**MYSA State Council Meeting- Winter**

**Saturday January 25, 2025- Helena, MT**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Board of Directors** | Present | No | Excused |
| P | John Lovell, President | X |  |  |
| VP | John Lacey, Vice President | X |  |  |
| T | Julie Jaksha, Treasurer | X |  |  |
| S | Jenny Wilcynski, Secretary | X |  |  |
| CR | Julie Van Hise, Classic Representative | X |  |  |
| SR | Phil McGovern, Select Representative | X |  |  |
| PR | Erin Williams, Premier Representative | X |  |  |
| SYR | Justin Harcrow, State Youth Referee Admin | X |  |  |
|  | **Staff** |  |  |  |
| R | Katja Andrew, State Registrar/ODP Admin | X |  |  |
| TD | Hunter Terry, Director of Coaching/TD/ODP | X |  |  |
| ED | Jill Marlow, Executive Director | X |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Call Meeting to Order - Meeting Called to Order ~9:05 am by P.**

**Roll Call-** **In Person**: Kolynn Traynor- Queen City FC, Amy Christensen HYSA, Dave Wrobleski-Clark Fork Soccer Alliance, Rachel Bohannon, Jeremiah Kirschman- Montana Rush, Doug Hare- Big Sky FC, Mike Maesar- Mining City, Pete Johnson- HYSA.

**Zoom Attendance:** Billings United, Montana Surf, Flathead Rapids, Flathead Valley United SC, Frenchtown Football Club, GESC, Kootenai Rapids, Livingston YSA, MC Posse, Missoula Strikers FC, Red Lodge Soccer, Real Billings (18/28 Clubs Represented)

**Credentials**- Quorum- 18/28 MYSA teams represented.

**Approval of 2024 Summer Meeting Minutes**- Rush moves to approve minutes, Clark Fork SA seconds- All Approve.

**Communications Report**- ED no current updates to communications.

**Reports-**

**DOC/TD/ODP Report-** Grassroots courses are being announced, please be patient as more information is provided. TD Forums- Coaching leadership, promotion/relegation and communication are subjects to look forward to, DOC/TD is happy to come and visit clubs via in person or zoom. ODP updates- ODP is a great connector to small and big clubs' athletes. Summer 2025 tryout dates are set – please see MYSA website for information. ODP tournament programs to come yet this year include Mayors Cup- Las Vegas, NV (Junior programs) RSL Arizona (senior group). ODP is looking into travel options for younger teams, bringing in volunteer coaches from smaller clubs. ODP continues to be a competitive venue for players and separate from club programs. Continued emphasis on training, ODP has utilized the UM Indoor training facility for winter training for teams. There are scholarships and financial help available to families if needed. Currently 283 Athletes- 24 coaches. Questions: Red Lodge-How do you become an ODP coach? Please reach out to TD/ODP and let him know you are interested. T mentioned the ODP camps allow for more players to be seen, players enjoy the camp and get additional training. R added that Montana sent 7 girls and 3 boys to the Interregional ODP Teams this year in Orlando, FL, this is really a “great step for MT”. Great job to the coaching staff. Damion Blackburn from FVU is involved with the ODP National Coaching Staff. TD adds that a video will be coming-Soccer Etiquette will be the topic highlighted.

**League Reports- Classic Report** – CR provided a report/update to the classic meeting. Held via Zoom (Tuesday) Minutes from this winter’s zoom call have been sent to the delegation. Also added that using MYSA for registering teams is great especially for the smaller programs looking to add soccer. CR reminded the council that her term is up in August 2025 and hope someone will consider this seat. As the MYSA HS Scholarship Chair- 1/31/2025 is the scholarship deadline, the committee members remain the same this year, and there will be 15 scholarships awarded, those will include athletes from large and small clubs and included referees as well from across the state. (An increase in number of scholarships was decided in 2024 now 15 available from 10) CR asked the delegation how many teams are “pure girls only classic clubs” in the state most play in Co-ed or Select programs. P reminded members that you do not have to be a small town to have a classic team. A reminder of play-ups and playdowns was added as the birthyear vs school year comments which comes directly from USYS. ED will be working on the schedule in the upcoming weeks. No further discussion or comments for CR

**Select Report**- SR provided a recap of the zoom call earlier in the week (Wednesday). Clarification for Play-ups/Play-downs. A reminder that the scheduling calendar is in motion and please provide our ED any information necessary. Please hold club team meetings-communication is key for all clubs and parents. A reminder for recruiting referees – How are you recruiting? Are you providing incentives? SR mentioned that Yellowstone SA has a great program for youth recreational players that feeds athletes into the Billings Club teams and that FVU club is also trying to fundraise and gain sponsors to provide entry level rec players a “feeless” soccer program. No Questions/Comments for SR.

**Premier Report**- PR provided the report form the zoom call earlier in the week (Thursday). Currently there are 4 additional teams than 2024, 174 premier games will be held in 6 weeks this spring. PR added that both the Regional and President’s Cup Tournaments will be held in Boise, ID, June 2025. PR reported 7-8 teams in some premier brackets for spring 2025 and a reminder that the top 4 teams will move to the Montana State Cup Tournament. The scheduling of the premier spring league games will take place the first week in February. No Questions/Comments for PR.

**Scholarship Committee**- See classic report for an update on HS Scholarship, provided by CR.

**ED Report-** ED reported the Grant that MYSA received that will provide funding for Underserved programs and smaller communities. Eureka and Browning will use the grant monies for start-up costs for their new programs this spring. The 2025 spring league schedule will be made in February, send blackout dates and conflicts to ED as soon as possible. There will be a potential for mid-week games for the Premier league only. Currently ~300 teams for Select league, 64 for premier league. New teams this season- South Dakota (Rapid City), Browning, Billings Wolves, and Eureka. South Dakota will not be eligible to play in the State Cup Tournament- only league games. Questions: Big Sky FC asked about league game minimums- ED answered only for premier teams. Montana Rush asked about a referee mandate? Answer: 1 referee minimum per team. No other questions/comments.

