



**ONTARIO LACROSSE ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
WEDNESDAY MARCH 3, 2021**

7:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

In Attendance:	Jim Bomhof	OLA President
	Marion Ladouceur	Past President
	Jim Leworthy	VP Junior – Major
	Tanya Thompson	VP Minor
	Mark Schuetzkowski	VP Field
	Ian Garrison	VP Officiating
	Rick Phillips	VP Coaching
	Sonya Crossey	VP Development
	Colleen Grimes	VP Promotions
	Doug Luey	Major Series Lacrosse
	Joe Hiltz	Ontario Series Lacrosse
	Shelly Nobile	Senior Series Lacrosse
	Sue Finnen	Senior Women's Box
	Jason Shuttleworth (Guest)	Junior "A"
	Jeff Williamson	Junior "A"
	Dave Vernon	Junior "B"
	Reg Holinshead	Junior "C"
	Scott Morrison	Zone 4
	Greg Rampley	Zone 5
	Paul Vivian	Zone 6
	Rory Smith	Zone 7
	Eddy Jack	Zone 8
	Nicole Napper	Zone 9
	Wendy Bennett-Costante	Zone 10
	Yvonne Harding	Women's Field
	Scott Matthews	Junior Men's Field
	Joel Firmin	Senior Men's Field
	Jennifer Price	Minor Field
	Ryan Wilson	OLOA
	Stan Cockerton	Executive Director
	Ron MacSpadyen	Programs Director
	Bruce Codd	Technical Director
	Jeramie Bailey	Promotions Director
	Fiona Clevely	Administration
With Regrets:	George MacDonald	VP Finance

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MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM.

President's Welcome (Jim Bomhof)

1. Welcome to this special meeting of the OLA's Board of Governors.
2. Ian Garrison submitted a request for virtual meetings to be recorded and stored for access solely by Jeramie. The sole purpose of this measure is ensure accuracy in the minutes, in case of dispute.

To approve the virtual meetings of the Board of Governors to be recorded and stored for reference by Jeramie until further notice.

m/ Ian Garrison

s/ Joe Hiltz

CARRIED.

3. Jim apologized for not being able to host this meeting at an earlier date. A number of issues require attention, and it's important for the Board of Governors to move forward and work through them.
4. Meeting etiquette requires that persons wishing to speak use the "raise hand" feature. The meeting will be kept as close to the allotted time frame as possible. Everyone is expected to show respect when in discussion. Dialogue is respected to remain focused on the topic being discussed. All participants were introduced by name and position.
5. The purpose of this special meeting is to discuss the OLA's Return to Activity Guide. Three governors have requested additional items for new business. A majority vote is necessary to add these items to the agenda.

To add new business item "Excelsiors Franchise transfer" to the meeting agenda for discussion.

m/ Doug Luey

s/ Joe Hiltz

CARRIED.

To add new business item “timeframe for circulation of the Board of Governors meeting minutes” to the meeting agenda for discussion.

m/ Ryan Wilson

s/ Eddy Jack

CARRIED.

To add new business item “timeframe for circulation of the Board of Governors and Board of Directors 2021 meeting dates” to the meeting agenda for discussion.

m/ Ryan Wilson

s/ Eddy Jack

CARRIED.

To add new business item “allegations of a breach of confidentiality by a member of the Board of Directors” to the meeting agenda for discussion.

m/ Ryan Wilson

s/ Ian Garrison

CARRIED.

To add new business item “modifications to the OMFLL’s season event window” to the meeting agenda for discussion.

m/ Jennifer Price

s/ Wendy Bennett-Costante

CARRIED.

To add new business item “review of the OMFLL’s Financial Review Committee Report” to the meeting agenda for discussion.

m/ Jennifer Price

s/ Tanya Thompson

CARRIED.

