



**ONTARIO LACROSSE ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2023**

7:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

In Attendance:	Sean O'Callaghan	President & Chairperson
	Marion Ladouceur	Past President
	George MacDonald	VP Finance
	Reg Holinshead	VP Junior-Major
	Jennifer Price	VP Field
	Mary Sticca	VP Minor
	Colleen Grimes	VP Promotions
	Sonya Crossey	VP Development
	Joe Hiltz	OSL Commissioner
	Shelly Nobile	SSL Commissioner
	Bob Clevely	OJLL Deputy Commissioner
	Dave Vernon	OJBLL Commissioner
	Jim Lowe	OJCLL Commissioner
	Scott Morrison	Zone 4 Director
	Beth Pollock	Zone 5 Director
	Eddy Jack	Zone 8 Director
	Cart Hill	Zone 9 Director
	Wendy Bennett-Costante	Zone 10 Director
	Kristin Ballentine	OMFLL Commissioner
	Yvonne Harding	OWFL Commissioner
	Jeramie Bailey	Executive Director
	Ron MacSpadyen	Program Director
	Fiona Clevely	Administration
Regrets:	Lynn Withers	MSL Commissioner
	John Dalgliesh	WMSL Commissioner
	Paul Vivian	Zone 6 Director
	Tom Quinn	Zone 7 Director
	Scott Matthews	OJMFLC Commissioner
	Joel Firmin	OSMFLC Commissioner
	Rick Phillips	VP Coaching
	Ian Garrison	VP Officiating

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SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2023**

MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 11:05 AM.

Chairperson's Welcome (Sean O'Callaghan)

1. Sean welcomed the Board of Governors to the meeting, and acknowledged a successful 2023 season for the OLA's leagues.
2. Quorum remains a struggle; for the OLA to be able to conduct business, its representatives must be present and prepared. Beginning in 2024, governors must be in attendance according to the published meeting schedule. Sending substitutes is not appropriate and will not be permitted moving forward.
3. Conflicts of interest were declared prior to the agenda adoption.
4. Jeramie shared the OLA's Territory Acknowledgement.

To approve the agenda of the September 10th Board of Governors meeting.

NO OBJECTION

To approve the previous Board of Governors meeting minutes as presented.

m/ Mary Sticca

s/ Reg Holinshead

CARRIED

Year-End Reports (Jeramie)

1. Year-End Reports are due September 30. Good reports highlight the main achievements of your involvement, and includes season initiatives which can be referenced by other leagues or zones in the future. A summary of team registrations (and the year-over-year increase or reduction) and major accomplishments are also appreciated.

Canada Summer Games (Sean O'Callaghan)

1. The next Canada Summer Games will be played in St. Johns, Newfoundland in 2025. After successful lobbying efforts by OLA representatives, lacrosse will be included as an event. The women's division will be played August 10-15, and the men's division will be played August 19-25. The 2027 Canada Summer games have been announced for Quebec.

Board of Governors Intention to Return (Sean O'Callaghan)

1. With Zone and League AGM's around the corner, the Governors are encouraged to return to their positions and build upon the successes of the 2023 season. With changes to the OLA's staff, the implementation of ONCA, opportunities for new growth areas, expansion in certain leagues and governance review, the most effective way to move into the 2024 season will be with leaders who have experience in their roles.
2. Wendy Bennett-Costante and Reg Holinshead announced that they would be leaving their posts for the 2024 to pursue other goals. Each was given a round of applause for their efforts and dedication to the game.

Canadian Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony (Jeramie)

1. For the first time, the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame is planning its induction ceremony in the province of Ontario. The Hall of Fame is located in New Westminster BC, and travel to the ceremony has always been prohibitive.
2. Ontario is well represented in the 2023 Class of Inductees: Troy Cordingley, Jennifer "JJ" Johnson, Gavin Prout, Paul Gilkinson, Frank Lawrence, Jim Price, Len Powers and Team Canada Women's U19 squad (2015).
3. The ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, November 5, 2023 at MontHill Golf & Country Club in Six Nations.

OLA Annual General Meeting (Jeramie)

1. The OLA's Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, November 11 at White Oaks Resort in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The schedule remains the same as in previous years: league and council meetings on Friday evening, the general membership meeting on Saturday morning, the OLA's

award luncheon on Saturday afternoon and the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame Induction banquet on Saturday evening.

2. A registration link has been provided to all club representatives to get an accurate count of who will be in attendance.

Governance Reform (Jeramie)

1. As part of the ONCA implementation process, the OLA will undertake a governance review and make appropriate changes to align with the best practices for Provincial Sports Organizations. This process will take approximately one year to complete, and will include independent experts to guide the reform process. Additional information will be shared at the Annual General Meeting as part of the OLA's Year-End Report.

