



Sports Commission Board Meeting minutes
January 9, 2019 ■ 11:30am
Central Illinois Regional Airport

ATTENDEES: Matt Hawkins, Jon Voegele, John Althoff, Denise Balagna, Doug Damery, Mike Wagner, Kathleen Lorenz, Leanna Bordner, Jim Benson, Stan Lewis, Beth Sauser, and Brittney Sage.

I. Public Comments

- i. None.

II. Action Items

a. Vice-Chair

- i. Jon Voegele called the meeting to order at 11:40AM and thanked John Althoff for all of his work while he was the Board Chair. Jon noted that Beth Sauser volunteered to be the new Board Vice-Chair. Leanna Bordner motioned to approve Beth as the new Vice-Chair. Mike Wagner seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

b. Illinois Top Times Sponsorship

- i. Jon Voegele noted that for the last four or five years we have sponsored IL Top Times at the \$2,000.00 level and that this year they are asking for us to sponsor at the \$3,500.00 level. Jon suggested that maybe we wait to increase the sponsorship until next year as we have struggled with deliverables and hotel rooms with this group. Mike Wagner mentioned that IL Top Times always does a great job and the Shirk Center is always packed. Matt Hawkins noted that the problem is that this group typically only books hotel rooms for their staff members. Doug Damery mentioned that we could use that as an incentive for increasing our sponsorship amount next year if we get numbers back from them this year. John Althoff asked what would happen if we do not give them the amount they want and it was discussed that they would possibly go to the Champaign area instead. Jon Voegele noted that he likes the incentive idea but that we don't want to lose the group to another area. John Althoff motioned to approve the \$2,000.00 sponsorship this year with the incentive to get deliverables and room night information and then increase to the \$3,500.00 level for next year. Beth Sauser seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

III. Discussion Items

a. Sports Complex

- i. Doug Damery noted that he had been meeting with a lot of local organizations and that the feasibility study was pretty conservative. Doug added that the IL Fire Juniors alone will meet our outdoor benchmark in the feasibility study. Doug Damery mentioned that Cricket and Lacrosse would also be interested in using the facility, however it would be really expensive for Cricket to use the facility for lower-level leagues. Doug noted that the major point is that there is definitely a need and demand locally for the outdoor portion of the facility and that depending on the location, there may be a need for limited use of the facility from both ISU and Heartland Community College. Doug Damery mentioned that he just recently sent the report over to Pam Reece and that they will have meetings coming up soon.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Sports Identity
 - i. **Wrestle Like a Girl:** Jon Voegele noted that last year the event had about 40 people and that this year they are looking at around 200 people. Leanna Bordner asked about emerging sports coming up with IHSA and Beth noted that there are many including Ultimate Frisby, Skeet Shooting, and 8-man Football. Matt Hawkins noted that Mike Manahan is trying to get a girls wrestling camp going at the Shirk Center as well. Mike Wagner added that Mike Manahan is supposed to be getting in touch with him about the possibility of a girls wrestling camp.
 - ii. **New Sports Commission Events:** Jon Voegele noted that Esports is coming up this weekend and that Pickleball is on the books as well. Foot Golf was discussed and Denise Balagna mentioned that it is a lot of fun and that Highland is set up for it. Robotics ideas were also discussed and Matt Hawkins noted that Metal Cow is the local Robotics group in Bloomington Normal. Jon Voegele mentioned that Heartland Community College has a Junior High Robotics conference every. Competitive Eating was discussed as a new event possibility and John Althoff noted that it would be nice to have a local tie such as Avanti's or BeerNuts that would make people think of Bloomington Normal and that could also help out with sponsorships. John gave the example of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest. Darts tournaments were briefly discussed. Matt noted that he talked to a few groups at tradeshows he's attended about Cornhole tournaments but that they are really expensive to bring to the area. John Althoff asked about 8-man Football and Beth Sauser noted that some schools have a huge following for it. Jon Voegele mentioned that the fields are about 10 to 20 yards shorter and that it opens up the game a lot more. Disc Golf was mentioned and Denise Balagna noted that Bloomington had their second local tournament that was played at Highland.

V. Open Discussion

- a. Denise Balagna noted that the Turkey Trot went really well and that the Chateau and Fleet Feet were both great to work with on the event. Denise added that they are proud to keep it a free family event and that she believes this is why they have such a great turn out each year. Denise mentioned that people that are in town for the holidays come from all over including Germany, Italy, and about 30 states.

VI. Director's Report

- a. **Sixty-Six Games Esports Tournament:** Matt Hawkins noted that they are very excited to bring Esports to Bloomington Normal this weekend. He added that there are 24 teams and that they will play all day Saturday until about 10PM and from about 8AM to 8PM on Sunday with each match hopefully being 3 hours or less. Leanna Bordner asked if they got all the volunteers that they needed and Matt noted that they are still needing a few referees but that they have to be people who know the game really well.
- b. **Pickleball Tournament:** Matt Hawkins noted that the tournament is booked for March 30-31, 2019 and that they are hoping for about 200 players.
- c. **Bloomington Criterium:** Matt Hawkins mentioned that they thought Kevin McCarthy would be interested in being the new race director, but that he declined for 2019 and will consider 2020. Matt added that they may take 2019 off then and work on trying to make it more of a festival-type event and not just about the race. Leanna Bordner asked when Kevin McCarthy will know for sure about 2020 and Matt Hawkins noted that it would probably be this Spring.
- d. **IHSA Volleyball State Finals:** Matt Hawkins noted that IHSA Volleyball in November went well.

- e. **State Farm Holiday Classic:** Matt Hawkins mentioned that the event went well and that about 19,000 people attended. Denise Balagna added that this tournament is very strong compared to similar tournaments across the country.
- f. **IHSA Cheer, Dance, Wrestling, Girls Basketball:** Matt Hawkins noted that all of these events are coming up soon.
- g. **CVB Board:** Matt Hawkins noted that the CVB Board has been updated with new members and that there are now 5 members from Bloomington and 4 members from Normal. He added that Steve Newman will still serve as an Associate Director on the board to represent the Sports Commission but that he won't have any voting rights.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55PM.