EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
May 6, 2015

Flag Salute

Roll Call / Introduction of Press

The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, May 6, 2015, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Thomas Coleman, at 11:01 am.

The following members were present: Robert Abatemarco, Gregory Bailey, John Bulina, Earl Clymer, Paul Crupi, William DePonte, Dr. Richard DiBianca, Thomas DiGanci, Bill Edelman, Dianne Furusawa, Michael Gatley, Richard Giglio, Abdul Hassan, Monsignor Kelly, Chuck Klaus, Howard Krieger, Dr. James Lavender, Joe Lennon, Michael Matyas, Elaine McGrath, Rona McNabola, Patrick Murphy, Susan Murphy, Michael Nitti, William Quirk, Dr. Charles Shaddow, Rod Sharpless, Steve Shohfi, Vincent Smith, Beverly Torok, Todd VanOrden, Barbara Wallace, Scott Wohlrab, and Stephen Yesinko. Also present: Steven J. Timko, Executive Director; Kim Cole, Larry White, Don Danser and Jack DuBois, Assistant Directors; Colleen Maguire, Director of Finance; Steven P. Goodell, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Mike McGarry, A.C. Press; Matt Stanmyre, NJ Advance Media; Phil Anastasia, Philadelphia Inquirer; Greg Schutta, The Record and Steven Falk, Asbury Park Press. Also present: Paul Anzano of Pringle, Quinn, Anzano, P.C; James Santana, Principal at Northern Valley Regional at Demarest; Michael Hughes, Asst Superintendent of North Hunterdon School District; Michael Zapicchi, Principal at West Windsor-Plainsboro North HS; and Sharon Hughes & Denis Nelson, Executive Director and Past Executive Director of the Big North Conference.

Approval of Minutes
A motion was made by Rona McNabola, seconded by Earl Clymer, to accept the minutes of the April 1, 2015 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 – Steven J. Timko

Legislative Update (Paul Anzano) – Governor Codey’s steroid bill will be voted on by the Senate, and then given to Governor Christie to sign or veto. This bill does appropriate an extra $45,000 to NJSIAA in funding for additional steroid testing.

On May 7th, there is a Senate Education Hearing that will consider a bill that proposes NJSIAA sponsor cheerleading. The bill is troubling because never before has a sport been mandated by government and there is a process for the membership should they want changes such as this.

Advisory Committee Proposed Legislation for 2015-2016 – Michael Hughes, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee and Asst Superintendent of the North Hunterdon School District, reported
that the following five proposals were approved by the Advisory Committee on 4/1/15 for consideration by the Executive Committee. If approved, each piece of legislation will be discussed at sectional meetings in the fall, and placed on the ballot at the annual meeting in December.

a. **Northern Valley Regional HS proposed to create four non-public districts and one non-public region in wrestling.** There were slight changes made to the original proposal emailed out to everyone and a revised proposal was emailed out. A motion was made by Bill Edelman, seconded by Abdul Hassan, to endorse Northern Valley’s Regional HS’s revised proposal to create four non-public districts and one non-public region in wrestling. Dr. DiBianca questioned whether this proposal will yield the best athletes in the individual tournament vs. the current structure. James Santana spoke on behalf of the proposal. He feels that adding a Region 9 does not prevent the best wrestlers from getting to Atlantic City, just may limit the amount. In the past six years, an average 56 non-public wrestlers qualified for the individual tournament in Atlantic City, with a rising trend each year. Mr. Santana feels four is the average number of qualifiers so a stellar wrestler will not be precluded from the tournament and if the proposal passes by the Executive Committee, it can be further amended to increase the amount of non-public wrestlers that can qualify.

Monsignor Kelly made a presentation in opposition to the proposal. First, he questioned the legality of the proposal since in 2009, Commissioner Davy denied a similar proposal. Steven Goodell explained that this proposal is slightly different and since then, things have evolved and changed so the Commissioner decision could be different this time if there is evidence why the change is needed. Mike Gatley added this proposal has a plan; the other proposal did not.

Second, over past sixteen years, there were always more public school finalists than non-public finalists, until this past year.

