EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
January 8, 2020

Roll Call / Introduction of Press - The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Mary Liz Ivins, at 11:09 am.

The following members were present: Mohammed Abdelaziz, Greg Bailey, Tom Berrios, Maureen Bilda, Joseph Bollendorf, Dr. Brian Brotschul, Kevin Carty, Jr., Joanne Dzama, James Gaffney, Edward Grande, Robert Grauso, Oscar Guerrero, Robert Haraka, Kurt Karcich, Raymond Kiem, Howard Krieger, Timothy McElhinney, Tony Mitchell, Thomas Mullahey, Michael Nitti, Leon Owen, Michael Pellegrino, Christopher Penna, Scott Ridley, Senator Paul Sarlo, Steve Shohfi, Daniel Sinclair, Vincent Smith, Frank Torcasio, Beverly Tokor, Bill Vacca, Paul Vizzuso, Kathy Whalen, Dr. Robert Zega and Dr. Brian Zychowski. Also present: Larry L. White, Executive Director; Kim Cole, Jack DuBois, Tony Maselli and Al Stumpf, Assistant Directors; Colleen Maguire, Director of Finance; Michael Zapicchi, Project Manager; and Steven P. Goodell, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Darren Cooper, Bergen Record; Mike McGarry, Press of AC; and JJ Conrad, nj.com. Also present: Paul Anzano of Pringle, Quinn, Anzano, P.C.; Casey Langel, Lenox Law Firm; Dave Frazier, Athletic Director (Rutherford HS); Rory McCourt, Superintendent of Ridgefield Schools; Dr. Joe Cerullo, Principal and Jon Duncan, Athletic Director (Ridgefield Memorial HS);

Approval of Minutes
A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Dr. Brian Brotschul, to accept the minutes of the December 11, 2019 Executive Committee meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Out-of-State Competition/All-Star Games
A listing of Bordering State Sanctions and National Federation Sanctions was given for informational purposes.

Executive Director Update – Larry White

Legislative Update (Paul Anzano) – The legislative session will end Monday, 1/13/20, and then all bills not passed will get renumbered. In lame duck session, there were a number of issues on the table, including what constitutes an independent contractor (which can affect our officials), anti-vaping measures, public records disclosure, electrical cars, auto insurance and legalizing pot. Many of the bills will be up vote for vote on Monday, and if passed, sent along to the Governor. Mr. Anzano thanked Executive Committee member, Senator Paul Sarlo, for supporting the association. Mr. Smith asked status about the immunization bill. Mr. Anzano and Mr. Sarlo explained that there were not enough votes in the Senate (were two short) but it could come up again on Monday. The governor has been non-committal on this issue. The issue people are voicing is religious exemption. Mr. Sarlo explained there is a lot of misinformation about there, and the bill only deals with the main vaccinations (measles, chicken pox, etc.) There is nothing expected on the horizon when the new legislative session starts.

Interpretation of Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations – The NJSIAA Bylaws allow the Executive Director “to be empowered to rule on the interpretations of the Constitution and Bylaws, and rules of the Association, subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee at its next meeting.” (Article I, Section 3N). On December 18, 2019, The Patrick School requested an interpretation as to whether the 30-Day Transfer Rule applied to international students who
transferred from one high school in the U.S. to another. On December 20, 2019, Mr. White ruled that it did:

Mr. White, as Executive Director, has determined that the 30-day Transfer Rule applies to any international student who achieved varsity status at a high school in the United States prior to transferring. This means that those students are ineligible for the first 30 days of the season (or half the season, whichever is less) unless they can show a bona fide change of residence - meaning a timely move with a parent or guardian. In this way, those students are treated the same as any other student who played varsity sports and then transferred schools. As noted in our December 18 memo, Mr. White's interpretation will be considered at the January 8, 2020 Executive Committee meeting, which you are welcome to attend.

Mr. Goodell invited the Patrick School to attend today’s meeting, but no representatives attended. Casey Langel, special counsel to the association, explained the rationale for Mr. White’s interpretation. The association wants to treat all student-athletes the same, regardless if they are international students, or domestic, to ensure there are no advantages. Questions were asked including:

1-are there varsity athletic programs abroad? Answer-athletics are not usually part of the school curriculum abroad. Most kids play at a club level so unless athletic advantage is suspected, most students are deemed eligible right away.

