

# **GHYLA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

July 29, 2014

6:00-8:00 PM

The meeting was called to order by Mike Alsobrooks at 6:15 PM at the offices of DLA Piper LLP (US), Wells Fargo Plaza, 1000 Louisiana Street, Suite 2800, Houston, Texas 77002.

## **Attendees:**

- Tim Bohdan – GHYLA Treasurer
- Mike Alsobrooks – GHYLA President
- Glenn Reitman – GHYLA Secretary, Sienna Plantation representative
- Mary Zimmerman – GHYLA Coordinator
- Michael Bertasz – GHYLA VP of U13
- Bob Wallace – GHYLA VP of U15, Outlaws representative
- Chris Arnold – GHYLA Representative to US Lacrosse Houston Chapter, Kingwood representative
- Donna Broom – Friendswood Youth Lacrosse (FYLAX), Friendswood representative
- David Broom – FYLAX
- Andrew Wheat – Katy representative
- Tawni Slaughter – FYLAX
- Jason Menchaca – Cy-Fair representative
- Ron Dunklee – Pearland representative
- Leslie Culhane – Pin Oak representative
- Clubs not represented:
  - North Conference: Klein, Lobo, Magnolia, Woodlands
  - West Conference: Kinkaid, Pershing, Memorial, Richmond, Spartans
  - South Conference: Black MS, Clear Lake, HYLAX Hornets, Kinkaid, Presbyterian.
  - Other: First Baptist

Discussions by area:

## **President (Mike Alsobrooks):**

- Mike gave an overview of the 2013-2014 lacrosse season. He stated that his goals were:
  - (1) Get GHYLA more self-running by the clubs and less directed by the executive committee members.
  - (2) Eliminate all local exceptions from the national lacrosse rulebooks.
- Regarding item #1, implementation of the game-scheduling software program Zebra Ware was a big step in the direction of getting GHYLA to be more self-running. Although there was a steep learning curve for users to use Zebra Ware, the program seemed to work well. The makers of Zebra Ware customized it for us to allow GHYLA to do certain things, such as post standings of

teams, which eliminated the need to do double-entry for the GHYLA web site to show upcoming games on the schedule. Mike noted that Zebra Ware tracked 400+ game cancellations and 400+ changes to the game schedules, which is a huge amount of communication. Mike requested that teams pick up the phone and call one another before entering a game change in Zebra Ware to avoid churn of the Zebra Ware system. If the game will occur in the next 24 hours, also reach out to the officials.

- Regarding item #2, Tim noted that GHYLA uses the US Lacrosse Youth Rules as written and with only one local exception, which is the grade requirement in the playing divisions.
- Mike suggested the GHYLA hold the end-of-season board closer to the end of the regular season. Admittedly, the summer of 2014 was an exception. In past years, the end-of-season meeting has traditionally been held in the month of June.

#### **U15 (Bob Wallace)**

- Incident reports were minimal (~5 of them).
- Ejections and suspensions – GHYLA did have 3-4 player suspensions due to game ejections with one player getting close to a third ejection, which would have ended his season.
- Playoffs – Bob commended Mark Rothwell and his HYLAX organization for the wonderful job they did hosting the GHYLA playoffs. For the first time, the event was hosted on a single weekend, which combined the Young Guns playoffs with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 7<sup>th</sup> grade playoffs.
- All Star Game – the All Star event was a big success. Houston Christian HS, which has a beautiful facility, hosted the event. Crowd turnout was high. The new design of the pinnies was a huge hit with the players. One criticism was that the process for nomination of players and communication to/from the clubs needs to be improved. One club did not submit its players until after the squads had already been chosen, so its players got left out. Communication of player no-shows was again very poor, so several slots on each squad remained unfilled on game day, which denied another deserving player of the opportunity to participate. Bob received feedback from Mike Newton, a former THSLL coach of the year from Memorial who is now coaching the Woodlands middle school program, who stated that his participation in GHYLA was a pleasure and that the GHYLA was well run. This is quite a compliment for the league.

#### **U13 (Michael Bertasz)**

- Playoff seeds were determined subjectively, but Michael and Bob put a lot of work into trying to make the seeds as fair as possible by looking at records, score differentials, and other factors. Each seed was justified by actual data that supported the seed number. Teams do not all play the same opponents, so doing cross-conference seeding will always be somewhat subjective.