Third, this creation of non-public wrestling districts and region would force upon non-public schools tremendous amount of travel since schools are widespread. In Monsignor Kelly’s example for his school, he is currently in a region where all schools are within a 7-mile radius of the District 10 championship site and a 12-mile radius from the Region 3 championship event. Having the non-public school regions in Toms River, the proposed regional championships site, would force many schools to have overnight travel, on multiple days and increased costs in a day and age where schools are trying to cut back costs. Mr. Santana acknowledged this burden and suggested making the tournament a two-day tournament? There would still be an overnight stay but it would be reduced by one day.

Monsignor Kelly also questioned the following:

1- Why are choice schools, tech schools, magnet schools, tuition accepting schools, and schools with programs for special needs students not addressed in this proposal and it only applies to non-public schools? Mr. Santana explained that he does not feel those type of schools pose a significant impact on medal acquisition with the exception of one school.
2- It states that this proposal puts wrestling in line with other individual sports like track, which is not true. Although track separates non-publics from publics before the TOC, it also separates non-publics by size, as well as separating public schools by size. In this proposal, non-publics would get a limited 14% of allotted sports for the ultimate State Tournament, while in track the non-publics get 33% of the slots in the TOC.

3- In reference to “this proposal solves obvious problems,” Monsignor Kelly expressed that currently the three big non-public schools dominate Region 2. In Region 4, the numbers seem to show a similar trend as well. However, this proposal doesn’t solve the many inequities throughout the state, and actually compounds some. Region 5 currently has 41 teams, with 1 being non-public, and 0 state qualifiers this past year. Region 2 has 35 teams, with 4 non-publics that had 26 state qualifiers. This proposal provides a tremendous amount of relief to Region 2, and little to no relief to Region 5, which has a greater percentage of large schools.

4- In reference to “This will not affect the quality of the wrestling tournament” – this proposes that we add 56 more wrestlers to the state tournament. However, going on this past year’s data, 20 non-public qualifiers would be left home. Therefore we are creating 76 slots for Public school athletes, while removing 20 from non-publics (wrestlers who previously earned spots in the tournament). Mr. Santana addressed this earlier with Dr. DiBianca and this can be addressed and changed before or during the sectional meetings if the proposal passes. The intent is not to water down the tournament, just address the significant divide.

5- Last, in reference to “Just slide the non-public state place winners into brackets”. Although 24 isn’t a great number for a state tournament bracket, it is clean in the sense that the Region champions get byes. By bringing in four new wrestlers from a “Region” with a very different makeup than the others, we are presented with many new issues. Is 2nd place in the non-public states equal to 2nd place in a region? How do we handle 4th place in the non-public states? A simple system now becomes much more complicated.

Members debated the proposal. It was suggested to take the top non-public wrestling schools and spread them among the regions. Region presidents don’t support that option and want separation. It was also suggested that NJISAA have a committee to work through concerns. It was expressed that from feedback across the state, there are major issues so the solution should be debated and left to the general membership to decide the outcome. Tom Coleman asked if there was data that would show how a wrestler would have fared if he stayed in his public school instead of competing for a non-public school? That data is hard to obtain due to student confidentiality but it is known in Region 2, eight wrestlers were from outside of the region and two were from one school. Dr. DiBianca questioned whether any other recommendations were considered, such as in the singles and doubles tennis tournament, where brackets don’t rely on geography or size, only ability.

Final Vote: Yes-22; No-10; Abstain -2. Motion passed.

b. A motion was made by Greg Bailey, seconded by Dr. Lavender, to endorse the Big North Conference proposal to start the fall season earlier. In
2016, practice in football can begin 8/10/16 with opening day on 9/1/16; all other sports will open up 8/15/2016 with opening day on 9/8/16. A schedule for proposed early fall opening dates up until 2020 was distributed. Kim Cole questioned where tennis stands in this because it usually opens up earlier than other fall sports. Mr. Nelson did not address tennis with the proposal but is not opposed to having tennis start on Tuesday, 9/6/16 and will change this for review at sectional meetings if the proposal is endorsed.