2-What if a student changes families? Answer-The student would sit 30 days. With the F1 program, public schools can host an international student for one year, while private schools can allow an educational experience for multiple years, but if the guardian changes, the athlete sits. Only time an athlete wouldn’t sit is if the guardian moves with the international student to a new location. Mr. Bollendorf asked how this compares to a domestic student changing guardians. Does a domestic student sit if they change guardians? Mr. Zapicchi answered that if it’s a court appointed change, then the athlete would not sit, but if one guardian is voluntarily signing over guardianship to another person living in another town, there is a 30-day sit.

3- Has the association ever determined a ruling like this before? Yes. About 4 times.

A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Kurt Karcich, to confirm the interpretation ruling made by Larry White on 12/20 regarding the Patrick School and the 30-Day Transfer Rule as it applies to international students who transfer from one high school in the US to another. Motion passed with two abstentions.

Advisory Committee Legislation – Chairman of the Advisory Committee, David Frazier, gave an update on December’s Advisory Committee meeting. Of the five proposals that the committee reviewed, three were endorsed, one was not moved forward, and the last proposal was withdrawn by the sponsors after discussion at the meeting. The Executive Committee then reviewed and debated the three proposals before them.

1. **Cooperative Sports Programs for Group 1 Schools (submitted by Ridgefield Public Schools)** – The Advisory Committee endorsed this proposal (10-3-1) to allow the formation of a cooperative sports FOOTBALL tri-op among Group 1 schools. If this proposal is endorsed by the Executive Committee, it must be rewritten to coincide with the current cooperative sports rules (because as written it does not follow the current procedures). The proposal submitted to the Advisory Committee only requested the ability for Group 1 schools to tri-op in football, but the original desire was to allow at least one Group 2 school in the tri-op, and even include wording to allow Non-Public B schools the ability to form a tri-op. Rory McCourt, sponsor of the bill, came to the
meeting to explain his position and was hoping to amend the proposal that the Advisory Committee approved. The Executive Committee had the choice to reject the proposal, endorse the original proposal submitted to the Advisory Committee, or endorse an amended proposal.

Ridgefield Memorial HS hasn’t fielded a football team in years and wishes to. Palisades Park and Leonia HS are willing to bring Ridgefield in to their existing football co-op if the rule changes since they too struggle with numbers. Mr. McCourt originally drafted a proposal to include Group 2 schools so this particular cooperative tri-op can form, but there was miscommunication, so Mr. McCourt removed the Group 2 and non-public B language from the proposal that he submitted to the Advisory Committee. That said, without the Group 2 component, his current situation would not be solved, nor was it his intent when submitting his proposal because Leonia HS is a Group 2 school, and the tri-op request submitted to the Advisory Committee only asks permissions for Group 1 schools to tri-op. Executive Committee members began to ask specific questions related to the Ridgefield-Palisades Park-Leonia HS football tri-op but were redirected because the proposal to be considered by the Executive Committee is a statewide rule change, not an individual cooperative sports application. Many specific questions were asked about amending the original proposal. Are non-publics included on the request and allowed to tri-op? If Group 2 schools are permitted to tri-op, can three Group 2 schools tri-op together or is the request to allow only one group 2 school to join two Group 1 schools? Mr. Mullahey asked if a tri-op would bump in to a larger classification. It would because if approved by the Cooperative Sports Review Committee, they determine the appropriate grouping. Mr. Grauso asked if there will be maximum player limit like there is in the ice-hockey tri-op rules. As of now, no. Mr. Goodell reminded the Committee that if the proposal is endorsed (the amended proposal or the original proposal), it can still be amended in the Sectional meetings before the Executive Committee approves the final annual meeting ballot version. Mr. McElhinney expressed that it should be amended because the sponsor always wanted to include Group 2 schools but was advised to submit the proposal only requesting the ability for Group 1 schools to co-op in football. Some Exec members expressed that the bill may not have been pushed forward by the Advisory Committee if it included Group 2 schools, and it can’t be assumed it would have. Also, whatever is endorsed can be modified and typically is after feedback from sectional meetings. Senator Sarlo asked if there will be enough time for next year. Unfortunately, since it can’t be approved until May at the annual meeting, 8th graders will probably begin committing to non-public schools now if they want to play football, but it will be in time to have a program for next year’s football 2020 season.