Agenda Discussion (Jim Bomhof)

1. The Return to Activity Guide is an important part of the process for lacrosse to occur this year. Feedback from everyone present tonight is critical to make sure that necessary modifications can be made prior to the season, and the rollout. There will be an opportunity for the governors to discuss the next steps for lacrosse in this meeting, but the six issues

raised by the governors to be added to the agenda will form the first part of tonight's meeting, prior to RTA discussion.

2. Jeramie shared that a small number of governors have not completed their confidentiality agreement or their offense declaration form prior to their participation in this meeting. Regardless, governors serving as representatives of the OLA are bound by the policies in place. Those governors will be required to formally complete these documents prior to the next Board of Governors meeting.

Relocation of Excelsiors Franchise to Owen Sound (Doug Luey)

1. As league commissioner, I am unhappy about losing the Brampton franchise, with 138 years of historical competition and 11 Mann Cup Canadian National Championships. That said, the vote at MSL Council was 6-0 in favour of approving the relocation of the Brampton Excelsiors to Owen Sound. The MSL has followed its policies to approve this franchise relocation, and has retained legal counsel to guide the process. This situation has been ongoing for some time, and information and accusations which are circulating on social media is not the business of the OLA. The MSL Entry Draft is scheduled to occur before the end of the month, and it is important that league knows where its clubs are located in order to conduct its business.
2. Dave Vernon countered the examples of past franchise relocations (Cobourg, Kitchener, St. Catharines) provided in Doug's letter by stating that these transfers were uncontested. Given the significant opposition that has been raised in this instance, what other options have been considered to resolve this situation? Could Owen Sound not be awarded an expansion team instead of transferring a historical franchise? Especially in light of the significant quantity of high-profile members who have expressed their dissatisfaction with this direction. Doug Luey responded that OLA Board of Directors have not publicly objected to the move; the recent protests have been raised by outside people. The current owner of Excelsiors franchise has previously applied to place an expansion franchise in Owen Sound, but the decision was rejected by the MSL Governors on the basis that one person should not own two teams within the same league. This level of lacrosse has become increasingly untenable in Brampton, and the community of Owen Sound has offered to welcome the team into its facility.
3. Wendy Bennett-Costante indicated that the BELC has not operated the MSL team since the conclusion of the 2017 season, when Joe Norton

became the owner. Following the ownership transfer, former Excelsiors members became vocal about the direction of the team, but the team is no longer under the ownership or control of the BELC. It appears now that the rightful owner of the team has reached the same realization that the BELC reached in 2017: it is no longer sustainable for the team to remain in Brampton.

4. Ian Garrison asked Doug if, from the franchise standpoint, the Excelsiors player base is prepared to move to Owen Sound along with the team. Doug answered that the General Manager is remaining with the club.
5. Colleen added that the Board of Directors has received written confirmation from a number of current Excelsiors players who have indicated that they are not willing to continue their participation if the team is moved to Owen Sound, and asked what will happen to these players if the transfer is approved. Doug responded that, until the team is approved, its impossible to speculate what decision each of the players will make. The ownership group accepts that these players are entitled to make a decision on whether or not they wish to participate. The MSL has a policy which addresses players who refuse to sign. Colleen asked Doug if he would refute the statement that the MSL teams voted in favour of approving the transfer, knowing that the players will refuse to sign, thus making them eligible to be traded or sold. Doug disputed the claim; the MSL governors and players anticipate larger crowds and more exciting competition in Owen Sound as compared to in Brampton, and the Excelsiors players participating in Owen Sound is what will guarantee those larger crowds.
6. Voting privileges and the minimum numbers to form a majority were clarified. Of the 27 eligible voting members at the Board of Governors, 26 are present for this meeting. A simple majority is formed with at least 14 members. A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority is formed with at least 18 members.

To permit the relocation of the Brampton Major Series Lacrosse Excelsiors franchise from the municipality of Brampton to the municipality of Owen Sound, effective March 2021.

m/ Doug Luey

s/ Joe Hiltz

CARRIED

7. Doug thanked the governors for resolving the issue and allowing the league to move forward with its 2021 season plans.

