

VPA ACTIVITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Thurs./ Fri., February 5&6, 2015

Golden Eagle Resort, Stowe, VT

Members Present: Lisa Atwood, Bob Davis, Jay Hartman, Bill Lawson, Mark Mooney, Amy Molina, Joe Harrington, Joe DeBonis, Rob Reardon, Bob Johnson

Also Present: Michael Marks (VPA Legal Counsel), Dan Ryan (Appeals Comm. Chair), Ken Page, Sean Farrell (VPA Football Comm.), Gino Riffle (Rice AD), Father Bernie Bourgeois (Rice Principal), Joanna Graves (Stowe AD), Matt Link (Montpelier AD), Ian Dinzieo (North Country AD), Dave Cobb (VPA)

Minutes:

- motion by Rob, second by Amy, to approve minutes of 11/2/14 and 11/12/14. Vote – approved unanimously (8-0)
- correspondence
 - 1) discussion on Otter Valley letter from field hockey issue. No action taken.
 - 2) discussion on gymnastics site for winter championships. No action taken.
 - 3) discussion on Green Mt. UHS disbanding girls basketball. No action taken
 - 4) discussion on x-country championship date being moved a week later as requested by coaches. No action necessary.
 - 5) Bob handed out Sports Law Review from NIAAA. No action necessary
 - 6) discussion on request from Websterville to be allowed to use a 7th grader during the basketball tournament. Motion by Amy, second by Rob to approve Websterville's request to be allowed to use a 7th grader during season and tournament. Voted – Yes-0, No-8, motion denied.
- update/discussion on VPA Appeals Committee decision to grant a parents request to allow Lamoille UHS to have two sending school agreements in the Member to Member Program (current policy allows for one. Michael Marks, Dan Ryan and Ken Page present. Primary concern from ASC is that the role of the Appeals Committee appears to have changed. ASC thought the role of the Appeals Committee was to be process oriented and not having the committee conduct a new hearing with new evidence. Dan Ryan indicated that in his many years on the committee, he had never been given that interpretation. Concern with how current policy is written in that it specifically says parents cannot appeal decisions, schools (members) can. If this practice is changing, then the policies have to be revised to reflect the current practice.

ASC expressed concerns that in previous meeting with the VPA Executive Council, they were told the Appeals Committee was to be process oriented.

ASC is also concerned that the Appeal Committee needs to be made up of people who have been trained and should have some sort of background in athletics as this is what the appeals are about.

Consensus that more work needs to be done in this area and that policies (Member to Member and Appeal procedures) need to be reviewed and updated. No further action.

- discussion on situation in Gymnastics where the number of schools needed for a state championship is less than needed. Current procedures say that a minimum of 9 teams are needed to have a state championship (based on new activity policy that states 9 teams are needed to bring forth a new activity). No current written procedure on how the “desanctioning” of an activity is to occur. Consensus that procedures need to be drafted and presented at next ASC meeting for consideration. As part of the process, consensus that any activity should be given a 2 year time frame (same as exhibition activities) to see if the issue can be corrected. If not, the activity would have its sanctioning removed.

Bob J. will let Gymnastics Committee know this and will also contact other states to see what policies/procedures are in place to deal with this type of situation. No further action.

- 2015-16 calendar presented for final approval. VSADA has voted to accept this. Motion by Amy, second by Rob, to approve the 2015-16 calendar as presented. Vote – approved unanimously (8-0).

Discussion on 2016-17 calendar. VSADA did approve the calendar, but the vote was close (24-20). Consensus that this issue should be discussed further by the VSADA at their next meeting and be brought back to the next ASC meeting. No further action.

- Appeal by Rice MHS (Gino Riffle, Fr. Bernie Bourgeois) to allow their Football Team to remain in D2. VIFL and VPA Football Committee placed them in D1. Sean Farrell (Middlebury AD) present representing VPA Football Committee and VIFL. Main concern is that it would put kids at risk. Rice numbers have remained stable (low 30's), even though their program has had success. Playing D1 teams week in and week out would be a concern.

Sean Farrell explained the formula used by the VIFL to place schools in a division. The formula is based on multiple factors. Rice was towards the bottom of D1, but not at the absolute bottom. Both the VIFL and VPA Football Committee heard Rice's appeal, but denied it.

Motion by Rob to grant Rice MHS its appeal to have their Football team moved from D1 to D2 for the upcoming alignment period. Vote – Yes-2, No-4, Abstain-4. Appeal denied.