A motion to endorse the original Group 1 (only) football tri-op proposal made to the Advisory Committee was made by Bill Vacca, seconded by Dr. Zychowski. This can be changed once feedback is received from schools at the sectional meetings. Final Vote: Yes-29; No-5; Abstain-1. Motion passed.

2. Football Group Championships (submitted by NJSIAA) – The Constitution (p. 32)
   Article IX, Championships, states that “No state championship, however, shall be declared in football.” The Advisory Committee voted 11-3-0 to remove that line so NJ can hold a statewide championship in football if the right plan is approved.

   Mr. Grauso asked why they can’t see a plan for a football championship and remove this statement to allow for a state championship at the same time. Mr. Grauso also added that there are concerns about extending the season past where it ends now, and the tournament already extends to a regional level. Ms. Maguire explained that any tournament structure proposal, if passed, would not go in to effect until 2023-24, the next scheduling cycle so there’s plenty of time to map out the right program. This was
attempted years ago, and it failed. The theory is why spend countless hours devising a
tournament structure if the membership doesn’t want it, so instead, the plan is to see if
there’s an appetite for this conversation first. Also, if the membership wants a statewide
championship, the plan will be brought to the membership to vote on, not the Executive
Committee. Mr. Shohfi added that there will be a commitment to make sure the season
does not start earlier in the summer, extend the length of the season, or affect
Thanksgiving Day traditions. Mr. Karcich added that there has to be a way to make a
statewide championship in football happen, taking in to account the length of season and
student-athlete safety concerns. Ms. Maguire added that the NJSIAA Student
Ambassadors found it strange that the association started off as a football association
but don’t have a statewide football champion. Also, NJ is the only single governing body
in the country that doesn’t do it. (States like NY have multiple governing bodies for its
different cities.) Mr. Carty added that a majority of coaches are behind this championship
format.

A motion to endorse removing the sentence that “No state championship, however, shall
be declared in football.” from the Constitution Article IX, Championships, was made by
Greg Bailey, seconded by Kurt Karcich. Final Vote: Yes-30; No-4; Abstain-1. Motion
passed.

3. Classification of Member Schools (submitted by NJSIAA) – Currently the language
in Article III, Classification of Member Schools, is outdated and does not reflect the
current practices. The current language applies to when each sport was classified based
on general classifications, rather than the current system of using sport specific
classifications. This proposal updates the Bylaws with current procedures but also
incorporates two additional changes, which are as follows:

#1 - All non-public school classifications will use gender-specific enrollment data instead
of utilizing the current doubling procedure.

#2 - Remove the wording “low enrollment” schools. In the past, if a school was under
150 students, they were automatically placed in the Group 1 classification, after schools
were divided and assigned a classification. Due to the increase in the amount of charter
schools (21 this year v 10 schools eight years ago), the gap between Group 1 schools is
expanding. When the association changed to sport specific classifications, some schools
can be a Group 1 or Group 2 school depending on the sport and the amount of other
schools participating. If the “less than 150 enrollment size” rule is removed, than some of
the larger schools will be bumped to the next group size, which will reduce the gap
between the smallest and largest school within the grouping and tighten the gap
differential. Ms. Maguire noticed in the ShopRite Cup standings that NP-B and Group 1
schools were being shut out of points because they were not earning sectional
championship titles. This change will help with that.

The Advisory Committee endorsed this proposal 12-0-1. A motion was made by Joseph
Bollendorf, seconded by Maureen Bilda, to endorse the proposed revisions made to
Bylaws, Article III, Classification of Member Schools. Final Vote: Yes-34; No-0; Abstain-
1. Motion passed.
**Assistant Director Reports**

**Jack DuBois**

**Football** – In less than a week, Mr. DuBois leaves for Indianapolis to attend the NFHS Football Rules Committee meeting, where 34 rule change proposals will be considered. The NJSIAA Football Rules Committee will meet on 1/22 and the NJSIAA Football Leagues and Conferences Committee will meet on 1/28.

