

## MIAA Football Committee

Minutes – Jan. 19, 2023

The football committee met on Jan. 19, 2023 virtually with 18 members in attendance as well as some media.

**Minutes** of the Sept. 15, 2022 meeting were read and approved, (D.Heres, B. Fonseca) 16-0-0

**2022 Tournament Review:** Scott Paine, tournament director and Richard Pearson, liaison, reviewed the 2022 tournament. Thanking sites for hosting and mentioning that much went very well. It was mentioned there were challenges finding and confirming state semi-final sites. All tournament administrators will work next year to confirm sites earlier to avoid last minute challenges. There was brief discussion about scheduling of games during the higher seed, which days – Thursday, Friday, Saturday. No vote or action taken.

**Football Format 2023** - R. Pearson introduced format ideas to think about for March discussion; format ideas discussed: size of teams, cutoff date language, assignment of officials, non-playoff schedule dates and times, non-playoff matchups

**Coaches Assoc. Proposal** – Each district rep. spoke about their efforts to elicit feedback from their constituents.

Feedback/Input

- majority against any change
- 64 teams two days and what thanksgiving will actually look like
- 16 vs 8 qualifying, some not sure about consolation; almost 50-50 split; calendar concerns some
- surveyed AD's, nobody in favor of; brought it up again, no change in opinion
- 52% against, 3\_% support \_\_\_ undecided; extended time in winter and some 16 v 8
- larger teams support, smaller numbers may not be in favor; non-playoff games
- surveyed AD's, some responses, majority against, some in favor; reducing teams not really in favor; winter season timing
- nobody really agrees with current proposal; vocational opposition considering vocational playoffs; season dates moving might help/calendar challenges;
- Patriot 100% against, winter season, other AD's against it as well; some like proposal, but some holes, (i.e. - dictate a bye, starting dates, would need to move winter sports, tough to get games already)
- Officials - Thanksgiving game brings back meaning; consolation may be positive for some
- MASC - cutting into winter? A little more than 50-50
- Coaches - things we don't control; not meeting bullet points of statewide proposal; coaches assoc. concerned about football specific needs

Questions and discussion by committee members; based on feedback, should there be tweaking? How best to vet the proposal?; can we do a subcommittee with the coaches; number of teams that make the playoffs; safety

Motion for subcommittee to tweak (S. Traister, M. Procacini) 16-1-1

Sub-Committee Volunteers - M. Procacini, J. Costa, S. Dembowski, R. Conway, S. Traister; Meet: Weds. Feb 1 - 10:00 AM

Discussion point - Consistent Survey to send to districts - one general survey to all

**NFHS Rules 2023:** R. Pearson mentioned that he had attended the NFHS Football Rules meeting a few weeks earlier. Final rule changes will be voted on by the NFHS and published in February.

**Coaches Topics:** S. Dembowski mentioned a few topics brought forward by coaches:

- First round of playoffs, getting matchups on Sunday is helpful
- Semi-Finals locker rooms and bathrooms
- Home team, does not have an option of side? Can home team have option of sideline? (Format)
- More of a plan for teams to video, sideline and end zone

**Upcoming Meeting Schedule: March 1, 2023 – 10:00am In-Person**

Move to adjourn: (S. Dembowski, D. Bauer) unanimous

The Football Committee met at the Franklin office on Sept. 15, 2022. After the meeting was called to order, the members of the committee introduced themselves as has been the precedent for first meeting of the year. R. Pearson mentioned completion of the Conflict of Interest statement and spoke briefly to the standard Governance Document.

**Election of Committee Leadership:** Committee leadership opportunities were opened to the members of the committee.

*Motion:* To elect Jay Costa as chair of the committee. No other nominations were offered. (D. Pignone, S. Dembowski) Approved 15-0-0

*Motion:* To elect Don Heres as the vice-chair of the committee. No other nominations were offered. (J. Costa, B. Fonseca) Approved 15-0-0

*Motion:* To elect Dave Pignone as the secretary of the committee. No other nominations were offered. (D. Heres, M. Procacini) Approved 15-0-0

**Minutes:** Minutes of the previous meeting were moved and approved, (J. MacCreery, J. Gamache) 15-0-0

**Football Format 2022:** R. Pearson stated there were no changes to the format other than an update for the Medical Personnel necessary to reflect current requirements for medical personal for each team at all games, home and away. Additionally it was also mentioned that a reminder be sent to schools if they wish to opt. out of the non-playoff scheduling/brackets.

Non-Playoff leadership was appointed. S. Traister – South, D. Pignone – North, P. Jones – Central, and J. Gamache – West.

O’Bryant High School football team lost a game due to cancellation of another school program and have been unable to acquire another opponent. They appealed to the committee to allow them to be eligible for the tournament even though they will only have 6 games during the qualifying period.

*Motion:* To allow O’Bryant High School qualification possibility with only 6 total games during the qualifying period. (D. Pignone, D. Heres) Approved 15-0-0

*Motion:* To allow R. Pearson to approve similar should it arise. (J. MacCreery, R. Conway) Approved 15-0-0

**Technology use during games:** R. Pearson mentioned that some schools have reached out about challenges with technology use during games. The rule as listed in the MIAA Handbook was mentioned. Discussion only, no action.

**Alignment Cycle 2023-25:** R. Pearson discussed the current development of alignments for football (and all sports) to be published by the end of September. Appeals will be open until the end of October with final decisions by the end of November. A representative, of the football committee (Chair or designee) will serve on the first level of appeal consideration.

R. Pearson showed the committee how the new Competitive Equity Modifier will be applied to all member schools. The committee asked questions and discussed the alignment process.

**Officials Topics:** Tom Azevedo, official’s representative, mentioned disseminating a preseason memo to all officials. He also mentioned that officials were helping to clarify expectations with coaches before the start of game, in particular medical personnel for both teams and any other

requirements. Pants and pads (knee length, coverage and pad present) are a challenge for officials.

**Coaches Topics:** S. Dembowski, coaches' representative on the committee, presented a Coaches' Association proposal to alter the playoff format. That proposal will be linked from the MIAA Football page when finalized.

**MIAA Rule Change Proposals 2023-25:** The committee reviewed and voted on all rule change proposals.

**Next meeting:** January 19, 2023