

The following are the preliminary minutes from the January 15, 2026, OHSAA Board of Directors Meeting. The Board is expected to officially approve them at its February 19, 2026, meeting.

## **OHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES (January 15, 2026)**

The Ohio High School Athletic Association Board of Directors held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at the OHSAA Offices in Columbus. President Walt Skaggs called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions of guests in attendance.

**Board Members In Attendance:** Walt Skaggs, president; Stephanie Evans, vice president; John Carter; Ray Hibbs; Matt Hutchinson; Tom Nerl; Mark Rose; Randy Tevepaugh; Lane Warner, and Glen Gillespie (ex-officio).

**Staff Members In Attendance:** Doug Ute, executive director; Bob Goldring and John Kronour, directors; Laura Vermilya, chief financial officer, and staff members Charles Anderson, Greg Bossick, Monroe Britton, Michael Cornathan, BJ Duckworth (participated virtually), Amanda Harding, Steve Hoffbauer, Alexis Holderman, Keaton Jones, Michelle Kern, Claudia Markoff, Ronald Sayers, Kelly Schoenly and Calvin Vermilya.

**Others In Attendance:** Joe Fraley, OHSAA legal counsel; Joe Balogh, Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association; Gerald Cooke, Ohio High School Football Coaches Association, and Dugan Hill, Ohio Association of Track & Cross Country Coaches.

### **I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Motion by Tom Nerl, second by Ray Hibbs to **adopt** the agenda for the January 15, 2026, Board of Directors meeting.

Motion passed 9-0.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Mark Rose, second by John Carter to **approve** the minutes from the October 23, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting and the December 4, 2025, Board of Directors Special Meeting.

Motion passed 9-0.

### **IV. FINANCIAL ITEMS**

#### **A. Recommendation to Approve OHSAA Audit**

Chief Financial Officer Laura Vermilya provided the Board with a copy of the 2024-25 OHSAA audit that was prepared by representatives of GBQ Partners, LLC, of Columbus. The audit included the OHSAA office and the six District Athletic Boards from August 1, 2024, to July 31, 2025. Ms. Vermilya noted that the audit included an unmodified, clean opinion, the best that can be received. The auditors also noted no audit adjustments were made, nor did they find any material misstatements or significant deficiencies. The Executive Director's Office recommended that the Board approve the report.

Motion by Ray Hibbs, second by Matt Hutchinson to **approve** the recommendation as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

Board President Walt Skaggs, Vice President Stephanie Evans and Executive Director Doug Ute recognized the OHSAA finance team, led by Ms. Vermilya, with assistance from Senior Accountant Greg Bossick and Staff Accountant Calvin Vermilya, for their work in leading the OHSAA financial department and receiving the unmodified, clean audit opinion. Special thanks also were given to the OHSAA District Athletic Board treasurers.

#### **B. Recommendation to Approve Tournament Travel Stipends for 2025 Fall Sports**

Chief Financial Officer Laura Vermilya said that the Executive Director's Office recommended that tournament travel stipends for 2025 fall sports be provided to qualifying schools in team sports at same level that was paid out last year. The exception would be the third round of the football tournament since the OHSAA moved to the top seeds hosting for that round rather than neutral sites. Teams that advanced to regional and state level tournaments would be compensated as follows:

- Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer and Girls Volleyball: teams would receive \$750 for each regional tournament contest and \$1,500 for each state tournament contest.
- Field Hockey: teams would receive \$750 for reaching the regional finals and \$1,500 for each state tournament contest.
- Football: teams would receive \$1,500 for reaching the regional final contest; state semifinalist teams would receive an additional \$3,000, and state finalist teams would receive an additional \$5,000.

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### C. Recommendation to Approve the OHSAA Financial Report through December 31, 2025

Chief Financial Officer Laura Vermilya provided the financial report through December 31, 2025. She said once all fall sports tournament revenues and expenses are complete, she anticipates a net profit of \$1.7 million better than budget and expenses are currently six percent favorable to budget. Though football tournament attendance was down, attendance for all other fall sports tournaments was up by five percent. When combining cash and investments, the OHSAA's current total cash was at \$19.1 million, which would cover 9.3 months of expenses. The financial report is summarized as follows:

