Flag Salute

Roll Call / Introduction of Press
The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Vincent Smith, at 11:25 am.

The following members were present: Maureen Bilda, Joseph Bollendorf, Dr. Brian Brotschul, Kevin Carty, Jr., Joanne Dzama, James Gaffney, Edward Grande, Robert Grauso, Robert Haraka, Jack Hurley, Mary Liz Ivins, Chuck Klaus, Howard Krieger, Timothy McElhinney, Elaine McGrath, Dominick Milella, Tony Mitchell, Thomas Mullahay, Michael Pellegino, Paul Popadiuk, Senator Paul Sarlo, Philip Schaffer, Steve Shohfi, Daniel Sinclair, Beverly Torok, Bill Vacca, Paul Vizzuso, and Dr. Brian Zychowski. Also present: Larry White, Executive Director; Kim Cole, Jack DuBois, Bill Bruno, Al Stumpf and Tony Maselli, Assistant Directors; Colleen Maguire, Director of Finance; Michael Zapicchi, Project Manager; Daniel Davidow, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Phil Anastasia, Philadelphia Inquirer; Mike McGarry, AC Press; and Matt Stanmyre and JJ Conrad, nj.com. Also present: Paul Anzano of Pringle, Quinn, Anzano, P.C.; Craig Sashihara, Assistant Attorney General & Counsel to NJ Cares; Dr. Jack Kripsak, Medical Advisory Committee Chairman; Dave Csillan, Ewing HS Trainer and Medical Advisory Committee Member; Terry O’Neil, Founder of Practice Like Pros.

Approval of Minutes
A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Maureen Bilda, to accept the minutes of the January 9, 2019 Executive Committee meeting. Motion carried with one abstention (Chuck Klaus).

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 L. White

Legislative Update (Paul Anzano) – Assemblyman Wimberley’s sensitivity and cultural training bill is actively engaged. The NJSIAA is in support of the bill and will be responsible for checking to make sure coaches complete the training. The Governor will present his budget on March 5th. The money allotted annually for NJSIAA steroid testing is expected to be included, but Mr. Anzano will work with Senator Sarlo to monitor for this. The legislature has been happy with how NJSIAA handled the Buena wrestling situation.

Opioids Video (Craig Sashihara, Assistant Attorney General & Counsel to NJ Cares) – A task force has been created to develop programs to address the opioids epidemic. The committee is made up of two independent pharmacy owners, county coalition agents, NJ Cares, NJSIAA and Success Communications (NJSIAA’s PR firm.) Mr. Sashihara, lawyer for the Attorney General’s office (an office which is comprised of dozens of agencies and has daily contact with the opioids epidemic), briefed the committee on sobering stats including that in 2017, more Americans died of an overdose than the entire Vietnam War. Since death is preventable, Mr. Sashihara feels
that we can reverse the odds. The Division of Consumer Affairs goes after doctors who overprescribe. There are now centralized databases that prescribers and pharmacists can use to check a patient’s history before prescribing.

The Attorney General’s Office created NJ Cares, which serves as a home base of coordinated efforts for targeted response. Polices are being made, directed by data. Led by Sharon Joyce, there are a bunch of new initiatives including a website, which contains county by county opioids statistics, quarterly reports generating how many prescriptions are written, and data about suspected overdoses that saw Narcan administered (there were 3,118 in 2018).

A survey conducted found HS athletes are the most at-risk, after a sports-related injury. The areas of a teen brain are not fully developed so taking drugs may disrupt the synapses and lead to problems later on. The key component is education. If a person views pain medication as harmful, they may be more hesitant to take too much. Addiction can happen after five days of use. Since pills are expensive, people turn to cheaper and more readily available alternatives such as heroin. The use of heroin spiked in 2010. Heroin is often cut with fentanyl, a highly addictive chemical, more powerful than morphine. 50% of overdoses can be contributed to fentanyl and 60% of heroin is now laced with it.

