

Minutes of Liberty League Spring Meeting May 29-30, 2019 – Turning Stone Resort – Verona, N.Y.

Present: Kris Hall, David Lindholm (Bard); Steve Yianoukos, Laurel Kane (Clarkson); Brian Miller (Hobart & William Smith); Susan Bassett, Will Rothermel (Ithaca); Lee McElroy, Kevin Beattie, Karen Hansen (RPI); George VanderZwaag, Kristine Shanley (Rochester); Amy Reed, Bethany Marren (RIT); Randy LaBrake, Franco Bari (St. Lawrence); Gail Cummings-Danson, Megan Buchanan (Skidmore); Jim McLaughlin (Union); Michelle Walsh, JoAnn Acquarulo, Kaitlin Leach (Vassar); Deb Steward (William Smith); Tracy King, Katie Meline (Liberty League).

I. Call to Order

Susan Bassett (Liberty League President) called the meeting to order at 12:38 p.m. Attendees introduced themselves.

II. Review of Minutes

The minutes of the January 25, 2019 meeting at the NCAA Convention in Orlando, Fla., were reviewed. No changes or corrections were noted.

Motion: A motion (Steward, McElroy) to approve the minutes from the January 25, 2019 meeting was APPROVED 11-0-0.

III. Financial Report

Liberty League treasurer Deb Steward provided an update on league financials. Income for FY19 from dues and grants totals approximately \$294,000 while year-to-date expenses total approximately \$222,000. The majority of remaining expenses include payroll expenses and conference grant disbursements. The current bank balance is approximately \$256,000.

Steward also reviewed the proposed budget for FY20. With a slight budget surplus forecasted for the next two years, keeping full-member dues flat at \$20,000 was recommended. The league currently has a 20-month CD at \$50,000. Given the current bank balance, investing funds in an additional CD was discussed. Steward can provide additional information at the fall meeting, but a decision on membership dues for FY22 might need to be made before additional funds are invested.

Motion: A motion (Steward, McElroy) to approve the FY20 budget with flat membership dues structure was APPROVED 11-0-0.

IV. Commissioner's Update

- A. Recap of 2018-19 Champions / League Success:** Katie Meline reviewed a document highlighting the academic and athletic accomplishments of Liberty League student-athletes and teams during the past academic year. Six Liberty League teams – Rochester field hockey, Ithaca women’s volleyball, William Smith soccer, RPI football, Ithaca women’s basketball and RIT men’s lacrosse – reached the quarterfinals in NCAA competition. In addition, associate member NYU captured the Division III women’s golf national championship. Nine different institutions captured Liberty League championships. Additionally, a total of 1,802 student-athletes qualified for the Liberty League All-Academic Teams (3.30 cumulative GPA or higher) in their respective sports – the highest number in the league’s history.
- B. Report on Hardship Waivers Granted:** Tracy King reported that a total of 35 hardship waivers have been granted during the 2018-19 academic year – 29 for men and six for women. The 35 hardship waivers granted are the most in the league’s history, outpacing the 22 granted each of the past two years.
- C. League Benchmarking Study:** As a follow-up to the January meeting, King solicited feedback from other conferences on benchmarking studies, specifically comparing staffing at member institutions. No conferences provide any benchmarking tools. Jim McLaughlin indicated that the league had compiled a staffing survey in 2009 when it was soliciting new members and would share the document. King will review the form to see what adjustments might be needed before circulating it to the group.
- D. 25th Anniversary – UCAA/Liberty League:** King noted that the 2019-2020 academic year will mark the 25th year since the founding of the Upstate Collegiate Athletic Association (UCAA) in 1995-1996. While the UCAA changed its name to the Liberty League effective with the 2004-2005 academic year, the name change was a rebranding initiative with the same members. The consensus is that it is appropriate to recognize a 25th anniversary during the upcoming year. Possible ways to recognize the anniversary include a commemorative logo and other branding materials as well as recognition of top individual athletes from the league’s history. Kevin Beattie felt the athletic communications members can be of assistance in developing a plan.
- E. Presidents Meeting – Interest/Feasibility:** At the league’s January meeting, HWS Vice President for Student Life, Robb Flowers suggested that an in-person meeting of the Liberty League presidents might be beneficial given that seven of the eleven member schools will have appointed a new president within a span of three years. Consensus was that an in-person meeting might be difficult to coordinate unless it was held in conjunction with a meeting in which the majority of presidents would be attending. A conference call was recommended as an initial step. If the presidents desire to meet, they can agree to do so on the call. King will discuss potential options with Bassett.

V. Scheduling Philosophy and Priorities

A committee consisting of Tracy King, Susan Bassett, Kris Hall, Lou Spiotti and Michelle Walsh held a conference call on April 18 to discuss the league's scheduling philosophy and priorities. King noted that the league developed a set of 'Guiding Principles for League Scheduling' in the spring of 2016, which include: 1.) minimizing the educational impact on student-athletes; 2.) commitment to student-athlete welfare; 3.) commitment to gender and sport equity; 4.) minimizing budget impact; 5.) awareness for support staff scheduling. While league schedules generally follow the guiding principles, should there be a more clearly defined process for approving schedules? In order to ensure that scheduling decisions are consistent and adhere to the league's guiding principles, it was recommended that a chronology be developed that tracks decisions, vote totals and rationale for approved schedules so they can be reviewed when evaluating proposed schedules. With regard to the scheduling of league contests on Sundays, decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. In some sports (e.g., baseball), Sundays need to be utilized to complete the appropriate number league games. Limiting Sunday play where possible is important in providing student-athletes and support staff with a day off.