#### OHSAA Financial Report (Through December 30, 2025)

<u>District</u>	<u>Total Cash</u>	<u>Year to Date Gross Revenue</u>	<u>Year to Date Gross Expenses</u>	<u>Year to Date Net Profit/Loss</u>
OHSAA Office	\$12,388,385	\$8,487,744	\$6,073,760	\$2,413,984
Central	\$1,066,177	\$346,071	\$326,312	\$19,759
East	\$995,468	\$167,935	\$135,131	\$32,805
Northeast	\$690,756	\$568,919	\$669,676	— \$100,757
Northwest	\$1,724,742	\$512,519	\$386,265	\$126,254
Southeast	\$835,487	\$194,659	\$220,963	— \$26,304
Southwest	\$1,434,676	\$493,902	\$464,684	\$29,219
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$19,135,691</b>	<b>\$10,771,749</b>	<b>\$8,276,791</b>	<b>\$2,494,960</b>

  

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Prior Month</u>	<u>Prior Year</u>
Checking	\$7,055,425	\$6,792,000	\$8,550,748
Savings	\$1,046,114	\$1,043,936	\$1,017,341
<b>Total Operating Cash</b>	<b>\$8,101,539</b>	<b>\$7,835,936</b>	<b>\$9,568,089</b>
Months on Hand	3.9	3.9	4.7
Board Designated Capital Improvements	\$278,502	\$278,013	\$494,812
Investments - Morgan Stanley	\$10,755,650	\$10,697,214	\$9,159,378
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>\$11,034,152</b>	<b>\$10,975,227</b>	<b>\$9,654,190</b>
Months on Hand	5.4	5.3	4.8
<b>Total Cash &amp; Investments on Hand</b>	<b>\$19,135,691</b>	<b>\$18,811,163</b>	<b>\$19,222,279</b>
Months on Hand (Cash & Investments)	9.3	9.2	9.5
Athletic Enrichment Fund	\$2,199,353	\$2,192,426	\$2,609,566

Motion by Mark Rose second by Stephanie Evans to **approve** Financial Items B. and C. as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

## V. INFORMATION ITEMS

### A. Review of OHSAA Fall Sports Tournaments

OHSAA sport administrators provided brief reviews to the Board on their respective fall sports tournaments. **Cross country** Sport Administrator BJ Duckworth said the expansion of the tournaments from three to four divisions this fall went well, and he thanked tournament manager Dugan Hill for his tremendous work with the state finals at Fortress Obetz in suburban Columbus. Reporting for Senior Sport Administrator Emily Mason, Director John Kronour said both the **field hockey** and **girls volleyball** state tournaments were successful, and he thanked Thomas Worthington High School for serving as the host of the state field hockey tournament; Vandalia Butler High School and Wittenberg University for serving as hosts for some of the girls state volleyball semifinals, and Wright State University for serving as host of some of the girls state volleyball semifinals and all of the state finals. **Soccer** Sport Administrator Kelly Schoenly said the state soccer tournament at Historic Crew Stadium went well, other than some weather challenges for some of the contests. Reporting for Director Beau Rugg, Executive Director Doug Ute said the six rounds of the **football** tournaments flourished. The first round and regional quarterfinals saw drops in attendance, with the first round conflicting with Halloween, but attendance picked up for the next three rounds. Mr. Ute thanked all the schools and their staffs that hosted tournament contests; praised the Cincinnati Bengals and Hamilton County Commissioners for hosting a Division I regional final at Cincinnati's Paycor Stadium that saw attendance of over 22,000, and he recognized the great effort by the staff at the Pro Football Hall of Fame and Hall of Fame Village, along with the numerous volunteers in Stark County, for hosting the state championship games.

### B. Review of Review of 2024-25 NFHS Coaches-of-the-Year

Director Bob Goldring said that the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Coaches Association Coaches-of-the-Year honorees have been selected for the 2024-25 school year. Ohio had 23 state coaches-of-the-year: **baseball**: Ryan Lucas, Lewis Central Olentangy; **boys basketball**: Eric Flannery, Lakewood St. Edward; **girls basketball**: Chris Hart, Kettering Archbishop Alter; **boys bowling**: Jim Brown, Ashland; **girls bowling**: Kurt Scott, Urbana; **boys cross country**: Tom Rapp, Mason; **girls cross country**: Jessie Magoto, Minster; **field hockey**: Janet Baird, Columbus Bishop Watterson; **football**: John Samsbury, Powell Olentangy Liberty; **boys golf**: Eric Heitkamp, Van Buren; **girls golf**: Daniel Gallagher, Rocky River Magnificat; **gymnastics**: Cindy Fushimi, Worthington Kilbourne; **ice hockey**: Craig Hagkull, Upper Arlington; **boys swimming & diving**: Kyle Goodrich, Columbus St. Charles; **girls swimming & diving**: Sandy Sliwowski,