**Ice Hockey** – Cutoff is 2/10 and seeding is 2/18.

**Fencing** – The districts tournament opens up with District 2 on 1/18 @ PCTI. The rest of the districts will compete on the following dates/locations: District 3 at Livingston HS on 1/19; District 4 at North Hunterdon HS on 1/25; District 5 at Montgomery HS on 1/26 and District 1 at Ramapo HS, on 2/1. The top four winners from each district move on to the team championships on 2/3.

**NJSCA Clinics** – The NJSCA tennis clinic will be held at Princeton University on 1/10. Over 40 coaches have registered but walkups will be allowed, with no late fee penalty.

**NJSCA Senior Basketball All-Star Game** – Nomination forms have been sent out, posted on our website, and are due back 2/7. The Selection Committee meets on 2/11 to select players.

**Corporate** – Nothing new to report.

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**Kim DeGraw-Cole**

**Girls Basketball** – Cutoff is 2/8 and seeding is 2/13. Out-of-State/Non-Member Tournament Forms should already be in.

**Softball/Baseball/Volleyball Rules Interpretation Meetings** – These meetings will begin at the end of the month. They are mandatory for officials, recommended for coaches.

**Transfers & Eligibility & Controversies Update** – There is an athletic advantage Eligibility Appeals case in the afternoon. 1,702 transfers have been processed since 9/1 and though it’s slowing down right now, Ms. Cole expects it to pick up again for spring sports. The tentatively scheduled 1/15 Controversies Committee meeting is not needed. Next Eligibility Committee meeting is 2/5.

**Wrestling** – Ms. Cole is overseeing wrestling in Mr. Bruno’s absence. Cutoff is 2/1 and seeding will be 2/4. The association is currently looking through officials’ assignments for the tournament. If a school has a female wrestler, they should see the qualifier that is posted on the NJSIAA home page. Last year was the first year of women’s wrestling and there were not as many uniform issues as this current year. Ms. Cole asks for modesty and making sure our female athletes are appropriately attired/taken care of.

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**Al Stumpf**

**NCAA/NFHS/NJSIAA June Basketball Showcase Event** – This is tentatively scheduled for 6/21 – 6/23, 2020. The NCAA and NFHS want control of the college recruitment instead of leaving it in the hands of the AAU. Mr. Grauso is a member of the committee planning this showcase. At
the 2020 NFHS Winter Meeting, forming a Basketball Coaches Association was discussed. If that happens, they will take over this event.

Boys Basketball – Cutoff is 2/8 and seeding is 2/13. Out-of-State/Non-Member Tournament Forms should already be in. A change to pre-game ticket sales was made to the tournament regulations. The rule states that when a school hosts, 60% of pre-sale tickets are allotted for the home team and 40% for the away team. Due to an issue last year when an away team stormed the home team’s school for tickets, it is now suggested that a person must show identification to purchase tickets.

Boys Bowling Update – See Mr. Maselli’s report.

Unified Bowling and Basketball Update – Everything is on track.

NAGWS – The deadline to return nomination forms is 1/15. The event will take place on Superbowl Sunday, 2/9, from 11am – 1pm. Tickets are $45 per ticket and honorees are limited to bringing three guests for a total of four people.

Winter Track - Mr. Stumpf is overseeing winter track in Mr. Bruno’s absence. The state relays begin next week, starting on Wednesday, 1/15 through Monday, 1/20. Sectionals begin in February and the Meet of Champions will take place at Ocean Breeze in Staten Island.

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Tony Maselli

Fall Disqualification Report – The total amount of fall disqualifications decreased by 32, for a total number of 173. That’s the lowest number it’s been in the past six years.

Girls Bowling Update – Everything is “rolling” along. Team entries are due Monday, 1/13. Mr. Maselli has received 30 just today. It is the only sport that receives entries, then determines groups/sections based on entries received.

Swimming/Diving Update – There was a nationwide girl’s uniform issue so Mr. Maselli pumped rules/guidelines information to coaches, officials, schools, etc. As of today, there have been no problems/complaints. Mr. Maselli has received some transgender concerns, but he advised his callers on the current rules for this type situation.