Lacrosse Canada Fee Changes (Jeramie)

1. Lacrosse Canada has announced significant increases to their membership fees that will affect all OLA clubs. These increases, from \$4.00/player in 2023 to \$10.00/player in 2024 and \$15.00/player in 2025, will apply to all registered players in Ontario. The OLA is firmly against its amateur player base bearing the responsibility of Lacrosse Canada's financial condition, and will be communicating that message on behalf of the OLA's clubs and leagues at the Lacrosse Canada Annual Meeting, which is November 18-19 in Toronto. The governors were firmly against how the implementation of such a measure would affect players participating in multiple sectors.

Lacrosse Canada Modified Box Lacrosse Rules (Jeramie)

1. Lacrosse Canada has proposed significant changes to the box lacrosse playing rules which will affect all divisions of minor lacrosse. Currently, there are no materials in place to explain how these changes will be implemented or taught to players, coaches, or officials. Given the challenges experienced with modifying contact in the U7 division, the governors expressed hesitation with implementing such a massive change for the 2024 season, and requested that the OLA communicate this message to Lacrosse Canada representatives.

OLA SIXES Tournament (Jennifer Price and Mary Sticca)

1. The OMFLL executive is coordinating an inaugural SIXES tournament to introduce the game to the next generation of players. Early registration has been encouraging, but many coaches are indicating that they would be more comfortable with exemptions granted to the team roster size in case players are unable to attend on short notice.

To remove the roster cap for this pilot event, allowing teams to match their 23 player OMFLL roster for the 2023 season only.

m/ Mary Sticca

s/ Jim Lowe

CARRIED

OLOA Report (Ben Kirkwood)

1. Report submitted.

Zone 5 Report (Beth Pollock)

1. Several behaviour issues in Zone 5 during the 2023 season have sparked changes in the zone's teams.
2. Girls box continues to grow in the region, which is an encouraging sign for the future.
3. Encouraging non-Zone 5 teams to travel to tournaments in the region continues to be a challenge, particularly with the rising cost of living.
4. Several clubs are exploring proposals for interlocking house leagues for the 2024 season, in an effort to encourage local lacrosse opportunities.
5. The Zone executive is investigating opportunities for Indigenous education with a lacrosse basis to build respect for the game among all participants. Once finalized, this information will be shared with Minor Council so that it can be shared throughout the province.

OJLL Report (Bob Clevely)

1. 2023 was an incredibly competitive season. One team went 20-0, but did not win the Ontario championship, which came down to a very exciting finish.
2. The Burlington Chiefs captured their first Canadian championship, with a 6-0 appearance in Alberta after some initial travel concerns.

3. From a player development perspective, the OJLL has never been stronger. Teams are working together for the best interest of the game, and there is a lot of excitement ahead of the 2024 U17 Entry Draft.

Zone 9 Report (Cart Hill)

1. Zone 9's season was very successful, particularly the playoffs. A dedicated group of volunteers organized the playoffs weekend, which was well-received by the teams.
2. A number of discipline situations arose during the year, which take up volunteer's time. In 2024, clubs will need constant reminders about expected behaviour.
4. One of the most successful initiatives that was introduced was a pre-season on-floor referee training session, which was led by Spencer Tanguay. The session applies the concepts that are taught in the clinic to on-floor situations where mentors are present to teach. This initiative will be continued in 2024.

OJBLL Report (Dave Vernon)

1. In 2023, the league expanded by one team (Cambridge) but lost a perennial franchise in Niagara-on-the-Lake.
2. The Mountaineers franchise will resume operations in 2024 after a hiatus, with jurisdiction under the Mimico Mountaineers Minor Lacrosse Association. The Barrie Bombers have submitted a proposal to the league for expansion beginning in 2024.
3. While the regular season had its share of exciting matches, the OJBLL playoffs series between the Six Nations Rebels and the St. Catharines Athletics was of particular note. The series went the full five games, before the Rebels defeated the Athletics in double overtime to seal their trip to the Ontario championship. Ultimately, the Rebels were knocked out by the Akwesasne Thunder, who captured a silver medal at the Founders' Cup in Coquitlam, BC.
4. The OJBLL will be transitioning to GameSheet Inc beginning in 2024. |

Zone 8 Report (Eddy Jack)

1. Aside from an increasing number of coaches being assessed penalties for GM28, the season was positive for Zone 8's teams.

2. Interlock house league continues to be a very positive opportunity for players to be introduced to the sport. Currently, 5 out of the 9 teams in the zone have an interlock house league program, and there are efforts underway for the remaining 4 teams to form an interlock system in 2024.
3. Registration numbers continue to rebound; West Grey is a particularly successful organization with two teams at every division for the first time, despite being a new club with a fairly small player base. West Grey has a dedicated group of volunteers and has fully embraced the TRY Lacrosse model, which encourages new players to join the game.