- Someone proposed doing random seeding using a drawing held in late April, but this was rejected since it could result in the #1 and #2 teams playing each other in the first round, which was deemed unfair.
- The playoff event was a big success. Mark Rothwell handled everything – shirts, flyers, volunteers. Kudos to Mark and the HYLAX organization for running a superb playoff event.
- Incident reports decreased this year, which was good.

#### **U11 (Open discussion)**

- Someone brought up the subject of the size of the playing field for the 4U division, which currently uses the reduced-size field for 7v7 play. The suggestion was to consider using a full-sized field and run 10v10 play.
  - Pros – Summer tournaments use full-field and 10v10. Players moving up from U11 to U13 will be better prepared for running the full field. The restraining box is already on the full field, which eliminates the “post-faceoff release” problem on the small field where the small field has no restraining lines. No need to paint a smaller field on top of a bigger field.
  - Cons – Players weighing 50-60 pounds running 110 yards on a full field would be equivalent to a 150-pound 8<sup>th</sup> grader running 200-300 yards on a scaled-up size field. Would that make any sense? The U11 players can focus on their stick skills and lacrosse fundamentals instead of their aerobic fitness for running the full field. Players at a young age hate any sport where they have to run a lot. It is better to let them fall in love with the game on a small field, where running is minimized. Then the U11 players can move up to the big field after they have fallen in love with lacrosse.
  - An informal poll was taken for the U11 field size – four people voted in favor of using the full field, four people voted to keep using the small field, and four people had no strong opinion either way. Although in favor of the small field, Tim made a **motion #1** to consider a change in the size of the U11 field and player complement. The proposal will be discussed and voted upon at the beginning-of-season board meeting in September or so. Motion #1 carried.
  - Someone suggested the use of a 75% field, which would be somewhere between the size of the full field and the small field. It was pointed out that this would create a nontrivial problem with lines and field paint because a 75% field would not fit nicely atop either the full or small fields. Only Kinkaid possesses a 75% field, which they use as their side field.

#### **U9 (Open discussion)**

- Everyone agreed that U9 will continue to use the small field and play 7v7.

- Mike suggested a tweak to the lineup so that the pre-faceoff attack and defensive players are five yards in front of Goal Line Extended (GLE) to prevent a long scrum from approaching the front of the crease and resulting in an undefended shot on goal by the team winning the first possession.
- FYLAX will be fielding a 2U team for the 2014-2015 season.

#### **Treasurer (Tim Bohdan)**

- Treasurer's emailed the treasurer's report to all GHYLA members earlier in the day. Please contact Glenn if you want to view it. Mary will post the report on the GHYLA web site.
- Tim reported that GHYLA finished the 2013-2014 season with \$47 more than it started with in its bank account. Revenue and expenses were nearly identical.
  - Revenue = \$8,450
  - Expenses = \$8,403
- Bank balance is healthy. The beginning balance was \$4,239.70 and the ending balance is \$4,286.90, which is a net increase of \$47.
- All dues were collected and deposited by January 24th (a new GHYLA record).
- Tim recommended switching to sublimated pinnies for the next All Star Game, which will eliminate the need for (expensive) piping on numbers. The cost will be the same.
- Tim recommended keeping GHYLA dues at the same level, assuming no playoffs for 2U or 4U, which is:
  - 2U = \$50 per squad
  - 4U = \$50 per squad
  - U13/Young Guns = \$120 per squad
  - U15/7th/8th Grade = \$120 per squad

#### **US Lacrosse Houston Chapter (Chris Arnold)**

- Chris and Donna mentioned that there will be a meeting of the US Lacrosse Houston Chapter on Friday, August 1. Members of the general public are invited to attend the constituents' session, which will start at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be held at Presbyterian School, 5300 Main Street, Houston, TX 77004. The meeting room number will be determined later. The subject of the meeting is budget prioritization, which is to identify all of the candidate programs and services that the Houston Chapter could be supporting and prioritize them. Dollars will not be allocated. This meeting is merely an early planning session. Examples of programs and services offered in

the past include coaching certifications, US Lacrosse training, rules interpretations, parent training, PE clinics, camps, tournaments, First Stick Program, Positive Coaching Alliance workshops, and grants for sticks, equipment, or defibrillators. The deliverable of the meeting will be a list of prioritized programs and services to be offered by US Lacrosse Houston Chapter.