ZebraWeb/ZebraPay – Two training sessions for ZebraPay have been scheduled (1/23 at NJSIAA and 1/29 at PCTI.) The sessions, appropriate for business administrators, will concentrate on how to pay officials. Three training sessions in ZebraWeb have been set up for assignors. The first one was 12/17 and was well attended. The next two will be held on 1/15 and 2/12 respectively.

Website – The association is inching closer to launch.

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Michael Zapicchi, Project Manager

School Start Times Committee – Mr. Zapicchi and Mr. Maselli will represent the NJSIAA on this committee, formed by the American Association of Pediatrics. In 2022, all high schools in California will start their school day after 8:30am. Five schools in NJ have volunteered to try this as part of a pilot program. Mr. Bollendorf expressed that using only five schools seems like a flawed pilot program. He suggested Mr. Zapicchi push for an entire conference to be part of the
pilot program to get true data. Mr. Zapicchi shared that the availability of transportation and extracurricular activities are the biggest concern of implementing this change.

International Students Eligibility Form – This form will officially be online today. No more paper forms.

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**Director of Finance Report – Colleen Maguire**

ShopRite Cup Standings- Fall – Ms. Maguire distributed the ShopRite Cup Fall 2019 standings/report. Fall leaders are as follows:

- Group 4 - North Hunterdon HS
- Group 3 - West Morris Mendham HS
- Group 2 - Haddonfield Memorial HS
- Group 1 - New Providence HS
- Non-Public A- Christian Brothers Academy and Immaculate Heart Academy tied
- Non-Public B- Moorestown Friends

Student Advisory Update – The next Student Advisory Council meeting will be 1/15. Mr. Goodell will speak to the students about the association’s sportsmanship policy and its evolution. Last meeting, after discussion about the sportsmanship policy being read to the captains, it became clear that most athletes do not know the policy is read, and the current statement is verbose and not student friendly. Therefore, the council will work on a new statement that is more student-friendly to replace the current one. The council will also address the declining numbers in athletic participation. What can be improved so students are more involved and feel they can still participate, despite overwhelming academic workloads. Sports are supposed to be an outlet, so the goal is to get more students involved. The Winter Officials’ Appreciation Week is scheduled from 1/27 – 2/2, 2020. Ms. Maguire encourages all schools to make a big deal about this.

Calendar Review Committee – Ms. Maguire is convening a group of principals to review the entire school year and look at each season’s start/end dates. It makes more sense to look from a wholistic approach than constantly changing the dates piecemeal. It’s not a simple process. The plan is to meet in few weeks and then periodically meet over the next eight months. Any proposed changes will not go in to effect until the 2023/24 school year, which is the next scheduling cycle. Ms. Maguire will send out a lot of surveys to collect data from the membership for the committee to review and consider.

Fall Cooperative Sports – Application Deadline – Reminder that 1/15 is the deadline to submit applications for a fall sports cooperative sports program. The form to apply is online. The Cooperative Sports Review Committee will meet on 2/6 to review all submitted applications.

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**Program Review**

Football Opening Recruiting Period – 1st Reading – The NCAA football open recruiting period runs from 4/15 – 5/31. In-person evaluations are allowed for all divisions but there’s a lot of misunderstanding what can and cannot occur during an evaluation. Two onsite visits are permitted, which cannot exceed one hour. The NJFCA would like the high school football coach to be the primary contact for these evaluations, which under the current rules violates the out-of-season coaching rules so the following guidelines were created for all member schools to adhere to during the NCAA Open Recruiting Period:
1. When a college coach is onsite at a NJSIAA-member high school, the high school coach shall be permitted to administer a football specific evaluation session at the request of a college coach.

2. High school coaches shall be permitted to attend and assist with any workout observed by the college coach.

3. The workouts to be observed by a college coach may include:
   a. Strength training
   b. Agility, speed and endurance training
   c. Position specific skills workouts (see details below)

4. Position specific skills workouts include, but is not limited to, throwing, blocking, running routes, kicking/punting, or defensive positioning.

5. The workouts SHALL NOT resemble any form of organized practice. Therefore, no diagramed plays may be executed, no individual skills training may occur, and no scrimmaging of any kind regardless of the number of players participating in the workout.

