Bowling Committee Members:
Howie Conklin, North Sectional Director/Girls and Boys - present
Dave Clampffer, State Rules Interpreter – not present
John Cavona – J.P. Stevens -Boys Coach – Central - present
Newlin Schoener, Boys South Sectional/Girls Tournament Director – not-present
Tara Burniston, Girls’ Individual Championship Director – not present
Tracie Smith – Boys’ Individual Championship Director – present
Anthony Bilello, Central Boys Sectional Director - present
Mike Mitchell – Central Girls’ Director/Boys T of C Director - present
Cherie Pizzano – Linden coach – North 2 coach – present
Mark Klimek – South Girls Sectional Director - present
Greg Hatzisavvas – Boys North 1B & North 2 Sectional Director – not present
Roger Pellitier, Mahwah AD, representing Athletic Directors – not present

The meeting was called to order at 5:25 although there were some members who still had not arrived. Perhaps next year the meeting will be set for a little later than 5 PM.

Introductions were made especially introducing Kim DeGraw-Cole as Girls Bowling Director.

II. Correspondences: The liaison shared with the committee a couple of email correspondences between Mike Nyitray and Yvette Walker and John Canova as they pertain to honors for scoring in a two-game series, rolling a 300 game, and/or bowling an 800 3-game series. The committee remembered Mr. Nyitray as the gentleman from Florida who we had a teleconference last year in regards to a “National Bowling Championship.” Kamerin Peters was added to the high two-game series of 526 and then this year Lanasia Neal topped that score with a two-game series of 527.

III. Items for Discussion – A. Dates for 2018 – The liaison handed out in the packet the date changes for 2018. The committee decided to reverse the order of sectionals and finals making the boys to go first in 2018 and the girls go second. So the changes would look like this:
Boys Cutoff Date for entries to Sectional Directors – January 12, 2018
Boys Sectionals – North 1A – February 3, 2018 – 9 AM start – Bowler City
Central – 9:30 AM – Site TBD
South – Deptford Zone – Groups 1 & 2 – 9 AM; Groups 3 & 4 1 PM
North 1B – Thursday, February 1, 2018 2 PM – Lodi Lanes
North II – Friday, February 2, 2018 2 PM – Jersey Lanes
Boys Finals – February 9, 2018 – Site TBD
Girls Cutoff Date for entries to Sectional Directors – January 16, 2018
Girls Sectionals – North – February 10, 2018 9AM – Bowler City
Central – February 10, 2018 9:30 AM Site TBD
South – February 10, 2108 9 AM Laurel Lanes
Girls Finals – February 16, 2108 9:30 AM Site TBD (date may change)
Individuals Championships – Boys and Girls – February 14, 2018 – Site TBD
Committee meeting 2/22/18 at 5:30 – NJSIAA offices

Any site that is marked as TBD, the time and date may change from what is written in these minutes.

Also during this topic the committee discussed the idea of looking at expanding the girls’ sections by possibly seeing how the teams would break down if we went with a North 1, North 2, Central and South geographical groupings. This would increase maybe the total number of individuals to the individual championships, putting those numbers more in line with the boys’ individuals. If so, it would mean another site, another director, more trophies, etc. Ultimately, if it merely just spreads out the already existing schools, there is probably no need to move in this direction.

The next topic of discussion was and is a point of contention for years and that is late entries to the sectional directors. No matter what the sectional directors always get entries after the posted deadlines, do not want to “hurt” the student athletes by not accepting, but want some “teeth” in the regulations. The liaisons, Kim and Larry, spoke that in other NJSIAA sport regulations, there are fines imposed to the schools for submitting late entries/paperwork. On a general note, NJSIAA has constructed a fee-schedule for above lateness (with any fines going to the Student-Athlete Scholarship Fund). The liaisons will consult this fee schedule and will write it into the 2018 Girls and Boys Tournament Regulations, post it on our website, and send notice to the AD forum once completed.

The committee then addressed perhaps the most pressing situation, that being the Bowlero site and the problems/situations that has surfaced since the takeover of the facility from Brunswick Zone Carolier. The concern came to NJSIAA attention back at the end of the 2016 bowling season when it became evident that there was going to be a change to the house mentioned above. NJSIAA received an email from John Canova dated December 27, 2016 Re: Happy Holidays/State Sectionals/Finals Concerns. The email details the concerns of not only Mr. Canova but those of the boys and girls individual tournament directors, Tracie Smith and Tara Burnistion, respectively. Then just before the meeting on February 28, 2017 NJSIAA received a letter from Mr. Joseph Ward, Woodbridge HS Athletic Director and GMC Bowling Chairperson dated February 23, 2017 highlighting the same concerns/issues of which Mr. Canova wrote of in his December email. The email and the letter will be attached to these minutes.

The liaisons, Ms. Cole and Mr. White, explained that they had visited Bowlero in early January of 2017, met with the General Manager and the Sales Director, Debbie Stein, and discussed the concerns and issue that were mentioned in the December 2016 email from Mr. Canova. We also went up there to see the place for ourselves. After our tour and
discussion, we felt that 1) at that point, we could not see finding another site to host the five (5) events that are held at this site, namely the Central Boys and Girls Central Sectionals and the Boys and Girls State Finals and the Individual Championships. We addressed some of the concerns such as the signage, lighting, dividing of the boys and girls to upstairs/downstairs venues, etc. Management was agreeable to our suggestions about the lighting and what could/would be done. As for the signage we asked if we could hang a banner in front of the one sign that seemed to be offensive. We looked but did not see any way to hide/block the word. In a nutshell, we felt that since we could not assure finding another site we had no recourse other than to remain there with the idea after the championships were over, we would then have time to pursue other options.