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Bexley; **boys tennis**: Rich Bole, Pepper Pike Orange; **girls tennis**: Mitchell Owens, Bryan; **boys track & field**: Lou Domitrovich, McDonald; **girls track & field**: Matt Beatty, Hilliard Davidson; **boys volleyball**: Connor Games, Cincinnati Archbishop McNicholas; **girls volleyball**: Nikki Etzler, Coldwater; **boys wrestling**: Felix Catheline, Columbus Bishop Watterson, and **girls wrestling**: Benjamin Kirian, Findlay.

The NFHS Coaches Association selected five Ohio coaches as 2024-25 Section Coaches-of-the-Year: **baseball**: Ryan Lucas, Lewis Central Olentangy; **girls cross country**: Jessie Magoto, Minster; **boys golf**: Eric Heitkamp, Van Buren; **girls golf**: Daniel Gallagher, Rocky River Magnificat, and **girls track & field**: Matt Beatty, Hilliard Davidson. In addition, Chris Hart, **girls basketball** coach at Kettering Archbishop Alter, was selected NFHS National Coach-of-the-Year.

Mr. Goldring thanked the various Ohio coaches associations that participated in the selection process and Michelle Kern, OHSAA executive assistant, for her work organizing the procedures.

### C. Review of Expiring and Unexpired District Athletic Board Positions for May Election/Board of Directors Appointees

The Board was provided with a list of the positions that will be up for election on District Athletic Boards for both terms that are expiring and terms that are unexpired. District Athletic Board (six-year terms, August 1, 2026-July 31, 2032) elections that will take place to fill expiring terms are: **Central**, Class A representative (Daniel Snivley, incumbent) and ethnic-minority representative (Scott Reeves, incumbent); **East**, Class AAA representative (Walt Skaggs, incumbent) and 7th-8th grade representative (Ray Hibbs, incumbent); **Northeast**, Class AA representative (Reid Guarneri, incumbent) and female representative (Shyla Urban, incumbent); **Northwest**, Class AAA representative (Matt Hutchinson, incumbent) and ethnic-minority representative (David Alvarado, incumbent); **Southeast**, Class A representative (Mark Rose, incumbent) and 7th-8th grade representative (Tony Williams, incumbent), and **Southwest**, Class AA representative/interim (Chuck Richardson III, interim) and female representative (Ashley Naff, incumbent). There are three unexpired terms that also must be filled (plus the Southwest's Class AA position, where the full term ends this coming July 31, 2026): **East**, ethnic-minority representative (Angelita Forte, 2025-26 interim), term August 1, 2026, to July 31, 2031; **Northeast**, Class A representative (Steve Watkins, 2025-26 interim), term August 1, 2026, to July 31, 2029, and **Southeast**, Class AA representative (Natalie Lucas, 2025-26 interim), term August 1, 2026, to July 31, 2027.

Later this winter, information on the submission of petitions to run for the District Athletic Board positions will be sent directly to superintendents, principals and athletic administrators in the districts and classes in which there are openings. Voting will take place on-line between May 1 and 15.

It was noted that all nine positions on the Board of Directors will return as part of their three-year terms for the 2026-27 school year. Those who will be in their third year on the Board will be Walt Skaggs, Class AAA representative (pending his running and retaining his district athletic board position), **East** district; Randy Tevepaugh, Class AA representative, **Northeast** district; Mark Rose, Class A representative, **Southeast** district (pending his running and retaining his district athletic board position), and Stephanie Evans, female representative, **Southeast** district. Those who will be in their second year on the Board will be Lane Warner, Class A representative, **Central** district; Matt Hutchinson, Class AAA representative, **Northwest** district (pending his running and retaining his district athletic board position), and Tom Nierl, Class AA representative, **Southwest** district along with ethnic-minority representative John Carter (**Northeast**) and 7th-8th grade representative Ray Hibbs (**East**, pending his running and retaining his district athletic board position) will be the and on the Board of Directors, with those latter two positions based on the predetermined statewide rotation. Ex-Officio Board of Directors member Glen Gillespie (Ohio Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association) will also return.

