

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS-REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL
COMBINED SESSION
June 16, 2020**

Due to COVID-19 and associated restrictions, this combined session of the Board of Directors and Representative Council was called to order via Zoom at 10:30 a.m. by President Francis. Directors present: Francis, Ebeling, Dufoe, Fleshner, Kroemer, Boehmer, Fadness and Seivert. Council members participating: Ehresman, Donels, Embray, Slater, Fenster, Heller, Miller, Eidahl, Wiebers, Turner, Thompson and Adams. Participating from the state office: Berger, Brown, Ihnen, Ross, Eslinger, Brinkmeyer and Florian.

Motion by Adams, Slater second and unanimously approved to accept November 14, 2019 combined session minutes as filed.

A document reflecting members of the 2020-2021 Student-Athlete Advisory Committee was reviewed by Brinkmeyer. There was only one returning member from last year's committee so 10 of the 11 members are new. Over 53 applications were received.

Brown updated Directors and Council members on the forthcoming elections. Roger Francis, Pocahontas Area (Northwest District) has served two terms on the Board of Directors and is not eligible for re-election. Shane Ehresman, Lynnville-Sully (Southeast District), Chris Fenster, Southwest Valley (Southwest District), Erin Thompson, Anamosa (Northeast District), and Ken Slater, River Valley (Northwest District) are eligible for re-election. Ballots will be blasted to superintendents in the respective districts on Tuesday, September 3.

Florian presented an overview and update on sponsorships and marketing strategies. The 2019-2020 year was very successful. The 2020-2021 year will look a little different. Florian shared that due to COVID-19 there will be decreases in partners, but this also provides an opportunity to secure others. It is the hope of management that the Iowa Farm Bureau contract will be finalized by the end of June or July. Florian obtained several bids on the autograph ball program, which has become extremely expensive over the last few years. In doing so, he was able to reduce the cost of the balls utilized in the program. The IGHSAU social media footprint is increasing – our Facebook page has seen an increase of 27% exposure and 7.7% increase on Twitter. Instagram experienced the largest growth. Instagram is the app that student-athletes are utilizing the most. Followers on that platform increased from 2,500 to 4,400. Florian also reviewed a number of marketing programs utilized during the pandemic in order to keep the IGHSAU brand at the forefront.

The Classification Committee has discussed various ways to reclassify. One idea was to classify based on gender only. Ross researched the idea and how it would affect the current classification structure. It did have some impact although not a great deal. Reminder was given that joint sports would continue using the total BEDs count. Discussion ensued on how such a change would affect cooperative sharing agreements.

Ross indicated that cooperative sharing policy appears in IGHSAU By-Laws 36.20(5). Proposed language that would address a classification change within the By Laws was shared with Directors and Council. Directors asked Council for input regarding a classification change. Slater was of the opinion that although a change in classification would not affect many schools (20 to 23), it would be significant for those. He also mentioned that as enrollments continue to decline, schools are experiencing problems with finding school districts willing to enter into a cooperative sharing agreement. Some districts are not interested in sharing because by adding the sending district's enrollment, they would move up a class. However, if classification was based on gender only, it might encourage districts to reconsider their stand on cooperative sharing. Wiebers, speaking for a small school, believes the concept is worth researching. Another suggestion was to take a look at the actual number of kids per school that are participating in a cooperative sharing agreement. Reminder was given that the idea of classifying by gender came out of the Joint Classification Committee survey. Since the IHSAA reclassified football, management hasn't heard a great deal about reclassifying girls' sports. Miller concurred with the fact that there are districts unwilling to enter into a sharing agreement because it would move them into a higher class. However, it is worth investigating. Donels was of the opinion that any time you collect data from a survey and then use it, it is a good thing. She agreed that some type of mitigation for shared programs would help. Ehresman asked if there had been other states that classified by gender only. Ross indicated that Nebraska has done it, but they didn't have a chance to use it this winter and spring due to COVID-19. Discussion ensued regarding classifying by socioeconomic status. This would have more of an impact but there hasn't been a consensus on how it could be done. Additional discussion ensued.