2021 Meetings (Ryan Wilson)

1. To ensure that the governors have scheduled access to previous minutes in between meeting dates, Ryan Wilson proposed that drafted minutes be made available to and held in confidence by the Board of Governors within 30 days of the date of the meeting for the purpose of proposing errors and omissions. Jim Bomhof asked if the OLA's Rules & Regulations currently contains information that conflicts with this request. There are not currently any timelines in place, but they could be added in the future. Minutes would still require approval for publication and circulation outside of the governors, according to the regular schedule of approval at subsequent meetings. Ryan confirmed with Jeramie that 30 calendar days was a fair and reasonable timeline for this request.

To mandate the internal circulation of Board of Directors and Board of Governors meeting minutes to the respective governance members within 30 days of the date of the meeting, for the purpose of review.

m/ Ryan Wilson

s/ Joe Hiltz

CARRIED

2. To ensure that leagues, councils and associations are able to properly plan for the 2021 season, Ryan Wilson proposed that the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Governors and Board of Directors be published within the next seven days.

To mandate the publication and internal circulation of Board of Directors and Board of Governors meeting dates for the 2021 season by March 11th, 2021.

m/ Ryan Wilson

s/ Tanya Thompson

CARRIED

Previous Meeting Minutes (Jim Bomhof)

1. The previous minutes are available for review. Because newly elected members may not have been present at the most recent meeting of the Board of Governors, it is permissible for a number of governors to abstain from discussion and approval if they wish.
2. Grammatical amendments to two sections were not opposed.

To approve the previous minutes dated November 4th, 2020, with corrections.

m/ Wendy Bennett-Costante

s/ Nicole Napper

a/ Tanya Thompson, Mark Schuetzkowski, Ian Garrison, Jeff Williamson, Paul Vivian, Eddy Jack, Scott Matthews, Jennifer Price

CARRIED

Potential Breach of Confidentiality (Ryan Wilson):

1. Confidentiality and discretion are incredibly important when discussing personal matters. Due to the sensitive nature of this situation, the Board of Governors should respect the privacy of this portion of the meeting.

To move the discussion in-camera.

m/ Ryan Wilson

s/ Ian Garrison

CARRIED

The remainder of this discussion took place in-camera.

To move the discussion out of camera.

m/ Ian Garrison

s/ Ryan Wilson

CARRIED

OMFLL Event Season Window (Jennifer Price):

1. At the most recent Board of Governors meeting, there was a motion approved to reverse the field lacrosse seasons so that recreational play would occur in the spring and competitive play would take place in the fall. The league intends to work closely with Mark Schuetzkowski to enact those season plans. The OMFLL is requesting that OLA members be notified of this change, especially given the likelihood that outdoor play will be the dominant model available to clubs in the 2021 season, pending facility availability. The OMFLL executive has discussed the RTA model as an opportunity to increase the number of teams and players, and membership awareness of this opportunity as a key part of the plan. Mark echoed Jennifer's excitement around this opportunity, and shared that zone directors and minor box clubs presidents should be welcomed into field lacrosse discussions as an avenue for play in the 2021 season.

2. Jeramie, Colleen and Ron offered to be available to the OMFLL executive for any initiatives on how to best reach and advertise these opportunities as the executive moves towards launching the 2021 season.

OMFLL Financial Review Committee (Jennifer Price):

1. The OLA Board of Directors has forwarded a report to the OMFLL Executive that was prepared by the Financial Review Committee. The OMFLL Executive is requesting a meeting with the OLA's Board of Directors to review the committee's findings and recommendations.
2. Ian proposed that a meeting between the Board of Directors and the OMFLL Executive to discuss the report's conclusions take place without delay. Jennifer Price responded that the league would appreciate the opportunity to fully absorb the report and prepare for the meeting.