Final Vote: Yes-29; No-5.  Motion passed.

c. A motion was made by Abdul Hassan, seconded by Steve Shohfi, to endorse the Pascack Valley HS proposal that schools can begin winter practices/tryouts the Monday – Wednesday before Thanksgiving, followed by a blackout period from Thanksgiving Day to Sunday. Those three practices will not count towards the six needed for a first scrimmage. If passed, this would go in to effect for the 2016-2017 winter season. There were questions about expectations of football players, which Ms. Cole clarified. An athlete cannot play two sports so they must complete their football season before practicing winter sports. Steve Shohfi shared that his district chose not to start early, and this did not cause a disadvantage. Rod Sharpless feels the optional date caused division among his conference. In the TCC, there was big debate about whether to follow conference or state rules. The answer is conferences can follow their own rules as long as theirs are stricter than NJSIAA’s rules. If the conference wanted to adhere to a later uniform date, that’s ok, an earlier date would not be permissible.

Final Vote: Yes-27; No-4; Abstain-1.  Motion passed.

d. A motion was made by Todd VanOrden, seconded by Michael Gatley, to endorse the Public/Non-Public Committee recommendation to create a non-public football conference. Bob Abatemarco questioned the process if a school wants to opt out of the non-public football conference. The answer is the school must request release from the newly formed conference and receive permission to withdraw.

Mr. Abatemarco expressed that his school enjoys being part of the Shore Conference, which is local. Now his school will be forced to play games across the state. Also, this proposal will hurt freshmen and JV programs. If a JV athlete plays Friday, they will not be able to play Saturday, which will hurt programs. Monsignor Kelly seconded both these concerns. In the Shore Conference there were issues at one time so the Conference addressed it and now there are restrictions on non-public schools. They cannot accept students from outside a pre-determined geographic region. Mr. Abatemarco feels this new solution is too radical and puts the majority in jeopardy so maybe the committee should evaluate what the Shore does to help solve the problem. Michael Zapicchi, chair of the Public/Non-Public Committee, thinks travel will increase a little but may not be that bad since the divisions have not yet been made.

Some people expressed this was not a statewide issue but rather a North Jersey issue but Mr. Zapicchi disagreed as did Michael Gatley, President of the Cape Atlantic League. Mr. Zapicchi also expressed he hears often that most non-public
schools do the right thing, but this proposal is more about non-public schools having a wider geographic range.

Patrick Murphy is concerned that if this passes, it’ll lead to division in more sports.

Final Vote: Yes-24; No-7; Abstain-2. Motion passed.

e. A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Mike Gatley, to endorse the proposal to amend the Transfer Rule as recommended by the Public/Non-Public Committee. Discussion ensued.

1- Mr. Zapicchi reiterated the reason the committee changed the concept of the transfer rule, moving away from the change of bonafide address rule to the concept of “open” and “closed” enrollment schools. The committee also wanted to improve the transfer form so it requires more proof that a transfer is not for athletic advantage.

2- Mr. Zapicchi also explained the new rule does not allow for appeals. Some think this will be challenged in court, but Mr. Zapicchi explained athletes are not being denied total participation, just limited participation at the varsity level.

3- Some expressed that it may be perceived as punishment for moving and others unsure if this is the best rule for kids, especially if a parent loses a job and cannot afford private school anymore or a student is not a star athlete. Mr. Nitti expressed opposition since he feels playing sports is such a valuable experience and this prevents some from having that opportunity, especially an athlete who plays and then has to sit out during playoffs. Mr. Zapicchi explained again that the rule would limit athletes but does not preclude them from playing interscholastic sports.

4- How the transfer rule should apply to students of faculty has not yet been decided. It is pending further research.

5- Scott Wohlrab expressed that in harder economic times, it makes a bad situation worse for the student. First having to transfer, then not being able to play, but Mr. Zapicchi reiterated they would be able to play; just limited.

6- Non-varsity players can still play JV without sitting. They just sit 30 days from Varsity, BUT CAN play in the state tournament. Larry White shared that 65-70% of transfers are non-varsity players.

