

Minutes of Liberty League Fall Meeting September 22, 2022 – Zoom Video Conference

Present: David Lindholm, Stefanie Carrington (Bard); Scott Smalling, Laurel Kane (Clarkson); Brian Miller, Liz Dennison, Chris Gray (Hobart and William Smith), Susan Bassett, Erienne Roberts (Ithaca), Kevin Beattie, Katie Paradise (RPI); George VanderZwaag, Kris Shanley, Morgan Stout (Rochester); Jackie Nicholson, Scott McVean (RIT); Bob Durocher, Randy LaBrake, Fran Grembowicz, Franco Bari (St. Lawrence); Gail Cummings-Danson, Megan Buchanan, Peter Fisher (Skidmore); Jim McLaughlin, Beth Tiffany (Union); Michelle Walsh, Kaitlin Leach (Vassar); Tracy King, Katie Meline (Liberty League).

I. Call to Order

Jackie Nicholson (Liberty League President) called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

II. Review of Minutes

The minutes of the June 1-2, 2022, spring meeting in Schenectady, N.Y., were reviewed. No changes or corrections were noted.

Motion: A motion (VanderZwaag, Durocher) to approve the minutes from the June 1-2, 2022, meeting PASSED 11-0-0.

III. Financial Report

King reviewed the financial report for recently completed FY22 along with FY23. Final budget for FY22 had a deficit of \$41,147.46, which was anticipated due to a reduction of \$55,000 in full-member dues as part of a two-year COVID relief measure. Increases in awards, insurance, professional/legal fees, and travel resulted in a deficit slightly larger than projected.

A budget surplus of \$4,350 is projected for FY23 as full-member dues are restored back to \$20,000. No decrease in NCAA grant funding is anticipated for the foreseeable future. Conferences will be receiving an additional \$24,000 in Tier 4 grant funds to utilize for diversity, equity and inclusion purposes. Funding can be used to offset or enhance existing positions within the department/conference office for up to three years. A multi-year budget will be prepared for the January meeting to determine future dues.

As of Sept. 19, two NCAA grant reimbursement checks have not cleared (Hobart and William Smith, Vassar). Full-member dues have been collected from eight of eleven institutions and associate member dues have been collected from two of four institutions.

IV. Commissioner's Report

- A. **Fall SAAC Meeting:** The Liberty League in-person SAAC meeting will be held Sunday, Oct. 23, at the Delta Hotels by Marriott in Utica, N.Y. The program will include a discussion of league and NCAA issues along with a mental health program facilitated by Dr. Jarrod Spencer.
- B. **NCAA Attestation of Compliance:** Institutions must complete the NCAA Attestation of Compliance electronic forms by Oct. 15. Each institution's president and athletic director must sign off through the MyApps portal on the NCAA website.
- C. **Babson Golf Inquiry:** Babson College is exploring the possibility of adding varsity women's golf and has inquired as to the possibility of joining the Liberty League as an associate member. Babson is also seeking a conference affiliation for its men's golf program. The Liberty League currently has seven participating institutions for men's and women's golf. Six teams are needed to receive an automatic qualifier (AQ) to the NCAA Division III championship, four of which must be core members of the conference. New York University is an associate member in men's and women's golf while Wellesley College is an associate member in women's golf. The Liberty League currently has several women's golf programs with small rosters. Teams are required to complete six contests with four golfers to count towards the six teams needed for an AQ. Would an additional member provide a buffer in the event that a team does not meet sport sponsorship requirements? While the administrators expressed some interest in exploring the addition of a women's team, there was less interest on the men's side. Additional feedback will be sought from the sport committees.
- D. **Liberty League Championship Plaques / Trophies:** As a follow-up to the discussion from the spring meeting regarding an upgrade of the Liberty League perpetual championship plaques, King contacted Championship Award Guys – the league's current supplier of championship medals – for potential trophy options. Championship Award Guys provided three perpetual cup/bowl trophy options. The question was posed as to whether the league needs/wants to utilize perpetual trophies in the future. Currently, a team winning a league championship receives the perpetual plaque at the championship and is also shipped a small custom engraved trophy that the league purchases at a cost of \$100 per trophy. Replacing the perpetual plaques with larger trophies will increase the league's awards budget. It was suggested that input from SAAC can be sought on trophy options.
- E. **IRA Rowing Memberships / Championship AQ:** King was informed by Intercollegiate Rowing Association (IRA) commissioner Gary Caldwell that Ithaca, St. Lawrence and Union intend to join the association this year, along with current IRA member Skidmore. With four IRA member institutions, the Liberty League will now receive an automatic bid to the IRA Division III

