

The following are the preliminary minutes from the February 15, 2024, OHSAA Board of Directors Meeting. The Board is expected to officially approve them at its April 25, 2024, meeting.

## OHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES (February 15, 2024)

The Ohio High School Athletic Association Board of Directors held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at the OHSAA Office in Columbus. President Gina Franks called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance and introductions of guests in attendance.

**Board Members In Attendance:** Gina Franks, president; Jay Selgo, vice president; David Alvarado; Bo Arnett; Andy Bixler; Molly Feesler; Bill Nye; Paul Stone; Jeff Wheeler, and Glen Gillespie (ex-officio).

**Board Member Excused:** Scott Hunt (ex-officio).

**Staff Members In Attendance:** Doug Ute, executive director; Laura Vermilya, senior director of finance; directors Bob Goldring, Kristin Ronai, Beau Rugg and Tim Stried, and staff members Charles Anderson, Kate Barnett, Monroe Britton, Alexis Holderman, Keaton Jones, Claudia Markoff, Emily Mason and Ronald Sayers.

**Others In Attendance:** Incoming Board of Directors members Stephanie Evans, Matt Rodriguez, Mark Rose and Walt Skaggs; Steve Craig, OHSAA legal counsel; Joe Fraley, incoming OHSAA legal counsel; Brian Timm, Ohio general manager, Teall Properties Group; Frank Gamble, Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Association; Joe Balogh, Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association; Dugan Hill, Ohio Association of Cross Country and Track & Field Coaches; Steve Hale, Ohio High School Football Coaches Association, and Kim Metz, Ohio High School Volleyball Coaches Association (participated virtually).

### I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Jay Selgo second by Jeff Wheeler to **adopt** the agenda as amended for the February 15, 2024, Board of Directors meeting.

Motion passed 9-0.

### II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Bill Nye, second by Molly Feesler to **approve** the minutes from the January 11, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting.

Motion passed 9-0.

### III. FINANCIAL ITEMS

#### A. Miscellaneous Issues

Senior Director of Finance Laura Vermilya reported that Claudia Markoff has started her work, filling the vacant OHSAA customer service manager position. Her primary responsibility is to manage our ticket process, working closely with HomeTown Ticketing, the OHSAA’s virtual ticketing partner, and ensuring a quality purchase experience for fans.

#### B. OHSAA Financial Report Through January 31, 2024

Senior Director of Finance Laura Vermilya provided the financial report through January. The OHSAA currently has \$10.5 million of operating cash; \$9.1 million in investments and board designated funds, and \$19.7 million in total funds. The latter amount can cover 10.5 months of expenses. Ms. Vermilya said the OHSAA exceeded its expected revenues for the fall tournaments, partly due to record attendance at the state girls volleyball tournament, and that expenses were below projections. She also noted that the Athletic Enrichment Fund currently totals over \$2.4 million. The financial report is summarized as follows:

District	Checking	Savings	Board Designated	Investment	Total	Year to Date		Year to Date Net Profit/Loss
						Gross Revenue	Gross Expenses	
OHSAA Office	\$9,707,254	\$866,346	\$597,486	\$2,776,112	\$13,947,198	\$10,848,892	\$7,356,377	\$3,492,515
Central	—	—	N/A	\$910,047	\$910,047	\$358,764	\$375,827	— \$17,064
East	—	—	N/A	\$849,693	\$849,693	\$134,119	\$148,545	— \$14,427
Northeast	—	—	N/A	\$589,602	\$589,602	\$655,354	\$711,645	— \$56,291
Northwest	—	—	N/A	\$1,472,173	\$1,472,173	\$512,491	\$469,481	\$43,010
Southeast	—	—	N/A	\$713,139	\$713,139	\$172,905	\$205,341	— \$32,437
Southwest	—	—	N/A	\$1,228,139	\$1,228,139	\$556,374	\$528,672	\$27,701
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$9,707,254</b>	<b>\$866,346</b>	<b>\$597,486</b>	<b>\$8,538,905</b>	<b>\$19,709,991</b>	<b>\$13,238,899</b>	<b>\$9,795,888</b>	<b>\$3,443,007</b>