7- Michael Gatley reminded everyone that NJ has the most liberal policy in the country. 26 states have a one-year sit; 14 have no appeals. NJ needs something stricter.

Final Vote: Yes-25; No-7. Motion passed.

Discussion then took place as to whether to approve this through the Executive Committee in two readings so that it can be effective July 1, 2015 or let the membership vote on it, for it to effective July 1, 2016. The Public/Non-Public Committee recommends that the Executive Committee approve it so it goes into effect sooner. Michael Nitti expressed that something so significant should go to the membership, especially since in the past the membership was upset when the Executive Committee voted on certain pieces of legislation. Paul Crupi supported this idea. Also, there may be more credibility in court if the full membership supports it as well. William Quirk felt it was unfair to enact so soon
since some athletes have already made decisions about next year without knowledge of this amended rule. Michael Gatley also felt it wasn’t prudent to move so fast, especially since some type schools (charter and tech) have not been addressed yet. A motion was made by Joe Lennon, seconded by Elaine McGrath, to introduce this as the Executive Committee’s own legislation, and have a final reading in June to enact July 1, 2015.

Final Vote: Yes-6; No-24; Abstain -1. The motion did not pass so the proposal will instead move on to the general membership at the December 2015 annual meeting.

2015/2016 List of Banned Substances – A motion to approve the new banned substances list for 2015/2016, which was preapproved by the NJSIAA Medical Advisory Committee, was made by William DePonte, seconded by Howard Kreiger. Motion carried unanimously.

NFHS Legal Meeting – Mr. Goodell attended the NFHS Legal Meeting in Indianapolis. Many states share the same issues as New Jersey, such as public/non-public issues, eligibility, legislators, etc. It was a helpful forum to share issues and solutions.

NFHS Medical Advisory Committee – Mr. Timko attended his last NFHS Medical Advisory meeting. Topics discussed were as follows:

1. Helmets for Girls Lacrosse
2. Baseball Pitch Count
3. Softball 1st & 3rd Base Helmets
4. Ice Hockey and Football Reconditioned Helmets
5. The head of NOCSAE was present. If caps or crowns are added to a helmet, that changes the warranty of the helmet and it will no longer be certified.

2015-2016 Resolution Cards and Affidavits – These have already been mailed. Bill Quirk asked if a school does not participate in tournaments, do they still need to fill out and return? No, they do not.

Nomination of Officers – 1st Reading – On behalf of the nominating committee, Rod Sharpless recommended the following slate of officers preside next year:

President - Greg Bailey, Football/Basketball Assignor & School Boards Assoc. representative
1st VP – Elaine McGrath, Athletic Director at South Brunswick HS
2nd VP – Chuck Klaus, Principal at Haddonfield Memorial HS

A motion was made by Monsignor Kelly, seconded by Earl Clymer, to approve the recommended officers for the 2015-2016 Executive Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

2015-2016 Executive Committee Meeting Dates – 1st Reading – Proposed meeting dates for next year were distributed. A motion was made by Bill Edelman, seconded by William DePonte, to approve the meeting dates for 2015-2016. Motion carried unanimously.
Assistant Directors Reports

Donald Danser

Outdoor Track – Mr. Danser thanked all the schools that host sectionals, including three new sites – Bernards HS, Central Regional HS and Northern Burlington HS. Rosters are still missing.

Cooperative Sports Program Approvals - A motion was made by Monsignor Kelly, seconded by William DePonte, to approve the below listing of cooperative sports program requests. Motion passed unanimously.

Audubon HS / Collingswood HS - Co-Ed Swimming
Benedictine Academy / St. Marys of the Assumption - Girls Volleyball
Girls Soccer
Girls Lacrosse

