

# CIAC OFFICIALS ADVISORY BOARD

## ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

October 13, 2016

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chris Burns, Ray Faustich, Pat Javorski, Jay Kelleher, Hank Koritkoski, Dave Leete, Hank Luzzi, Joe Miller, Bill Tomassi for Lev Torgerson, Melissa Zigmont, Dan Scavone, Guest Bhavin Parekh, Joe Tonelli and Steve Wysowski, CIAC.

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### ACTION ITEMS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

On a motion by Joe Miller, the minutes of May 12, 2016 were approved. In addition, the summary of the June 16, 2016 State-Wide Meeting was included in the packet for reference.

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### MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of October 12, 2016, 3,756 individual officials occupy 4,853 officiating slots. 2165 officials are members of the NFHS Officials Association.

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### ATHLETIC DIRECTORS UPDATE

A letter of appreciation from Fred Balsamo, CAAD Executive Director, was distributed to the board. Fred expressed the sincere gratitude of all the athletic directors for the kind gesture demonstrated by all the officials' groups in not taking a fee increase this school year to help with the budget woes being faced by the schools. Dan Scavone, past president of CAAD, who was in attendance, reiterated the sentiments of the athletic directors and emphasized that that this gesture resonated throughout the state and can only bring about good will to all officiating organizations. Dan mentioned that he is part of an athletic directors strategic planning committee that has a goal of further enhancing the working relationship between athletic directors and officials groups. He emphasized that continuing to work together is the best way to address issues of mutual concern.

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### CAS/CIAC HALL OF HONOR

Steve Wysowski, CIAC Associate Executive Director mentioned that the second annual Connecticut Association of Schools Hall of Honor induction program will be held Saturday, October 29, 2016 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Aqua Turf. There are 7 inductees and the officials are represented by Ray Faustich who will be honored for his tremendous contributions to officiating in the sport of baseball for more than 5 decades. Ray, who is a member of the CIAC Officials Association Advisory Board, is an officiating leader on the local, state and national levels serving on FCIAC, CIAC and NFHS committees for many years. He served a four-year term as a member of the NFHS rules committee, and, in recognition of his vast rules knowledge, the NFHS re-appointed him to chair the rules committee for another full term. Ray was also a teacher-coach and finished his career in education as an athletic director.

Steve also informed the group that nominations are now being accepted for the 2017 induction class. Anyone can nominate deserving individuals for consideration for this award. The nomination packet can be accessed on the [www.ciacofficialsassociation.org](http://www.ciacofficialsassociation.org) website. **The deadline is December 15, 2016.** An article about the Hall of Honor dinner, that included ticket information, was included in the meeting packet and posted on the CIAC website. The completed nomination forms can be sent to Joe Tonelli at CIAC and he will forward the nominees to Steve.

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## **OLD BUSINESS/INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **PRESEASON RULES MEETINGS/WINTER DATES**

Joe Tonelli requested the winter sports rules meeting dates for coaches. He encouraged boards to accommodate leagues, when possible. Joe urged the clinicians to continue to promote the communication protocol in the CIAC Handbook at the preseason meetings which specifies the proper way to address concerns relative to officiating. Joe also stated that this forum provides an opportunity for clinicians to solicit the assistance of coaches and schools to help recruit new officials, especially in the sports that have the most need. Also it is a good venue to continue to further enhance the working relationship among the coaches and the officials.

### **NFHS ONLINE RULES INTERPRETATIONS MEETING SCHEDULE**

Track & Field – Tuesday, Jan 17, 2017

Softball – Wednesday, Jan 18, 2017

Baseball – Thursday, Jan 19, 2017

Boys Lax - Tuesday, Jan 24, 2017

For your convenience, interpreters now have the ability to log in from their home, office, or a designated location. Also, Joe T has arranged for the interpreters to register directly for the on-line meeting and he will send registration information at the appropriate time.

### **CIAC BOARD OF CONTROL MEETINGS**

Reps for CIAC Board Meetings. All meetings are at 2:00 PM. If you wish to represent the Advisory Board at any of the meetings below, call or email Joe Tonelli. When no one is available to attend, the advisory board is represented by Joe T, who also attends as a CIAC staff member.

