

Minutes of Liberty League Special Meeting February 21, 2018 – Conference Call

Present: Kris Hall (Bard); Steve Yianoukos (Clarkson); George VanderZwaag (Rochester); Lou Spiotti (RIT); Bob Durocher (St. Lawrence); Gail Cummings-Danson (Skidmore); Jim McLaughlin (Union); Michelle Walsh (Vassar); Tracy King (Liberty League).

I. Call to Order

Tracy King convened a conference call at 12:02 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a Liberty League play-in game for the 2018 and 2019 league baseball tournaments.

II. Proposed Baseball Play-In Game

With Ithaca College's announcement that it would be delaying entry into the Liberty League in baseball until the Spring 2020 season due to Empire 8 obligations, the baseball coaches asked for reconsideration of a proposal that would add one additional team (increasing from four teams to five) to the league baseball championship in 2018 and 2019. The original proposal from the coaches, which was presented and discussed at the league meeting on January 19, 2018, called for a single-elimination play-in game for the 2018 season to be played on the first day of the league championship. Current format in the double-elimination tournament is two games Thursday, three games Friday, one or two games Saturday. The addition of the play-in game between the No. 4 and 5 seeds, would add an additional game on Thursday, making the format 3, 3, 1 or 2. The proposal was defeated (1-7-3) because the format was inconsistent from the other formats of expanded tournaments and would have resulted in three different championship formats for baseball in three years.

Given that Ithaca's entry into the Liberty League in baseball will be delayed from 2019 to 2020 the administrators agreed to revisit the proposed play-in game. Without an additional team being added to the tournament, baseball would now go two years (2018 and 2019) without an expanded model rather than just one year as anticipated. The proposal provides baseball student-athletes an expanded postseason opportunity afforded to other student-athletes in sports with nine or more competing teams. While the proposed format may be inconsistent with other expanded tournament formats, it is understood that the play-in game will be for two years *only*. While the addition of a fifth team to the baseball tournament will give another team access to postseason play, it will also make it more difficult for the No. 4 seed (as well as the No. 5 seed) to win the tournament as both teams will need to utilize an additional starting pitcher to advance to the double-elimination portion of the tournament. It was unclear if the coaches considered the ramifications when proposing a play-in game. This should be thoroughly vetted with the coaches.

Motion: A motion (McLaughlin, Durocher) to approve a baseball play-in game for the 2018 and 2019 Liberty League tournaments pending the support and approval of the baseball coaches PASSED 7-1-0. If supported by the baseball coaches, the play-in game shall be conducted between the No. 4 and No. 5 seeds on Thursday, immediately prior to the start of the double-elimination tournament.

King and McLaughlin will convene a conference call with the baseball coaches to discuss the logistics and ramifications of adding a fifth team to the tournament. King will share the decision of the coaches with the administrators following the call.

XVI. Adjournment

The call adjourned at 12:33 p.m.