VI. Associate Membership Philosophy

Given the recent interest in associate memberships in the sports of rowing and swimming and diving, the committee of King, Bassett, Hall, Spiotti and Walsh also discussed circumstances under which an institution would be invited to join the league as an associate member. Associate members have previously been added to the league in football, golf and rowing, primarily for the purpose of securing an NCAA automatic bid (AQ). Other football associate members (i.e., Susquehanna, Springfield) have also been added for scheduling purposes. It was agreed that there needs to be compelling reasons – a benefit to the league – in adding an associate member in a particular sport. Regarding the request of Nazareth College for associate membership in women's rowing, while the coaches were generally supportive of adding Nazareth, there did not appear to a compelling reason to do so. The league already has an AQ in rowing and an additional team could lengthen the championship schedule.

Motion: A motion (Bassett, VanderZwaag) to specify that the Liberty League is not seeking to expand in women's rowing at the present time was APPROVED 10-0-1.

VII. Review of Sport & Committee Reports

- A. Single-Site Championship Dates and Host Rotation:** King reviewed the single-site championship dates and sites for 2019-20. The schedule reflected proposed date changes to the men's and women's golf championships. Men's golf has proposed moving the championship to May 1-3 (one week later) while women's golf has proposed moving the championship to April 25-26 (one week earlier). Those dates will be determined following the vote on sport action items. Additionally, King noted that Bard has been removed from the

host rotation for outdoor track and field in 2022. As a result of other institutions moving up a year, RIT was now scheduled to host both indoor and outdoor track and field in 2023. It was recommended that RIT switch outdoor hosting responsibilities with RPI (2024) so RIT is not hosting both championships in the same year. King will adjust the schedule accordingly.

B. Sport / Committee Liaison Responsibilities – 2019-2023: The four-year term of sport committee liaison assignments has concluded with the end of the academic year. Sport liaisons serve four-year *renewable* terms. The following changes were made to the sport liaison assignments: Baseball – Rochester takes over for Union; Football – RPI takes over for Rochester; Men’s Golf – Clarkson takes over for Rochester. Complete list of assignments for 2019 to 2023 is noted in ATTACHMENT #1.

C. Reports from Sport Groups:

1. Cross Country / Track & Field (Tracy King for Lou Spiotti): Action items include: 1.) to specify in indoor and outdoor track and field that each institution shall be allocated a minimum of two participants per event at each championship and in order for an institution to qualify more than two participants per event, all individuals must meet the established Liberty League qualifying standards; 2.) to specify that entries in track and field shall be submitted by noon on Tuesday with a performance list from the timer generated and made available by 5 p.m. on Tuesday; 3.) to specify in the combined events that the top 12 declared individuals based on compiled points from the respective season shall qualify for the championships and those athletes must have competed in at least 50 percent of the events in order to qualify; 4.) to establish a 3-person Games Committee in cross country, indoor and outdoor track and field to address issues that arise during the championship. Discussion items: 1.) with the change in format beginning in 2018 from a one-day meet to a two-day meet in indoor and outdoor track and field, the coaches have continued to evaluate and tweak the entry process. During the 2019 championships, for the purpose of qualifying for both the indoor and outdoor track and field championships, each institution was allocated a minimum of two participants per event at each championship. In order for an institution to qualify more than two participants per event, all individuals must be listed among the top 20 performers indoor and top 24 outdoor as listed on the Liberty League’s TFRRS descending order list AND must also have met the established Liberty League qualifying standards. Those individuals were entered if declared. There were often events in which fewer than 20/24 declared, which resulted in smaller fields than anticipated. Also, there were athletes who have achieved the qualifying standard, but were not among the top 20/24 and are thus unable to enter. Eliminating the cap on the top 20/24 and using only a qualifying

standard would simplify the entry process and make it clear that a student-athlete would qualify by meeting the entry standard. 2.) In order to address issues that arise prior to and during the championships, it was also recommended that the league establish a three-person Games Committee. This will streamline the decision-making process and will save the host institution from sending multiple emails to the entire coaching body prior to the championships. It was noted that the duties of the Games Committee must be established prior to the cross country championship in the fall.