Men's Rowing Championship, June 2-4, 2023, in West Windsor, N.J. The top finishing IRA member that wins the Liberty League V8+ race will receive the league's IRA bid.

V. League Governance / Issues

- A. Sport Liaison Assignments:** New sport liaisons are needed for softball (Karen Hansen), squash (JoAnn Acquarulo) and women's volleyball (David Lindholm). Kris Shanley (softball), Franco Bari (squash) and Stefanie Carrington (women's volleyball) have expressed interest in serving as liaisons. All three individuals were supported for the positions and will begin their terms immediately. King will notify the respective sport groups.
- B. Officials Fuel Surcharge:** As a follow-up to the spring meeting, the basketball officiating coordinators have asked for the league's consideration in adding a fuel surcharge to officiating fees for the upcoming season. At the time of the spring meeting, the average price of unleaded gas in New York State was \$4.83 per gallon, reaching a high of \$4.93 on June 13. The most recent average, as of Sept. 12, was \$3.74 – nearly identical to the price at the end of the basketball season. While the price may continue to drop, New York State suspended its gas tax (16 cents per gallon) through Dec. 31, which could potentially lead to an increase in January. The SUNYAC has agreed to a fuel surcharge for this season of \$30 per 100 miles one-way (200 miles round trip), which will likely have the greatest impact on schools that are geographic outliers. The coordinators are open to other options, such as an additional \$10-\$15 per official per game for all games. A concern with not providing a fuel surcharge is that officials might choose to work for conferences that provide a surcharge, leaving the Liberty League with a smaller, less qualified pool of officials. The consensus among administrators was to join the SUNYAC in providing a fuel surcharge of \$30 to basketball officials traveling 100 miles one way.

Motion: A motion (Smalling, Durocher) to adopt a fuel surcharge for basketball officials for the 2022-23 season of \$30 per game for officials traveling 100 miles one way (200 miles round trip) PASSED 10-0-1.

- C. Squash Membership Update:** King provided an update on Liberty League squash membership. At the spring meeting, the league agreed to extend associate membership invitations to squash teams at Chatham (men and women), Denison (men and women), Fordham (men), Haverford (men and women) and Mount Holyoke (women). Denison is expected to accept the league's invitation and participate this year. Mount Holyoke recently hired a new athletic director. While the coach is supportive of participating in the Liberty League, the new athletic director will be part of the decision-making process. Fordham expressed interest but has decided not to pursue membership this year. Haverford has declined the league's associate

membership invitation and Chatham has not responded to inquiries. New teams will be included at the championship in February.

VI. League Championships / Scheduling

- A. Volleyball Championship / NCAA AQ Date:** The NCAA has recently announced that the Division III women's volleyball championship (and selection date) will move back a week beginning in 2023 (NCAA selections moving from Nov. 5 to Nov. 12). The volleyball coaches discussed adjustments to the NCAA selection date and are recommending moving the Liberty League tournament back a week while leaving the league schedule unchanged. Doing so will leave an open weekend between the end of the league schedule and the league tournament. Teams could either use this weekend for an additional non-league opportunity or a weekend of rest prior to the tournament. This schedule will align with the regular-season and tournament schedule of the SUNYAC – and possibly other conferences – providing opportunities for non-league scheduling. Providing an open weekend will also allow teams to make preparations and travel plans for the league tournament. While the administrators were supportive of the proposed changes, there were concerns expressed with the NCAA moving the championship schedule back a week as it may create facility conflicts between basketball and volleyball. Changes to NCAA start dates are voted on by the members, but changes to the championship dates appear to be committee decisions made with limited consultation of the membership.

