 5:00 pm (PST)
San Jose Marriott - Downtown
Almaden Room

Present

Rob Azevedo
John Beaulieu
Darin Campbell
Flint Doughtchak
Darren Elliott
Josh Ellis
Dan Ellison
Wendy Goldstein
Thomas Hancock
Kris Knauss
Steve Laing
Lisa McPheters
Wayne Sawchuk
Lester Sparks
Darryl Thompson
Matt Zucker

Absent

Chris Hays
Kathy McGarrigle
John Silberstein
Rick Trupp

Guests

Teresa Attebury

Minutes

- I. **Call to Order** – Kris Knauss called the meeting to order at 9:00 am PST.
- II. **Roll Call & Introductions** – Roll call was taken, and Thomas Hancock introduced Teresa Attebury, one of CAHA's registrars, who was attending the meeting as a guest.
- III. **Persons To Be Heard** – no person(s) to be heard.
 - A. **Approval of Agenda** – Kris Knauss asked for approval of the agenda. Lester Sparks motioned to approve the agenda; Darryl Thompson seconded the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes** – Kris Knauss asked for approval of the following minutes.
 - B. **June 12, 2021 – Board Meeting** – Lester Sparks motioned to approve the minutes; Darryl Thompson seconded the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.
 - C. **June 22, 2021 – Zoom/Teleconference** – Lester Sparks motioned to approve the minutes; Darryl Thompson seconded the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.

V. Reports

A. Chairman Report - Kris Knauss

Welcome, nice to see everyone in person. We had a District Director dinner last night. Jon Gustafson and Steve Laing were both there. We wanted to thank them both for their service as Pacific District Directors. We gave them a nice gift at dinner, but mostly want to say thank you for everything they each did on behalf of the Pacific District. The 2021/22 Hockey season is moving ahead. In Alaska have a new NAHL team, the Anchorage Wolverines. A new NHL team in Washington, the Seattle Kraken. A lot of exciting things are happening throughout the Pacific District. Good growth.

I am on the governance committee for USA Hockey. USA Hockey currently has a 91-member voting board. The USA Olympic and Paralympics has asked us to reduce the voting board size and increase Athlete Directors. USA Hockey has been built on the strength of volunteers. Some real concern over the athlete directors and their ability to be engaged. Can they commit the time? Discussing moving the 91-member board to a role of congress. Work more like an assembly. Then the board of directors would then become the executive committee and 4 additional. We would go from 4 to 3 district directors/representatives. Sections, how will that work? Talking about moving Girls Section into a Council. Challenge is that the USOC is requiring this by 2024, and this requires a significant bylaw change and will require 2/3's of existing directors to approve this format. May prove to be difficult to achieve. If and when these changes occur, we as the Pacific District will need to assess what the best options are moving forward for overseeing our District. Appears that our National Office is allowing itself to be told what to do by the USOC with no pushback. Problems is that it centralizes most of the power in Colorado Springs, and limits Districts ability to govern. Important for the Pacific District Board to be aligned in what direction we decide is best moving forward.

Presently have two applications in at USA Hockey to host National Tournaments for 2023, one from San Jose and the other from the Kraken. Decisions will be made at Mid-Winter meeting. Bob Mancini has been name USA Hockey's Assistant Executive Director for Hockey Development. Steve Thompson has been hired as the Women's National Team Goaltending Coach. Plan is for them to be at the Kraken facility, prior to departing for the Olympics. Possibly we can do a District Event. John Beaulieu has stepped up to be our Player Safety Representative.

B. Financial Report - Chris Hays – not present. Written Report Provided.

2021 Pacific District Tournament surplus needs to be issued to the Affiliates. This is being worked on and each affiliate should receive something in the near future.

C. Bobby Freeland Grants – Lester Sparks

Lester stated that he had sent out all Bobby Freeland Grant applications earlier in the week, confirming that everyone had an opportunity to review them. Lester Sparks motioned for approval of all grant applications. Darryl Thompson seconded the motion. With no discussion, motion passed unanimously.