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	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Prior Month</u>	<u>Prior Year</u>
Checking	\$9,707,254	\$10,867,551	\$8,579,257
Savings	\$866,346	\$866,346	\$866,388
Concentration Account	—	—	—
<b>Total Operating Cash</b>	<b>\$10,573,600</b>	<b>\$11,733,897</b>	<b>\$9,445,644</b>
Months on Hand	5.6	6.3	5.2
Board Designated Funds	\$597,486	\$596,542	\$708,037
Investments - Morgan Stanley	<u>\$8,538,905</u>	<u>\$8,501,974</u>	<u>\$7,994,709</u>
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>\$9,136,391</b>	<b>\$9,098,516</b>	<b>\$8,702,746</b>
Months on Hand	4.9	4.9	4.8
<b>Total Cash &amp; Investments on Hand</b>	<b>\$19,709,991</b>	<b>\$20,832,413</b>	<b>\$18,148,390</b>
Months on Hand (Cash & Investments)	10.5	11.1	10.0
Athletic Enrichment Fund	\$2,492,274	\$2,082,983	—

### IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

#### A. Audit Recognition

At the January 11, 2024, OHSAA Board of Directors Meeting, the Board approved the OHSAA 2022-23 audit, and it was noted that the audit included an unmodified, clean opinion, the best that can be received, with no significant concerns. At this meeting, Board President Gina Franks, Vice President Jay Selgo and Executive Director Doug Ute recognized the OHSAA finance team, led by Senior Director of Finance Laura Vermilya, with assistance from Senior Accountant Susan Javery and Staff Accountant Greg Bossick, for their work in leading the OHSAA financial department and receiving the outstanding audit opinion. Chief Operating Officer Kim Kiehl also was part of that team prior to her retirement at the end of December.

#### B. Update on Upcoming Spring Meetings

Director Bob Goldring informed the Board that the sites and dates for the 2024 in-person OHSAA Athletic Discussion Meetings in April have been set. The OHSAA is required by the Constitution to conduct these meetings in order to explain the upcoming referendum issues, so the majority of the meetings will be spent with Director Kristin Ronai reviewing those items. The six locations are Athens, Cambridge, Clayton, Streetsboro, Tiffin and Westerville, with the Tiffin meeting in conjunction with a Northwest District Athletic Board. Registration material will be sent to the membership soon. In addition, the Executive Director's Office will be conducting an in-person meeting with the presidents of the various state coaches associations on Wednesday, April 24, at the OHSAA Office. This meeting is a chance for the staff to share important reminders and discuss hot topics while also hearing the concerns from the coaches associations. Mr. Goldring said invitations have already been emailed, and Board of Directors members are welcome to attend to listen to the discussion.

#### C. Update on 2024-25 Board of Directors Meeting Dates

Director Bob Goldring said that most dates for OHSAA Board of Directors Meetings for the 2024-25 school year have been selected, and most will correspond with the 2023-24 dates. Unless noted, all meetings are on Thursdays at the OHSAA Office in Columbus and begin at 9:00. The dates are: August 29, 2024; September 25, 2024; October 23, 2024; January 16, 2025; February 20, 2025; \*April 24, 2025, and June 13, 2025 (8:30 at Canal Park in Akron). The Board will also conduct closed meetings during the state football finals in Canton in early December and during the state boys basketball tournament in Dayton in late March. \*It was noted that the April 24, 2025, meeting date could change due to a possible conflict for Executive Director Ute and the OHSAA's legal counsel with a National Federation of State High School Associations meeting of which the date has yet to be determined.

#### D. 2024 OHSAA OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame Members Selected

Director Beau Rugg informed the Board that 15 individuals have been selected to the 2024 OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame after the Hall of Fame Committee met earlier this year. Selected were: **Scott Anders** (Zanesville; basketball, baseball); **Jeffrey Ayers** (Cincinnati; basketball); **Larry Bartlett** (Middletown; football); **Jeff Bauer** (Columbus; football, track & field); **Nick Bavaro** (Seville; soccer); **Don Cash** (Bridgeport; basketball); **John Jasin** (Brunswick; football, basketball); **Rick Keys** (Lancaster; volleyball, basketball, softball); the late **Robert Lee** (Upper Sandusky; basketball); **Rick Merb** (Lancaster; football, baseball, softball); **Don Muenz** (Columbus; former OHSAA director of officiating development for soccer); **Mark Riley** (Westerville; football, basketball); **Timothy Shumaker** (Lancaster; baseball); **James Siler** (Hicksville; baseball), and **Bill Wonders** (Defiance; football). The hall of fame ceremonies will take place June 22 at the Hilton Polaris in Columbus.