Motion: A motion (Nicholson, Lindholm) to adopt the revised Liberty League volleyball schedule, moving the Liberty League championship back one week while leaving the league schedule unchanged PASSED 9-0-2.

- B. Golf Championships Update:** As a follow-up to the spring meeting, the golf committees discussed the following proposals:
- 1. 2023 Men's Championship Course / Practice Round:** After considering alternatives for the 2023 Liberty League Championship, men's golf is proposing to return to Turning Stone Resort, April 28-30, 2023. It has become increasingly more challenging to get favorable tee times at Turning Stone, as Saturday and Sunday rounds started at 1:30 p.m. last spring. The course personnel will make a good-faith effort to have rounds start no later than noon next spring. The league has also conducted a 36-hole 'Fall Preview' event at Turning Stone in past years, providing teams with an opportunity to play the course in the fall prior to the spring championship. Turning Stone is unable to accommodate the event this fall. As a result, teams will not have an opportunity to play the course prior to the championship. The coaches are unanimously in support of the league permitting a practice round prior to the championship.

Motion: A motion (Miller, Durocher) to permit one practice round in men's golf at the championship course to be utilized at the institution's discretion PASSED 7-0-4.

- 2. 2023 Women's Championship Course:** The women's golf coaches have explored options for a 2023 championship course. Thus far, the coaches have gotten proposals for two venues – Edison Club (Rexford, N.Y.) and Leatherstocking Golf Course (Cooperstown, N.Y. – Otesaga Resort). Edison Club offered a rate of \$82 per player per round – significantly higher than the \$60 rate at Turning Stone last spring [note: the rate of \$82 includes the use of carts, but the walking rate – which the coaches prefer – is \$60 per player]. The league may be able to secure a group rate for an area hotel to offset the cost of golf. Leatherstocking/Otesaga offered a rate of \$69 per player per round with a hotel rate of \$149 per room. Hotel rooms are not available on Saturday, April 29, meaning the tournament would have to be played Friday-Saturday with teams likely arriving Thursday. Due to the difficulty of the course, the teams would prefer a different option to Turning Stone. A coaches meeting will be convened to discuss the course options for 2023.
- C. Softball Championship Format:** With the league's decision to increase championship field sizes to 60 percent of the sponsoring teams, the softball championship will increase from four teams to five. A five-team double-elimination tournament would require eight or nine games (compared to six or seven with a four-team double-elimination tournament). Adding a 4 vs. 5 "play-in" game would require seven or eight games. A five-team double-elimination tournament could be played in three days but would require four games on the first day, which would likely require games to start at 9 a.m. A coaches meeting will be convened to discuss the potential formats for a five-team championship in 2023.
- D. Swimming & Diving Championship:** As a follow-up to the spring meeting, the swimming and diving coaches discussed the following proposals:

 - 1. Exhibition Athletes:** The coaches proposed adding two additional exhibition athletes to the competition roster for the Liberty League swimming and diving championship. Currently, teams are permitted to enter 22 individual athletes with 18 considered part of the team's scoring roster. For scoring purposes, divers are counted as 1/3 of an athlete, so a team could enter six divers and 16 swimmers (22 individual athletes) for a total of 18 scoring athletes. A team could enter three divers and 17 swimmers (20 individual athletes) for a total of 18 scoring athletes. Any individuals not among the 18 scoring athletes, can currently compete as exhibition athletes. The two additional athletes would specifically be designated as exhibition

athletes. With some student-athletes taking advantage of the extra COVID year provided by the NCAA, some teams are carrying larger rosters than they may carry in typical seasons. Also, some teams are being asked to carry larger rosters for institutional enrollment purposes. This permissive proposal would allow teams to bring two additional athletes to compete in preliminary events.

