

Illinois Water Polo Agenda for January 22, 2018

Attendance:

Kyle Perry - President
Beto Garcia - Vice President
Rob Biamonte - Treasurer
Elizabeth Timmos – Secretary
Jesse Zein
Carol Macola
Tom Musch
Marc Popovici
Cynthia Bedolla
Chris Cloy
Tim Daniel

1. Opening comments – Kyle Perry
 - By-laws are still being updated from the last meeting
 - The updated proposed by-laws will be re-examed at the next meeting in March.
 - Please view the most up to date version (one will be sent out shortly) and decide what you do think we need to change. This way we can only highlight where we have concerns, and we do not need to go section by section.
2. By-law update, review, and discussion
 - The Chicago Park District would like to be a voting member due to the number of athletes and programs provided.
 - The Chicago Park District is a separate entity from the Chicago Park District water polo club.
3. Treasurers Report – Ron Biamonte
 - In 2017, IWP made almost \$8000, mostly from the increase in the high school summer leagues.
 - o Some of this money will be used for a coaches/officials clinic at the end of the high school water polo season/beginning of the summer league season.
 - Working to integrate the PayPal account we have. This could be a way for people to pay for banquet tickets, ads in the program at the All-State Banquet, selling extra banquet programs, obtaining donations, etc.
 - o Currently we can't do this, but want to work on options going forward to make our website easier to use, especially for potential donors.
4. Midwest Water Polo and Aquatics Association Executive Board Report – Rick Marsh, Garrin Kapecki, Jeff Wimer, Sally Stelnicki, Perry Korbakis
 - Nothing to report at this time
5. Reports:
 - a. All State Banquet – Sally Stelnicki (absent)
 - Date is May 29th and most stuff is taken care of as we are at the Diplomat West again.
 - All-State Banquet booklet organizer – VOLUNTEER NEEDED
 - o Responsibilities would include:
 - Manage graphic design with vendor
 - Handing out information to make sure it gets to parents, coaches, etc and they would need to follow up with anyone who has previously purchased an add.
 - Keeping in touch with Carol and Sally regarding who is getting tickets as part of their donation to Illinois Water Polo's banquet booklet.
 - Collecting ads to give to printer as people will email either their design or just the words.
 - Could do something with designing if people just sent in words. Some people will design their own ads.
 - Money is sent separately to IWP via Kyle or Ron. Hopefully, we will eventually be able to do something with PayPal for this.
 - o All-Sectional voting list could have a spot for a coach to enter in a parent contact so the volunteer has someone to reach out to for each team about the banquet.