The goal is to create a 10-minute long video, long enough to have information but short enough to grab attention. This would supplement the content provided by the Department of Education, not replace it. A motion to approve a joint venture between the NJSIAA and NJ Cares to create an opioids awareness video accompanied by a parent/student sign-off sheet, was made by Maureen Bilda, seconded by Joseph Bollendorf. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Haraka asked when this initiative would go into effect. Mr. White hopes in early April but can’t guarantee it because he’s unsure how long production time will take. Mr. Bollendorf asked if the video will be web-based. According to Mr. White, it will be.

Heat Policy Presentation (Dr. Jack Kripsak and Dave Csillan) – A new heat policy was presented and approved unanimously by the Program Review Committee. The new policy would require the use of a Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer (WBGT) at practice(s) and games/contests. The WBGT measures relative humidity, radiation from the sun and wind speed, and measures evaporation of sweat. The instrument is easy to use – you just press a button and seconds later get a reading with recommendations. Though using the physical thermometer is the ideal practice, there is a WBGT chart that can be used if a school’s budget doesn’t allow for buying one. The concern originally was that using this instrument would lead to many cancelled games. In the past three years, there have only been six black flag days (3 in July, 2 in August and 1 in September). By mid-September, the likelihood of a black flag day is rare. Another viewpoint is this type cancellation/reschedule is no different than a lightning or snow event.

Since 2011, there were 18 direct heat-related deaths, but none took place in a state that utilizes heat acclimatization. Dr. Kripsak explained that the goal is not to cancel games but modify them like done for lightning. Last year, during the lacrosse championship game, a WBGT was used and a time out was added, the game wasn’t cancelled. Officials are beginning to become familiar with the thermometer. At a football game, one of the officials asked Mr. Csillan for a reading on a questionable day. This is recommended practice by the NFHS, National Trainers Association, and the Corey Stinger Institute and utilized by organizations such as the NYC Marathon and US Tennis. A motion was made by Bill Vacca, seconded by Elaine McGrath, to utilize a Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer and approve the new heat policy. Motion passed unanimously.
Wrestling New Ultrasound Measuring Device – 1st Reading – Tinatia scales are breaking down and there’s been problems getting weight certifications. Dr. Kripsak reached out to other associations for new viable options and talked to Mike Moyer. This past October, a validation study came out which supported two In-Body devices, similar to the Tanita Scale. Then in November 2018, the ultrasound measuring device was validated. After analyzing all options, the Medical Advisory Committee recommends using the ultrasound tool to determine body fat in wrestlers. It is a handheld device that hooks up to a laptop and is more sensitive and accurate than the scales. New In-Body scales cost $1800. New Tanita scales cost $1500. This ultrasound device, though originally $1,295, Dr. Kripsak worked out a deal for the next six to nine months so the cost would only be $895. Arkansas and Kansas use this and the device will become more common. If approved, next year will be a grace year. Schools can use either the Tanita Scale or the ultrasound device, but the discount price for the ultrasound device is only for next six to nine months.

Mr. Bollendorf asked if training is needed. Answer - yes. Dr. Franks and Dr. Monaco will establish educational programs and it was recommended to have two master testers for each district. There will also be an online instructional video made. Mr. Bollendorf likes the grace period, because it allows schools time to budget for the new tool. Mr. Pellegrino asked if schools still need a scale to certify and the answer is yes so that is another cost but Dr. Kripsak shared that the ultrasound is the best technology for measuring body fat. You could lose a lot of weight, but if you lose lean body mass, you’ll be weaker. Dr. Kripsak is from Bridgewater, and there, a wrestler begins a weight plan in September, so they have four months to lose weight in a healthy manner. The goal is to encourage year-long health. Mr. Mullahey expressed concern that this new tool doesn’t replace the scale, so a scale is still needed. Dr. Kripsak said that’s correct but schools just need a certified scale from within the school district. Every district should have a functioning scale so that’s not a new cost. A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Maureen Bilda, to mandate using an ultrasound measuring device for wrestling weight certification for the 2020/2021 wrestling season with a grace period for the 2019/2020 wrestling season. Mr. Pellegrino asked if the company Dr. Kripsak contacted is the only company that offers the ultrasound device. Mr. Bruno shared that there are others out there and the association is not mandating which company a school should choose. This new rule is just mandating the technology, not the specific device. Dr. Kripsak answered that currently, this the only company that has this kind of technology/model for wrestlers. Motion carried with three abstentions.