Edison HS / JP Stevens HS - Ice Hockey

Gateway Regional HS / Woodbury HS - B/G Cross Country
B/G Swimming
Wrestling

Glassboro HS / Clayton HS - B/G Tennis

Jonathan Dayton HS / David Brearley HS - Gymnastics
Co-ed Swimming
Ice Hockey

Leonia HS / Palisades Park HS - Girls Soccer
B/G Swimming
Wrestling

Lyndhurst HS / North Arlington HS - B/G Swimming
Wrestling

Middlesex HS / Dunellen HS - Wrestling

New Milford HS / Dumont HS - B/G Swimming

NV Old Tappan HS / NV Demarest HS - Ice Hockey

Palisades Park HS / Leonia HS - Football

Paramus HS / Lyndhurst HS - Ice Hockey

Park Ridge HS / Emerson HS - B/G Cross Country
Wrestling
B/G Golf
B/G Lacrosse

Paul VI HS / Camden Catholic HS - Ice Hockey
River Dell Regional HS / Westwood HS - Ice Hockey
B/G Swimming

Waldwick HS / Midland Park HS - Football
Wrestling

West Essex Regional HS / James Caldwell HS - Ice Hockey

Special Note - After 18 years of service, Don Danser announced that he will retire in December 2015. Steve Timko expressed gratitude for all Don has done for the association.

Larry White

**Baseball** – Cutoff is 5/8. Seeding is 5/14. Tournament sites and dates were distributed. Mr. White is still waiting on some contracts for a few state public semifinals; NP sectional finals sites and will post when confirmations are final.

**Men’s Volleyball** – Cutoff is 5/12. Seeding will be 5/16.

Jack DuBois

**Clinics** – The wrestling clinic will take place on 5/8 at Princeton University’s Jadwin Gym. On 5/13, Atlantic Sports Health is co-sponsoring an athletic trainer’s workshop at Morristown Medical Center.

**Scholar Athlete Program** - 325 scholar athletes will be honored and 1330 are registered to attend this program, which takes place on 5/17 at the Pines Manor in Edison. $161,500 in scholarships (a $12,000 increase from last year) is being awarded through 199 scholarships.

**Men’s Lacrosse** – Seeding takes place 5/11. The group finals will take place on 5/27 at Ridge HS, Livingston HS and Hopewell Valley HS (which is replacing Somerville HS.) The quarterfinals will be in Bridgewater and the semis and finals will be played at Kean University.

**Ice Hockey** – The ice hockey committee recommended two changes. First, they want the number of public at-large schools allowed in the tournament increased. Presently there are three bids for public schools and two for non-public schools. The committee increased the amount for public schools to 3 bids per division (Public A and Public B) so six in total. The amount for non-public will remain the same at two. These spots do not have to be filled.

Second, the committee also recommended that to participate in post-season play, a player must play in 50% of the regular interscholastic season. Several players had not been seen all year, prior to the final. This rule is already in place for swimming. A motion was made by Monsignor Kelly, seconded by Bill Edelman, to require ice hockey players to play in 50% of the regular interscholastic season in order to participate in post season play. First reading passed unanimously. Second reading will be scheduled for the September meeting.
Men’s Tennis – Seeding for the team tournament took place on 5/4. 249 teams will compete in the team tournament. The Singles and Doubles Tennis Tournament seeding was conducted with seeding to 32 for the Singles and 16 for the doubles teams.

Women’s Lacrosse - Women’s Lacrosse seeding takes place 5/11 using LAX power. Cutoff is 5/8. All sites are set.

Softball – Power points for the first 15 games as of the cutoff of 5/9. No ties. Seeding is 5/12. Not all of the semi-finals sites are set because the committee wants double headers at college venues, which has been a challenge.

Website – Tournament Refusal Forms are now interactive. Athletic Directors are finding this process easier though it’s a change in culture.

Finance Report

April 2015 Checkbook – A motion was made by Joe Lennon, seconded by William DePonte, to accept the April check register, which was approved by the finance committee as well as our monthly approvals according to policy. All in Favor, No Opposed, No Abstentions. Motion carried.

2015-2016 Budget – The budget was reviewed in the Finance Committee meeting and was distributed to all in attendance. For those not present, a copy will be mailed. Please call or email Colleen Maguire with any questions before the vote in June.

Winter 2015 Championships Financial Report – NJSIAA earned $50,000 less than projected, but this is due to certain staff members’ hours not allocated in the budget and gate receipts were down because of rough weather conditions this winter.