- After the banquet, we could send books out to anyone who took out an add but was not able to make it to the banquet to pick up a booklet.
- Banquet Gifts
 - Balls - want to try this but Tread 365 is concerned about time so we are contacting other vendors (Swimmer's Edge, Holy Cow, Kap7) to see what might be possible within our budget.
 - We have found Zooma balls that cost \$15/ball. We are asking these companies whether or not it would be possible to print on a ball if we order it or if we need to print on the ball during production.
 - Another option is to use water bottles with Lively Bottle.
 - Instead of handing out the water bottles, we could give a certificate that could be sent in to the Lively Bottle. This would be great if we want to personalize more with names, etc, but the downside would be an increase in shipping and would require the player to turn in their certificate instead of just having the gift at the banquet.
 - Logo on ball or water bottle would include the IWP logo and ideally "All State Team"
 - We are planning to eliminate names, but can use first team, second team, etc, to be able to reuse in future years if there are players that are not present at the banquet to pick up their award. Player of the Year one might be more customized.
- b. Player Recognition – Chris Cloy
 - An amendment to the meeting minutes from November: The All-State voting may or may not be in person. A decision will be made for the 2018 season at the March meeting.
 - Should we have an in-person meeting, Chris will need help to organize and run for both boys and girls at the same time.
 - Another possibility is to do the meeting in person but then collect votes online [there are limited spaces in Fenwick that would be workable for this – library, math lab, and the language lab].
- c. Photography – Tom Musch
 - Get the word out to use the site for photos, especially as the season begins.
- d. Fundraising – Kyle Perry
 - Beached Whales raised some money for the scholarship at their tournament by adding a small amount to the entry fee.
 - This one event raise about \$300 for scholarship fund.
 - Jolyn continues to be helpful in making donations to the scholarship fund by providing Illinois Water Polo a portion of their proceeds when Jolyn is allowed to sell their merchandise at Illinois Water Polo events.
 - The Metro Catholic Aquatic Conference will continue to promote the scholarship with their scholarship week and the fundraiser at MCAC.
 - Fundraiser at O'Sullivan's in Forest Park on Saturday, May 5th.
 - This takes place after the championship game of the Varsity MCAC tournament around 6:30pm.
 - Good social event for coaches, officials, parents, etc from all teams (not the just the MCAC).
 - O'Sullivan's will occasionally donate money or food at the event.
 - Coaches' clinic on 1/27/18 will donate some money to the scholarship fund.
 - WildCats are using it as a fundraiser for Nationals and as a way to promote the scholarship.
 - IWP is collecting funds for this and promoting the event however we can.
- e. Referees – Perry Korbakis (absent)
 - Upcoming event is the Two Daves Tournament and IHSA official training
 - 2 Daves Tournament is February 9-11.
 - Clinic for officials and coaches at Fenwick on Saturday and Sunday, January 27 & 28.
 - Officials pay fee and coaches are free.
 - Want coaches to hear what main speaker (Ed) has to say.
- f. Website – Jesse Zien
 - Website numbers:
 - Last 30 days we had 517 sessions by 414 users with 1,090 page views with 2.11 pages per session on average and a bounce rate of 58.61%.
 - Last 90 days we had 1,589 sessions by 1,249 users with 3,182 page views with 2.00 pages per session on average and a bounce rate of 62.37%.
 - While the 30 day marker is a decrease from the last time we posted them, there has been an uptick in pages per session. This means people are hitting our first page and going deeper into the site.
 - Thanks to Jesse for updating the website so well! Bios (below) and calendar have stayed very up to date which helps with planning and getting the word out about events.

- g. Hall of Fame – Jeff Wimer (absent)
 - There are 18 bios for Hall of Famers which is just short of the goal of 20 by 2018.
 - Tom Allen, retired Lyons Township Water Polo coach, passed away last month. His HOF bio will be going up shortly.

- 6. Liaisons Report
 - a. USWP Liaison – Midwest Board Members Present / Tim Daniel
 - b. ODP – Tim Daniel
 - Qualifier for JOs this summer
 - IU has another event this year so the qualifier will be in St. Louis on Father's Day weekend in June (6/15-17).
 - o There will be communication with IU to work out the details in for future years, especially because Ryan Castle, the new IU Coach, has been very proactive about working with coaches and players from our area. Ryan would also like to do clinics and continue to work on player development in the midwest.
 - o Both IU and Toronto coach were really happy with the Chicago Showcase that was hosted in November and are already looking forward to coming back to participate.
 - Goal is to ALWAYS keep the weekend of the qualifier tournament the same.
 - ODP got ok to create a regional tournament to look for talent in the Midwest.
 - o Changes coming that will be better for the boys side of ODP to conflict less with HS swimming.
 - o While this is still in the works, the hope is to use MLK weekend for regional tournament and team picked from there. This would mean only a few players would have to decide between IHSA state meet and tournament as they would have to make the regional team first.
 - c. College Programs Liaison – Ryan Hall, McKendree Water Polo Coach (absent - notes were added after the meeting)
 - Our men's team finished 5th in our conference out of 8 teams. We did about as well as I was expecting us to do with a new coach and it being our first year as a varsity program. I was happy to see a lot of improvement from our first weekend of play back east at Brown and Harvard to our last weekend of competition during our conference playoff. We played and lost to Salem in the second round of the playoffs, but it was a hard fought game, and we gave ourselves a chance to win down the stretch. Our last game against Connecticut was one of our best all-around team performances of the season. It was great to get a win against a team that had beat us pretty handily early in the season and to finish on a high note. Overall, we lacked experience and depth, two areas that will improve tremendously in the off season and into next fall as we return our entire roster and add a large class of talented and experienced incoming players. I think we will be a very different team next season, and my expectation is to be in a position to compete with the top teams in our conference in addition to high level non-conference opponents.
 - Our women's team had their first exhibition against St. Louis University last week. It was a great opportunity to build some confidence and work on a few things as we prepared for a tough weekend of ranked opponents at Indiana University. This last weekend we played against UCSB, Harvard and Indiana, all teams that will more than likely be ranked in the top 15 nationally by the end of the season. I was impressed by our effort and the way we fought, but ultimately, our team is not in a position to be competitive at that level quite yet. It was a great experience and we figured out specific areas that we need to focus on improving moving forward into the season. This weekend we travel to Brown to play against Brown, Wagner, Bucknell and Hartwick. It will be another rough weekend but our goal is to use these opportunities to get into better shape and prepare for conference play.
 - As for recruiting and suggestions regarding how an athlete should plan for playing water polo in college (at McKendree and other schools):
 - o I would always encourage high school boys and girls to reach out to coaches and be persistent. Often times coaches won't respond right away because either they are busy focusing on their season, or some coaches are gauging the interest level, and it might take multiple emails to get a response.
 - o Try and watch as much water polo as you can and be a student of the game. A lot of colleges will live stream their games and keep them up on the website for several days to watch. Our home games will be streamed, and if you wanted to get the word out about when we are playing, it would be great exposure for us and we try and get the word out about McKendree polo (we play tomorrow night at 7pm vs Lindenwood and it should be streaming live). Youtube has tons of old games from Junior Olympics, Pro Leagues, College finals etc. I think its funny that most kids can tell you who the best basketball or football players are but can't name the best USA water polo players. There are also a bunch of classroom type videos that talk about center play, analytics, goal keeping etc which are great resources for newcomers and experienced players looking to learn something new. Be a student of the game you love!