2. **Field Hockey (Tracy King for Joanne Little):** Action item: to add a Midfielder of the Year award to the field hockey awards program. Discussion items: 1.) it was noted that in 14 of the past 15 years that the league's Player of the Year has been a forward. The top midfielder often gets overlooked by a player who has more goals and points. Recognizing the top midfielder will also provide that individual with a greater opportunity to earn All-America honors. 2.) Coaches also discussed tournament umpires, video sharing and league scheduling. The current league schedule extends through the 2020 season. The coaches agreed that the format of two Saturdays, two Friday-Sunday weekends and a single game scheduled against a travel partner has worked well.
3. **Soccer (Susan Bassett):** Action item: to change the format of the Liberty League soccer tournament from Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday to Tuesday-Friday-Sunday while shifting the back-to-back regular-season weekend from Friday-Saturday to Saturday-Sunday. Discussion items: 1.) the coaches have unanimously supported eliminating the back-to-back format of the championship weekend. Moving to a Tuesday-Friday-Sunday schedule will allow the higher-seeded team to host each round of the tournament and will also eliminate the possibility of the same institution simultaneously hosting two four-team tournaments, including one tournament on an alternate field. Tuesdays and Fridays typically have different class schedules, minimizing the academic impact. Shifting the one back-to-back weekend from Friday-Saturday to Saturday-Sunday will eliminate a missed class day that can be utilized instead for the tournament. 2.) Sportsmanship was also discussed at the coaches meeting where it was suggested that an email reminder of the league's commitment to sportsmanship could be sent from the league to the coaches prior to the season.
4. **Volleyball (Kris Hall):** Action item: to move the Friday match time on the split-site league weekend (when teams are either home Friday and away Saturday, or vice versa) from 6 p.m. to 4 p.m. to allow recovery for travel and preparation for Saturday's match. *Note: This action items was presented and approved during the January meeting due to its scheduling*

impact on the fall season. Discussion items: 1.) the proposed time change on the split weekend would only impact teams traveling on Friday every other year. Because of the distance some teams have to travel on Friday, teams can arrive back to campus late at night, resulting in a quick turnaround time for Saturday's match. 2.) The coaches also met with assignor Mara Wager to discuss officiating concerns. In order to complete assignments earlier, Wager had requested schools submit their schedules as soon as possible.

5. **Football (George VanderZwaag):** Action items includes: 1.) adding clock to the filming requirements that already include wide and tight video shots; 2.) for pregame warmups, specifying that the field shall initially be divided in an L shape in front of each team's home bench. Discussion items: 1.) an in-person meeting was held to welcome Buffalo State and new head coach Christian Ozolins to the league. Buffalo State will officially join the league as an associate member this fall. Assignor of officials Bill Schuster joined the meeting to address concerns and review 2019 NCAA football rules changes. 2.) Issues/challenges with the New York State bowl game were discussed. VanderZwaag reported to the coaches that in a conference call with the football ADs, it was agreed that the Liberty League's second-place team would represent the league in the bowl game against the second-place team from the Empire 8. The New York State bowl game would take priority over the ECAC. 3.) The proposed action items regarding filming and warmups were intended to clean up language in the league's football guidelines. The coaches expressed no opposition to the proposed changes.
6. **Men's Squash (JoAnn Acquarulo):** Action items: none. Discussion items: 1.) a match schedule for the 2020 Liberty League men's and women's squash championships, a combined event co-hosted Feb. 1-2 by the University of Rochester and Hobart and William Smith Colleges, was drafted by Tim Riskie (Hobart) with assistance from Martin Heath (Rochester) and Chip Fishback (William Smith). The schedule calls for nine matches to be played at Rochester on Saturday and seven matches at HWS on Sunday. Match schedule is tight with approximately one hour allocated for most matches while utilizing the five-court system. When factoring in warmups, it is quite possible that the schedule could run long. The coaches attempted to utilize both Rochester and HWS both days, but were unable to come up with a schedule that worked. 2.) Tracy King also shared that the College Squash Association is in the process of drafting eligibility regulations which draw from both NCAA Divisions I and III. The proposal includes a five-year eligibility clock along with an age limit, both of which do not exist in Division III.
7. **Swimming & Diving (Susan Bassett):** Action items include: 1.) clarifying the process for switching athletes between 'A' and 'B' relays;

2.) specifying that if there are 10 'A' relays entered in the 800-Freestyle Relay, the top nine seeded 'A' relays will swim in one heat in the Finals during the evening session and the 10th-seeded team, based on seed time, will swim in the morning session with the 'B' relays and will score as the 10th-place team. Discussion items: 1.) the coaches expressed a strong desire (voting unanimously) to continue scoring 24 places – keeping the bonus heat – for both men and women. A number of events – significantly more on the men's side – did not have 24 entries, so all swimmers who enter those events scored points. The format of the championship was maintained from the UNYSCSA Championship, which was a larger meet. 2.) The relay action items have represented common practice, but have not been stated in the swimming and diving guidelines. 3.) Bassett noted to the administrators that the Liberty League is the only conference in Division III currently utilizing the NCAA's full 4-day championship meet format. A number of other conferences utilize a 3.5-day format in which one diving event and a relay are conducted on the day that teams arrive. Such a change could result in significant cost savings for the traveling teams while also reducing missed class time while not significantly impacting the quality of the student-athlete experience. It was agreed that the shortened format needs further consideration and should be discussed with the coaches prior to revisiting at the fall meeting.

