

# Minutes of Liberty League Special Meeting March 8, 2017 – Conference Call

**Present:** Kris Hall (Bard); Steve Yianoukos, Laurel Kane (Clarkson); Mike Hanna (Hobart); Susan Bassett (Ithaca), Kevin Beattie (RPI); George VanderZwaag, Andrea Golden (Rochester); Lou Spiotti (RIT); Bob Durocher (St. Lawrence); Gail Cummings-Danson, Megan Buchanan, Nekisha Quinney (Skidmore); Jim McLaughlin, Joanne Little, Beth Tiffany (Union); Michelle Walsh, , Kim Culligan, JoAnn Acquarulo (Vassar); Deb Steward (William Smith); Tracy King, Katie Meline (Liberty League).

## I. Call to Order

Steve Yianoukos (Liberty League President) convened a conference call at 10:02 a.m. for the purpose of discussing Liberty League tournament expansion.

## II. Tournament Expansion

Tracy King reviewed the discussion on league tournament expansion from the Liberty League meeting at the NCAA Convention in January. In the sports of basketball, lacrosse and soccer, it was agreed that if sport groups wished to consider expanded tournament formats, three options should be presented for their consideration: 1.) Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday; 2.) Saturday-Wednesday-Saturday; 3.) no tournament expansion. If the sport group preferred a Saturday-Wednesday-Saturday format, the group should also present a revised schedule for consideration. After sport liaisons solicited feedback from their respective sport groups, it was agreed that recommendations would be considered via conference call.

The benefits and drawbacks of expansion were considered, including impact on the student-athlete experience along with academic and budgetary impacts. Expansion proposals have been discussed at length by sport groups and administrators with the sport groups seeking a vote on expansion.

The procedure to vote on the expanded tournament proposals was discussed. Expansion proposals from the sport groups could either be considered collectively and voted on as a group or considered on a sport-by-sport basis and voted on separately.

**Motion:** A motion (Spiotti, Yianoukos) to vote on each tournament expansion proposal on a sport-by-sport basis PASSED 8-3-0.

## III. Basketball

Tracy King, speaking on behalf of basketball liaison Brian Miller, indicated that the basketball coaches unanimously supported the Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday option for an

expanded tournament. The NCAA tournament consists of a back-to-back format. King indicated that the coaches preferred a format where the higher-seeded team hosted the final, creating an optimal championship atmosphere, but they were willing to accept a format with four teams at one site in order to expand the tournament to six teams. A Saturday-Wednesday-Saturday format would require another Saturday to be used for regular-season play, meaning an additional weekend in December would likely need to be utilized. An additional December date could conflict with final exams.

**Motion:** A motion (Yianoukos, Spiotti) to adopt the proposed six-team basketball tournament format beginning in 2017-18 PASSED 7-3-1. The format shall consist of a Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday schedule with two (2) quarterfinal games being played at the higher-seeded teams on Tuesday followed by two (2) semifinal games being played at the site of the top-seeded team on Saturday with the championship game being played on Sunday at the site of the top-seeded team.

#### **IV. Women's Lacrosse**

Laurel Kane indicated that the preferred format of the women's lacrosse coaches is Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday for a six-team tournament. Women's lacrosse currently utilizes a Friday-Saturday format with the top-seeded team hosting both the semifinals and the championship. A back-to-back format is consistent with the NCAA tournament schedule.

**Motion:** A motion (Yianoukos, Hall) to adopt the proposed six-team women's lacrosse tournament format beginning in 2017-18 PASSED 9-2-0. The format shall consist of a Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday schedule with two (2) quarterfinal games being played at the higher-seeded teams on Tuesday followed by two (2) semifinal games being played at the site of the top-seeded team on Saturday with the championship game being played on Sunday at the site of the top-seeded team.

#### **V. Men's Lacrosse**

Gail Cummings-Danson indicated that the proposed format of the men's lacrosse coaches is Saturday-Wednesday-Saturday for a six-team tournament. This proposed format is consistent with the NCAA Division III tournament as men's lacrosse does not utilize a back-to-back format. In order to accommodate a tournament schedule with quarterfinal games beginning on Saturday, the men's lacrosse coaches proposed moving the final regular-season games from Saturday up to the preceding Wednesday.

**Motion:** A motion (Cummings-Danson, Yianoukos) to adopt the proposed six-team men's lacrosse tournament format beginning in 2017-18 PASSED 8-1-2. The format shall consist of a Saturday-Wednesday Saturday schedule with two (2) quarterfinal games being played at the higher-seeded teams on Saturday followed by two (2) semifinal games being played at the higher-seeded teams on Wednesday with the championship game being at the higher-seeded team on Saturday.

#### **VI. Soccer**

Beth Tiffany indicated that the soccer coaches were split on a proposed format for a six-team soccer tournament with the majority preferring a Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday format. A total of 10 coaches preferred Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday; three coaches preferred Saturday-Wednesday-Saturday; three coaches preferred to keep the current four-team format. It was suggested that the coaches may seek to propose an alternate format in the future. It was agreed that a recommendation from the sport group on a tournament format could be made and considered consistent with other sport-related recommendations.

**Motion:** A motion (Spiotti, Yianoukos) to adopt the proposed six-team soccer tournament format beginning in 2017-18 PASSED 7-2-2. The format shall consist of a Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday schedule with two (2) quarterfinal games being played at the higher-seeded teams on Tuesday followed by two (2) semifinal games being played at the site of the top-seeded team on Saturday with the championship game being played on Sunday at the site of the top-seeded team.

## **VII. Field Hockey Assigning Proposal**

Field hockey liaison Joanne Little indicated that the field hockey coaches had proposed that the Liberty League utilize an assigning group consisting of MJ Vrooman (Central New York) and Julie Clark (Capital District) to assign umpires for all Liberty League games. Currently, there is no designated Liberty League assigner for field hockey. Only Vassar (Roberta Butler) utilizes an assigner other than Vrooman or Clark. The goal of the coaches is to provide a consistent pool of quality officials to work all league games. The concern with the Capital District group is the ability to assign officials to Vassar at a reasonable cost as there are currently six officials in the Capital District group, but none that reside within 100 miles of Poughkeepsie. All officials would receive a game fee plus IRS mileage. There is also concern that a pool of six Capital District officials would be sufficient to adequately handle the needs of four Liberty League schools.

**Motion:** A motion (Walsh, Cummings-Danson) to utilize the field hockey assigning group of MJ Vrooman and Julie Clark to assign all Liberty League games PASSED 5-2-1.

## **XVI. Adjournment**

*Meeting adjourned at 11:14 a.m.*