

CIAC OFFICIALS' ADVISORY BOARD

ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

May 12, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chris Burns (Swimming), Ray Faustich (Baseball), Patricia Javorski (Girls Lacrosse), Jay Kelleher (Football), Hank Koritkoski (Softball), Dave Leete (Boys Lacrosse), Joe Miller (Soccer), Lil Perone (Field Hockey), Lev Torgerson (Ice Hockey), Hank Luzzi (Basketball), Kelly Murphy (Wrestling), Melissa Zigmont (Gymnastics) Dan Scavone, CAAD President and Joe Tonelli, CIAC Staff
Special Guests: Dr. Karissa Niehoff (CAS-CIAC) Executive Director) and Dr. Steve Wysowski (CIAC Associate Director)

DISCUSSION and ACTION

The meeting was called to order by Joe Tonelli at 4:05 p.m. As was mentioned in the meeting notice, Joe reiterated that Karissa and Steve requested to speak to the advisory board about the state of the Connecticut budget and the affect it would have on schools, and in particular the athletic budgets. He introduced Karissa and Steve and requested that the Advisory Board members give a brief synopsis of their background, providing years in officiating, the sport they represent and their present and past occupation.

A synopsis of Karissa's remarks to the Officials Advisory Board is as follows: The CIAC greatly appreciates the work that you do in your role as officiating leaders as well as the efforts of all Connecticut high school sports officials. We have enjoyed a collaborative relationship with the Officials Association for many years and we will do whatever we can to support that relationship in the future.

CIAC has approximately 200 member high schools. In our work with school and district leaders we are often engaged in discussions about financial issues and school budget challenges. It is no secret that the state of Connecticut is in a horrific fiscal situation; addressing a \$960 million deficit this year. Severe budget cuts will impact communities and subsequently schools. We are hearing from our member schools that layoffs and salary freezes will occur once again and budgets for athletics are being significantly decreased. Some schools may have to cut sport offerings. To assist schools, CIAC will not increase any fees charged to the schools and the CIAC staff will take a salary freeze for the 2016-17 school year.

All this being said, we ask officials to consider a good will gesture to schools, whereby the game fees paid to officials' fees in 2015 -16 will remain in effect for the 2016-17 school year. Rationale for this request is as follows:

- Since 1998-1999 officials fees have increased each year, a claim no other state can make. This increase has been based on the average negotiated teacher salary increase of only those communities that offered increases.

- Many negotiated contracts have resulted in salary freezes for school staff; some communities have suffered multiple freezes and layoffs in the past few negotiation cycles.
- High school athletic budgets have not increased at the same rate as fees for officials. Officials fees have increased 30-40% depending on the sport.
- Other expenses have increased that are out of the control of schools such as transportation, security, facilities, custodial support, equipment, etc.

These issues were discussed at length. It was a very positive exchange of thoughts and ideas with advisory board members expressing their opinions in an honest and forth right manner. In the end, on a motion by Hank Luzzi and seconded by Joe Miller, the advisory board members voted unanimously to support, in principle, a good will gesture to freeze officials' fees for the 2016-2017 school year and bring this request to the leadership of their respective boards for approval.

Karissa stated that in recognition of your show of support to schools, the CIAC is committed to enhancing our "PR" so to speak, regarding the great and challenging work of officials. We will ask a number of things from member schools that might make your job easier and safer. We will tell the good stories and work to promote you as professionals and advocates for high school sports and kids.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m. The state wide meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 16, 2016. The next meeting of the Advisory Board would be held in the fall on Thursday, October 13, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. at CIAC

Post Meeting Note: We are pleased to report that the leadership of the officials in all 13 sports agreed to support this good will gesture which will result in no increase in official's fees for the 2016-17 school which will help schools and be viewed in a positive manner by the member schools, the athletic community and the CIAC.

On behalf of the CIAC staff and the CIAC member schools we would like to express our sincere appreciation to all the officiating boards in the state as well as the 4,000 officials who serve the schools and the 109,000 high school student athletes.

Thank you very much!