- Something interesting that you may already be aware of... Austin College in Sherman Texas is the latest college to add a water polo program. Originally they were going to join the Mid Atlantic West (our conference), as La Salle (division 1 program) was going to be leaving the West conference to the Mid Atlantic East with the other D 1 teams. Just recently Austin college announced they will be joining the MPSF, much like Penn State Behrend did, forming a conference of 6 teams – Stanford, Cal, UCLA, USC, PSP and Austin College. This may lead to some realignment with the non-California water polo teams in the Midwest and the East Coast. Currently, there is the Mid Atlantic West – McKendree, Gannon, Mercyhurst, Salem International, Connecticut College, Washington and Jefferson, La Salle, Monmouth and the Mid Atlantic East – George Washington, Navy, Bucknell, Johns Hopkins, Fordham, Wagner. The top two teams from the West decided in a conference playoff advance to the Mid Atlantic East playoff making an 8 team tournament. Winner gets the AQ to advance to NCAA tournament. The other side is the Northeast Conference – Harvard, Princeton, Brown, St. Francis, Iona, MIT. Winner of conference tournament gets AQ to advance.
- d. Chicago Park District Liaison – Beto Garcia
- CPD would like to highlight the efforts of IU and Coach Castle for such a great Speedo Cup tournament. In addition to hosting a great water polo tournament, the school welcomed the players on tours led by Coach Castle and his assistant for any team that was interested. This was a great way to showcase the school to prospective students.
 - As of this year, CPD has 22 teams in a 10U league, 24 teams in a 12U league, 27 teams in a 14U league, 8 teams in their Senior Men’s Competition, 4 senior women’s teams, 6-10 teams playing in their Senior Women’s league.
 - Have to belong to any local park to be able to participate in their leagues.
7. League Updates – Rob Lindgren (absent)
- As of now, there is only one outstanding summer league fee – Andrew. Overall, it is great that we only have one outstanding balance.
 - Looking to make changes so IWP can make a profit off of all summer leagues, not just high school league.
 - This could be in the form of adding a little to each team entry fee or player fee to generate a profit for IWP.
 - The goal is not to hurt the leagues with any increase in cost, but to generate some funding for IWP.
 - Girls league is underway for winter and currently has 12 teams.
8. Old Business
- Nothing to report at this time.
 - Be sure to read the most updated by-laws for the next meeting and come with any questions or concerns.
9. New Business
- a. Tony Azevedo & Kami Craig’ Clinic/Combine Program Weekend in Chicago presented by NWC & Cardinal water polo – Tim Daniel & Marc A. Popovici
- Tony was contacted by a kid who was interested in having him come out to run a water polo clinic.
 - Hoffman Estates High school is hosting this one.
 - \$150/kid/day, 8am-3:15pm
 - Tread365 t-shirts for the kids
 - IHSA Boys’ State Swim Meet weekend (2/24-2/25)
 - 8th grade and under on Saturday
 - High Schoolers on Sunday
 - Each day is limited to 50 kids.
 - The morning will be the clinic/teaching portion and the afternoon will include games to showcase skills taught in the morning.
 - Need 9 volunteer coaches to take data and coach during games. Tony will help critique your coaching as well while you work with the kids.
 - In the future, they will look into other weekends, but this seems to be a good way to kick off the season.
 - Registration will be up in the next few days.
 - Currently, Tony is looking to run 2 clinics/year and would like to go to different schools around the area, including in the city.
 - This particular time, he will have 2 in a row on the north side.
 - A concern is finding pool time that is affordable, but he is open to travelling all around the Chicagoland area.
 - Wants to do June as well. Coincide with All-Star game and clinic?
 - Tony will be in Cincinnati on July 28 & 29 for another clinic.