#### E. Update on Appeals, Legislative Issues and Legal Cases

Director Kristin Ronai provided the Board with an update on appeals. She said the OHSAA Appeals Panel has made 64 rulings on 63 appeals during 12 hearings this school year, and 19 appeals have either been granted or the penalties modified. In addition, Ms. Ronai provided the Board with an update on current legislative issues and OHSAA Legal Counsel Steve Craig provided the Board with an update on current legal cases.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Recommendation to Approve Additional 2024 Referendum Items

Executive Director Doug Ute and his office's compliance team have been reviewing potential changes to the OHSAA Constitution and Bylaws with the Board of Directors that would be placed before the membership for referendum. At the January 11, 2024, meeting, the Board of Directors approved placing two proposed Bylaw modifications before the membership for referendum. At this meeting, Director Kristin Ronai reviewed three additional 2024 proposed items (all Bylaws), and recommended that they be approved by the Board for referendum. If approved, member school principals would vote on the proposed modifications between May 1 and 15. The three recommendations were as follows:

**Bylaw 2-1-1, Divisions and Tournament Assignments (New Exception)**

This proposed exception would allow schools to move up to Division I on a sport-by-sport basis if they desired to do so for that season. The request would have to be received by the OHSAA Executive Director's Office within two weeks of the start of the sport's regular season. If requested for an individual sport, all athletes on that school's team would have to compete in Division I.

**Bylaw 4-4-3, Scholarship (Modification)**

This proposed modification would address the transition of athletic eligibility between grading periods and amend the OHSAA's definition of a school day to **not** include calamity days, where school is cancelled due to weather or similar circumstances.

**Bylaw 4-7-3, Transfers (Modification)**

This proposed modification would allow for mid-season transfers to be fully eligible at the new school in the same season but **only** at the sub-varsity level (and no OHSAA tournaments) and **only** if the student met the requirements of an exception to restore full transfer eligibility. The proposed change would not permit a student who has played for the varsity team (or there has not been a distinction between varsity and sub-varsity competition) at the school from which they are leaving to gain sub-varsity eligibility at the school to which they are transferring.

Motion by Jeff Wheeler, second by Paul Stone to **approve** the recommendation to place the three proposed bylaw changes up for referendum vote by the membership as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

B. Recommendation to Approve Revised 2024 Tournament Representation in Softball (Division II)

At the August 31, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting, the Board approved a recommendation to approve the 2024 tournament division assignments and representation for the Competitive Balance sport of softball. At this meeting, a process to break the tie that was previously overlooked in Division II was utilized since the Central, East and Southeast divisions all had 19 teams participate in the 2023 tournament. To break the tie, pills were drawn in alphabetical order, resulting in the following:

**Softball**

Division I, 183 teams (329 females or more from October 2021 enrollments plus Competitive Balance factors)

Division II, 185 teams (193 to 328 females)

Division III, 181 teams (115 to 192 females)

Division IV, 181 team (114 or less females)

Total Teams: 730

Representation from the district to the regional tournaments in softball for 2024 would be: **Division I:** Combined Central, one East school (Dresden Tri-Valley) and two Southeast schools (Chillicothe and Logan) 4; Northeast 6; Northwest 2, and Southwest 4; **\*Division II:** Central 2; East 1; Northeast 5; Northwest 3; Southeast 2, and Southwest 3; **Division III:** Central 2; East 1; Northeast 4; Northwest 3; Southeast 3, and Southwest 3; **Division IV:** Central 1; East 1; Northeast 3; Northwest 6; Southeast 2, and Southwest 3.

**\*Indicates** pills were drawn at the February 15, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting, resulting in the Central District getting 2 representatives for 2024, the East District getting 1 and the Southeast District getting 2.

VI. NEW BUSINESS (CONSENT)

A. Recommendation to Approve 2024 Spring Sports Tournament Regulations

Updates in regulations for the 2024 spring sports tournaments were provided to the Board by OHSAA sport administrators Emily Mason (baseball and boys volleyball); softball and boys tennis (Monroe Britton), and boys lacrosse and girls lacrosse (Kate Barnett), and the Executive Director's Office recommended that the modified regulations be approved. Most updates reflect date changes or modifications made for clarity purposes. Other prominent changes include: in **baseball** it was noted that medals will be presented to regional champions and runners-up, matching a similar practice in other OHSAA tournaments, and the state tournament will shift to a Friday through Sunday format. In **boys volleyball**, tournament seeding and draw information was clarified. In **boys lacrosse** and **girls lacrosse**, it was noted that some schools' regional assign-

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ments have changed; that language for overtime and goal differential procedures has been clarified, and that the state championship games will go to a Friday-Saturday format, with the girls playing on Friday and the boys playing on Saturday.

### B. Ratification of Recommendation from the Southeast District Athletic Board to Appoint Interim Ethnic Minority Representative

Board member Bo Arnett said the Southeast District Athletic Board has recommended that Joe Turner, principal at Hillsboro High School, be appointed as the interim ethnic minority representative on their board through July 31, 2024. If interested in continuing in that position, Mr. Turner would then have to go through the election process in May to fill the position, with the term running August 1, 2024, through July 31, 2025. Mr. Arnett asked that the Board ratify this recommendation.