### **Executive Committee Elections (Mike Alsobrooks)**

The following people were elected by unanimous vote since all people ran unopposed.

- President – Glenn Reitman (Sienna Plantation)
- Treasurer – Tim Bohdan (unaffiliated)
- Secretary – vacant
- VP of U15 – Michael Bertasz (Outlaws)
- VP of U13 – Andrew Wheat (Katy)
- VP of U11 – Jillian Barkley<sup>1</sup> (Klein)
- VP of U9 – Donna Broom (Friendswood)
- Coordinator – Tom Partin (Richmond)
- Representative to US Lacrosse Houston Chapter – Chris Arnold (Kingwood)

Although not elected, Deanna Reitman was confirmed to be continuing in her role as GHYLA Counsel.

### **Playing Rules**

- A suggestion was made to use the US Lacrosse Youth Rules 100% and eliminate the local exception to include academic grade level in the requirements for player eligibility in a particular playing division (i.e., use strict U15, U13, U11, and U9 playing divisions, which would effectively fuse the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 7<sup>th</sup> grade into a single two-year playing division). Most attendees were in favor of this, and none of the attendees were against this change. Tim provided background information on why GHYLA and its predecessor organization HMSLL both instituted the grade requirement, which was to align with the private schools. Back when lacrosse was new to Houston, it evolved out of the private schools, so the middle school league needed to align with the private schools to get games. Now that GHYLA is four times larger than HJPC, GHYLA teams no longer depend on the private schools to get a complete lacrosse schedule. Thus, GHYLA now has the freedom to drop the grade requirement in favor of using the strict US Lacrosse Youth Rules.

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<sup>1</sup> Unsure if she was running or not. If not, then the position for VP of U11 will need to be filled.

- Pros – conformity with the US Lacrosse Youth Rules nationally, which is how the summer tournaments are run, allow a new-to-lacrosse 8<sup>th</sup> grader to “play down” on the U15 “B squad” without requiring any (contentious) GHYLA waivers, allow coaches to form their U15 squads based on skills instead of grade levels, which will give coaches more flexibility to put forth squads that match his players’ skills, most other sports use two-year playing divisions, allow more U15 squads to participate in playoffs (e.g., invite 12 squads instead of only 8), make it easier on the playoff host which won’t need as many fields to host the event on one weekend, most teams have difficulty fielding a pure 7<sup>th</sup> grade team and the playoff participation proves this (most 7<sup>th</sup> grade teams qualified for playoffs due to a shortage of teams).
- Cons – the private school still use grade level for player eligibility, so games played against them might require rearrangement of players on the U15 A-squad and the B-squad for any given GHYLA team.
- A **motion #2** was made to consider wholesale adoption of the US Lacrosse Youth Rules for the 2014-2015 season, which would effectively switch GHYLA to the pure U-xx system used nationally. The proposal will be discussed and voted upon at the beginning-of-season board meeting in September or so. Motion #2 carried.

#### **All Star Games**

- All Star Games. If the aforementioned motion on strict usage of US Lacrosse Youth Rules gets ratified at the next meeting, a vote should be taken on what to do with the All Star Games:
  - Option 1 (three All Star Games) – U15, U14, and U13 (new for U13).
  - Option 2 (two All Star Games) – U15, U14 (essentially the same for both).
  - Option 3 (two All Star Games) – U15, U13 (combined for 7/8, new for Young Guns).

#### **Jerseys for the 2014-2015 Season**

- Jerseys – Mike and Tim pointed out that teams need to respect the rules for jersey numbers. Teams are getting carried away with creating designs that impair the ability of officials to officiate the game. Examples of jersey violations:
  - Numbers missing on front of jersey.
  - Number too small (needs to be at least 8” tall on front and 10” tall on back).
  - Number on shorts in lieu of number on jersey (useless; number on shorts is too small to be seen during live action).