6. Each onsite visit/workout may not exceed one hour in length.

7. No player protective gear may be used. Protective gear includes, but is not limited to, helmets, shoulder pads, rib pads or thigh/knee pads.

8. THUD or live contact with another student-athlete is not allowed at any time. The only football-specific equipment that may be in use are blocking/tackling dummies, blocking/tackling sleds or hand-shields.

A high school coach that violates any part of these guidelines will receive an automatic two-game suspension, such suspension to be served during the first two regular season games during the immediate next season.

This proposal was also created because NJSIAA believes that the high school football coach is the best advocate and most knowledgeable resource to promote a prospective student-athlete’s best interest, rather than a third-party/private individual. Also, not all students have the money for showcase camps and due to the nature of the football season and only game per week, there’s limited games for exposure so this six-week period is important for those aspiring to play in college. Ms. Bilda asked if there will be documentation required to be filled out by the coach administering the evaluation. A log was suggested by the NJFCA but Ms. Maguire doesn’t think it’s necessary and feels administrators have enough paperwork to file without adding another form to submit. A motion was made by Robert Grauso, seconded by Rob Haraka, to approve the new Football Opening Recruiting Period Guidelines, as outlined above. Motion passed first reading with one abstention.

Spring Opening Dates – 1st Reading – A motion was made by Mohammed Abdelaziz, seconded by Bill Vacca, to change the regular season opening date to April 8th for the 2020-2021 school year and beyond, for baseball, softball, boys’ tennis and boys’ volleyball.

In March 2018, legislation was submitted to move the start of the Spring season back by one week for baseball, softball, boys’ tennis and boys’ volleyball. The start date for all other Spring sports moved from the first Friday in March to the Monday preceding the second Friday in March. The new start dates will take effect for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result of the change in start date for baseball, softball, boys’ tennis and boys’ volleyball, the proposal also intended to move the regular season opening date from April 1st to April 8th so that the length
of the preseason is the same. The April 8th date was discussed at the Advisory Committee meeting and during all Sectional meeting presentations, however, due to an administrative mistake, the ballot for the December 2018 Annual Business Meeting did not include the April 8th regular season opening date. With that background, the Spring Sports Calendar Proposal Committee respectfully requests the April 8th regular season opening date for the 2020-2021 school year and beyond for baseball, softball, boys' tennis and boys' volleyball.

The hope is that the NJSIAA Sports Committees will push back their state tournament one week as well, so the season is not shortened by one week. Discussion about the proposal ensued. Some comments/concerns were as follows: 1-There’s so much going on in spring already with proms, senior trips, spring holidays, weather, and even graduation at tail end of season – it’s hard enough to get the games in so shortening the season by a week will make it more difficult to get games in; 2-Pushing opening day until a week later gives a bigger break between seasons and due to weather, makes sense. It was also always the original intent of the proposal as understood by all and only wasn’t included on the ballot due to a clerical error (though it cannot be assumed that the proposal would still have passed if it included the opening day date change); 3- Concerns were expressed that NJSIAA will not push back the tournaments or drop the amount of required games therefore crunching the season even more. Mr. Maselli explained that in baseball, 26 is not the number of games that must be played. That’s a choice by the school. Only 15 games are needed to qualify. 4-It was expressed that on 4/1 there is a good weather, so opening day shouldn’t move to a week later. This was rebutted by a comment that asked why start the spring season so early in March when it’s 30 degrees and it’s much nicer out later in the season? This proposal addresses the weather discrepancy and makes more sense. One former LAX coach Executive Committee member expressed that when he coached, there were many years they couldn’t even get on the field early in the season, due to weather. Mr. Goodell called a question.

Final Vote: Yes-25; No-8; Abstain-1. Motion passed first reading.

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**Old Business** – None.

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**Report of Counsel – Steven P. Goodell, Esq. / Closed Session**

A motion was made by Maureen Bilda, seconded by Greg Bailey to enter closed session at 12:55 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

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**Adjournment** – A motion was made by Maureen Bilda, seconded by Mohammed Abdelaziz, to return to open session and adjourn the meeting at 1:01 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry L. White  
Executive Director

LLW: In