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

Staff member Alexis Holderman provided the Board with a list of schools that have recently violated OHSAA bylaws or sports regulations. **Dayton Christian High School** had a student-athlete in boys cross country violate Bylaw 4-7-2, Transfer, when he participated in a contest during the period of ineligibility required within the transfer bylaw. In accordance with Bylaw 10-2-5, Forfeitures, the school forfeited the victorious contest in which the ineligible student participated. **Solon High School** had a student-athlete violate General Sports Regulation 7.2.1 when she participated in a non-interscholastic contest after establishing herself as a member of the school's girls soccer program. In accordance with Bylaw 11, Penalties, the student-athlete was suspended for one regular season contest. **Norton High School**'s girls varsity volleyball team violated Volleyball Regulation 5, Match Limitation, when the varsity team participated beyond the maximum number of 22 matches in the 2025-26 school season. In accordance with Bylaw 11, Penalties, the team was removed from the 2025-26 OHSAA volleyball tournament. **Ironton Rock Hill Middle School** had a middle school basketball coach violate Basketball Regulation C when the coach held tryouts prior to the designated start date of October 31, 2025. In accordance with Bylaw 11, Penalties, the start date of basketball coaching, tryouts, and instruction was pushed back by three days for the Rock Hill Middle School basketball program. **Cleves Taylor High School** violated Bylaws 4-9-2 and 4-9-4 #3, Recruiting, when a football coach had impermissible contact with prospective student-athletes prior to applications being submitted to the

school for potential enrollment. The OHSAA Executive Director's Office accepted the school's self-imposed penalty of an immediate suspension for the coach upon notification of the violation, which included the first game of the 2026-27 OHSAA tournament and the first regular season contest of the 2027-28 season. **Richfield Revere High School** had a student-athlete who was eligible to qualify for full eligibility under Transfer Bylaw 4-7-2 Exception 1, Bona Fide Change of Residence. However, the school failed to submit the request for eligibility to the Executive Director's Office prior to the student participating in a regular season competition. The Executive Director's Office restored the student-athlete's eligibility retroactively and prospectively, but, in accordance with Bylaw 4-1-1, Administrative Error, the school was fined \$100. **Maumee Valley Country Day School** had three high school student-athletes who were eligible to qualify for full eligibility under International Bylaw 4-8-1 Exception 3, F-1 Visa. However, the school failed to submit the request for eligibility to the Executive Director's Office prior to the students participating in a regular season competition. The Executive Director's Office restored the student-athletes' eligibility retroactively and prospectively, but, in accordance with Bylaw 4-1-1, Administrative Error, the school was fined \$100. **New Franklin Manchester High School** had a student-athlete who was eligible to qualify for full eligibility under Transfer Bylaw 4-7-2 Exception 1, Bona Fide Change of Residence. However, the school failed to submit the request for eligibility to the Executive Director's Office prior to the student participating in a regular season competition. The Executive Director's Office restored the student-athlete's eligibility retroactively and prospectively, but, in accordance with Bylaw 4-1-1, Administrative Error, the school was fined \$100. **Toledo Notre Dame Academy** had a girls soccer coach violate General Sport Regulation 11.1, Coaches Mandatory No-Contact Periods, when he coached two student-athletes in a training session and a scrimmage during the mandatory no-contact period. In accordance with Bylaw 11, Penalties, the Executive Directors Office has extended the school's no-contact period an additional 14 days and has reduced the summer contact period from 13 days to 12. **Sheffield Brookside High School** had a student-athlete who was eligible to qualify for full eligibility under Transfer Bylaw 4-7-5 Provision 2, Return to Local Residential School. However, the school failed to submit the request for eligibility to the Executive Director's Office prior to the student participating in the 2024-25 basketball season. The Executive Director's Office restored the student-athlete's eligibility retroactively and prospectively, but, in accordance with Bylaw 4-1-1, Administrative Error, the school was fined \$100. **Dayton Northridge Middle School** had a student-athlete in girls basketball violate Bylaw 4-3-1, Enrollment and Attendance, when she participated in regular season contests without being enrolled in and attending the school full time. Further, the student did not meet the requirements of any of the enumerated exceptions codified within Bylaw 4-3-1. In accordance with Bylaw 10-2-1, Forfeitures, the school was required to forfeit any victorious contests in which the ineligible student participated. **South Vienna Northeastern High School** had a student-athlete who was eligible to qualify for full eligibility under Transfer Bylaw 4-7-6, Intra-District. However, the school failed to submit the request for eligibility to the Executive Director's Office prior to the 15th day of school. The Executive Director's Office restored the student-athlete's eligibility retroactively and prospectively, but, in accordance with Bylaw 4-1-1, Administrative Error, the school was fined \$100. **Chardon Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School** had a student-athlete violate General Sports Regulation 7.2.2 when he participated in a non-interscholastic contest after establishing herself as a member of the school's gymnastics team. In accordance with Bylaw 11, Penalties, the student-athlete was suspended for two regular season contests.

