MIAA Board of Directors Meeting Highlights – March 6, 2019

Student Advisory Committee (SAC) members Kinsley Roth, Senior at Hopkinton High School and Richard Darkwa, Senior at West Springfield High School provided a presentation to Board members regarding their involvement with the SAC. Sharing their experiences of community service, leadership, friendship and more, Kinsley and Richard asked membership: “How can the SAC continue to support the Association?” The MIAA SAC is comprised of 20 students who were selected to represent MIAA student-athletes statewide.

Attorney Geoff Bok reported to the Board regarding the Open Meeting Law in relation to a complaint the Association received. Attorney Bok explained the definition of Open Meeting Law. He stated the Association needs to respond to this complaint by March 11, 2019. A motion was made to maintain the status quo, meaning the Board will act under the provision of the Open Meeting Law. Voted 18-0-1 to approve.

Gregg Brighenti, Lee Middle High School principal and District G board representative, put forth a proposal for the appointment of an Ad Hoc Board committee dedicated to researching redistricting and voting rights on MIAA committees. This special committee “...shall be constituted as soon as practicable and shall present recommendations to the Board of Directors no later than January 2020.” A motion to support this proposal was made and approved with a 10-8 vote.

Thom Holdgate, AD and MSSADA Executive Board member, presented an updated MSSADA redistricting proposal. The intent of this proposal is to reformat the nine districts. These 9 districts would then form the representation for the standing sport committees, sportsmanship, integrity & ethics committee, and the MIAA Board of Directors.” A motion was made to accept the updated proposal and to “support” the proposal forwarded to the Assembly at the Annual Meeting. The motion was approved: 9-7-2.

Volleyball Committee amendments to NFHS rules. Ted Wilcox, Officials representative and Sean McDonald, Volleyball leader’s sub-committee representative, along with Rich Riley, MIAA Volleyball liaison presented 6 modifications to the NFHS rules for approval to the Board. The motion unanimously passed to approve all modifications.

The Annual Meeting Draft Agenda authorized by the Board subcommittee was presented. After much consideration and discussion, the decision to reduce the number of general sessions from five to three was agreed upon. Reasons included the opportunity for enhanced discussion time in selected areas; Tournament Management Committee, the redistricting Constitutional Change Proposal, and the role of the Finance & Personnel Committee. Opportunity to hear updates regarding the Blue Ribbon Committee and Student Advisory Committee will be included in a revised program.

Jurisdiction of the Executive Director – A clarification with respect to the jurisdiction of the Executive Director was cited from the MIAA Governance Document, “May the Board of Directors or Executive Director review, reverse, or modify decisions made by standing committees or tournament directors?” Answer – Yes, the Board of Directors is ultimately responsible and accountable for the activities of the Corporation. The Board of Directors delegates to the
Executive Director responsibility for the daily operations of the Association. Decisions made by the Executive Director under this authority may be reviewed by the Board of Directors.

MIAA Financial and Personnel Committee Highlights – March 6, 2019

MIAA Board Auditor, Marco Seidman, CPA PC visits with Finance Committee – the MIAA FY’18 audit was approved in November of 2018, however in the wisdom of the Finance Committee questions and concerns had evolved from constituents which led to a follow-up review. Mr. Seidman reinforced that his firm issued an unqualified opinion, meaning the financial statements “present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.” Mr. Seidman stated the Association’s tax returns, such as the form 990, were completed in accordance with IRS regulations and accurately reflect the same numbers provided in the Association’s financial statements. Mr. Seidman also highlighted the accuracy and professionalism of the Association’s accounting staff.

Jeff Granatino, Finance Committee Chair, acknowledged the thoroughness of the audit and the audit process. Mr. Granatino also shared that some voices amongst the membership suggest there remains a lack of understanding regarding the financial status and the method of financial reporting by the MIAA. As a result, a motion was made that a more in-depth audit be conducted to validate the process. This recommendation was met with full board approval. Executive Director Gaine concurred with the action asserting additional tools as such will assist in promoting total financial credibility of the organization.

Culture and Climate - A suggestion was made that this area is of more importance than dissecting Association finances. Statements such as there is a “communication divide” and “the numbers are dwarfing the culture and climate of the Association” were voiced. This discussion led the Committee to motion for adequate time to focus solely on issues of culture and communication to respond to Association needs. The vote was unanimous.

A proposal from the Massachusetts State Track Coaches Association (MSTCA) to independently organize and administrate current MIAA cross country and track and field meets to begin as early as spring 2019 was presented. Board members cited MIAA process protocols and the need for statewide and detailed communication given the unprecedented nature of this request. The MSTCA group was advised the appropriate process commences with the Cross Country and Track & Field Committee.