Motion: A motion (Miller, Cummings-Danson) to permit up to 24 athletes per men's team and women's team to compete at the Liberty League swimming and diving championship with scoring rosters remaining at 18 (divers counting as 1/3 of an athlete for scoring purposes). A maximum of 22 individual athletes can be part of scoring rosters PASSED 10-0-1.

2. **Championship Awards:** The swimming and diving coaches have previously selected their end-of-season awards at the conclusion of the league championship meet. Instead, the coaches would like to vote on their end-of-season awards after the NCAA championship while selecting athlete of the meet awards at the conclusion of the meet. The process would be consistent with awards provided in track and field. The league would have to purchase additional awards to recognize a male and female swimmer and diver of the meet.

Motion: A motion (Walsh, McLaughlin) to present Liberty League Swimmer and Diver of the Meet awards for each gender at the conclusion of the Liberty League championship – based on championship performance – and to select Liberty League Swimmer of the Year, Diver of the Year, Rookie of the Year and Coaching Staff of the Year for each gender following the conclusion of the NCAA championship – based on entire season performance PASSED 10-0-1.

3. **Championship Format:** The length of the Liberty League swimming and diving championship – a four-day championship that begins Wednesday and concludes Saturday – was discussed. Some student-athletes have shared concerns with administrators that the championship schedule results in students missing classes for the majority of the week. It was noted that the league championship format mirrors the NCAA swimming and diving championship format and is a continuation of the UNYSCSA meet in which most league teams participated. Shifting the meet to Thursday-Sunday would result in teams returning to campus late Sunday night or early Monday morning, potentially impacting classes on Monday. Most swimming and diving teams do not typically miss many classes except for the league championship. It was suggested that the format could be revisited during the next coaches meeting so coaches could share concerns of their student-athletes.

- E. Basketball Schedule Development:** King reported that he and Brian Miller met with the basketball coaches via Zoom on Sept. 14 to discuss scheduling options. The goal with the development of a new schedule has been to reduce the number of long Friday-Saturday trips on league weekends. Five models were reviewed, including three double-round-robin schedules, a 13-game divisional model and a 16-game model. Miller also proposed to the coaches a potential model consisting of Tuesday-Saturday and Wednesday-Saturday weeks. Under the proposal, teams would be limited to four midweek away games – two on Tuesday and two on Wednesday, limiting the number of times students would miss the same class day. Every effort would be made to schedule midweek trips against opponents closer geographically. Since a number of the midweek games would also be scheduled during semester break, the academic impact would be minimized. It was agreed that athletic directors would review the model with their respective coaches and a follow-up meeting of the administrators would be convened in mid-October to make a final decision.
- F. Tennis Schedule Development:** A committee consisting of tennis coaches Brian Bowman (Union), Tina McDermott (Vassar – men) and Tim Riskie (Hobart and William Smith) met with King on Sept. 14 to discuss league scheduling options. Bowman and Riskie had originally shared a scheduling proposal with the coaches in May, but there were concerns expressed with the format and flexibility that was presented. The committee discussed several potential concepts, including the current 9-team Liberty League volleyball schedule format, which consists of three 3-team pods. All teams play two back-to-back weekends, two single Saturday matches and two matches scheduled by mutual agreement against the other teams in the same pod. The coaches felt that the concept offered a compromise of fixed dates and flexibility that coaches were seeking. King is drafting a model to share with the committee with the goal of presenting a proposal in January.
- G. Baseball/Softball – Friday-Saturday Scheduling:** As a follow-up to the spring meeting, Nicholson revisited the concept of a Friday-Saturday scheduling option for baseball and softball. Shifting to Friday-Saturday would provide student-athletes with a true day off and would also ease the burden on support staff. Other league sports, like basketball, soccer and women’s lacrosse, utilize a Friday-Saturday schedule. The availability of umpires on Fridays is a question to consider. Rather than shifting all weekends to Friday-Saturday, might it be possible to shift half to Friday-Saturday while keeping half on Saturday-Sunday? The baseball and softball coaches committees will be convened to discuss the proposal and make a recommendation.