OJCLL Report (Jim Lowe)

1. Oakville and Caledon were each granted the second of a two-year hiatus as a result of the pandemic. These teams will be required to announce their intention prior to the league's AGM. No further hiatuses will be granted.
2. The biggest concerns in 2023 involved scheduling, particularly in the east. Otherwise, the season was successful, particularly in regards to the competitive balance between teams.
3. The Meredith Cup was played between Wilmot (the furthest team in the west division) and North Shore (the furthest team in the east division), which created stress when planning. The North Shore club captured its first provincial franchise championship.
4. Evan MacDougall broke the league's rookie scoring record, and became the youngest player in league history to win the scoring title.
5. The OJCLL continues to focus on making the league a desired destination for players, which includes increasing its branding initiatives.
6. A strong working relationship with the OJBLL and OJLL commissioners protects the integrity of lacrosse, particularly for players moving between leagues.

OSL Report (Joe Hiltz)

1. The 2023 season was the most competitive in recent memory, with Ontario's bid to host the Presidents Cup meaning that there would be two team entries for the OLA (Six Nations Rivermen and Oakville Rock).
2. One serious incident during the season resulted in a significant suspension as a result of fighting. Rule 45 will likely become a focus for the JMOC in the off-season.

3. The Oakville Rock captured the Presidents Cup bronze medal, and did a notably professional job of operating the championship with not noticeable involvement from Lacrosse Canada's staff or board.

OMFLL Report (Kristin Ballentine)

1. The OMFLL grew from 99 teams in 2022 to 128 teams in 2023. The biggest area for growth is at the U9 division. Multiple centres have second teams in the same division.
2. Registration continues to be an issue, and needs a more concrete solution to avoid the delays that occur each season.
3. The OMFLL will be piloting GSI record-keeping in the fall by using portable generators at each scorer's table.

Zone 4 Report (Scott Morrison)

1. Registration numbers increased slightly year-over-year, with the growth at U9 and U11 offsetting the decline in the older age divisions.
2. Officiating availability remains poor, which will need to be addressed in 2024.

Senior C Report (Shelly Nobile)

1. The Six Nations Tomhawks captured another franchise championship in an exciting victory over the Wellington Aces. The championship weekend needed to be moved at the last minute, but Brampton was accommodating to host.
2. Early discipline issues in the season were resolved with a formal meeting with all teams in the league to discuss expectations. Each team pledged to make improvements in order to avoid significant discipline.
3. Several more franchises are interested in joining the league, which will be discussed by the Board of Directors.

Zone 10 Report (Wendy Bennett-Costante)

1. The season was incredibly competitive.
2. John Stephens will likely be tipped as the Zone 10 Director for the 2024 season.

OWFL Report (Yvonne Harding)

1. An incredibly strong season featured 86 teams, including the introduction of the U9 division.
2. Early in the season, there were registration challenges, but they were addressed.
3. There was more discipline required this season, which many have attributed to pandemic frustration. In order to avoid distractions in the game, clubs will made responsible for managing their spectators.
4. Provincials were successful directly because of MyLAX rankings, which resulted in several overtime games to determine a winner.
5. The JEWL division continues to be a work in progress. The level of lacrosse in phenomenal, and athletes are very appreciative of the opportunities to compete at the highest level. A year-end report will be forwarded to the Board of Directors as agreed upon.
6. A number of new officials became involved this season, which allowed for the base to push up to intermediate divisions.
7. There is significant interest to begin the season earlier in 2024 in order to provide more flexibility, specifically for players who wish to participate in girls box lacrosse. Discussion with minor council might help to identify weekends where girls box tournaments are scheduled in order to avoid conflicts. Regional games may also be scheduled during the week to ease the game count on weekends, especially in the divisions where the OWFL continues to see growth.

Minor Council Report (Mary Sticca)

1. 37 box tournaments were held in 2023, with a total of 986 team spots available. 907 of those spots were filled. The biggest interest was at the U9 and U11 divisions, which required expansion in several tournaments. Tournament Committee representatives attended 27 of the province's 37 tournaments. As a result of this coverage, the OLA designate position may be assigned for the 2024 season by the tournament committee, as opposed to appointed by the host.
2. 5186 minor box games were entered into GameSheet Inc for the 2023 season. These statistics will be monitored in future years to track growth.
3. Garret CVH and Jeremy McNaught were recognized for their guidance and leadership.

Closing Remarks (Sean O'Callaghan)

1. The OLA was increasingly pleased with the efforts of the governors and the respective executive councils during the 2023 season. The game is currently trending in the right direction, and there will be more exciting announcements as we continue to build the game up in 2024.

To adjourn the September 9th Board of Governors' meeting.

m/ Eddy Jack

s/ Wendy Bennett-Costante

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 1:53pm.