



Iowa Lacrosse Association Annual Meeting

Wednesday, June 16, 2021, 7:00 pm - Zoom Conference Call

Attendees: Beech Turner (West Des Moines), Sean Mahoney (Waukee), Marc Schulman (Ames), Jeff Kueter (Iowa City), Bruce Maxwell (Ames), Dave Hankins (Ankeny), and Vince McGee (Quad Cities). Guests included Edie DePhillips, Mike Ross, Max Gula (ISU club president), Alex Palensky, Scott Moran, and Paul O'Connell.

Meeting was called to order by Beech at 7:05 pm. A quorum of members were present.

May meeting minutes were presented for discussion and acceptance. Motion to accept was made by Jeff and seconded by Bruce. Motion was subsequently approved.

Treasurer's Report

Bruce advised we have \$3,931.75 in the bank account. Most expenditures and deposits recently involved the collection and payment of officials' fees for the youth league. Board will start to consider ILAX budgetary needs for the upcoming year at the next meeting. Bruce will begin to outline budget so we can advise clubs on expected ILAX membership fees before they set their spring registration fees.

Old Business

Diversity & Inclusion Statement – The board had discussed the need for a formal statement as well as possible wording the past two monthly meetings. Beech subsequently presented wording for final consideration. Dave made the motion to accept the statement as presented and Marc seconded. The board unanimously accepted the statement which will be published by ILAX and shared with member clubs for their consideration.

Nike Accelerate Camp – Beech updated the board about the upcoming lacrosse camp in July in Grimes. He said the Girls Camp had been cancelled and speculated that it was due to low registrations, but said the Boys registrations were strong and that the camp most likely will

be held. Jeff expressed concerns that the day camp format was not attractive to players living outside central Iowa, and Sean said he thought the Nike camps often were multi-day, overnight events on college campuses which might be more attractive. Beech said he would follow up with the camp director to get more information and make those suggestions.

Dave also told the board about a PLL clinic for boys & girls on July 13 in Ankeny. For more information interested parents & players can visit the Ankeny Thunder website.

New Business

Election of officers – The following directors were nominated and subsequently elected for the upcoming 2021-22 year: Beech Turner, President; Dave Hankins, Vice President; Vince McGee, Secretary; and Bruce Maxwell, Treasurer.

Annual Report – The Association is publishing its annual report for 2020-2021, and again plans to distribute to member clubs and throughout the Iowa lacrosse community. The report briefly highlights what was accomplished in the past year and what ILAX plans to work on in the coming year.

Beech presented a power point of the highlights of the report. The Association played a key role in helping clubs respond to COVID19 with several eventually able to return to the field last fall, and all clubs this past spring. The monthly ILAX board meeting helped club leaders share their local situations as well as ideas on how to respond. A key response was providing a COVID19 Action Plan (CAP) template for the clubs to consider when making their own return to play plans.

The CAP template borrowed from return to play guidance from USA Lacrosse (USAL) and focused on essential actions to help ensure safety like pre-screening prior to practice, on-site temperature checks, social distancing, compulsive mask wearing before & after practice, and attendance documentation for contact tracing. Beech said all ILAX members used the CAP in some fashion, and reported very few issues.

Beech went on to say the state of the game in the state remained steady despite the challenges of the pandemic. A recent survey of the 8 youth lacrosse organizations in Iowa showed that 554 players registered this past spring which was a similar result to 2020 before that season was cancelled. However, the results by club varied greatly with some clubs struggling with their youth numbers.

Beech noted that a new club had been formed over the past year called Kingfisher Lacrosse. The club serves the Iowa City-Cedar Rapids area and was able to field teams this past spring when they combined forces with the Quad Cities club. Over 50 players registered in their first season and they also participated in the Youth league. Jeff is the Kingfisher board president and acknowledged the great progress the club has made, and thanked those leaders within their organization.

The annual report also acknowledged the ongoing problem of recruiting local officials in Iowa for both the men's and women's games. This is especially true for the women's game where only one credentialed official is available. (Thank you Paul O'Connell.) ILAX plans to put more resources into addressing this crucial issue in the coming year.

Beech said the board also wanted to re-establish the ILAX Youth League this past spring after a two-year hiatus. Despite the uncertainty of whether a spring season would happen and how many clubs would be able to participate, the league did unfold with the help of many individuals. He also cited the jamborees held at Solon and the Meskwaki Settlement as well as the Iowa Games in Ankeny, and thanked those that hosted.

The annual report also outlined some preliminary plans the Association hopes to pursue in the coming year. However, a robust effort by ILAX will be dependent on getting more help from member clubs and the lacrosse community. Beech said the board plans to form committees and will be recruiting committee members in the coming weeks. The committees could separately address Competition/League Administration, Marketing & Communication, and Recruitment & Training. He encouraged the clubs to step up and help fill these committees so we can continue to grow the game.

Besides recruiting more help, the ILAX board hopes to meet with all member club boards in the coming months to listen and offer help if needed plus network with more local lacrosse leaders. ILAX also wants to have a dialogue with clubs struggling to grow their youth numbers to see if any help can be provided or ideas shared.

ILAX wants to continue to improve league play and participation as well as take steps to grow the game through support of city parks & rec beginner lacrosse programs, and local clinics for new players. Beech reminded the board of the TryLax two-night clinic in West Des Moines on September 14 & 16 for new players. A USAL grant supports this event by providing lacrosse sticks for registrants along with a free USAL annual membership. Central Iowa clubs will run the event. Any unused sticks/memberships will be shared with clubs in eastern Iowa.

Finally, ILAX plans to put more resources and focus on recruiting new officials in the coming year. The hope is a new committee with additional manpower can gain some traction. There is ample training support from USAL so the key role ILAX can play is recruitment. In fact during the Q & A session that followed the annual report presentation, most discussion centered on how to find officials. Comments ranged from identifying college grads that played lacrosse, networking with other sports officials groups like youth hockey, and encouraging high school players to get credentialed so they can officiate youth games.

With Max Gula, ISU club president, in attendance we discussed how to build a relationship with the club and where we could work together. Bruce, Marc and the Ames club will follow up with the club.

Beech asked whether there needed to be additions or corrections to the drafted annual report, and the consensus was that the report was ready to be published. Marc moved that the report be accepted and Dave seconded. The board unanimously voted to publish, and thanked Beech for his efforts in drafting the report on the board's behalf.

The meeting wound down with a recap of immediate steps to be taken by the board. Beech, Jeff, and Bruce will work together to share ideas on forming ILAX committees and will engage the board in the near future. Beech will distribute the Diversity & Inclusion Statement plus work on getting registration set up for the TryLax event.

Next Meeting - Wednesday, August 11th at 7:00 pm via Zoom. The board decided to skip a July meeting while acknowledging that several steps needed to be taken in the interim to prepare for the fall and future events. We also talked about the prospect of meeting in person at least occasionally in the future.

The meeting closed at 8:20 pm with a motion to adjourn by Jeff seconded by Sean.