8. **Basketball (Brian Miller):** Action items include: 1.) revising the basketball video exchange guidelines to complete video uploads for Friday-Saturday weekends to MIDNIGHT Saturday and by MIDNIGHT immediately following midweek home games; 2.) making the National Anthem optional before the second game of a doubleheader; 3) shifting start times for all Friday and midweek league doubleheaders to 5:30 p.m. (women) and 7:30 p.m. (men); 4.) changing the format of the Liberty League tournament from Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday to Tuesday-Friday-Sunday with the higher seed hosting each round; 5.) to reinstate the All-Rookie Team awards. Discussion items: 1.) Officiating assignors Tom Reinisch (men) and Mike Schmidt (women) joined the coaches meeting to provide an update on officiating services and proposed NCAA rule changes. 2.) The coaches expressed a desire to continue with the format of pregame introductions implemented last year, but some also felt that coaches should shake hands following the conclusion of team introductions. 3.) Regarding the proposed time change for midweek and Friday doubleheaders, the move to 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. last year has resulted in challenges with student-athletes from the host school arriving from classes for the games. Moving the start time back 30 minutes will alleviate some concerns. The coaches also agreed that it would be beneficial to survey student-athletes to determine their preference for rotating which gender plays the first game in league doubleheaders. The fall would be the best time to conduct a survey. 4.)

The league's video exchange policy was also discussed. In addition to the proposed action item, coaches also expressed concern that there is no penalty for coaches who violate the policy by uploading video after the deadline. The administrators agreed that the commissioner should contact the athletic director of the offending institution concerning issues of noncompliance. With the contract for the Synergy video exchange service entering its final year in 2019-2020, the coaches expressed unanimous support for extending the contract at the current pricing. The administrators asked to solicit quotes from other video exchange services. Brian Miller agreed to take on the task.

9. **Rowing (Tracy King):** Action items: 1.) to add an All-Liberty League Second Team to the rowing awards program; 2.) to add a Third Varsity Eight race to the Liberty League regatta. Discussion items: 1.) the coaches noted that the awards ceremony is lacking a championship feel and needs to be improved. There was no public address system, no banners or table skirt for the awards table and no established time for the awards ceremony. Since a Liberty League representative may not always be present, the coaches agreed they needed to take more ownership in the execution of the ceremony. It was recommended that the NCAA Host Operations Manual and Participant Manual be used as resources to improve the championship protocol. Tracy King acknowledged that better direction needs to be provided from the league to the host institutions and will work on improving the championship guidelines. 2.) Regarding the All-Liberty League action item, it was noted that rowing and squash are the only teams that do not have an All-Liberty League second team. Squash only has five men's programs and four women's programs, so the sponsorship does not support a second team, but rowing has eight women's teams and seven men's teams, consistent with other sports that have a second team. 3.) With regard to adding a Third Varsity Eight to the regatta, King noted that the guidelines currently allow for additional events to be added to accommodate entries. 4.) The coaches also discussed prioritizing entries at the championships. Should a school have to enter a V8 or N8 before it can enter a V4 or N4? While there was no consensus, some coaches expressed that they needed to make entry decisions based on the best interests of their programs. With differing resources across the league, some were opposed to a league mandate.
10. **Men's Golf (Tracy King):** Action items: 1.) to move the Liberty League championship to May 1-3, 2020, the last available weekend prior to NCAA selections; 2.) to utilize a USGA official at the league championship to make rules interpretations and decisions concerning the cancellation of play. Discussion items: 1.) weather was a challenge during the second round (Saturday) of the championship with cold, wind and rain/sleet mix affecting course conditions. Turning Stone

doesn't close, so the course was not declared unplayable. As a result, the coaches elected to play. A coach suggested that a wind chill factor or 'feels like' temperature could be utilized to determine whether a round would be played. The concern with using an exact number is that the weather and temperature could change throughout the course of the round. A USGA official could not only assist with rules interpretations, but also serve as an independent voice in making decisions regarding the cancellation of play. 2.) The coaches also felt that by conducting the tournament a week later, course conditions and weather could be improved. The cost for playing one week later at Turning Stone will be an additional \$10 per player per round – from \$40 to \$50. The resulting cost per team would be an additional \$150 for the tournament.

11. **Women's Golf (Tracy King for Beth Tiffany):** Action item: to conduct the Liberty League championship one week earlier (April 25-26), which is one week prior to the NCAA declaration deadline. Discussion items: 1.) the coaches proposed moving the championship one week earlier, primarily for two reasons. First, the first weekend of May conflicts with the last week of classes or exams for some institutions. Second, the NESCAC will be hosting its championship beginning on the final Saturday in April. As a result of that change, other tournaments such as the Jack Leaman Invitational at Amherst – a tournament in which a number of Liberty League teams compete – is going to move a week earlier. Since there are a limited number of women's tournaments in the spring in which teams can participate, the coaches thought it would be beneficial to align the Liberty League and NESCAC championships to maximize the number of available opportunities during the spring season. Teams that wish to play during the first weekend in May would have the option of competing at the Williams Invitational.
12. **Softball (Karen Hansen):** Action item: to utilize the NCAA halted-game policy for Liberty League regular-season and championship games. Discussion items: 1.) during the regular season, Ithaca and Union were unable to complete two games in their entirety. The second game was halted due to rain after 4 ½ innings. By NCAA rule, the game had reached the point of being a regulation game, but the coaches agreed to finish the game at a later date. After discussion with the league office and administrators from both schools, the game was ruled a completed regulation game and was not resumed. With no halted-game policy in the softball guidelines, the coaches have proposed that all games be completed. Karen Hansen indicated that the situation with Ithaca and Union does not occur frequently and could not recall it happening during her tenure as softball liaison. Since there would be budget and missed class time implications of utilizing the halted-game policy in all games, Hansen suggested utilizing the halted-game policy in the first game of the doubleheader and the regulation-game policy (NCAA

softball rules 6.18.4, 6.18.5 and 6.19.1) in the second game of the doubleheader.