The approved 2020-2021 Unified Calendar and the adjustments appearing within were reviewed by Ross. The Family Week will be July 25-August 1. There will be no activities and no coaching contact during this period. Changes that affected tennis and golf were reviewed. Girls' and boys' state soccer will be the same week. However, the only day both the girls and boys play on the same day is on championship day. President Francis expressed appreciation for all the work that went into making the adjustments work.

Executive Director Berger brought Council members up to date on IGHSAU venue contracts. She shared with Council that the IGHSAU has entered into a 10-year contract with Wells Fargo Arena to host the girls' state basketball tournament. The state volleyball contract with US Cellular Center is up for renewal after the 2021 tournament. Both Cedar Rapids and Iowa City/Coralville have made it known that they are interested in hosting the tournament. The softball contract with Fort Dodge will need to be renegotiated after this summer's tournament. Iowa City has shown some interest in hosting the tournament at the University of Iowa fields. Drake University asked for a one-year extension for track and field and will operate under the current contract for one more year. This also allows us the time to adjust for our needs. Discussion ensued.

Executive Director Berger informed Council members that the IGHSAU filed an application with the Small Business Paycheck Protection Program. This federally funded program provides small businesses with funds to pay up to eight weeks of payroll costs

including benefits. Funds can also be used to pay rent and utilities. The funds are provided in the form of loans that will be fully forgiven when used for payroll costs, rent and utilities. Forgiveness is based on the employer maintaining or quickly rehiring employees and maintaining salary levels. Executive Director Berger informed Council members that the first application was filed with Wells Fargo Bank, which is the current financial institution providing banking services to the Athletic Union. That application was denied. A second application was filed with a small family-owned bank in State Center and was approved almost immediately.

Due to COVID-19, the Iowa Department of Education established an administrative waiver. This waiver was reviewed by Directors and Council members. The waiver states: "For the summer sports season, notwithstanding anything in the Iowa Administrative Code Rule 281-36.15, subrules (3) and (4), to the contrary, a high school athlete who is otherwise eligible to compete in a summer sport during the summer of 2020, but whose school is not offering summer sports, may be permitted to compete for any other member school or associate member school of the Iowa Girls' High School Athletic Union and the Iowa High School Athletic Association without a period of ineligibility. It was noted that this waiver is for one year only.

Executive Director Berger reviewed the process management and Directors utilized in deciding to move forward with the softball season in light of COVID-19. The Board met in April to discuss the proposed post-season softball and return to play information. Consensus of the Board at that time was that if Governor Reynolds relaxed restrictions due to COVID-19 and if high school softball teams would be allowed to begin the season on June 1, we move forward with the season. Heller applauded the Board for its action as he truly believes that if we didn't take a chance on playing this summer, there would be no way sports would be played in the fall. Donels stated she appreciated the timeliness of the information provided the schools and that there was not a lot of confusion.

Executive Director Berger reviewed the state softball schedule. She explained that with this schedule the only consolation games that will be played will be third and fourth place. There is significant time allowed between games for the purpose of cleaning and allowing fans to leave prior to arrival of the next game's fans. Additional time has been allowed between championship games. Management has a site visit at Harlan Rogers Softball Complex in the near future. Their facility has some social distancing procedures in place, which will be discussed at the site visit. Utilizing the four-field schedule reflects that the IGHSAU is cognizant of social distancing and desiring everyone be safe. The order in which classes play will be determined at a later date.

Brinkmeyer informed Directors that the 2020 Robert B. Smiley Scholarship recipient has been selected. The state office received over 100 applications. This year's recipient is Brennah Ricketts from Midland High School. Brennah participated in volleyball, softball, golf, track and band. She was a member of the Spanish Club and the FFA. Her volunteerism includes Highway Clean-Up and counselor at Camp Wyoming. A \$1,000 scholarship will be directed to the Iowa college or university of her choice.

There being no further business, this combined session of the Board of Directors and Representative Council adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Karon Brown
Senior Associate Director