

**CIAC OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION
STATE-WIDE MEETING SUMMARY
JUNE 14, 2012**

The meeting was attended by officiating leaders representing practically all local or state boards. The main purpose of the meeting was to keep the lines of communication open, to update the members on important issues, and to share ideas for mutual benefit.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The group observed a moment of silence for the officials that died this past year. May they rest in peace.

MEMBERSHIP TEMPLATE (2012-13)

Improvements to simplify the roster submission process were explained and demonstrated by Matt Fischer. Boards were instructed to send additions and deletions to officialsupdates@casciac.org as per the instructions and as soon as possible along with the appropriate payment. The membership in the CIAC Officials' Association runs from July 1 to June 30 as does the NFHS membership. No new members should be submitted unless they have consented to a background check and provided the information required including their date of birth. Jadwiga will also send an electronic copy of the current roster to the appropriate individuals.

Payment should be sent to Joe Tonelli, CIAC Office, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT. 06410. The CIAC membership fee is \$10 per member; if your board also chooses to join the NFHS Officials' Association that fee is \$17 per member. Submission dates were reviewed. Boards should adhere to these dates.

EJECTION REPORTS

It was emphasized that officials are obligated to complete ejection reports in a timely manner and with precise accuracy. Mistakes are embarrassing and time consuming to rectify.

CIAC WEBSITE UPGRADE

Matt reported that the CIAC Website will be upgraded and expanded to benefit the thousands of users that frequent the various sites. The www.ciacofficialsassociation.org Website will be much improved also. Stay tuned! Matt also encouraged officials sign up for and to make use of the postponement notifications for the schools on their assignment schedules.

SOCIAL MEDIA / FACEBOOK USE BY OFFICIALS

Matt cautioned the group that officials should not be going on these sites to discuss games, players, coaches or fellow officials. It is never appropriate to "friend", "follow", or otherwise "interact" with student - athletes. This is unprofessional and inappropriate and officials groups were encouraged to educate their members. It is the responsibility of the local boards to deal with their members relative to the issue. CIAC was asked to provide the boards with some guidelines and CIAC will be happy to accommodate the request.

GRANTS PROGRAM

Hank Koritkoski, chair of the "Grants Committee" distributed the list of approved grants and indicated that that the advisory board voted to extend the grant program from now until June 30, 2013 only for

groups that have not applied and received a \$250 grant. The goal is to award a grant to all boards. It was emphasized that there are 2 additional standing grants for the initial use of arbiter and joining the NFHS Officials Assoc. The 2 standing grants of \$250 and can be applied for at any time and can be in addition to any other grant previously received.

NFHS ELECTRONIC EXAMS AND RULES TESTING OPTIONS

Joe T explained that the NFHS will no longer provide paper exams...All exams are electronic; CIAC will currently provide an electronic copy of the exam when requested through Joyce Smith at 203-250-1111 or jsmith@casciac.org. NFHS members only will be allowed to do online testing. This is a NFHSOA membership benefit and the service is provided at no cost.

COACHES RULES INTERPRETATIONS MEETINGS

Joe T thanked the boards for providing these rules sessions for coaches and leagues. In appreciation, the CIAC Officials' Association will reimburse the presenters for their round trip mileage as provide a \$50 honorarium. Boards were encouraged to provide this service which enhances the relationship amongst coaches, leagues, and officials' groups.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Criminal Information Services (Cris Company) of Oregon did an excellent job with the reports and getting the information to us in a timely manner. The first year went very well and over 4,000 officials were screened. Starting with the 2012-13 season, there will be a \$10 non-refundable background check fee payable to CIAC for all new applicants. Up to this point, the background checks were done at no additional cost to the officials or the local boards. Joe reported that over \$15,000 was expended. When meeting with new candidates it is helpful to provide them with a copy of the background check policy and consent form. Let them know that the forms can be accessed on line at www.ciacofficialsassociation.org. Also, utilize this opportunity to collect their completed consent form with their full name, including their middle name or initial. It was emphasized that boards should submit their new officials for the background check when they become candidates and not wait until they have passed all requirements.

In accordance with the background check policy, officials that get arrested for crimes that could result in jail time must report it to their local board and CIAC immediately. This is important especially when the arrest occurs during the season. Many boards have a statement to this effect in their constitution, which is advisable. In most cases the CIAC would let the board handle the matter unless it was advisable to do otherwise.

REVIEW OF SELECTED HANDOUTS

Communication protocol - Joe T mentioned that when schools and officials groups follow the protocol when lodging a legitimate complaint and both groups respond with professionalism and mutual respect and in a timely manner, issues can usually be resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned. The protocol is in the CIAC handbook and all officials should be made aware it and follow it.

