

MINUTES**North Dakota High School Activities Association
October 15, 2014, Bismarck, ND**

The Board of Directors of the North Dakota High School Activities Association held their meeting on October 15, 2014 in Bismarck. President Hall called the meeting to order at 9:25 a.m.

Members present: Hall, Roaldson, Bertsch, Brannan, Martin, Wiberg, Rinas, Dahlen, Manley, Stedman

Members absent: Baesler

Others present: Brian Midthun, Tom Rettig, Brian Wolf, Chris Edison, Paul Myerchin, Sophie Morgan, Martin Bratrud, Dean Koppelman, Amy De Kok, David Phillips, Rachel Brunner Kauffman and Jon Sanstead

Upon additions to the agenda, motion by Brannan to approve. Second by Martin. Motion carried unanimously.

Upon additions to the consent agenda, motion by Wiberg to approve. Second by Rinas. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent agenda items included:

1. September 16, 2014 minutes
2. September 30, 2014 minutes
3. Cooperative sponsorship dissolutions:
 - a. West Fargo High School and West Fargo Sheyenne High School in Boys' Tennis, 2015-16
 - b. West Fargo High School and West Fargo Sheyenne High School in Girls' Golf, 2015-16
4. Financial report including balance sheet, detailed budget and investment report.
5. Cooperative sponsorship applications:
 - a. Grand Forks Central High School, Valley Middle School and East Grand Forks Sacred Heart (MN) in boys' tennis, 7-12, 2015-16, no fee
 - b. Grand Forks Central High School, Valley Middle School and East Grand Forks Sacred Heart (MN) in boys' soccer, 7-12, 2015-16, no fee

President Hall reported on executive board committee actions.

1. Denied a request for a late cooperative sponsorship between Bottineau High School and Newburg United High School in boys hockey, 7-12, 2014-15, no fee
2. Hettinger self reported the use of non-registered officials in junior varsity football. This is the second offense. Issued a letter of reprimand and one year probation for the Hettinger school.
3. Grand Forks Middle School self reported the use of an ineligible participant (6th grade student) in a cross-country meet. Issued letter of reprimand to school and forfeiture of any points earned by participant.
4. South Heart High School self reported the use of an ineligible participant in volleyball. Student participated in too many volleyball sets. Letter of reprimand to school and forfeiture of games in contests in which the ineligible student participated.

Motion by Roaldson to approve executive committee report. Second by Bertsch. Motion carried unanimously.

Brad Rinas, finance/personnel committee chair, reported on a practicum/internship partnership with Valley City State University. NDHSAA will offer an internship for approximately 5 hours per week to a student in the Business Communications division including a \$1,000 stipend for the second semester of the 2014-15 school year. The student will also complete a practicum with NDHSAA first semester of the 2014/15 school year to be arranged between the student and Executive Director Fetsch. Fetsch indicated the majority of states have a dedicated social media staff member.

Motion by Stedman to approve finance committee report. Second by Wiberg. Motion carried unanimously.

Constitution & By-Laws Committee chair, Steve Hall, reported to the Board concerning academic eligibility By-Law amendment progress and a draft of academic eligibility Board interpretations. Board interpretations and proposed By-Law amendments will be presented on October 16, 2014 at a breakout session during the NDCEL Conference at 1:15 pm in the Cannonball Room. Motion by Rinas to approve Constitution & By-Laws committee report. Second by Manley. Motion carried unanimously.

Chris Edison, Paul Myerchin, Sophie Morgan from Bormann, Myerchin, Monasky & Espeseth, LLP made a presentation to the Board concerning legal retainer services contract.

Brad Rinas, chair of the realignment committee, provided a report on the realignment ad-hoc committee meeting in Carrington on September 24, 2014. The committee came away with the sense there is a lot of support to transition to a super-region format, but not in the same timeline. Reports of the super-region format Region 7 used in 2013/14 for volleyball and basketball were received. The feedback was positive. Schools originally opposed to the super-region format, were in favor of the format once the tournaments were completed. Brannan indicated it was good for all regions to hear the same information. Manley interjected the importance of regions reporting how their districts felt concerning a super-region format. The participants in the ad-hoc committee meeting indicated all districts do not have to have the same format or things would not be "fair" if not all the same. Presently there are three regions that are in the process of experimental super-region formats. The ad-hoc committee will meet in March at the State Class B Boys' Basketball Tournament. Roaldson reminded the group to keep in mind even though the focus is on one group, decisions may affect other groups. What happens in Class B may also be applied to Class A. There was no sense within any of the districts or regions of a need to have a unified approach to the super-region process. This approach would be similar to EDC and WDA soccer where a different process is used in each conference and both conferences are fine using different processes. There did not seem to be a need to have one format, there was more interest in allowing districts and regions to do their own thing. Venue availability may be an issue if trying to have one format as some regions do not have venues large enough to have tournaments at one location.