Practice Like Pros Recommendation – 1st Reading – Supported by the NJ Football Coaches Association (NJFCA), the NJSIAA Football Rules Committee, the Football Leagues and Conferences, and the NJSIAA Medical Committee, it is recommended to go from 90 minutes in-season full contact per week in football to 15 minutes. In preseason, full contact will reduce from unlimited hours to six hours total. There is no change to the existing full contact rules in the off-season. Kevin Carty, Jr. explained that the NJFCA approved this on the rationale that practicing safety could help increase participation numbers. Tony Mitchell asked why 15 minutes is considered the appropriate amount. Mr. Carty responded that other states were moving towards 30 minutes and as an Executive Committee, they wanted to be on the edge of being one of the safest states since they’ve also seen other states go to 15 minutes maximum. Tom Mullahey asked if this topic was part of the survey sent to coaches and asked how many people were at the meeting when this was decided. Mr. Carty explained that this was not in the survey, there were 75 people who voted at the December meeting and information about the vote was sent out. Ms. Maguire added that the survey was very specific, and Mr. DuBois added that this was introduced to the Football Rules Committee and the Leagues and Conferences Committee, and all supported it. Mr. Mullahey expressed that only coaches saw this recommendation, not Athletic Directors. Steve Shohfi asked for the definition of “contact.” Answer – contact is considered tackling to the ground and does not include “thud.”
Mr. Terry O’Neil explained this process started 22 months ago. In April 2017, he was invited by the Coaches Association to a clinic at Rutgers, which he’s gone to every year since. There, they showed videos how practices at the college and NFL level are conducted. 9 other states are also discussing limiting full contact each week, so consensus is building. The coaches are familiar with this concept and are already making adjustments on their own. It may be because they see the declining numbers and the amount of injuries, then see the success of the Dartmouth program. A motion was made by Dr. Brian Zychowski, seconded by Kevin Carty Jr, to approve first reading of the Football Practice Like Pros Recommendation and go from 90 minutes in-season full contact per week to 15 minutes and reduce full contact in preseason from unlimited to six hours total. Motion carried unanimously.

Protest Committee Decision Regarding St. Peter’s Request for Waiver of the 70% Rule – The Protest Committee convened on 1/25/19 because in September 2018, an email request from St. Peter’s Prep was sent requesting a waiver of the 70% rule in wrestling. Somehow the email was never moved forward to the appropriate NJSIAA Director. A few days before seeding, Rich Hansen, St. Peter’s Prep’s Athletic Director, questioned if the waiver was ever approved. The Protest Committee, made up of Executive Committee members Vincent Smith and Michael Nitti, and Larry White, met via conference call with Mr. Hansen. After all facts were presented, the committee unanimously granted the waiver. A motion was made by Tony Mitchell, seconded by Tom Mullahey, to ratify the 1/25/19 Protest Committee meeting decision. Motion carried with one opposition (Dr. Brotschul) and no abstentions.

2019/2020 List of Banned Substances/Categories & Steroids Consent Form & Steroids Protocols – A motion was made by Maureen Bilda, seconded by Dr. Brian Brotschul, to approve the 2019/2020 List of Banned Substances/Categories, Steroids Consent Form and the Steroids Protocols. Motion carried unanimously so all three documents are approved.

Assistant Director Reports

Kim Cole

Girls Basketball – The tournament has already been seeded and kicks off on 2/25. The association is using a new system for assigning officials. Three Regional Assignors who have already begun working with the local chapters, will assign all officials for the tournament. Game times cannot be changed. There are 307 out of 320 schools participating in the tournament. Ms. Cole encourages schools to update their rosters in NJschoolsports.com. Parents become upset when their child’s name is not correct or is missing from the program.

Girls Lacrosse – LAX power no longer exists so the Girls Lacrosse Committee adopted the power point structure used in other team sports with the adaptation that group size will not be a factor in the power point process. Goal differential maxed at five goals will be used as the power point tie breaker. The first 13 games will be used for seeding. After this year, the seeding system will be re-evaluated.