### C. Ratification of Recommendation for Recipient of 2024 OHSAA Naismith Awards for Meritorious Service (Southeast District)

The OHSAA Naismith Awards for Meritorious Service are presented to individuals who have made significant contributions to interscholastic athletics in Ohio. Two of the six OHSAA District Athletic Boards make selections on a rotating basis each year, the recommendations are ratified by the Board of Directors and the honorees are traditionally recognized during the OHSAA Boys State Basketball Tournament. The Southeast District Athletic Board (SEDAB) has recommended Harold "Bud" Sayer, a retired school administrator, teacher and coach, as a 2024 recipient. Mr. Sayer spent several years as a teacher, coach and administrator at his alma mater, Portsmouth West High School, before serving as the superintendent of the Union-Scioto School District in Chillicothe and the Eastern Local School District in Pike County. Bud served on the OHSAA's Southeast District Athletic Board for 12 years and served two years on the OHSAA Board of Directors.

Motion by Bill Nye, second by Andy Bixler to **approve** New Business Consent Items VI. A., VI. B. and VI. C. as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS (OTHER)

### A. Recommendation to Invoke Constitution Article 8-1-1 to Change Language to Bylaw 1-6-3 (Transgender Female Participation)

Director Kristin Ronai said that with state law changing which no longer permits a male to female transgender student to participate on girls' teams, the Executive Director's Office recommends that Constitution Article 8-1-1 be invoked and that Bylaw 1-6-3 be modified to be in compliance with state law. Previously, those students were eligible for interscholastic participation per OHSAA bylaws so long as specific OHSAA policies were followed and regulations met. Since state law on this change becomes effective April 24, 2024, the recommendation is for the OHSAA's modification to also become effective on that date.

Motion by Andy Bixler, second by Jay Selgo to **approve** the recommendation as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

### B. Recommendation to Approve Additional Tournament Divisions in the Sports of Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Softball and Girls Volleyball Beginning with the 2024-25 School Year

Executive Director Doug Ute said the staff and Board of Directors have been having numerous discussions during this school year to address the enrollment disparity that exists in several Division I tournaments where the smallest schools are in the same division with schools that have nearly 1,000 more students. The discussion began based on concerns raised by member school administrators and coaches. To address the concerns, Mr. Ute said he recommends expanding the number of tournament divisions from four to seven in the sports of baseball, boys basketball, girls basketball, softball and girls volleyball and from three divisions to five in the sports of boys soccer and girls soccer beginning with the 2024-25 school year. In all seven sports, Divisions I and II would be assigned 64 teams based on enrollment (including Competitive Balance factors), and the other divisions will be divided as evenly as possible. Making this modification would mean that OHSAA General Sports Regulations 17.1 and 17.2 would need to be revised.

Motion by Jeff Wheeler, second by Molly Feesler to **approve** the recommendation as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

Mr. Ute said the OHSAA staff recently met with school administrators in all six OHSAA athletic districts, and the general feedback was positive toward the proposed change. It was also noted that the OHSAA Constitution charges the Board of Directors to decide on such changes and that a vote of member school principals is not required. In addition, the executive director said discussions on potential expansion of tournament divisions in some individual sports will continue.

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### VIII. ONCE AROUND

Board members thanked the staff for their work on the expansion of the tournament divisions proposal and noted how they looked forward in assisting with the additional work still needed. It was noted that this was a positive thing for Ohio's student-athletes and that approval of the proposal made for a monumental day in the OHSAA's history. The 2024-25 incoming Board of Directors members who were in attendance for this meeting were welcomed, and it was noted that being involved in Board meetings now will be good for transitional purposes. Good luck was given to fellow board members, the staff, member schools and their student-athletes in the upcoming winter tournaments. Board member Bill Nye noted that it is great that the dollars set aside in the OHSAA's Athletic Enrichment Fund will be able to assist schools. Additionally, congratulations were extended to staff member Ronald Sayers and his wife on the recent birth of their first child.

Motion by Jay Selgo, second by Jeff Wheeler to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 a.m.

Motion passed 9-0.

Bob Goldring, recorder.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

**(Unless noted, all meetings are on Thursdays and begin at 9:00 but are subject to change.)**

**2023-24 School Year:** April 25, 2024, and June 6, 2024 (8:30 a.m. at Canal Park in Akron).

**2024-25 School Year:** August 29, 2024; September 25, 2024; October 23, 2024; January 16, 2025; February 20, 2025; \*April 24, 2025, and June 13, 2025 (8:30 at Canal Park in Akron). \*Indicates the date is currently tentative.