- Numbers printed in colors that make them tough to see. One team even printed its numbers in camouflage colors, which made the numbers almost impossible to see when the players are moving (i.e., camouflage works).
- Colors on the jersey that are not either (1) dominant light or (2) dominant dark, which means it is difficult to distinguish the players from those on the other team.
- Use of double-zero. This number will be illegal in a few years. You might as well change it to single-zero, as required by the US Lacrosse Youth Rules.

### **GHYLA Member-specific Items**

- By unanimous vote, the Frank Black Middle School program was upgrade from provisional member to regular member of GHYLA. Congratulations to the Frank Black Middle School program.
- Someone asked what new teams, if any, desire membership in GHYLA. Candidate teams were discussed, but none of these teams have formally applied to GHYLA. Teams discussed included Emery-Weiner, the Awty International School<sup>2</sup>, and First Baptist Academy.
- Stratford and Memorial are merging once again. The new team will be called Memorial Knights Youth Lacrosse. The assumed boundary will be that of the two predecessor teams, which comprises the entirety of the Spring Branch ISD.
- FYLAX is expanding to include Galveston County. FYLAX plans to field teams from 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The Friendswood Middle School Lacrosse will still exist separately outside of FYLAX. This brings up a question of GHYLA membership since Friendswood was only ever admitted to GHYLA as “Friendswood” once back when it was purely a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade program. When Young Guns were added and FYLAX was formed, the young guns squads were assumed to be covered by the existing Friendswood membership and board position, and thus no vote was ever taken to adopt FYLAX as a separate GHYLA member. Including teams with two voting board members – one for 7/8 and one for YG –might have created a ruckus with other organizations that had separate internal boards for 7/8 and YG but which possessed only one GHYLA board vote (e.g., Cy-Fair, Woodlands, Kingwood). Another issue to consider is the current GHYLA boundary rules. The current GHYLA Rules and Regulations stipulate mutually exclusive boundaries based on the relevant high school. In a district with only one high school (Friendswood), it would be impossible to have two separate GHYLA members within the same high school boundary and comply with the boundary rules. Further investigation is needed.
- Cy-Fair plans to field a 4U team (now called U11).

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<sup>2</sup> The Awty International School is a Houston affiliate of a global private school based in Paris, France.

- The Cy-Fair Sports Association (CFSA) is allowing lacrosse to use its 11-field sports campus, which is located near the intersection of Hwy-290 and Grand Parkway. The facility has all-grass fields and five of the 11 fields are lighted.

**Action items:**

#	Description	Owner	Due Date
1	Communicate a proposal to all board members for a vote at the beginning-of-season board meeting motion to consider a change in the size of the U11 field and the playing complement.	President	8/1/14
2	Recommend a change to the pre-faceoff positioning of players on the small field (U9, U11) so that the non-midfield players are five yards <u>in front of</u> Goal Line Extended (GLE) to prevent a long scrum from approaching the front of the crease and resulting in an undefended shot on goal by the team winning the first possession.	VP U11	9/1/14
3	Invite all GHYLA member organizations to attend the meeting of the US Lacrosse Houston Chapter.	Secretary	7/30/14
4	Communicate a proposal to all board members for a vote at the beginning-of-season board meeting motion to adopt the US Lacrosse Youth Rules 100% and eliminate the local exception to include academic grade level in the requirements for player eligibility in a particular playing division (i.e., use strict U15, U13, U11, and U9 playing divisions, which would effectively fuse the 8th grade and 7th grade into a single two-year playing division).	President	8/1/14
5	Communicate to all GHYLA members immediately (before teams order their jerseys) to conform with the requirements for uniforms and jerseys for the 2014-2015 season, especially for the requirement on jersey numbers and colors.	President	7/30/14
6	Communicate to all GHYLA teams that Frank Black Middle School has been accepted as a regular member of GHYLA.	President	8/1/14
7	Investigate the ramifications of FYLAX adding 7/8 grade and still sharing the same recruiting boundary as the Friendswood Middle School program.	President	9/1/14
8	Communicate results of elections and vacancies needed to be filled.	President	8/1/14



#	Description	Owner	Due Date
9	Post the Treasurer's Report, End-of-Season Board Meeting Minutes, GHYLA Rules and Regulations, and GHYLA Bylaws on the GHYLA web site	Mary	8/1/14

END OF MEETING