- 13. Tennis (Tracy King for Fran Grembowicz):** Action item: to mandate the use of an ITA official at all Liberty League regular-season tennis matches. Discussion items: 1.) Coaches continue to make tweaks to the tournament schedule to make it run efficiently and on schedule. First match on Friday (#4 vs. #5) and Saturday (#1 vs. #4) will move up from 8:45 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. If rain forces early matches indoors, coaches recommended that later matches should be able to be played outdoors if conditions permit. 2.) Regular-season scheduling was discussed. While there is interest among some coaches in developing a league schedule, there are challenges to consider including: travel budgets, coaches who coach both genders, availability of off-site backup facilities on weekends and having an odd number of teams (travel partners). While there isn't a consensus for a league schedule, King will attempt to put together a draft for coaches to review and consider. 3.) The coaches are in favor of mandating that an ITA official is utilized at all league matches. The concern is the number of available tennis officials in certain geographic regions, particularly St. Lawrence. King will discuss with the assignor the feasibility of staffing all Liberty League matches.
- 14. Women's Lacrosse (Laurel Kane):** No action items. Discussion items: the coaches expressed a desire to have the league consider a policy of determining game times when both the women's and men's teams are home on a given weekend. Which gender should have priority? Also, the final regular-season Saturday for women's lacrosse might conflict with the first-round of the Liberty League men's lacrosse championship. Should a previously scheduled regular-season game take priority over a tournament game? For a regular-season game that is not part of a Friday-Saturday back-to-back weekend for women's lacrosse, it was suggested that the men's or women's team traveling furthest has the choice of playing the earlier or later game. For example, if RPI is hosting a lacrosse doubleheader against the Skidmore women and RIT men, then RIT would have the choice of playing the earlier or later game. Regarding potential conflicts on the final regular-season Saturday for women's lacrosse and the first-round game for men's lacrosse, King was tasked with developing language to address the situation.
- 15. Men's Lacrosse (Gail Cummings-Danson):** Action item: to add a Midfielder of the Year award to the men's lacrosse awards program. Discussion items: 1.) men's lacrosse coaches, like field hockey, have an interest in adding a Midfielder of the Year award. Administrators agreed that awards proposals should be vetted by the same awards committee that recommended changes last May. King will organize the committee to discuss awards proposals. 2.) Coaches discussed

scheduling and the possibility of playing the final regular-season game (Wednesday) against an opponent that is close geographically. King drafted a schedule and will get feedback from the coaches. The current schedule runs through 2021.

16. **Baseball (Jim McLaughlin):** Action items: 1.) to adopt the revised Liberty League baseball guidelines that go into effect with divisional play beginning in the spring of 2020; 2.) to approve the default schedule for a weekend series which includes a 7/9 doubleheader Saturday and a single game Sunday. Discussion items: the proposed baseball guidelines were reviewed by the administrators. A number of questions were raised, including the determination of the regular-season champion, selection and seeding of tournament teams, and process for determining AQ representative if the tournament cannot be completed. King will discuss further with McLaughlin and will present revised baseball guidelines for adoption at the fall meeting.

17. **Sports Medicine (Michelle Walsh):** Actions item: in the Sports Medicine Handbook, to remove knee immobilizers, spine boards and blankets from mandatory emergency equipment provided by the host institutions during events. Discussion items: the athletic trainers discussed a wide range of topics on their annual conference call. 1.) Of particular concern was coverage for last-minute venue changes, particularly baseball games in the spring that get switched from one school to another. The group requested that the administrators notify the athletic trainers as early in the process as possible to assist with planning purposes. 2.) Regarding the action item, the group noted that these items are not part of the standard list of emergency equipment that host institutions regularly provide for their own teams and are no longer considered best practice.

18. **SAAC (Megan Buchanan):** No action items. Discussion items: 1.) For the first time, a professional facilitator was brought to the SAAC meeting on Oct. 21 to conduct a leadership program. Dr. Greg Shelley of Rise Above Performance Consulting worked with the SAAC members to empower them with leadership skills that would transfer easily back to campuses and teams. 2.) The second half of the meeting consisted of a discussion of NCAA legislation and league issues. The league schools conducted in a Special Olympics “Change War” during Division III Week, April 1-7, to raise money for Special Olympics. A combined total of \$4,657.33 was raised by 10 participating institutions.

19. **Sports Information (Kevin Beattie):** No action items. Discussion items: Beattie reported that the athletic communications staffers provided feedback in an email discussion. Members of the group

expressed a preference for scheduling fewer games on Sundays, but did not present any action items. Other feedback was largely positive.

