

CIAC BOARD OF CONTROL MEETING MINUTES
January 16, 2020

Present: Sheila Riffle, Joseph Corso, Vincent DeNuzzo, Marc Aceto, Joe Velardi, David Eustis, Steven Swenson, Bob Hale, Henry Rondon, Dan Scavone, Robert Lehr, Joel Cookson, Nadine Gannon, James Wygonik, Deb Petruzzello, Dave Tanner, Matt Perachi, Damian Frassinelli, Daniel Zittoun, Ralph Mayo, Linda Iacobellis, Anna Mahon, Matt Ryan, Gregg Simon, Glenn Lungarini, Anthony Azzarra.

Note – Due to the large number of action items, the consultant reports were presented at the beginning of the meeting to give the consultants the option of leaving prior to the action items. The minutes are presented in the order listed on the agenda.

1.0 ACTION ITEMS

- 1.1 Review and approval of the Board of Control Minutes for December 5, 2019 – After review and discussion the Board voted to approve the minutes.

Motion: To approve minutes – D. Eustis / second – S. Riffle – motion approved.

- 1.2 Treasurer’s Report – The Treasurer’s report was presented for Board consideration.

Motion: To approve the Treasurer’s report – V. DeNuzzo / second – L. Iacobellis – motion approved.

- 1.3 Letter of Self Report – Use of Ineligible Player – [] – The Board considered a self-report from [] for use of an ineligible player by its girls basketball team. A student-athlete had transferred to the school for her senior season and played in the first basketball game of the year in violation of the 50-percent transfer rule. The school administration did not recognize the student had transferred that would have required sitting out the first half of the season. Because the student had competed as an ineligible player, she was now permanently ineligible, pending reinstatement by the Board. The school listed additional safeguards put in place to insure transfers would not be overlooked in the future. The school already contacted its opponent to forfeit the game in which the ineligible student participated.

Motion: To fine the school \$100 for the violation – D. Tanner / second – V. DeNuzzo – motion approved

- 1.4 Eligibility Appeal – Ineligible Student Athlete – [] – The Board heard an appeal of eligibility for the student athlete from the prior action item. [] Principal Robin Ledversis and Athletic Director Mike McKenna presented the appeal. The school representatives indicated that it was purely a mistake by school personnel that jeopardized the student-athletes eligibility. They presented additional methods that would be put in place to insure no future violations with transfer students. The Board members discussed what requirements could be placed on the school administration to prevent further eligibility mistakes as possible motions.

Motion: To reinstate the athlete’s eligibility following the 11th game of the season (consistent with the eligibility period required in the transfer rule) – S. Riffle / second – A. Mahon – motion approved.

Motion: To require the school to submit a written plan to insure better procedures to handle new students – D. Tanner / second – J. Corso – motion approved.

- 1.5 Letter of Self Report – Use of Ineligible Player – [] The Board considered a letter of self-report from [] for use of an ineligible player by its boys basketball team. The student-athlete transferred to Bridgeport Central from another member school, and participated in the team’s first game of the season, in violation of the transfer rule. The mistake was noticed before the second contest of the year. Because the student had competed as an ineligible player, she was now permanently ineligible, pending reinstatement by the Board.

Motion: To fine the school \$100 for the violation – D. Zittoun / second – J. Wygonik – motion approved (one abstention)

- 1.6 Eligibility Appeal – Ineligible Student Athlete – [] – The Board heard an appeal of eligibility for the student athlete from the prior action item. [] Principal Eric Graf presented the appeal. He explained that the athletic director informed the coaching staff that the student must sit out the first 50-percent of the season per the transfer rule, but following that conversation the head coach retired and a new head coach was hired in close proximity to the start of the season. The new coach was not informed that the student was ineligible to start the season, and the violation was not discovered until the first home game. The school indicated additional steps it would put in place to insure better communication in the future, including granting the Assistant Principal access to the eligibility information. Though it was not part of a motion, the Board members asked Gregg Simon to communicate with the school to make sure the new coaching staff is adequately aware of CIAC rules.

Motion: To reinstate the athlete’s eligibility following the 11th game of the season (consistent with the eligibility period required in the transfer rule) – J. Corso / second – D. Tanner – motion approved (one abstention).

- 1.7 Letter of Self-Report – Use of Ineligible Player – [] The Board considered a self-report for use of an ineligible player by the [] wrestling team. The report indicated the student was awarded a forfeit in a match at a time when the student was academically ineligible. The Board members felt more information about both the nature of the academic ineligibility and the competition were needed before any action could be taken.

- 1.8 Letter of Self-Report – Use of Ineligible Player – [] The Board considered a self-report for use of an ineligible player by the [] boys basketball team. A player had received two technical fouls in one game, leading to a disqualification and requirement to sit out the next game. The player participated in the following game, before ultimately being held out of a later game. The self-report indicated the school believed it was not in violation because the school had not been properly notified of the disqualification. CIAC staff indicated that CIAC rules do not allow for any appeal of disqualifications, and that the language about disqualification notification had been misinterpreted.

Motion: To fine the school \$250 and require a forfeit of the game in which the player participated – J. Corso / second – J. Wygonik – motion approved (two abstentions).