Ms. Holderman also provided the Board with an update on appeals. She said the OHSAA Appeals Panel has made 90 rulings on 84 appeals held during 13 hearings this school year, and 16 appeals were either granted or the penalties modified. Most of the rulings dealt with the transfer bylaw. Executive Director Doug Ute also provided the Board with an update on current legislative issues. In addition, Legal Counsel Joe Fraley provided the Board with an update on current OHSAA legal cases.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Recommendation to Approve Additional 2026 Referendum Items

Staff member Ronald Sayers said the OHSAA's eligibility team and legal counsels have been reviewing potential changes to the OHSAA Constitution and Bylaws that would be placed before the membership for referendum if approved by the Board of Directors. The Board approved an initial bylaw item for referendum at its September 26, 2025, meeting and approved two additional bylaw items for referendum at its October 23, 2025, meeting. At this meeting, Mr. Sayers reviewed additional 2026 proposed items (all bylaws), and recommended that two 7th-8th grade issues and three high school issues be approved by the Board to place on the referendum ballot. If approved by the Board for referendum, member school principals would vote on the proposed modifications between May 1 and 15, 2026. The recommendations are as follows:

#### **Bylaw 4-2-2, Age Limitation, Exceptions 1 and 2, 7th-8th Grade Age Exceptions (Modification)**

This proposed modification to the bylaw's exceptions would change the current stipulation *to the student would not likely participate in a way which "would significantly impact the outcome of the contest" from "in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate"* and permit the Executive Director's Office to waive the ineligibility for students who cannot meet the age limitation if the student is a child with a disability or the student has repeated any grade from kinder-

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garten through grade 3 at the recommendation of the student's teachers or other educational professionals and for purely academic reasons. Despite the age requirements, the modification essentially would allow eligibility to continue for these students who participate in a meaningful way, but perhaps not in a significant way (e.g. they are in the rotation but not one of the best players). If placed before the membership, this proposal would be voted upon by 7th-8th grade principals.

### **Bylaw 4-3-4, Scholarship, Exception 1, 7th-8th Semesters Exception (Modification)**

This proposed modification to the exception mirrors the previous proposed modification. Despite the semester requirements, it essentially would allow eligibility to continue for these students who participate in a meaningful way, but perhaps not in a significant way (e.g. they are in the rotation but not one of the best players). If placed before the membership, this proposal would be voted upon by 7th-8th grade principals.

### **Bylaw 4-1-4, Eligibility, Member of an Interscholastic Team (Modification)**

In this proposed modification to the bylaw, a school would NOT be considered to have sponsored a sport should one of its teams participate in a preseason preview or scrimmage but, before participating in a regular season contest, then drops the sport and/or cancels its season. This, ultimately, could allow a pathway for students to transfer and be immediately eligible at a new school, subject to the enrollment and attendance bylaw.

### **Bylaw 4-6-2, Residence, Exceptions 4 and 6 (Modifications)**

These proposed modifications to the bylaw's exceptions would be to better afford participation opportunities for a student whose parents live outside of Ohio but have shown a prior commitment to a certain school/district consisting of grades 1-12. In Exception 4, the modification would be that a student who enrolls at the sixth grade level of a school/district consisting of grades 1-12 and maintains continuous enrollment shall be eligible for interscholastic athletics in grades 9-12 in that school/district regardless of place or state of residence of the parents (or enrolls at the fourth grade level in order to be eligible in grades 7-8). The current exceptions says those students must have been continuously enrolled beginning at grade one in order to be eligible in grades 7-12. In Exception 6, the modification would mirror the proposed change in Exception 4 for 7th-8th grade students at parochial schools and require that those students must have been enrolled at the parochial school continuously since the fourth grade.

### **Bylaw 4-7-2, Definition of Transfer (Modification)**

This proposed modification would add a new note that indicates that, should a student enroll at a school, transfer to a different school for a period of time and then re-enroll at their original school and that student did NOT participate in interscholastic athletics at the school in which they made the first transfer, the student would be fully eligible at the school where they re-enrolled and not subject to the transfer consequences.