VII. NCAA / National Issues

- A. Division III Management Council Update:** Michelle Walsh provided an update on behalf of the Division III Management Council, including: the work

of the Division III Advisory Council; budget updates and priorities; championship updates including access ratios and automatic qualifiers; and Division III governance-sponsored legislative proposals that are expected to receive significant attention at the Convention. The Second Publication of Proposed Legislation (SPOPL) is expected to be released Sept. 22.

- B. NCAA Financial Reporting:** Jim McLaughlin surveyed the members on whether institutions were compiling separate financial filings for the EADA report and the NCAA financial report. Since the NCAA is now accepting the EADA report, most institutions reported that they are no longer compiling separate EADA and NCAA financial reports.

- C. NCAA AQ Replacement Policy:** Last year, Division III implemented an automatic qualifier (AQ) replacement policy for conferences in which the AQ recipient might be unable to participate in the NCAA championship due to COVID. Conferences designated a replacement team in the event the conference champion was unable to participate. The Liberty League submitted its tournament runner-up as the replacement team, but it is a conference's decision as to how the replacement team is selected. A conference may choose to designate its regular-season champion if the team does not win the AQ. As discussed by the administrators, if the AQ recipient is unable to participate, the best team to represent the league would be the highest seed that is able to participate. If the regular-season champion does not win the AQ, then it would be designated as the AQ replacement. If the regular-season champion receives the AQ, then the second-seeded team would be designated as the replacement team.

Motion: A motion (Miller, VanderZwaag) to specify that the Liberty League's AQ replacement team will be the highest-seeded team that is able to participate in the NCAA championship PASSED 11-0-0.

VIII. 2022-2023 Meeting Dates

- A. Winter Meeting:** Friday, Jan. 13, 2023; NCAA Convention (San Antonio), Jan. 11-14, 2023.
- B. Spring Meeting:** May 31-June 1, 2023 (Turning Stone).

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

Minutes of Liberty League Special Meeting October 26, 2022 – Zoom Video Conference

Present: Stefanie Carrington (Bard); Scott Smalling, Laurel Kane, Ben Gaebel (Clarkson); Brian Miller (Hobart and William Smith), Susan Bassett (Ithaca), Lee McElroy, Kevin Beattie, Katie Paradise (RPI); Jackie Nicholson, Scott McVean, Bethany Marren (RIT); Bob Durocher, Randy LaBrake (St. Lawrence); Gail Cummings-Danson, Megan Buchanan, Peter Fisher (Skidmore); Jim McLaughlin, Beth Tiffany (Union); Michelle Walsh, Kaitlin Leach (Vassar); Tracy King (Liberty League).

I. Call to Order

Jackie Nicholson (Liberty League President) called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

II. Soccer Tournament Video Exchange

The current Liberty League soccer video exchange protocol requires schools to upload game video within 24 hours of a game's kickoff (e.g., video from a 1 p.m. Saturday game needs to be uploaded by 1 p.m. Sunday). With the change to the format of the league tournament this fall (shifting the semifinals from Saturday to Friday), if a game is played at 4 p.m. on Friday and doesn't need to be uploaded for 24 hours (4 p.m. Saturday), teams in Sunday's final would have little time to review the video in preparation for the championship. Potential option for this year would be to require teams to upload the video by midnight following the game, which is consistent with the league's video exchange policy for basketball.

Motion: A motion (McElroy, Nicholson) to require the host institution in each round of the Liberty League soccer tournament to upload the game video by no later than midnight following the game PASSED 10-0.