From the meeting other concerns surfaced that were brought to our attention: Lanes were in horrible shape, the site relies on machines to set the shot, not people, not educated in how the lanes should be maintained, and scoring machines are difficult to program. A major concern was that alcohol was reported to be sold during our events that extended into the afternoon hours of 3 PM.

During this part of the agenda, we asked the committee what other sites are possible replacements. Laurel Lanes was suggested (actually in Mr. Ward’s letter it was mentioned). The liaisons said that they had met with the General Manager, Chuck Soos, and Owner, Keith Johnson, while at the South Girls Sectional event. Our major concerns then and now is that 1) the site is not centrally located as it pertains to travel time especially for the Northwest and Northeast teams/individuals that would have to travel very long distances to get to Laurel Lanes, 2) the wake-up times for these bowlers, and 3) the fact that the lanes and the spectator standing area is all on the same level, making viewing difficult but not impossible per se.

Another site was Strathmore Lanes in Aberdeen but it is not confirmed that it has been updated in some years. Ocean Lanes was also a possibility but 42 lanes makes it difficult to host seeing our needs for lanes, and some other houses were thrown out for discussion but several were dismissed due to not enough lanes and/or parking limitations.

The liaisons said that they would visit these other sites to check them out, and we also said that we would have a long sit-down with the administration of Bowlero to discuss these concerns to see what they would do in order to keep us there.

C. The next item of discussion was the email from above Laurel Lanes. Mark Klimek spoke of how great management was there in taking on the South girls’ sectional and the cooperation he gets from them in assisting running the tournament. The liaisons agreed that they were very nice and receptive to the idea of hosting more of our major events. As was noted above, the location is one detriment but also a severe lack of parking on site presents issues.
D. The committee then discussed the 2017 Tournament in terms of negatives and positives. All agreed that the sectionals and all of the finals went very well, with very few, if any issues.

At this point, the committee went over the results of the 2017 Tournament. The liaisons explained to the committee that we had a situation to arise at the Boys’ T of C (Finals) that was not covered in the Tournament Regulations. The situation was we had a tie for total pins for the seeding of the group championships for the Baker roll-off but this was not covered as to how to break the tie. It was discussed and finally agreed upon by the NJSIAA bowling liaisons and the T of C Tournament Director that we would use total pins beginning with the 3rd game, and if needed because of a tie there, we would use total pins in the 2nd game, and if needed again, we would use total pins for the first game. School with highest pin fall would be seeded higher. This will be put in the regulations for 2018.

Another situation that almost occurred was a tie for the Individual bowl-off round and in looking at the Tournament Regulations, there was nothing in the regulations to handle this situation. It was determined by Individual Tournament Directors, Tara and Tracie, and the NJSIAA bowling liaisons, that we would have a 9th and 10th frame roll-off. I tend to recall that there may need to be something written in the regulations as to how to determine who places in the 5 step ladder contests when there is a tie in total pins. I believe we talked about same format as for the team tie mentioned in paragraph above.

The liaison shared with the committee a document that Howie uses in lieu of the coaches meeting. Often a team maybe running late and does not make the coaches meeting or perhaps just to save time and get the event started right on the scheduled time, a document such as this can be just handed out when the team’s arrive and sign in.

V. Good of the Order: The committee informed the liaison that as of that moment all sectional sites would remain intact, unless some major circumstances came up. Also, for some there will be no increase cost for sectional tournaments; others there might be a nominal increase. We also asked the committee members to please contact liaisons if they are aware of any new school programs. We will reach out to them to make sure they get in School Manager so that they show up as a varsity team.

Next, the committee talked about rosters/T-rific Tees and one major problem was that they are slow to open, lines were extremely long, sold out fairly quickly but did not stay to take orders. This will be conveyed to them when NJSIAA meets with the owner and his staff in March/April.

The committee discussed the issue of late arriving teams/individuals and should there be a time limit as to how long to wait seeing that the house will be losing time for the public to bowl, thus losing revenue. There was no definitive answer.

The liaison shared with the committee a conversation that he had with a parent of a boy bowler who did not make the cut of the individuals but whose score was higher than other
boys who made it but were from a different section. The committee said it is all about what you do on that day on those lanes and that the way we do it is fine it is not broken.

One of the liaisons brought up the idea of having for the individuals the 4 and 5 seed bowl off, and then the winner of that bowl the number 1 seed, while the 2 and 3 seed bowl off, and then the winner of the “Semifinals” bowl off for the Finals winner. It was just thrown out there as an idea. Reason was Number 1 seed sits around, practicing for a long time and maybe loses her/his edge. Something to send out to the coaches?

Lastly, the liaison shared an All-Star Bowling Concept that came out of a conversation with Cherie Pizzano, coach from Linden HS. The concept is attached to this report. The committee loved the idea and when finalized it will be brought to the NJSCA for their approval to be a formal All-star event under their auspices.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry L. White