Motion by Randy Tevebaugh, second by Stephanie Evans to **approve** placing the proposed bylaw modifications up for referendum vote by the membership as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

It was noted that the Executive Director's Office may recommend additional items to be placed before the membership for referendum at upcoming Board of Director's meetings.

### **B. Recommendation to Approve 2026 Winter Sports Regional and State Tournament Officiating Representation**

Staff member Charles Anderson provided the Board with the 2026 representation for officials assignments for regional and state tournaments in the winter sports of basketball (regional and state tournaments); ice hockey (state tournaments); swimming and diving (state tournaments), and wrestling (state tournaments), and he said the staff recommended that they be approved. Per the OHSAA Handbook, the representation is calculated on a proportional formula per district based on the number of Class 1 officials who had registered with the OHSAA by October 31.

Motion by John Carter, second by Tom Nerk to **approve** the tournament officiating representation as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS (CONSENT)**

### **A. Recommendation to Approve Resolution to Rename the OHSAA State Track & Field Tournament**

Executive Director Doug Ute said he recommended that the state track & field tournament be renamed the OHSAA Jesse Owens State Track & Field Tournament, effective immediately. Besides recognizing the incomparable Owens, who demonstrated excellence, resilience, integrity and courage throughout his lifetime, the move would take place as part of the Jesse Owens Initiative, "Beyond the Finish Line," an aligned effort with the Jesse Owens Foundation and The Ohio State University to resurrect the legacy of Owens, one of America's greatest heroes, empower the next generation and unite people from all backgrounds to pursue

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their highest potential. The OHSAA's state tournament, which expands to five from three divisions in 2026, will be held at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium on the campus of The Ohio State University in Columbus June 4-7.

Owens won nine OHSAA state track and field tournament events — including four as both a junior and senior in 1932 and 1933 — and set seven state records while competing for Cleveland East Tech High School. At the national interscholastic meet in Chicago during his senior year, he set a world record, tied a world record and set a national high school mark. Owens then enrolled at Ohio State, where on May 25, 1935, he performed one of the greatest feats in athletic history at the Big Ten Championships held in Ann Arbor, Mich. Uncertain that he would even participate after recently falling down a flight of steps, Owens set world records in the 220, 220 low hurdles and the long jump and tied the world mark in the 100, all in a span of about 45 minutes. In 1936, he qualified for the Olympic Games that were held in Nazi Germany and became the first American track & field athlete to capture four gold medals in a single Olympiad, winning the 100, 200, long jump and 4x100 relay. While showcasing his excellence on a global stage, his victories provided a powerful rebuke to Adolf Hitler's racist ideology, cementing his status as a legendary figure who symbolized perseverance and breaking barriers, with his achievements setting a standard for future generations of athletes. Owens died on March 31, 1980.

Motion by Ray Hibbs, second by Tom Nerl to **approve** the recommendation as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS (OTHER)

None

## IX. ONCE AROUND

Board member Tom Nerl praised his fellow Southwest District athletic administrators for their work planning the annual Ohio Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (OIAAA) state conference that was held in Nov. 9-11 in Columbus. It was the highest attended conference in its history. Glen Gillespie, Board ex-officio and executive director of the OIAAA, congratulated fellow OHSAA Board member and Streetsboro High School Athletic Administrator Randy Tevepaugh for being one of eight athletic administrators across the country to receive a citation from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). He was presented his award during the annual National Athletic Directors Conference Dec. 14 in Tampa.

Board members praised Chief Operating Officer Laura Vermilya and her staff for again helping the OHSAA obtain an excellent audit report; the staff's sport administrators for all of their work in tournament preparations; the staff's eligibility department for their work in the absence of Associate Executive Director Kristin Ronai, who is out on family leave; Executive Director Doug Ute and their fellow Board members for demonstrating excellent leadership, and Director Bob Goldring, who recently submitted his letter of retirement after 31 years at the OHSAA, effective August 1, 2026. Board members also said they were looking forward to the upcoming winter sports tournaments.

Executive Director Doug Ute thanked the Board members for their tremendous work, especially considering they also hold administrative positions at their respective schools and serve on OHSAA District Athletic Boards.

Motion by Tom Nerl, second by Randy Tevepaugh to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 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.)

2025-26 School Year: February 19, 2026; April 23, 2026; June 11, 2026 (8:30 at Canal Park in Akron).