**VP Report**- VP reported MYSA relies on member clubs to manage own club “risks”. P added that risk management for clubs includes field maintenance. Please be sure all athletes are safe. Questions: Montana Rush asked about policy for weather, specifically lightning. Referees can make the call- what about practices? Is there a MYSA policy for clubs to abide by? VP added that each club has its own policies to follow. MYSA can advise but look to club policy for protocol- each will be slightly different. Mining FC (Butte) asked if the state has a threshold if clubs have differing policies. (i.e. Smoke, Rain, Snow) MYSA will set the procedure, 1 designated person will contact ED and decision will come from her if games are to be cancelled. MYSA will provide a standard within 2 weeks. Clark Fork added they use “airnow.gov” for smoke references. No other questions/comments.

**T Report –** T reported that the compilation report came available yesterday that provides a 3-year average. 2025 budget will be sent by 1/31/25. T reminded the delegation the T term is up in August 2025, and is currently seeking 3-5 individuals for a financial committee, if interested please send email to current T. Provided an update as to the potential Endowment or Trust MYSA hopes to form as an effort to give back to the organization with funds that already exist. Provided a few current financials to look at upon receiving the budget and reported the overall financial health of MYSA is strong. MYSA will be switching to an online version of QuickBooks; the desktop version is being eliminated. A mention of the financial team being of T, ED, Wendy the current bookkeeper and Pat Burt as acting accountant. T added that a credit card was approved for MYSA/ODP staff and travel policies will be put in place. Current CDs (certificate of Deposits) are making 4-5%. T would like to have the endowment/trust in place by March. No question/comments.

**SYR Report-** SYR Reports pathways for referees. Upcoming Field sessions will be held in Kalispell, Helena, Livingston & Billings. Remote locations can be arranged with instructors. Digital referee programs are available on-line and are shorter courses. Work great for lower-level games, recreational games and are less expensive. Clark Fork SA asked about Bridge- Course. 1 year is needed- can be a CR & AR. SYR reported that some states are using digital course, then bridge course and then full referee as a pathway. MT has ~600 referees with recertification on track for this year. SYR introduced the 3 Strike Policy that was approved by the MYSA board during the January board meeting. This policy will be enforced starting Spring 2025. VP added that it was adopted from the Australian League with some changes to the original verbiage and policy. This policy will apply to all involved in soccer. SYR reported a review of the policy with a mention of a 4th strike possible being a pause in membership with MYSA. SYR mentioned the new Referee Abuse Prevention program that is upcoming by US Soccer, referencing 539-1 policy. P added that this is taken very seriously- please police people, including hierarchy in clubs, parents, coaches, players, etc. SYR reminds review game reports- be sure to do your job as a referee- all reports will become better when taking the time to properly fill out game reports. Questions- P asked if there is a policy if a referee is not deemed capable? Yes, please reach out to current SYR. Montana Rush asked if 3 Strike Policy is club rather than a specific individual? It is club driven. SYR announced that the Digital referee platform can be done in a short time- 2 hours + safe sport certification. There is an emergency referee clause in place if needed. Clark Fork SA asked if the 3 Strike Policy can be from anyone as opposed to referee alone? VP encourages shared responsibilities. SR added as a manager/program don’t forget what you would do normally in a situation- (i.e. Child Protection services, Police, Sheriff, Responders)

**P Report-** P reported that MYSA is currently updating the MYSA Bylaws. (originally from 1990s) MYSA hired Sage Consulting to help update and Bylaws will be sent 120 days prior to the Summer AGM for approval.

**Unfinished Business-** None.

Short Break- reconvene at 11:10am.

**New Business-** ED reminded the policy/protocol for players receiving a red card. Premier games players will sit out the next premier match scheduled. In a select game- the player will sit out the next select/friendly that is scheduled. Questions- what about a non-state situation? If the red card has been reported that player will sit the next scheduled game. Questions/Discussions of whether programs can add a scheduled game for the team? The answer is NO! It has to be a scheduled game, police your program. What about a red card for a coach? Can the coach then go and coach a different team? MYSA will work on the policy for the summer AGM. ED announced the upcoming 2026 hosts for MYSA Events-Showcase=Helena Youth Soccer Association, Montana Cup=Montana Rush, State Cup=Real Billings.

P added this is the first AGM that Ralph Serrette has not attended since 1995.

Montana Rush added they have instituted Futsal with over 600 players in Great Falls playing. The program is currently using the MT Expo Indoor Park- Session 1 ~500 Players, Session 2 ~350 players. Fees are $50 kid/$85 HS & Adult. Very successful program!

**For the Good of the Game-** What is For Good of the game? It can be a Motivational Statement, Thought, something happening in the soccer or sports world. Can be local or worldwide. Montana Rush in Great Falls announced- “Mini pitches in the park”- Working with Parks and Recreation program to build mini pitches in local parks (west & south) so any player has access to soccer. ~$120K per court and Great Falls is raising monies now. US Soccer will come for ribbon cutting once complete! Clark Fork Soccer Alliance has started Futsal and is currently using Thompson Falls and church gyms for programs. SYR added Kari Seitz is the first VP of Refereeing (US Soccer Federation) “green whistles” for minor referees, will use a green badge to acknowledge the young refs.

**Adjournment**- Meeting adjourned at ~ 11:41 am HYSA moves to adjourn, Montana Rush Seconds, all approve.