D. Registrar's Report – Wendy Goldstein – written report attached.

Youth numbers are 94% of what they were compared to the 2019.20 season, which is good since we are only in October. Adults' numbers are at 85%. Last year we had lots of waivers for game counts, etc., and I just want to advise that will not be happening this year. SafeSport will be going to a date-to-date compliance (get in February, renew in February). Steve Laing's director position expires June 2022 and I need to receive in writing by December 31, 2021, for anyone interested in running for this position. The position is a 3-year term, expiring in 2025.

E. District RIC Report – Dan Ellison – written report attached.

Things are interesting right now. Shortage of officials nationally, in all sports. In the Pacific District, 2019.20 season we had 1,738 officials and 1,300 completed their requirements to be certified. Currently, we have 1,500 registered, with only 700 having completed their requirements to be certified. The officiating seminars are currently going on, and we have 30% in new officials, but

retention and development is the issue. Losses come from the pandemic, and a lot of uncertainty with covid mandates and confusion are driving officials away. My written report addresses issues as to why people leave officiating. Lack of assignments and opportunity are part of that. Trying to work through the good old boy network so all officials are considered. Abuse of Officials is also an issue. Kudos to Tom Hancock and CAHA for how they handle abuse of officials. Putting cameras in the rinks, which gives us another source to refer to when there are issues. I am trying to be creative with recruitment of officials. Would like to get invites out to female officials by end of November for Girls Districts in Fairbanks. Really good camp in Oregon for female officials and now that Girls Development Camp is back in the Pacific District, I would like to partner up with that.

On a national level, we had an RIC call. USAH cut \$120K out of officiating training budget. There's a fee attached to the USA Hockey registration fee, which was supposed to stay in each District, but the national office took it all.

F. Alaska RIC Report – Josh Ellis

Darryl Thompson introduced Josh, with his position finally approved by the national office. Dan has been working with Josh for a while. Looking forward to having him in this role, and has seen some nice leadership already out of Josh. Thank you for that and welcome aboard.

G. District CIC Report – Flint Doungchak – written report attached.

All education is on zoom. Coaches can attend a clinic anywhere across the country. The benefit of national based training is that coaches have the choice of clinics to take and can work around any conflicts. Biggest challenge right now is the lack of clinics being posted and available for coaches to take. For the Pacific District, this means that because we have been proactive at posting our clinics online, coaches outside the Pacific District are taking our clinics, reducing the available spots for Pacific District coaches. Also, the lack of physical contact is an issue. I am hoping that is alleviated with continuing education classes. Regarding Temporary Coaching Cards, the national office was flooded with requests for these last year and under the circumstances approved them. For this season, we are back to being stingy, and I would encourage your coaches to complete their required training prior to the December 31st deadline.

H. Alaska CIC Report – Rick Trupp – not present. Written report provided.

I. Disabled Section – Matt Zucker – written report provided.

Disabled Section is more vulnerable for Covid illness, so we cancelled the National Festival last year.

I am really excited about what is happening in Reno. Their biggest challenge is getting ice. May need help from this Board in smoothing that situation out.

Affiliate Presidents, do we have any programs getting started up? We will have gear available for a start-up Disabled program.

This coming year the National Festival is in Pittsburgh for every discipline except sled, on April 7-10, 2022. Nationals for Sled is April 21-24, 2022. If any of you have somebody locally who can be a point of contact, that would be helpful to me.

I had the opportunity to serve as a sled hockey official this year, which gave me the opportunity to rub elbows with some Paralympic gold medalists. Pretty special!

J. Affiliate Presidents' Reports

Lester Sparks, OSHA – Oregon is back up and running. Huge decline in the numbers. Portland essentially closed down for the entire year last season. We are going to have one Girls team going to Districts, and two Youth Tier II teams. Working to grow officials, haven't quite tackled all the issues yet. For our Girls Try Hockey for Free Weekend we had 33 girls.