- October 27, 2016 – Ray Faustich
- December 1, 2016- Dave Leete
- January 12, 2017 - TBA
- February 16, 2017 – TBA
- April 6, 2017 – TBA
- May 4, 2017 (If Needed) - TBA

### **ARBITERPAY**

ArbiterPay is being used by a growing number of states throughout the country. In Ct, this method of payment seems to be following the same pattern that has occurred in other states, so we can expect an increase in the next few years. CIAC experimented with ArbiterPay in one of the tournaments and it worked out so well that the business manager would like us to consider expanding its use to other sports. ArbiterPay is a very efficient way for schools to pay refs and is more secure than the method many schools currently use to collect information from officials. Since

ArbiterPay has an option for refs to get their full game fees, this payment system is acceptable to CIAC.

## **NFHS OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION MEMBERS ONLINE EDUCATION BENEFITS**

Joe T. encouraged the NFHS Officials Association members to take advantage of the free online publications, rules information, articles and videos that are available to them as a benefit of NFHSOA? membership. The information is password protected for members only. If you forgot your password it can be easily reset when signing into the website. There are also free courses relative to officiating that members can take. The NFHS Officials Association not only provides an excellent liability and accident/injury insurance plan, but also continues to expand their educational materials available to members only. They will also be adding sports specific courses on officiating that will be available to the all officials for a fee. Once again, NFHSOA members will get a reduced rate for these courses.

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## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **RECRUITMENT DISCUSSION AND STRATEGIES**

#### **Overview of the officiating members in Ct.**

Number of officials per sport, including multi-sport official:

B & G Basketball - 1,364	Girls Lacrosse - 155
Baseball - 766	B & G Swimming - 135
Football - 654	Ice Hockey - 122
B & G Soccer - 579	Field Hockey - 99
Softball - 387	Wrestling - 72
B & G Volleyball - 244	Gymnastics - 17
Boys Lacrosse - 240	

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT COUNTED IN THESE NUMBERS ARE ALL MEMBERS INCLUDING INACTIVE OFFICIALS AND THOSE INDIVIDUALS THAT ARE NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE OF INJURIES OR WORK SCHEDULES THAT PRECLUDE AFTERNOON GAMES. ALSO, UNDERSTAND THAT PREP SCHOOL ATHLETICS, COLLEGE ATHLETICS AND OUTSIDE LEAGUES IN NUMEROUS SPORTS (IN SEASON & OUT OF SEASON) DRAIN THE POOL ON ANY GIVEN DAY AND TAKE OFFICIALS AWAY FROM HIGH SCHOOL ASSIGNERS. ALSO, 20 YEARS AGO, MORE THAN 60% OF THE OFFICIALS WERE SCHOOL TEACHERS, BUT MOST TEACHERS NOWADAYS CAN'T GET OUT IN TIME TO OFFICIATE SOME SPORTS.**

### **SHORTAGE OF OFFICIALS IN SEVERAL SPORTS**

With the input from the Advisory Board Members, we are providing a snap shot of the sports that have a definite and immediate need for more officials in order to be able to service all of their schools on all levels. The membership counts above provide evidence that the sports with most need are Gymnastics, Field Hockey and Girls Lacrosse. The sport of Girls Lacrosse continues to grow; Hence the need for more officials. The next category are groups that are holding their own, but could use some help in some sections of the state. These sports are Soccer, Girls Volleyball, Ice Hockey, Wrestling and Softball. Boys Lacrosse is holding their own, but they are encountering some difficulty filling sub varsity slots because outside leagues play shorter games and pay more money. Boys Volleyball is in good shape because fewer teams play the sport. Swimming is also doing fine because there are no sub varsity meets.

The leaders in the larger sports such as Basketball, Baseball, and Football tell us that you can never have enough officials, especially since these sports are played by practically all schools in the state on all levels. However, in all sports we have to recruit new officials because we have an aging work force so each year all boards are losing officials to retirement.

There are 54 boards of officials in Ct in all sports that use numerous recruitment and retention strategies. Also, the CIAC put together a recruitment committee that developed some ideas that have helped the cause. Below is a list of some of these ideas.