Motion by Wiberg to approve realignment committee report. Second by Brannan. Motion carried unanimously.

Amy De Kok, and David Phillips, shareholders of Fredrickson & Byron, P.A. made a presentation to the Board concerning legal retainer services contract.

The agenda for the General Assembly Meeting was discussed including how handouts would be distributed, the process for the By-Law Amendment vote and potential for an amendment to the amendment. Gavin Muscha, 2014/15 Distinguished Student will also speak to the assembly. There are openings for Board representatives from the Northwest Class B region and from the Class A West region.

Martin Bratrud, Valley City High School athletic director, appeared before the Board requesting reconsideration of their proposed football region assignment for the 2015 and 2016 football plan. Mr. Bratrud expressed concern with the movement of Valley City High School to the AA western conference for the 15-16 and 16-17 school years.

Valley City High School estimates this move will cost the district up to \$20,000 more than current placement and asked the Board to consider looking at the alignment and consider an alternative. Bratrud requested the Board take one more week and look at the football plan to see if any other options can be implemented. Valley City did not have a suggested alternative plan to find more parity within the levels of teams within the conference. Board members questioned what non-conference teams were scheduled for the 2014-15 football season. Bratrud replied Dickinson and Dickinson Trinity were scheduled this year and Valley City was looking at two Minnesota schools for the 2015-16 schedule. It was pointed out Valley City currently has coop teams that travel to the West region including Williston. As per the football plan guidelines, Valley City had the opportunity to opt up a division to alleviate some travel and chose to stay within the AA division. Bratrud indicated Valley City considered playing an independent schedule

including Minnesota schools but did not feel that was something they should do as they are a North Dakota school. NDHSAA Board members indicated the football plan is based on survey information obtained from the schools involved and decisions were made based on survey results. The football plan may not be a perfect plan, however based on the current structure it is the best plan that can be implemented. The survey results indicated the majority of schools were more concerned with balanced play over travel considerations. The primary issue for Valley City is cost of travel. Brannan asked Bratrud if Valley City discussed using a neutral site for the long distance travel games. Bratrud indicated they had not, but may do so in the future. Bratrud thanked the Board for their attention and requested if placement could not be changed for the 2015 and 2016 football plans, possibly something different can be done for future plans.

Jim Roaldson, football committee chair, provided a report of committee recommendations regarding region assignments for the 2015 and 2016 football plan. Review of the football plan guidelines:

Approved Timeline

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| January 2014 Meeting | complete guidelines and share with membership |
| March 2014 | send out preliminary division assignments and request feedback |
| June 1, 2014 | all requests for football coop dissolutions due |
| September 15, 2014 | deadline for new football cooperative agreements |
| September 16, 2014 | Board meets and addresses coop applications |
| September 17, 2014 | preliminary region assignments will be sent to schools |
| September 30, 2014 | deadline for requests to move up a division |
| First week in October | Football Committee meets & finalizes recommended plan |
| October 2014 Meeting | Final plan presented to membership |

Schools were surveyed. The committee understands this plan does not serve all schools equally, but is the best plan for the majority of our schools. There was a question as to the number of divisions schools would like to see. The survey indicated the majority of schools are in favor of four divisions. Future decisions will also be made according to feedback from schools.

The football committee reviewed letters concerning the football plan from Tom Rettig, Enderlin High School Superintendent, Brian Wolf, Maple Valley High School superintendent and Steve Swiontek, former NDHSAA Board Member and former Devils Lake administrator.

The final plan requires Board approval and will be distributed at the General Assembly Meeting.

The Board received additional comments concerning the football plan from Dean Koppelman, Valley City, Brian Wolf, Maple Valley. Dean Koppelman, Valley City High School superintendent, indicated he respects each and every Board member on decisions made. As discussed previously, the Valley City school board indicated the biggest issue is the placement of Valley City in the AA West region and requested again, for a chance the Board look for a different option. As per his letter to the NDHSAA Board of Directors, Brian Wolf, Maple Valley Public School superintendent, indicated enrollment numbers put Maple Valley/Enderlin in in the AA division and would like schools to have the ability to opt down a division. Wolf questioned the timing of NDHSAA getting school enrollment numbers. Fetsch indicated fall enrollment numbers are received from the Department of Public Instruction are the basis for schools' foundation aid.

The timeline previously approved by the Board is the most efficient means of getting the numbers out to schools. The timeline allows decisions to be made at the local levels concerning dissolving coops and creating new coops. The first task the football committee completes is to survey schools as to the most important considerations to use in the creation of the football plan.