III. WeCOACH Program

WeCOACH, an organization that is committed to the professional development of women coaches, has created Division III conference memberships where all of the women coaches in the conference can be enrolled in the development program at a flat fee of \$3,000. While the conference membership does not provide all of the benefits of an individual membership, it provides coaches with access to virtual development sessions, access to the WeCOACH mentoring program and access to year-round virtual video chats. The program is also open to women administrators as well as men coaching women's sports teams. Nearly 20 Division III conferences have registered as WeCOACH conference members. NCAA conference grant funds and be utilized for the program. Does the Liberty League wish to participate in the WeCOACH program?

Motion: A motion (Durocher, Miller) to utilize NCAA conference grant funding to enroll the Liberty League in the WeCOACH Development Program PASSED 10-0.

IV. Friday-Saturday Baseball/Softball Scheduling

As a follow-up to the Sept. 22 meeting, the option of shifting the Liberty League baseball and softball schedules from their current Saturday-Sunday format to Friday-Saturday has been discussed with both coaches groups. The baseball coaches are unanimously in support of the change as they feel it would provide student-athletes and staff with a true day off while also creating scheduling flexibility in the event of inclement weather during a league weekend. The softball coaches were less supportive as they expressed concerns with potential missed class time by moving from Saturday to Friday. It was noted that the Empire 8 and SUNYAC have shifted their conference schedules to Friday-Saturday. If the league is supportive of switching to Friday-Saturday, the baseball coaches have requested that a decision be made as soon as possible as it would impact non-league scheduling for 2024. It was agreed that a follow-up meeting would be scheduled in November to make a final decision.

V. Basketball Schedule Options

As a follow-up to the Sept. 22 meeting, the basketball coaches were recently polled on the various scheduling models that have been developed. Of the 20 coaches, 19 responded to the survey. While the coaches expressed differing opinions, the consensus was that the majority of the group prefers the current scheduling model of eight back-to-back weekends and two single games scheduled by mutual agreement. The concern with the schedule has been a long travel weekend that most teams have once during the season. One of the Capital Region teams has two long travel weekends, but a suggestion was made by one of the coaches to address that within the current model. It was suggested that the Capital Region team with two long travel weekends can request to move one of the Saturday games – which also occurs against another Capital Region team to another date, thus eliminating one of the long back-to-back weekends. The game could be moved to the following Sunday, Monday, or another mutually agreeable date. The schedule was reviewed to determine if it would be feasible to apply the change to other long weekend trips, but there was no clear solution to eliminating all long weekend trips.

Motion: A motion (McLaughlin, McElroy) to adopt the proposed 2023-2029 Liberty League basketball schedule PASSED 9-1.

VI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

Minutes of Liberty League Special Meeting November 30, 2022 – Zoom Video Conference

Present: David Lindholm, Stefanie Carrington (Bard); Laurel Kane, Ben Gaebel (Clarkson); Brian Miller (Hobart and William Smith), Erienne Roberts (Ithaca), Lee McElroy, Kevin Beattie, Katie Paradise (RPI); George VanderZwaag, Kris Shanley, Morgan Stout (Rochester); Jackie Nicholson, Scott McVean, Bethany Marren (RIT); Bob Durocher, Randy LaBrake (St. Lawrence); Gail Cummings-Danson, Megan Buchanan, Peter Fisher (Skidmore); Jim McLaughlin, Beth Tiffany, Wally Bzdell (Union); Michelle Walsh (Vassar); Renee Carlineo (Buffalo State-Football); Tracy King, Katie Meline (Liberty League).