- D. Baseball Scheduling – Optional Fourth Game:** Jim McLaughlin inquired as to the interest of schools in adding an optional fourth game to the 3-game weekend series in baseball. The fourth game would not count toward league standings, but would provide teams with a way to fill out their schedules that would be both cost effective and would have a minimal academic impact. Some schools expressed interest. McLaughlin will follow up directly with baseball administrators to determine if games can be added.

- E. League Scheduling Obligations:** Kevin Beattie raised the issue of how the league handles situations with teams that are unable to complete their league schedules. A situation occurred this spring in which a team was unable to play all of its league games. Beattie indicated that there was no communication from the league in terms of why games were not played and no discussion of how they were being recorded in the league standings. King indicated that the impacted schools were informed of the issue and the league adjusted the standings accordingly. While there is no policy for addressing situations in which a team is unable to complete its schedule, King suggested those situations might best be handled on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances. In 2013, when Merchant Marine was unable to complete its Liberty League football schedule due to the federal government shutdown, a conference call with the football administrators was convened to discuss how the situation would be handled.

VIII. Championship Assessment

Lee McElroy inquired as to the methods used to assess the quality of Liberty League championships. King noted that coaches are typically surveyed in postseason meetings and asked to provide feedback on the championships, but feedback has not been collected directly from participating student-athletes. The league has not utilized a specific survey instrument to collect feedback. It was noted that teams participating in NCAA championship competition are offered the opportunity to provide feedback through a post-championship online survey. Could the Liberty League develop a similar survey? While the NCAA championships typically include a large number of teams and student-athletes, Liberty League championships are much smaller and it isn't clear that an accurate assessment could be made based on a limited number of responses. Student-athletes are subject to survey fatigue, so it might also be difficult to get a strong response rate. King offered to gather information from the NCAA on its post-championship survey and present it to the group at the fall meeting.

IX. CSMG Proposal

King reported that he and Katie Meline met with individuals from the Collegiate Sports Management Group (CSMG) at the NCAA Convention regarding a proposed sponsorship

agreement. CSMG has offered to conduct an asset audit valuation for the Liberty League to determine the value of its assets for the purpose of soliciting sponsorship and marketing opportunities. The cost of the proposed asset audit valuation is \$10,500. Specifically, CSMG will evaluate in total, all current and prospective assets and work with the Liberty League to provide a valuation for all league assets, which will allow an entity such as CSMG to sell sponsorships. Without knowing what type of value the league assets could generate in return, there is no interest among league members in moving forward with the proposal.

Meeting adjourned for the evening at 5:49 p.m.

Thursday, May 31

Meeting reconvened at 8:17 a.m.

X. Vote on Sport Action Items

- A. **CROSS COUNTRY / TRACK & FIELD: Motion** to specify that for the purpose of qualifying for both the indoor and outdoor track and field championships, each institution shall be allocated a minimum of two participants per event at each championship. In order for an institution to qualify more than two participants per event, all individuals must meet the established Liberty League qualifying standards. Those individuals will be entered if declared. *PASSED 8-0-3.*

Motion to specify that entries shall be submitted by noon on Tuesday with a performance list from the timer generated and made available by 5 p.m. Tuesday. *PASSED 8-0-3.*

Motion to specify in the combined events (indoor – women’s pentathlon and men’s heptathlon; outdoor – women’s heptathlon and men’s decathlon), that the top 12 declared individuals based on compiled points from the respective season shall qualify for the championship. There is no minimum point standard, but athletes must have competed in at least 50 percent of the events in order to qualify. *PASSED 8-0-3.*

Motion to establish a 3-person Games Committee in cross country, indoor and outdoor track and field to address issues that arise during the championship. *PASSED 10-0-1.*

A specific list of responsibilities for the Games Committee will be drafted and reviewed at the league’s Fall meeting, prior to the 2019-2020 championships.

- B. **FIELD HOCKEY: Motion** to add a Midfielder of the Year to the Liberty League field hockey awards program.

REFERRED to Awards Committee for a recommendation; will be revisited at the league's Fall meeting.

- C. **SOCCER: Motion** to change format of Liberty League Soccer Tournament from Tuesday-Saturday-Sunday to Tuesday-Friday-Sunday while shifting the back-to-back regular-season weekend from Friday-Saturday to Saturday Sunday. *FAILED 4-5-2.*

A primary concern with the proposed format was the quick turnaround from Friday to Sunday with the uncertainty of not knowing where a team might have to travel for the Sunday game. A team could potentially be on the road Friday, arrive back to campus and then depart again on Saturday for Sunday's final. The potential for additional Sunday play and missed class time were also expressed as concerns. If the current format (Saturday-Sunday at one site) is going to continue to be utilized, further discussion is needed regarding potential facility conflicts with one institution potentially hosting both soccer championships and/or a football game. Given the strong preference of the coaches to avoid playing a Saturday-Sunday championship and the desire to not utilize another Saturday (Saturday-Wednesday-Saturday tournament format) for the tournament, it was recommended that the coaches be polled on the option of reverting back to a four-team tournament. It was agreed that a change in format should not be made once the season has started. The draft schedule formats reviewed by the administrators at the fall 2018 meeting will be recirculated for further consideration.