Eligibility/Transfer Review – The Transfer Forms keep flowing in. Approximately 15 Transfer Forms are reviewed daily, using both the online transfer form system and the original paper format for out-of-state transfers. At this point in time, MS. Cole needs all school athletic directors to use the online transfer format for in-state transfers. The EAC heard 5 cases on 1/9/19, the Eligibility Committee reviewed 8 waiver requests on 2/5, and as of now, there are several EAC hearings scheduled for 2/27.
Jack DuBois

Football Committee Report – The committee met 1/23/19. Football updates from the meeting were distributed. Some key notes are below.

1. Double Zero Week will start on Thursday, August 29th to correspond with 2018 schedule date.

2. Full Contact Hours during official NJSIAA practice period is capped at 6 hours which include 3 scrimmages. A scrimmage counts as 1 hour of full contact. Full contact is defined as taking your opponent to the ground. One (1) thud scrimmage will also be permitted during the official practice period. A thud scrimmage does not count toward the 6 hours full contact maximum.

3. DePaul moves to Category A. Red Bank Catholic and Mater Dei move to Category B. Camden Catholic was dropped as a multiplier school for 2019 since they did not meet the minimum criteria of success against public schools in 2018.

4. Seven games will continue to count for residual points.

5. For 2019 the OSI (opponents strength index) will replace the Born Power Index and will count toward 60% of a school’s United Power Ranking (UPR). The OSI Index will be presented to the Executive Committee at the May meeting.

NFHS Football Rules Committee Meeting – Mr. DuBois attended this meeting from 1/13 – 1/15/2019. Seven rule changes were approved for the 2019-2020 season.

1. The use of a 40-second clock will be permitted. It does not have to be visible like in the NFL or NCAA.

2. Video Replay- The NFHS football rules committee approved video replay for the post season only as a State Adoption. The NJSIAA lobbied for the inclusion of video replay during the regular season; however, that request was denied. The NJSIAA has been approved by the NFHS for a second year of video replay experimentation during the 2019 regular football season.

3. Tripping a runner is now a penalty.

4. Also, now a penalty is grabbing the name plate area of the jersey of the runner, directly between the back collar and pulling the runner to the ground. That is now considered an illegal personal contact foul.

5. The penalty for illegally kicking or batting the ball was reduced from 15 to 10 yards.

6. The legal scrimmage formation has been redefined and now requires at least five offensive players on the line of scrimmage with no more than four backs.

7. The size requirements for jersey numbers through the 2023 season has been clarified. The committee also added a new requirement that effective in the 2024 season, jersey numbers must be a single solid color that clearly contrasts with the body color of the jersey.

Fencing – Some districts had to be postponed due to weather so there were two district tournaments on 1/26 and two on 1/27. The last one took place at Hackettstown HS on 2/2. The
five district champions meet in the team championship tournament. Right now, the tournament is at the quarterfinals level.

Senior All-Star Basketball Game – North/South-Boys/Girls rosters were distributed. The games will be played at Rider University on 3/16. Boys play at 12pm while the girls play at 2:30pm.

Ice Hockey – Seeding was supposed to take place on 2/12, but due to weather was postponed to 2/14.

Kearny Bank Courage Award – Kearny Bank is giving out a $2,500 scholarship to an athlete who has endured significant injury and recovered from it. The application is online. The scholarship will be presented at NJSIAA’s annual scholar athlete program. As of this date, three applications have been received.

Approval of Cooperative Sports Programs – A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Rob Haraka, to approve a one-year renewal of the following cooperative sports agreements:

a. David Brearley HS / Jonathan Dayton HS – Wrestling
b. Jonathan Dayton HS / David Brearley HS – Gymnastics, Co-Ed Swimming
c. Jonathan Dayton HS / David Brearley HS / Union HS – Ice Hockey

Motion carried unanimously.

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Al Stumpf

Boys Basketball Update – As Ms. Cole noted previously, there will be only three regional assignors to assign officials for the whole tournament. Athletic Directors will receive contact information about this later in the week.

Boys Bowling – The team championships were moved to 2/14. Sectional championships results were distributed. The individual boys championships will take place at Bowlero on Friday, 2/15 at 9am.