To schedule a meeting within 14 calendar days between the OLA's Board of Directors and the OMFLL Executive members to address the Financial Review Committee's report.

m/ Ian Garrison

s/ Mark Schuetzkowski

CARRIED

3. Wendy Bennett-Costante added that the recommendations within letter were not well-received by the OMFLL Executive. The Board of Directors was questioned on how the report was allowed to be circulated to the OMFLL Executive. Ian clarified that not all Board of Directors members reviewed the report prior to its approval. In order to be fully apprised of the contents, Ian requested that the documentation be re-circulated to the Board of Directors. Tanya apologized on behalf of the Board of Directors, and added the work of OMFLL volunteers is respected.
4. Ryan asked who sent the report, and who had access to it prior to it being shared with the OMFLL Executive. Jim Bomhof answered that the letter was forwarded to Jennifer Price by Mark Schuetzkowski, following agenda discussion at the February 24th Board of Directors meeting. Jeramie clarified that, although the document was not marked "draft," that the Board of Directors approval motion did specify that Mark and Jennifer were to review the report and determine the information that will be shared with the OMFLL's club representatives. Unlike motions made by the Board of Directors, the Financial Review Committee's recommendations are non-

binding on the OMFLL, and that the Board of Directors approved the action of forwarding of the report, without making any comment on its recommendations. Tanya disputed that the Board of Directors had access to the document prior to the meeting. Mark confirmed that the motion was made for the committee report to be shared with Jennifer Price, and that the Board of Directors discussed timelines for a final document to be published in conjunction between the Board of Directors and the OMFLL Executive. This process is what the Board of Directors has agreed to, and there is an expectation from both parties that resolution is forthcoming. Jennifer echoed Mark's commitment to resolution.

Registration for Return to Activity (Board of Governors):

1. Dave Vernon asked for information on registration of players in the junior age bracket. A small number of teams have been approved by their municipalities for pre-season activities, but are not willing to schedule floor time without following registration rules. Ron added that registration access for the junior divisions is slightly different from the minor lacrosse programs based on the differing OLA regulations, but within 10-12 days, these divisions could also be granted access, subject to the same RTA initiation conditions that are in place for minor clubs.
2. Doug Luey shared his concern with opening the Sportzsoft registration portal. Given the uncertainty that the 2021 season is currently facing, the questions of affiliations between the junior and senior divisions is too difficult to navigate at this time. Jim Bomhof answered that proper registration allows for players to participate in pre-season activities under the OLA's insurance program; the purpose of registration at this time is not to begin a typical season of game play. Ryan Wilson asked if there would be any game play sessions at this time. Dave Vernon answered that the only activities that will take place are training and conditioning sessions until further notice.
3. Greg Rampley added that insuring players in minor lacrosse will be a concern for clubs, and that dictating the type of programming available will be difficult given the wide range of restrictions in place throughout the province. Minor Council has advocated for adding the non-refundable component to the Sportzsoft registration portal, which would allow for clubs to begin skill-based activities that are permitted within their public health units. Once there is more of an understanding as to what will be permitted throughout the province in May and beyond, additional products may be added to Sportzsoft that speak to the specific programming products that

will be possible. The non-refundable insurance portion is the most important piece of the puzzle for clubs at this time.

4. Tanya Thompson asked Dave Vernon if junior clubs are charging for registration outside of the registration portal. Dave Vernon answered that this practice does not occur through any teams in the Junior “B” division. In a typical year, all registration fees are billed directly by the OLA to each team following the closing of Sportzsoft. Tanya asked Ron if minor box registration could be opened in accordance with the same timeline as the junior registration window. Ron answered that the registration models are different between sectors because of the approach to billing clubs, and that minor box registration will follow the TRY Lacrosse registration process when it is appropriate to do so.