- D. **VOLLEYBALL: Motion** to move the Friday match time on split weekends from 6 p.m. to 4 p.m. to allow recovery for travel and preparation for Saturday's match. *PASSED in January, 7-1-3.*
- E. **FOOTBALL: Motion**, in the football video exchange protocol, to specify that clock shall be displayed in addition to wide and tight video angles. *PASSED 6-0-5.*

Motion to specify in pregame warmups that the field shall initially be divided in an L shape in front of each team's home bench (long side-short side). *PASSED 6-0-5.*

- F. **SWIMMING & DIVING: Motion** to maintain the scoring of 24 places – keeping the bonus heat – for both men and women at the Liberty League Championship.

No vote was conducted as the proposal already reflects the current scoring at the championship and would not result in a change in guidelines.

Motion to specify that after the completion of relay preliminaries, a maximum of two swimmers may be switched from either the A relay to the B

relay or the B relay to the A relay for the Finals competition. Teams may add up to four new athletes to either the A or B relay respectively for the Finals session. If an athlete was a member of a scoring relay after preliminaries (i.e., 9th or 10th placement not competing in the Finals session) that athlete is not eligible to compete on the respective B relay in Finals. If an A or B relay is disqualified during the preliminaries the athletes on the disqualified relay are not eligible to swim in Finals for that event. *PASSED 10-0-1.*

Motion to specify that if there are 10 'A' relays entered in the 800-Freestyle Relay, the top nine seeded 'A' relays will swim in one heat in the Finals at night. The 10th-seeded team, based on seed time, will swim in the morning session with the 'B' relays and will score as the 10th-place team. *PASSED 10-0-1.*

- G. BASKETBALL: Motion**, in the basketball video exchange protocol, to specify that all game video must be uploaded to Synergy by MIDNIGHT Saturday on Liberty League weekends and by MIDNIGHT Tuesday for mid-week games. Note: the non-league policy will remain by NOON the day following the return to campus. *PASSED 10-0-1.*

Motion to make the playing of the national anthem optional before the second game of a Liberty League doubleheader. *FAILED 0-8-3.*

Motion to shift starting times for all Friday and Midweek Liberty League games to 5:30 p.m. Women and 7:30 p.m. Men during the 2019-20 season. Game times for Saturday league games will remain 2 p.m. Women and 4 p.m. Men. *PASSED 7-3-1.*

Motion to change the Liberty League Championship format to have first-round games Tuesday, semifinals Friday and championship Sunday, all at the site of the higher seeds. *FAILED 4-5-2.*

Motion to reinstate the All-Rookie Team awards. *FAILED 0-10-1.*

- H. ROWING: Motion** to add an All-Liberty League Second Team to the Liberty League awards program. The first and second teams would consist of a total of two coxswains and 16 rowers.

REFERRED to Awards Committee for a recommendation; will be revisited at the league's Fall meeting.

Motion to add a Third Varsity Eight race to the Liberty League regatta.

No vote was conducted as the rowing guidelines currently allow for additional events, such as a 3V8, to be added to accommodate entries.

I. **WOMEN'S GOLF: Motion** to move the Liberty League Women's Golf Championship to two weekends prior to NCAA selections (which are announced on a Monday). *FAILED 3-5-6.*

J. **MEN'S GOLF: Motion** to conduct the Liberty League Men's Golf Championship on May 1-2-3, 2020 at Shenendoah Golf Course at Turning Stone Resort, moving championship date back one week. *PASSED 6-1-5.*

Motion to utilize a USGA official at the Liberty League Spring Championship to make rules interpretations and decisions on halting play.

TABLED until the league's Fall meeting to secure a cost estimate for hiring a USGA official for the championship.

K. **SOFTBALL: Motion** to utilize the NCAA Halted-Game Policy for Liberty League regular-season and tournament games as specified. *PASSED 8-0-3.*

Halted-game policy will be used in first game of a doubleheader while regulation-game policy would be used in second game.

L. **MEN'S LACROSSE: Motion** to add a Midfielder of the Year to the Liberty League men's lacrosse awards program.

REFERRED to Awards Committee for a recommendation; will be revisited at the league's Fall meeting.

M. **TENNIS: Motion** to mandate the use of an ITA official at all Liberty League regular-season tennis matches.

TABLED until the league's Fall meeting to obtain additional information on the availability of officials for all league matches; if passed, proposal would be implemented for the 2020-2021 year.

N. **BASEBALL: Motion** to approve the revised baseball guidelines for the 2020 season.

TABLED until Fall meeting to review proposed guidelines.

Motion to specify that the default schedule for weekend series will be a doubleheader (7- & 9-inning game) on Saturday and single 9-inning game on Sunday.

TABLED until Fall meeting to review proposed guidelines.