Darren Elliot, NAHA – written report attached. In Nevada, growth at the 8U highlights what is going on in Vegas. From 92 8U's in 2017 to 810 in 2020.21. Tremendous growth for us. For our Girls Try Hockey for Free weekend, we had a street hockey event and then went inside for a dance party, which was really cool and creative. Our learn to play programs begin in November and December. The NHL All Star game will be in Las Vegas in Feb 2022. During this we will have an hour for girls learn to play and then an 8U jamboree. Still working on the details. We are developing our travel program and will have one Tier 1 team at Youth 16Us, consisting of mostly local kids. Our hope is to then grow to 18s and well as 14s. Our guidebook is finally approved, and am very proud of it, but have already been approached for a waiver. Our player development camp will be January 7-9, 2022, and it will be open for registration in November 2021.

Rob Azevedo, PNAHA – It is a great honor to follow in Dru Hammond's leadership. At our September board meeting we primarily discussed getting our league back in shape within Washington state. With border closed, that makes travel north very difficult. Really need to get people playing within the state. In August, the Kraken went to 8 different facilities with learn to play hockey, development. PNAHA's Girls Try Hockey for Free Weekend is taking place this weekend. Our Girls' Player Development Camp will be January 15, 2022, and the Boys' Player Development Camp will be January 22, 2022. Both camps will be in Wenatchee.

Darryl Thompson, ASHA – Alaska currently has a 42-member board, and this is a governance issue. We can't get a quorum for meetings. Clearly, we need to change our governance. I have looked at how California has established a smaller board. Thomas Hancock is looking to come up for our December meeting. Need to get a working group in place showing that we can function more effectively. At present we have an open position for the VP of Discipline. PD Melgoza, Alaska's Goaltending CIC has moved on to a USHL team. Kenny Rausch will be coming up in December in conjunction with our Girls and Boys Development Camps on December 18-20, 2021, at Royal Ice Rink. Challenge Alaska is our disabled program, and I'm really proud that they have established a method to self-fund this program. Anchorage is robust with mask issues pertaining to Covid. Currently, one does not need to wear masks relative to athletic activities.

Thomas Hancock, CAHA – On June 15, 2021, all Covid restrictions pertaining to our sport went away, allowing us to move forward. I was able to convince our Board that we don't weigh in on health mandates, let's just stay in our lane, and focus on hockey. Municipal properties were going to require vaccination, effective Sept 20, 2021, but we were able to get them to agree to a test option. Officials are the legitimate issue we've had to deal with. Any non-contact sport, we can go down to 1 official. We have been flying in officials from Texas. CAHA is flexible with waivers if the request is not in defiance of the rules. At our annual board meeting we elected a DEI person.

K. USA Hockey Reports

a. Girls Section & Player Development – Kathy McGarrigle, written report provided.

b. Youth Council – Kris Knauss

Prior to his decision to not seek re-election, Jim Smith was working to fill USA Hockey's IHF seat. Digger had aged out. The US has had a seat on that board for 20+ years and had enjoyed a good reputation on that board. USA Hockey staff took it upon themselves to push Dave Ogrea for the IHF seat. The election held two weeks ago, and Dave Ogrea lost through 8 rounds of voting. Now US no longer has a position on that board. Presently that Board has only 2 members from North America, and the rest are from Europe and Asia. Very unfortunate. National office doesn't have anyone on deck to run for that. Staff driven decisions seem to be becoming the norm at USA Hockey. There are some serious politics going on and not necessarily in USA Hockey's best interests. USA Hockey's employee morale is at an all time low.

c. Legal Council – Darryl Thompson

The council is trying to change the form/process on what Affiliates use for suspensions. Trying to establish a standardized discipline policy through By Law 10.

d. SafeSport Report – Darryl Thompson.

Really not sure where we are going with the strategic planning. National office is getting a lot of complaints. Official abuse, player abuse, national office wants the affiliate to handle everything. SafeSport is seeing more and more governance coming out of congress. It's a dictation telling us what we are going to do. National office wanting monthly reports.

e. High School Section – Steve Laing.