- Renewal of cooperative team agreements in baseball, softball and girl's hockey between Stowe and Peoples presented. Joanna Graves (Stowe AD) presented request. All programs have gone well. Current request is for an additional two years.

Motion by Amy, second by Lisa, to approve cooperative teams in baseball, softball and girl's hockey between Stowe and Peoples Academy for the next two year cycle. Vote – approved unanimously (9-0).

- Bob J. presented revised draft of Independent School Policy. This policy Would allow students from Independent schools to participate on their local public school teams as long as a criteria is met. Discussion. Need to clarify what a local school is. Mention no shopping around for a school. Note that the intent of the policy is for a student to remain with one school per year.

Motion by Rob, second by Amy, to approve Independent School policy with suggested changes. Vote – approved unanimously (9-0). Will be sent on to VPA Executive Council for consideration.

- Discussion on in-door track situation. This year, the in-door track committee was notified by Norwich University (site of our state championships and several regular season meets), that they were raising the costs of using the facility for the season. There had been no notice of this and the first the committee found out was after the season had begun. As a result, schools had to bear the increased costs during the regular season and the VPA bore the increased cost of the championships. Several attempts were made to get Norwich to reconsider their decision, but they would not. The in-door track committee will be looking for a new championship site next year. No further action.
- Discussion on the awarding of index points when schools play at a neutral site. This issue was raised by several schools who were concerned that schools may be playing at neutral sites in order to get additional index points (for playing an away game). Consensus from the committee that the home team should get home points regardless of the site. This would be the school who is listed on the schedule as having a home game and pays for the officials. If there is a situation where both schools agreed to play at a neutral site for travel considerations (Lake Region and Burr & Burton have played basketball games at Windsor), then one year one school is designated as the home team, the next year, the other team is designated (this is decided before the season begins).

Motion by Joe D., second by Jay, that in all games a “home” team be designated on the season schedule and that team would be awarded the home points even if they are playing at a neutral site. The only exception would be schools who are invited to a tournament (winner gets the away points). Vote – approved unanimously. This is to go into effect in the Spring 2015 season.

- Cooperative golf team between Montpelier/U-32 and Twinfield presented by Matt Link, AD at Montpelier and Amy Molina, AD at U-32. Proposal has not gone to the golf committee due to the late application date.

Motion by Rob, second by Jay to approve the Montpelier/U-32/Twinfield cooperative golf team (in both boys and girls) and to refer the new team back to the VPA Golf Committee for divisional assignment. Vote – approved unanimously.

- Bob J. presented alignments in soccer/basketball/baseball/softball for the 2015-17 alignment cycle. These alignments were approved by the individual sports committees and include teams who have petitioned up.

Motion by Amy, second by Lisa, to approve the alignments as presented. Vote – approved unanimously.

- Rob presented an update of the newly created recruitment committee. Committee has met once and will meet again. Is currently examining policies from other states. Key issues have been identified. No further action.
- Hardship Waiver request presented by North Country UHS by Ian Dinzeo, AD at North Country. Hearing conducted in Executive Session.

Motion by Amy, second by Lisa to grant Andrew Ritter from North Country UHS an additional year of eligibility. Vote – approved unanimously.

- Bob J. presented memo from NFHS concerning contact in football. This memo Has been reviewed by the VPA Sports Medicine Committee and also by a sub-committee from the VPA Football Committee. Specific recommendations will be made to the VIFL in order to bring Vermont into compliance with the recommendations. No further action at this time.
- Bob J. gave an update from the VSADA meeting of 1/20/15 in regards to calendars and game limits. VSADA defeated the recommendations to reduce the amount of games in the Winter and Spring seasons. VSADA also voted to deny the recommendation to require all sports officials to complete a concussion education course. Concerns expressed about sub-varsity officials who are not assigned and the responsibility this would put on the schools.
- Discussion on the language in the Member to Member Agreement in regards

To a sending school only being allowed to have one agreement with a receiving school. This was a key issue in a recent VPA Appeals Committee hearing.

Motion by Rob, second by Amy, that additional wording be added to the current Member to Member Agreement stating that a sending school may only have one agreement with a receiving school (as stated in MTM minutes in 2004). Vote – approved unanimously.

- adjourned. Next meeting Friday, May 1st – Capitol Plaza – 10:00 a.m.