Unified Sports Update –

Unified Bowling – Somerville HS and Union City HS will be competing in the Group A State Championship and Franklin HS and Moorestown HS will be competing for the Group B State Championship at Bowlero on 2/15 at 9am.

Basketball – The amount of schools participating has increased from 3 teams last year to 18 teams this year. The regional qualifiers will be held on 2/23. The South site is Moorestown HS and the North site is West Morris Central HS. The Group Championship rounds will be at Hunterdon Central HS on 3/2 (There’s two divisions – A & B Division). Winners of each division will play each other on 3/17 at Rutgers at the Tournament of Champions finals.

NAGWS Program – This event took place on 2/3 at Seton Hall University. 196 female high school seniors were honored along with Executive Committee member Elaine McGrath and Hunterdon Central HS coach and field hockey/lacrosse official, Jennifer Spieker for their contributions to the advancement of women’s sports at the high school level.

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Bill Bruno

Winter Track Update – 2,190 athletes participated in the state relays while over 9,000 participated at sectionals (8,284 from public schools and 1,075 from non-public schools). Two schools had athletes that were ranked #1 in the country. The Union Catholic girl’s 4 x 800 team finished with 9.01 time and Deven Hart from Point Pleasant Boro HS ran the 3200 in 8.59 minutes, which at that time was the fastest time in the nation, and ranks as the eighth of all time in NJ history.

Boys and Girls Wrestling Update – 305 girls are competing in the first-ever girls’ regional tournament, which will be held at Red Bank Catholic HS. Mr. Bruno thanked the executive board for approving this new format. There were 126 female wrestlers involved in wrestling before this year. In one year, the amount of female wrestlers grew to 400, with 305 competing in the girls regional tournament. Mr. Bruno also distributed a listing of boys’ team champions.

NJSCA Hall of Fame – Mr. Bruno and the NJSCA HOF Committee are finalizing the Class of 2019. They narrowed down the list to 40, from 123 nominations. The final list should be finalized on 2/15.

NFHS XC/Track Rules Committee Meeting - The pole vault variable is illegal because there is not enough data to support its use. Weight can fluctuate 15 lbs therefore it is not approved. Do not let kids use it. Also, there’s talk about extending fly zones in the 4 x 100 relay to 20 yards. Mr. Bruno has been asked if schools will have to repaint their tracks. No, they can use tape marks. This is not approved yet, but the proposal is gaining momentum.

Tony Maselli

Swimming Update – The tournament is in the sectional finals round. There were some weather issues.

Girls Bowling – The team tournament completed on Monday, 2/11. Group winners were as follows:

Group 1- St. John Vianney HS
Group 2- Colts Neck HS
Group 3 - Freehold Twp HS
Group 4 - Toms River North HS.

Toms River North HS defeated Freehold Twp in the Tournament of Champions finals.

Website – Mr. Maselli has been working with a new company, but the new website will not go live until it’s perfect.

Out-of-Season Coaching Committee – There is a meeting tomorrow, 2/14 to discuss the proposals that were previously tabled. This includes summer recess period and allowing out of season contact between coaches and kids. Three pieces of legislation that were pushed forward by this committee passed in December 2018.

Officials Interpretation Meetings – The last interpretation meeting was 2/11. Mr. Maselli has been traveling all over the state to conduct these meetings, which addresses issues and reviews rule interpretations and sport specific rules with officials.
Changes to International Student Eligibility Guidelines – 2nd Reading – There are two major changes being proposed. The first addresses removing the section about “Prior to 9th grade” since NJSIAA doesn’t govern students before high school.

The second part of the guidelines being removed is the requirement that “As a part of applying for athletic eligibility for the international student, the admitting school is asked to provide a description of living conditions for the student, as described by the host family.” Since CSIET-approved agencies will now routinely check on the living conditions of the students, it would be repetitive work for an Athletic Director to also have to do this.

A motion was made by Bill Vacca, seconded by Robert Grauso, to approve the changes proposed to the international student eligibility guidelines. Motion passed second reading with one abstention (Zychowski).