OFFICIALS FEES (2012-13)

The fee schedule was distributed, which reflects a 1% raise applied to the Ice Hockey fee, which translates into a raise of 92 cents added onto the varsity fee in all sports. Joe T mentioned, just as an FYI, that there seems to be a growing feeling on the part of AD's, principals, and superintendents that

the officials should take a zero increase every so many years. This talk continues to surface more and more because many schools systems in the last several years have frozen teachers, and coaches' stipends as well as administrative raises or have included at least one year with a zero increase as part of a multi – year settlement. A phenomenon that now occurs regularly is that arbitration settlements have also come in at zero percent.

One school of thought is that the officials should volunteer to accept the 2012 -13 fees for 2013-14 also as a good will gesture. Joe T said that thus far CIAC has been reluctant to ask officials to do this...CIAC feels that it would best to have this idea come from the state boards in all the sports. Some officials groups would like to see all state boards discuss this concept at their first meeting this year to see how others feel about this. It was pointed out that all officials groups have received a fee increase for the last 15 consecutive years. During that time period varsity officials' fees in all sports increased \$28. Since the raises will be minimal as a result of the calculation factor during this economic climate, all officials will be given up last than a \$1 raise, while reaping some good PR from the member schools, if all groups volunteer to forgo an increase in 2013-2014. "Just food for thought!"

NFHS OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION EDUCATION, LIABILITY AND ACCIDENT /MEDICAL INSURANCE BENEFITS

Boards that decided to join the NFHS for \$17 per member, that includes insurance coverage for high school and all other games you officiate, except pro games, will have password protected access to the following information: educational videos and animation, online rule books and case books, a searchable rules database, the online Officials' Quarterly magazine, free online testing, and much more. A new course on officiating has been launched by the NFHS. The course is free for NFHS members. The NFHS is partnering with Arbiter Sports to be an online technology partner for NFHS members only. The NFHS members also get an excellent insurance plan through K & K insurance that covers them while officiating high school and other non high school leagues. Boards that want more information should contact Joe Tonelli @ CIAC.

EJECTION OF A COACH

In accordance with the CIAC handbook, when a coach is ejected from a game the contest may not continue until the school replaces the ejected coach with a certified coach. If this may not be accomplished within 15 minutes the official in charge will declare a forfeit win for the opposing team. It is important to note that the official has no obligation to determine the certification of the individual the school selects to take over the team, beyond asking the school or individual if they are a certified coach. This is an issue between the 2 competing schools, not the officials, and could be dealt with by the schools, league, or CIAC , if necessary, after the fact.

IDEA SHARING

For discussion purposes these questions were posed...See a few of the ideas shared by the group after each question.

What is the best thing your board has done to accomplish the following...?

1. Improve the caliber of officiating

Mentor, observer / evaluator programs, on field training, pairing veteran and less experienced officials, filming and reviewing the officials performance, purchasing a camera for filming refs.

2. Improve rules knowledge

Yearly rules testing and review, incorporating a rules review segment as part of all meetings, joining the NFHSOA and utilizing the searchable rules feature and other educational material that is included in the benefits of membership

3. Improve conditioning and physical fitness

Soccer officials are required to do a yearly 1 mile run for time and other conditioning drills as part of their on - going physical fitness efforts..It was noted that very few boards do anything specific in this area and none of the boards required a physical. Although this is a sensitive area perhaps boards should consider providing additional guidelines or suggestions for members to consider.

4. Improve conflict resolution skills

This is an extremely important aspect of officiating and often separates the average officials from the good or great ones. Boards do some role playing to train refs, some show videos of umps over-reacting as an example of what not to do, many emphasize the positive aspects of remaining level headed and calm in all situation, all agreed that communicating with the athletes, coaches and others is an area that needs to be addressed more today than ever before. Effective officials do not throw gasoline on fires.

5. Train and retain new members

Although we have experienced an increase in new officials all agree that the key is to retain them for a significant number of years. It was mentioned that another free benefit of NFHSOA membership is an on-line course designed to help new officials...NFHSOA members should take advantage of this free offer, Bring the newer refs along slowly and pick your spots when assigning them to games, have special sessions for 1st, 2nd and 3rd year refs to prepare and encourage them.

6. To get officials to commit for next year and pay their fees

All boards were encouraged to collect fees and membership dues a year in advance. The membership year for the CIAC and the NFHS runs from July 1 to June 30th.

MEETING WRAP UP

Joe thanked the group for the excellent cooperation and support that CIAC has received from all officials groups and for their dedicated service to high school sports. Let us know how we can continue to support your efforts. It seems hard to believe that the CIAC Officials Association was resurrected in 2005-06. It was a fast 7 years and I have enjoyed my role in working together with you to better serve the officials groups and the member schools.
Have a great summer!!