1. Advertising in newspapers, websites, schools, colleges, rec departments etc. as well as the social media;
2. Sell the concept that it is everyone's job to recruit new officials for their sport;
3. Widely distribute the CIAC Officials' Association recruiting brochures (Use fee structure to attract college age officials);
4. Encourage others to utilize the brochure to recruit - league captains' meetings, officials' meetings summer camps, etc.;
5. Current members - Theme - "Each one, Get one" (incentives for recruiting new members);
6. Encouraging current officials to consider other sports;
7. Training older youth players to officiate younger youth games;
8. Utilizing intramurals, summer camps, play days, etc. to train officials;
9. Establish Mentor programs for new officials as well as the individuals with less than 3 years' experience to support them and encourage them to stick with it;
10. Solicit AD's /coaches/teachers to assist recruiting efforts;
11. Officials groups send reps to schools to meet with prospects;
12. Organize officiating fairs.

These are just some of the ideas that can be utilized.

### **TARGET GROUPS FOR RECRUITING OFFICIALS**

1. High School students and athletes;
2. College students and athletes, club and intramural team players and the student refs in the various sports;
3. Current officials adding a sport;
4. Former coaches;
5. Officials' siblings and/or relatives;
6. Police Officers and Firemen; Best recruiters can be the officials.

However, it's a catch-22 since we must convince current refs that getting more people will help everyone and not cause a reduction in games for them.

**Worthwhile Initiative** - As planned, Bhavin Parekh, Associate Director for Competitive Sports at UConn attended the Advisory Board meeting in order to further develop the concept of establishing a relationship between the local boards and the colleges in Ct. To facilitate this initiative, Bhavin distributed a roster with the contact information of the individuals at each college. At UConn, Bhavin is responsible for the recruiting, training, development, and evaluation of officials for the extensive UConn Intramural program in the sports of softball, basketball, soccer, flag football, field hockey, volleyball and ice hockey. Although the programs at the other schools may not be as extensive as UConn, these individuals can help gain us access to students interested in officiating at the high school level. This concept is worth pursuing and we should definitely follow up on this. It was also mentioned that it may be worthwhile to visit some high school PE classes to drum up interest in officiating.

For this recruitment initiative to be successful, it has to be everyone's responsibility. We have to solicit others to help our cause (i.e. sports committees, coaches, athletic directors, recreation departments, and PE teachers). Although we are certain that all officials' groups have an active recruitment program, we are hopeful that by sharing some of the successful recruiting strategies employed by the various groups, all groups will benefit. It was also mentioned that we have to give newer officials the opportunity to develop

on the Middle School, Frosh and JV levels without being chastised by coaches and fans. These levels of play provide an excellent teaching and learning environment for the development of players, coaches, and officials, and we have to work together to educate all groups regarding the importance of creating a positive environment to enhance the growth of the participants. Delivering a consistent message in this regard is important, and can only be achieved through a cooperative effort on the part of administrators, athletic directors, coaches, and officials.

Regarding the recruitment of college students, Bhavin suggested that the best group to address is the intramural players and the student refs. It would be easier to provide access to these individuals rather than the varsity athletes. Even the club players have an extensive practice and games schedule and would be more difficult to reach. He is willing to work with board leaders with any sport that can attract new officials from this college target group. Bhavin is an excellent resource and we are very appreciative of his efforts to assist us. This is an ongoing “work in progress” that will always be a challenge in our united effort to build and sustain a solid work force of qualified officials.

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### **EXCELLENT ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTING FEMALE OFFICIAL**

Lisa Mikelic, an excellent multi-sport official, was featured in a very complimentary article about her football officiating skills that appeared in the Waterbury Republican American, written by sportswriter, Mark Jaffe. Lisa was an outstanding athlete at Danbury High School and Fairfield University. An All-State athlete in high school, Lisa is the second all-time leading scorer in basketball at Fairfield University. In the article, Lisa received much praise from fellow football officials and Brendan Jugler, Commissioner of the Colonial Board of Football Officials. In our continuing effort to attract more female officials in all sports, Lisa and many other quality officials, serve as an excellent example of the success that can be achieved with dedication and hard work, while providing incentive for others to join the ranks of high school officiating.

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### **AROUND THE TABLE**

As has been our custom at all meetings, we go around the table to ask if anyone has anything to share with the group for the good of the order or to seek input from other sports. This is always a worthwhile exchange of information.

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### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 pm. The next meeting of the CIAC Advisory Board will be held on Thursday, February 9, 2017 @ 4:00 p.m. @ CIAC. The last Advisory Board meeting is Thursday, May 11, 2017 @ 4:00 pm. The State-Wide Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 15, 2017 @ 5:30 pm. Food at 5:00 pm.