Finance Update – Colleen Maguire

Final Fall Season Results – A schedule of net profit/revenue per fall sport was distributed. Net profit was under budget due primarily to football gate receipts. It was difficult to budget for football since there was such a change in structure to the tournament, when public sectional final games were shifted back to the schools. Also, the second round of games were played during the NJEA Teacher’s Convention, which hurt attendance therefore hurt ticket sales. The sectional finals being played at home schools was well received, but November snow impacted a lot of the games. MetLife attendance was also down.

Spring Classifications – Drafts were distributed and will be finalized by March 1st.

Cooperative Sports Review Committee Update – The committee met last month and created a transition memo to set rules for the first year of implementation. The detailed Year 1 transition memo was distributed to the committee, as was the enhanced application. The information will be shared at the Leagues and Conferences meeting, as well as on the forum.

Student Athlete Advisory Council Update – 45 student ambassadors and advisors from the South/Central region met on 2/10. The North group will meet on 3/3 at Rutgers. A survey for students was put out, and there were over 1,500 responses. The data from this survey served as great conversation for the ambassadors and advisors. The first question of the survey asked if most schools should take one day a week off. The NCAA demands that, so NJSIAA should too. It’s necessary to be a kid for a day. Another topic was off-season. Football players wish they could have more of a break in the off-season re: strength and conditioning. There’s pressure to do it but students would rather play and focus on the sport of that season. Statewide blackout period was also discussed and seems impractical, though the last week of June is a good time to have a break from sports. At that time, many students are focusing on finals. Another question asked was “What would you want to tell your coaches?” Many responded that there is pressure to be well rounded and many will not play in college, so they shouldn’t focus on only one sport. NJSIAA will summarize the feedback and put out an op-ed piece.
Finance Committee Update – Vincent Smith

January 2019 Check Approval - A motion was made by James Gaffney, seconded by Kevin Carty, Jr., to accept the January 2019 check register, as approved by the finance committee, as well as our monthly approvals, according to policy. Motion carried unanimously.


There is one outstanding appeal in the Appellate Division and the Juan Griles - Eastside Paterson HS case has been dismissed.

Old Business / New Business

Requests to Participate in a Double Zero-Week/Out-of-state Game for the Fall 2019 Season – 11 schools played a football game during zero-week in 2018 and wish to play the corresponding date in 2019. A request for a double zero week play date waiver (August 29,30 or 31) was submitted to Jack Dubois. A motion was made by Kevin Carty, Jr., seconded by Tom Mullahey, to allow a waiver for the following schools (Camden HS, Cedar Creek HS, Holy Spirit HS, Millville HS, Morristown-Beard School, St. Augustine Prep, St. Joseph’s Hammonton HS, Timber Creek HS, Wayne Hills HS, Wayne Valley HS and Willingboro HS) to open their football season on 00 week this 2019 season waiver (August 29,30 or 31). Rob Haraka asked if they start practice and heat acclimatization a week earlier. Answer is yes – begins one week earlier. Motion carried unanimously.

Cresskill HS Early Start Waiver Request for Football 2019 Season – A motion was made by Jack Hurley, seconded by Joanne Dzama, to allow Cresskill HS and Hasbrouck Heights HS to play their opening day football game on Thursday, 9/5/19 rather than on opening day (Friday, 9/6/19). The request is because the coaching staff are all involved with a wedding on 9/6 which was scheduled prior to the release of the 2019 football schedule. The NJIC supported this 36-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Waiver Request for Mary Help of Christians Academy Girls Bowling Team for the 2019-2020 Season – Mary Help of Christians Academy is an all-girls school that belongs to an all-male bowling league (NJIC). A motion was made by Bill Vacca, seconded by Steve Shohfi, to allow Mary Help of Christians Academy girls bowling team to compete against NJIC member schools (all boy teams) for the 2019-2020 season. This waiver has been granted for the past 6-7 years. Motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session/Adjournment - At 1:00 pm, a motion was made by Maureen Bilda, seconded by Tony Mitchell, to enter closed session. Motion carried unanimously. At 1:10 pm, a motion to come out of closed session was made by Maureen Bilda, seconded by Joseph Bollendorf. Motion carried unanimously. Then a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Joseph Bollendorf, seconded by Tony Mitchell, at 1:10 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry L. White
Executive Director

LLW: In