To proceed with access to junior-aged clubs through the Sportzsoft registration portal for the purpose of pre-season activities, in accordance with provincial health guidelines and OLA Return to Activity parameters.

m/ Dave Vernon

s/ Ryan Wilson

CARRIED

5. Paul Vivian thanked Ron for the explanation on the difference between the minor and junior registration process, but added that a number of clubs are counting on player registration fees to cover costs incurred with preparing for the 2021 season. Under the TRY Lacrosse product registration, no fees are attached to the participant, which prevents the club from offsetting facility costs to operate free sessions. By publishing the non-refundable fees through Sportzsoft, clubs can proceed with the execution of their season. Clubs are willing to pay these costs, provided they have access to them. It is also recommended that clubs post these non-refundable fees prominently on their website. Ron responded that the non-refundable fees, as well as a small number of other conditions, will need to be agreed upon by the OLA’s Board of Directors prior to minor box registration being accessible by clubs.
6. Greg Rampley asked for clarification about the TRY Lacrosse program. Ron MacSpadyen answered that it is both a program that allows for clubs to attract new players to the sport, as well as a registration product within Sportzsoft that permits those new players to participate without incurring registration fees, thus lowering the barriers of entry to the next generation of players.

7. Stan added that the next Board of Governors meeting, tentatively slated for March 16th, will include the 2021 operating budget for the governors to review and approve. Non-refundable fees will be discussed at that time as part of the budget approval process.
8. Yvonne Harding shared that a number of OWFL clubs are struggling financially and could benefit from access to paid registrations from returning members. Some clubs are beginning to be able to access facilities within their municipalities, and would appreciate knowing as soon as possible which OLA fees are non-refundable so that they can prepare for the 2021 season.
9. Greg Rampley shared that the Return to Activity Guide provides a strong basis for following the provincial restrictions that are currently in place, but that a number of regions are indicating that additional regulations will be in place in order to ensure the safety of the community. Ottawa Public Health has published a strict interpretation of the provincial health measures which, at this time, does not permit cohort crossover even with a periodic rest between opponent engagement. This will make it difficult for certain clubs to plan competitive schedules. Greg will supply this information for further discussion. Ron MacSpadyen asked all zone directors and league commissioners to ensure that the public health units that cover the regions and communities they operate in are not also interpreting the public health restrictions in the same way. These measures may only be temporary.
10. Yvonne Harding asked if the RTA Committee would be able to clarify whether players who live in one public health unit, but participate in another public health unit, would be subject to individual restrictions. Additionally, questions have arisen on whether or not Team Ontario programs would be eligible to offer programming for elite players who do not wish to participate in recreational programs within their communities. Jim Bomhof answered that the RTA Committee will be notified through the committee chairperson of these requests for clarification.
11. Paul Vivian stressed that the governors came prepared to discuss the RTA Guide, and that it is in the best interest of the sport if everyone involved at this table is focused from this point forward on implementing successful Return to Activity programming throughout the province. Ryan Wilson asked what the direction of the OLA is moving forward. Jim Bomhof said that this is something that everyone needs to reflect on in order to move forward. Marion pledged that the Board of Directors are not resistant to change, and that good ideas have already been proposed and adopted for implementation, despite the tone of previous meeting minutes. Decisions are made based on what all representatives feel is good for the game, and

disagreement is not necessarily a sign of division or disrespect. The OLA is not opposed to change. Paul Vivian echoed Marion's comments; the only path forward is that which is in the best interest of the members, regardless of title, skill level or years of service. Jason Shuttleworth recommended that the Board of Governors employ forward-thinking in all discussions, and embrace whichever ideas and actions are necessary to ensure a positive experience for the membership. The OLA will absolutely find a way forward through this pandemic, and will return strong because there are so many passionate people involved and lots of reasons to be excited about the future. Jim Leworthy pledged a commitment to do what is best for lacrosse. Ian Garrison said that change must be welcomed for the success and future of lacrosse in Ontario.

To adjourn the March 3rd, 2021 Board of Governors meeting.

m/ Ian Garrison

s/ Tanya Thompson

CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 PM.