Survey results indicated minimizing travel was the most important consideration for 19% of survey respondents. Balanced (competitive) divisions was the priority for 81% of respondents. 21% of respondents favored three divisions of play and 79% favored four divisions. 34% of respondents were in favor of an "opt down" option for teams to move down one division and be ineligible for the playoffs and 66% opposed. 28% of respondents were in favor of a plan allowing programs to select the division they

compete in, understanding a full schedule could not be guaranteed with 72% opposed. 23 schools comprising 16 current teams, 14 of who were fielding a varsity team in 2013 would consider playing 6-man football if it were an option. With that information, the committee continued. In January 2014 the preliminary number of teams in each division was established. Division AAA increasing from 14 to 16 teams does not pull any teams from AA, the increase is due to new high schools.

Just over a year from now, the football committee will be determining the number of divisions in football for the next plan and the number of teams. Schools will again be surveyed on what is most important to the plan. The next survey may include questions on 6-man football, allocating free & reduced lunch numbers across the entire male enrollment or a different number of divisions. As demographics change in North Dakota, two years from now may be the biggest change to the FB plan since 4 divisions were created.

Rinas commented the Board has followed the approved plan and it would be hard to veer off at this point. Football coops have been dissolved and created based on this plan. We need to continue surveying our schools creating future plans with survey results in mind. The Board needs to discern what realignments will take place. There is no incentive for schools to form cooperative sponsorships. Coops influence divisions schools are in, leaving other schools unable to form teams. This issue is not merely about scheduling and travel. The message needs to go back to school boards the issues brought up by schools in attendance at the Board meeting have been addressed through the football plan process.

Motion by Dahlen to approve the 2015 and 2016 football plan as presented. Second by Martin. Roll call vote: Bertsch - yes, Brannan - yes, Martin - yes, Wiberg - yes, Rinas - yes, Dahlen - yes, Manley - yes, Stedman - yes, Roaldson - yes, Hall – yes. Motion carried unanimously. Roaldson will present the football plan to the NDHSAA General Assembly on October 16, 2014.

Rachel Brunner Kauffman and Jon Sanstead , representing Pearce & Durick, made a presentation to the Board concerning legal retainer services contract.

Steve Brannan, fine arts committee chair, reported to the Board results of the fine arts season survey. Recommendation of the fine arts committee would be to pass this issue to advisory for recommendation. Motion by Roaldson to approve fine arts committee report. Second by Rinas. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board discussed the three legal retainer contract presentations made during the meeting. Board members questioned the amount of money budgeted and used in previous years for legal services. Fetsch indicated \$10,000 is budget annually for legal services. In 2013/14 over \$9,000 of that budget was used. Past years have been below the budgeted amount.

Bertsch indicated each firm brings a level of experience to NDHSAA. Pearce & Durick also brings a level of history and continuity. Motion by Bertsch to continue with Pearce & Durick as legal counsel for one calendar year beginning January 2015. Second by Wiberg. Discussion included North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund experience was in our Request For Proposal. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Correspondence was reviewed:

1. Enderlin High School letter
2. Steve Swiontek letter
3. Maple Valley High School letter

In representative reports, Northwest representative Brannan thanked Executive Director Fetsch for attending their region meeting and presenting to the group. NDHSAA presence at region meetings makes a difference and is appreciated.

Executive Director's report included:

1. A letter was received from Darrin Roach, Principal/Superintendent of Oak Grove in reference to compliance of submitting a plan of action to assure eligibility of participants in activities.

2. Blue Cross Blue Shield estimates a less than one tenth of a percent increase in health insurance in the coming year. The low amount is due to turnover in age of staff.
3. An attorney in Carrington requested the Board consider drug testing of all athletes.
4. Fetsch received a request to remove the Labor Day start letter from the NDHSAA website. The letter was removed on 10/9/14.
5. Upcoming State Tournaments:
 - Saturday, October 25 – State Cross Country Meet – Minot
 - Saturday, October 25 – 9-man/Division A football playoffs – various sites
 - October 31/November 1 – Football quarterfinals – various sites
 - November 6-7 – State Student Congress – Bismarck
 - November 7-8 – Football semifinals – various sites
 - Fri. Nov. 14 – Dakota Bowl – Grand Forks
 - November 14-15 – State Girls’ Swimming Meet – Bismarck
 - November 20-22 – State Volleyball Tournament – Minot

The next regularly scheduled NDHSAA Board meeting will be held November 21, 2014 at the Holiday Inn (Riverside) Hotel in Minot. District Chairs will meet at 9:00 am with the Board meeting starting at 1:00 pm.

President Hall declared the meeting adjourned at 11:47 am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brenda Schell
Assistant Director

Signed: _____ Approved Date: ____/____/____