Receivables Past 90 Days – There is an outstanding balance of $3,000 between twenty schools, though ten of those schools have submitted a PO. To be eligible for spring tournaments (tennis not included), the deadline for payment is the morning of 5/11. Anne Marie Walters has been working with schools to try to secure payment so no one is excluded from tournament play due to outstanding monies.

Spring Ticket Prices – The Department of Education approved NJSIAA’s spring ticket price requests.

New Trophies/Awards Provider – Effective 7/1/15, Spikes Trophy will replace Blue Ribbon as NJSIAA’s awards vendor. This will save $50,000. In addition to cost savings, this new vendor will allow NJSIAA to offer mini replicas of team trophies that individuals/booster clubs can purchase.

Program Review

On behalf of the Program Review Committee, Beverly Torok shared the following proposals:
Swimming Start Date – 1st Reading - The Program Review Committee unanimously approved (5-0) the Swim Committee’s recommendation to mirror ice hockey and permanently change the start dates for practice and competition. It was proposed to begin practice every year on November 9th and the regular season on the last Saturday of November (November 28 in 2015). Most schools do not have pools and securing one 5-6 days is difficult so this offers more flexibility. A motion was made by Stephen Yesinko, seconded by Dianne Furusawa, to approve the Swim Committee’s recommendation to begin practice every year on November 9th and open up the regular season on the last Saturday of November. Motion passed first reading unanimously.

Women’s Volleyball Power Points – 1st Reading - The Program Review Committee unanimously approved (5-0) the Women’s Volleyball Committee recommendation to go back to the RPI method of seeding the tournament instead of using the power point structure that was used as a one-year trial this past 2014 season. There was negative feedback using power points since some teams were knocked out early and it was felt that using RPI is the best system for seeding. The men’s committee never went to power points. A motion was made by Beverly Torok, seconded by Stephen Yesinko, to return to the RPI method of seeding the women’s volleyball tournament. Motion passed first reading with one abstention (Monsignor Kelly.)

Report of Counsel – Steven P. Goodell – After the Superior Court of NJ, Appellate Division ruled in favor of NJSIAA and upheld the decision of the Executive Committee to direct the North Bergen High School football team to forfeit the 2011 North Jersey, Section 1, Group IV, State Football Championship title, North Bergen HS has filed a petition for certification with the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has discretion whether to hear the case. A copy of the decision from the Appellate Division was distributed.

Old Business / New Business

1. Extension of Early Winter Start Date for Additional One-Year Period – 2nd Reading & Vote - A motion as made by Dianne Furusawa, seconded by William DePonte, to extend the waiver granted this past year, to change the winter season start date for one more year so that all athletic teams that currently begin their season on the Monday following Thanksgiving weekend (November 30) can begin on the Monday prior to Thanksgiving (November 23 – 25, 2015) with a shutdown period from Thanksgiving Day until Monday, November 30th, when practices may resume again. The three days of practice prior to Thanksgiving will not be permitted to count as part of the six days needed before scrimmages may occur. The Monday after Thanksgiving will start as Day 1 of the pre-season count. Motion carried with two oppositions and one abstention.

2. NJIC / Mary Help of Christians Academy Bowling Waiver Request & Vote – For the past several years, Mary Help of Christian has been in a bowling conference with only male teams so they asked for a waiver to play against their male counterparts in the conference. A motion was made by Stephen Yesinko, seconded by Abdul Hassan, to allow Mary Help of Christian's women's bowling team to participate against male teams in their conference for the next schedule cycle. Motion carried with one abstention (McNabola.)

3. Raritan Bay Catholic 70% In-State Competition Rule Football Waiver Request & Vote – In order to resurrect its football program, a motion was made by Pat Murphy, seconded
by Paul Crupi, to waive the 70% in-state competition rule in football for one year for Raritan Bay Catholic (formerly Cardinal McCarrick HS.) They submitted a full fall schedule and found four teams to play of comparable size out of state. Motion carried with one abstention.

Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion was made for adjournment by Paul Crupi, seconded by Rona McNabola. Meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven J. Timko
Executive Director

SJT:In