- 1.9 Letter of Self-Report – Use of an Ineligible Player – [] The Board considered a self-report for use of an ineligible player by the [] boys basketball team. A student transferred from [] to [] for the 2018-19 academic year. During his admission process to [], the student moved from one address in Trumbull to another. [] mistakenly believed this exempted the athlete from the 50-percent waiting period per the transfer rule, and he competed the full season in boys basketball. The error was not discovered until the student transferred back to [] prior to the 2019-20 academic year. CIAC staff indicated

that recent precedence has been to not alter results of already completed seasons due to use of ineligible students. The Board members expressed a desire to approve a penalty that indicated the severity of the violation and sanctions that would have taken place had it been discovered during the season.

Motion: to fine the school \$500 and place the athletic department on probation for two years – D. Zittoun / second – J. Corso – motion approved.

- 1.10 Tournament Qualification/Structure requests – Girls Tennis Committee: Robert Lehr presented a pair of requests from the Girls Tennis Committee. The first was to move to a four-division tournament format from the previous format of three divisions. The second was to move change the tournament qualifying standard from a 50-percent winning percentage to 40-percent. Both changes are consistent with other CIAC sports.

Motion: To approve the request for four divisions for the CIAC Girls Tennis Tournament – J. Wygonik / second – D. Eustis – motion approved.

Motion: To approve the request to change the qualifying standard to a winning percentage of 40-percent – J. Corso / second – N. Gannon – motion approved.

- 1.11 Eligibility Appeal – CIAC In-Season Rules – [] The Board considered an appeal from [] concerning the eligibility of an ice hockey player. The student took part in an event with a non-school team during the hockey season. The school is seeking an exception as presented in CIAC rules that athletes may still be eligible if the event is deemed by the Board of Control to have been “legitimately organized for the sole purpose of preparing for and selection to the next Olympic Games or the Pan-American Games. And the events must be recognized by NGB for those sports.”

Motion: To deny the request for the exception to the In-Season rule – D. Zittoun / second – L. Iacobellis – motion approved.

- 1.12 Recruitment Accusations – [] The Board considered an accusation of recruiting from []. The letter claimed that a student withdrew from its school but had been practicing with a team from another school prior to his withdrawal. The schools had been in communication about the issue, but there was conflicting information.

Motion: To approve CIAC hiring an investigator to look into the recruiting accusation – J. Corso / second – L. Iacobellis – motion approved.

2.0 DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 2.1 Executive Director Update – Glenn Lungarini provided an update from his recent NFHS Executive Directors meeting. He shared the necessity that schools insure they have purchased copyright licenses for music to be played in public, whether at games, or in competitions such as cheerleading and dance. He indicated there are three primary groups that hold these licenses and schools should verify they have purchased them. There is also an NFHS online course on copyright that is recommended.
- 2.2 Sportsmanship Committee: Gregg Simon provided an update from the Sportsmanship Committee. He shared the positive response and work the group had done on the Officials Appreciation Initiative and the general success of the Committee this year.
- 2.3 Disqualification Rule: Gregg Simon raised the question with the Board members whether the current disqualification penalties for athletes and coaches were appropriate. At present, the penalties for a disqualification for a coach and an athlete are the same. He suggested given the role of the coach and higher expectations for an adult that the

penalties for coach disqualification be modified. The Board members gave approval for CIAC to look at the penalties and present proposed changes at a future meeting.

3.0 CONSULTANT REPORTS

- 3.1 CAS –
- 3.2 CAPSS – No report
- 3.3 CABE – No report
- 3.4 Sports Medicine – No report
- 3.5 CATA – Marc Aceto reported that the trainers association had begun a collaboration with the Korey Stringer Institute to focus on student health and safety.
- 3.6 Unified Sports – Bob Hale reported Unified held 15 soccer tournaments in the fall with 2,200 students participating, and an additional 29 schools held their own games or events during the fall. Unified also hosted a successful Student Leadership Conference with 400 students attending, and a Middle School Leadership event was taking place next week with another 160 students registered.
- 3.7 CAAD – Matt Perachi shared that Damian Frassinelli was voted on the NIAA Board of Control at the National Conference. He reported that CAAD is continuing to debate the golf season proposal and will be vetting the proposal on 3 OTA days for football in the coming months.
- 3.8 CHSCA – Deb Petruzzello shared that CHSCA Sports Committee chairs had been recently given statements about their duties for serving on committees. CHSCA continues to vet the golf seasons proposal. The organization’s coach of the year mailings will be going out this week, as well as scholarship notifications.
- 3.9 Officials – Dan Scavone reiterated that the Officials Appreciation Initiative had received tremendously positive feedback from the officials around the state.

4.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 4.1 Eligibility – Did not hear any cases
- 4.2 Eligibility Review Board –
- 4.3 Cooperative Team – Will meet later this month

5.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 5.1 Coaching disqualification punishments.

6.0 STAFF REPORTS

- 6.1 Joe Velardi reported the golf committee is continuing to look at the feedback and options for the golf season proposal.
- 6.2 Joel Cookson shared that the CIAC winter sports sportsmanship PSA and the first items related to the CIAC Centennial would be coming soon.
- 6.3 Glenn Lungarini expressed deep gratitude for the work of Stephanie Ford who is retiring as the Director of Marketing at the conclusion of the month. He noted she made significant contributions to CAS-CIAC over an extended period and formally thanked her for her efforts.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 20 (8:30 a.m.)