Showcase is April 21-25, 2022, in St. Louis, Missouri. Application is on showcase website.

f. Youth Player Development – Kris Knauss

1. 2022 Boys Player Development Camp – Kris Knauss

The 2022 Camp is set to be held at City National Arena, May 5-8, 2022. For the 17s Division, we will be holding a 40-man Camp, with two teams.

a. Affiliate Player Allocations – I sent out the allocations to all Affiliates. If you have a player that needs to be there, reach out to me for At-Large spots, and we will make sure those players are there.

2. Western Regional High-Performance Camp – Wayne Sawchuk

Dallas was a great host. 194 players at the camp. Everything ran out of the rink, and teams had their own locker room for the week. For 2022 we will be returning to Colorado College June 13-18. Want to restart the coaching intern program. The Pacific District always has quality coaches and quality team leaders, people you can trust. Flint commented that it was an awesome job by everyone involved to move the 2021 camp to Dallas at a moment's notice.

3. District Goaltending Development Camp – Lester Sparks & Darin Campbell

The 2021 Camp was held in Snoqualmie WA. The Pacific District was 1 of 2 districts that hosted a goaltending development camp this year. We had 55 goalies registered, hosting both the 06 & 07 Boys and the Girls 06. Included a Girls' Roundtable with the Seattle Kraken's female goaltending person. We had 20+ coaches and staff. Jordan James did fitness testing and dryland. I'd like to keep it in Seattle because that's where I live, and it makes it easier. Going to do same weekend next year. Looking at Kraken facility.

VI. Executive Session – meeting broke for an Executive Session

VII. New Business

D. Open District Director Position. Thomas Hancock motioned to appoint Ben Frank to fill the open seat that expires in June 2022. Darryl Thompson seconds the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.

E. Player Safety Coordinator. Darryl Thompson motioned to appoint John Beaulieu. Lester Sparks seconds the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.

F. District Tournament Coordinator. Darryl Thompson motioned to appoint Wayne Sawchuk. Thomas Hancock seconds the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.

G. District Tournament Director/President Coverage. Wayne Sawchuk stated that he and Kris Knauss will be the Director representation at the Youth Tier I District Championships in February 2022, and he, Ben Frank, and Darryl Thompson will be the Director/President Coverage at the Girls Tier I & Tier II in March 2022. Darryl Thompson motioned to accept these appointments. Lester Sparks seconds the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.

H. Safe Sport Representative. Lester Sparks motions to appoint Darryl Thompson. Wayne Sawchuk seconds the motion. Open for discussion. No discussion ensued and motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment

Wayne Sawchuk – Thank you Steve Laing. I will be leaning on you for guidance with tournaments.

Matt Zucker – Thank you Steve for your mentorship and guidance over the years. If you need something for your disabled program let me know.

Thomas Hancock – Thank you Steve.

Josh Ellis – Thanks for having me, it is good to meet everyone.

Dan Ellison – November 5th college game is in dedication to Jaime Hunt. One of Jamie's officials she mentored she did outstanding job putting this together.

Kris Knauss – It would be great to begin a female official award in Jamie's name. Appreciate everyone being here today. Look forward to seeing you in the future.

Lisa McPheters – In order to clean up the District Handbook, each Affiliate needs to send me their updated personnel.

John Beaulieu – Thank you Steve.

Wendy Goldstein – Thank you Steve. We did have growth in one affiliate through the pandemic and that was Nevada.

Rob Azevedo – Thank you for the welcome.

Darren Eliot– Have some governance issues within our board. Need to get that corrected.

Steve Laing – Thank you for all the time I've spent with this board. Very appreciated.

Darryl Thompson – Steve and I have had a love hate relationship through the years, but I want Steve to know that I really appreciate him.

Lester Sparks – Appreciate you Steve, thank you.

Kris Knauss called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Darryl Thompson motioned to adjourn. Darren Elliott seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.