O. **SPORTS MEDICINE/ATHLETIC TRAINING: Motion**, in the Sports Medicine Handbook, to remove knee immobilizers, spine boards and blankets from the

list of mandatory emergency equipment provided by host institutions during events. *PASSED 11-0-0.*

XI. NCAA / National Issues

- A. Management Council Update:** NCAA Management Council representative Chuck Brown (FAR, Penn State-Behrend) provided an update on items of interest in Division III. Brown provided a report and sought feedback on the following topics: eSports, NCAA Transfer Portal, proposed regional realignment, Division III non-championships budget initiatives, Sport Science Institute, sports wagering and the Ice Hockey International Pilot program.
- B. Gameday the DIII Way Program:** Kris Hall reported that she had recently participated in an all-day training session on the Gameday the DIII Way Program that was facilitated by the Disney Institute and Division III staff. The program provides online resources to assist schools in training their game management staff to provide a hospitable game environment for teams and fans. Hall thought it would be helpful for all schools to support the program and provide a consistent message across the league.
- C. Nondiscrimination Policy:** As a follow-up to a discussion at the January meeting, King sought feedback from the Executive Committee on the possible adoption by the league of a nondiscrimination statement. The NCAA Division III LGBTQ Working Group compiled four sample statements for institutions and conferences to consider adopting. A concern expressed by the Executive Committee was how the four sample statements would fit within current campus policies. The league's insurance provider has recommended that the Liberty League have a nondiscrimination policy. After a review of the statements, the consensus among the administrators was that samples #2 and #3 were concise and inclusive for the league. It was agreed that the statements would be reviewed on campus with direct reports and/or general counsel for possible adoption as Liberty League policy.
- D. NCAA Woman of the Year / Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year:** NCAA Woman of the Year nominees must be submitted via the NCAA online portal by June 11. King will conduct an email vote for the Liberty League Male and Female Scholar-Athletes of the Year. These awards are presented to graduating seniors who have demonstrated excellence in academics, athletics and leadership/service. The individual selected as Liberty League female scholar-athlete of the year will be the league's nominee for the NCAA Woman of the Year award.

XII. Institutional Tailgating Policies and Best Practices

Issues and challenges with tailgating were discussed. Parents from visiting teams have often sought to provide meals for their teams after games and have requested space and

even tables and access to power on host campuses. Often requests are made at the last minute. While host institutions have sought to be good hosts, not all requests could be accommodated, which has led to conflicts between visiting parents and staff members. In some instances, individuals have brought alcohol to tailgating events even though institutional policies prohibit the consumption of alcohol. Some institutions have directed tailgating requests to campus services to provide meeting space. It is important that schools work with coaches to ensure that parents understand that they are guests on campuses and should not feel entitled to hold tailgating events.

XIII. Perfect Record Contract Software

Kris Hall indicated that Bard has begun using Perfect Record software for signing and exchanging game contracts. Hall felt the software, which is currently being utilized by Ivy League schools and RIT, is very user friendly and would be a benefit to other league schools. King will seek to schedule a webinar or demo for the fall meeting.

XIV. Anticipated Institutional Sport Sponsorship Changes

Administrators were polled to gauge potential changes in institutional sport sponsorship. No changes are currently being considered. The league's greatest needs are the sports in which there is a reliance on associate members in order to secure NCAA bids – football, men's golf and women's golf.

XV. Future Meeting Sites / Dates

Meeting dates for 2019-20 were reviewed.

- A. Fall Meeting:** Tuesday, Sept. 24 at Verona, N.Y. (Turning Stone).
- B. Winter Meeting:** Friday, Jan. 24 at NCAA Convention (Anaheim). NCAA Convention dates: Jan. 22-25.
- C. Spring Meeting:** May 27-28 at Verona, N.Y. (Turning Stone). Memorial Day – Monday, May 25, 2020

XVI. Other Business

Steve Yianoukos, who earlier in the spring had announced his retirement after 35 years at Clarkson, was offered congratulations and well wishes. Yianoukos was thanked for his recent service as Liberty League president (2016-18) and a member of the Executive Committee.

XVII. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned and the athletic directors conducted an executive session to evaluate the performance of the Liberty League staff.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

ATTACHMENT #1

**Liberty League Sports / Support Area Committee Liaisons
2019-20 through 2022-23 (APPROVED 5/19)**

For more details on Liberty League Sports Committees, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons, refer to page 9 of the Policies and Procedures or page 15 of the Team Guidelines.

Sport / Support Area	Athletic Director or Designee Serving as Sport Liaison
FALL SPORTS	
Cross Country	RIT
Field Hockey	Union
Football	RPI
Soccer	Ithaca
Volleyball	Bard
WINTER SPORTS	
Basketball	Hobart & William Smith
Swimming & Diving	Ithaca
Squash	Vassar
Track & Field	RIT
SPRING SPORTS	
Baseball	Rochester
M/Golf	Clarkson
W/Golf	Union
M/Lacrosse	Skidmore
W/Lacrosse	Clarkson
Rowing	Skidmore
Softball	RPI
Tennis	St. Lawrence
Track & Field	RIT
SUPPORT AREAS	
SAAC	St. Lawrence / Skidmore
Sports Information	RPI
Athletic Training	Vassar
Senior Woman Administrators	Rochester
Compliance	Hobart & William Smith