- b. WildCats clinic is happening on January 27th at Stevenson High School from 12:30-5pm.
- Ashley Hill is the speaker.
 - o Ashley is in her 19th year as a high school teacher and her 24th year as a coach.
 - o Her passion lies in teaching and coaching young athletes to be leaders both in sports and in life.
 - o Ashley is currently the head boys and girls swim coach at Cathedral Catholic High School in Indianapolis, Indiana. Most recently she has been coaching boys water polo at the 12u, 14u, and 16u levels for Stanford Water Polo Club. At Stanford's club, they coach with each level (start with 14U and move up with the kids). She has been involved at every level of managing a club and coaching with Stanford. For the past 15 years she has been coaching and teaching at Saint Francis High School in Mountain View, CA. She was the assistant boys water polo coach, Head Girls Basketball coach, and assistant boys and girls varsity swim coach.
 - The WildCats club was started because they wanted to gain some respect for Midwest girls players and wanted to give girls a place to come back and play after college without having to go somewhere else. They want to have consistent good competition for people in this area for girls who want to keep playing.
- c. Discussion about starting up a water polo program at Peoria Notre Dame.
- Derek Amerman, swim coach at Peoria Nortre Dame, Perry Korbakis, Kyle Perry and Tim Caldwell have been discussing the idea of starting a water polo program at PND.
 - o PND has been successful at swimming and are looking to branch out.
 - o Nothing will happen for this upcoming water polo season, but maybe getting up and running for the club summer season.
 - Currently it would be a challenge for them to join a conference because of the distance from teams that are participating in the high school season.
 - However, there are 9 schools in the Peoria area that have swimming (Pekin, Peoria HS, Peoria – Manuel, Peoria – Notre Dame, Peoria Christian, Peoria – Richwoods, East Peoria High School, Washington Community High School, and Dunlop, and just 30 minutes east are Blooming – Central Catholic, Normal – Community, Normal – Community West, University High School, and Bloomington). If a few of these teams could be enticed to have a team, this would make starting a program up a lot easier. Peoria could have its own conference or even sectional!
 - For the summer season, some ideas have been tossed around to help PND participate in our leagues.
 - For example, they could play most of their games on the weekends and if they could host 2 weekends and travel 2 weekends, they would get a substantial number of games. Need to have teams willing to travel that far for a weekend.
 - o It would be amazing to get some more water polo going in Illinois a little farther from Chicago.

10. Next meetings at Fenwick Library: Sunday, March 11, 7pm at Fenwick, Sunday, April 22, 7pm, Monday, September 10, 7pm, and Monday, November 12, 7pm.
- Officer elections planned for November of 2018.
 - The by-laws are a big topic of the March meeting.

11. Closing Comments & Adjournment