I. Call to Order

Jackie Nicholson (Liberty League President) called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

II. Friday-Saturday Scheduling in Baseball/Softball

As a follow-up to the Nov. 30 meeting, the concept of moving the Liberty League baseball and softball schedules from Saturday-Sunday to Friday-Saturday was discussed. Under the current Saturday-Sunday format, games can be moved to Friday-Saturday by mutual agreement, which frequently occurs during Easter weekend and also due to inclement weather either Saturday or Sunday. While shifting the default dates to Friday-Saturday might create a true day off for baseball and softball student-athletes and staff, a shift may result in academic conflicts for some athletes. It was noted that a number of other Liberty League sports – basketball, women’s lacrosse, soccer, volleyball – also utilize a back-to-back scheduling model which includes Friday-Saturday weekends. If the current Saturday-Sunday format remained in place and schools moved games to Friday-Saturday by mutual agreement, there may be concerns among the coaches with gamesmanship as some teams may gain a rest advantage over others.

Motion: A motion (Durocher, Miller) to move Liberty League baseball and softball play from Saturday-Sunday to Friday-Saturday while allowing teams to shift to Saturday-Sunday by mutual agreement PASSED (8-3-0 for baseball; 6-2-3 for softball).

It was noted that the baseball coaches recommended that the regular-season crossover weekend remain a Saturday-Sunday schedule. The one crossover weekend in which teams from the eastern division play teams from the western division includes doubleheaders both Saturday and Sunday. Shifting to Friday-Saturday would mean that teams would have to start the doubleheader early (noon or 1 p.m.) the first day to complete both games. The traveling team would also likely have to depart campus Thursday.

Motion: A motion (Lindholm, Cummings-Danson, Miller) to maintain the one regular-season crossover weekend on Saturday-Sunday in baseball as previously scheduled.

III. Liberty League Championship Trophies

With the Liberty League perpetual championship plaques running out of space and needing to be replaced in the coming years, the option of providing permanent trophies at each championship is being considered. King reported that he had contacted Jostens regarding potential trophies for the Liberty League championships. The cost for the Jostens trophies would be comparable to what the league currently spends on plates for the perpetual plaques - \$20 per plate – and the permanent trophies ordered after each season - \$100 per trophy. Of the two designs provided by Jostens, option #1 was the favored option among the administrators. King will order trophies to present at the league championships beginning with the winter sports. Trophies will also be ordered for the fall championship teams. The perpetual plaques will then be phased out.

IV. Western Ontario Squash

In a meeting to discuss the format of this year's Liberty League squash championship, the squash coaches continued their discussion of potential associate members. King reported that the league had reached out to varsity programs that are not currently affiliated with a conference. Denison agreed to join this year. Other institutions remain interested but were not able to commit to joining this year. Western University (Ontario) was also suggested as a potential associate member. Western is a long-standing member of the College Squash Association and plays a schedule consisting primarily of U.S. collegiate varsity teams. Earlier in its history, the program had been affiliated with the Ivy League for squash. While it may seem unusual to include a non-NCAA institution from Canada as part of the league, Western has regularly scheduled matches against Hobart, Rochester and St. Lawrence. Since an associate membership would be for championship participation only, league members would not be required to travel to Western for regular-season matches. The squash playing institutions expressed a willingness to consider Western further for membership. King will reach out to the school's athletic administration to gauge interest and gather additional information.

V. Football 2023 Schedule

With several football-playing institutions seeking to fill games for the upcoming 2023 season, King sought to adjust bye weeks to create opportunities in weeks 7 and 8 for teams to potentially play Hilbert, which had openings in those weeks. Buffalo State, Hobart and Ithaca all lost games against Empire 8 teams when the Empire 8 and Landmark Conference agreed on a scheduling partnership for the 2023 and 2024 seasons. King was able to adjust the league schedule to provide opportunities for Buffalo State and Hobart to play Hilbert. The revised draft maintained Homecoming dates so all teams would still have home games on those dates. While most schools expressed a preference for the previously approved 2023 schedule and the order of league games, the athletic directors understood the

challenges of trying to fill open dates for a season starting in less than a year. The consensus was that the revised schedule would be in the best interest of the league even though certain institutions may not benefit.

Motion: A motion (Miller, Durocher) to adopt the revised 2023 Liberty League football schedule PASSED 5-2-5.

VI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.