



Minnesota Curling Association

2018 Minnesota Curling Association Annual Spring Meeting Minutes

Saturday, April 21, 2018

Four Seasons Curling Club, Blaine, MN.

- Meeting was called to order by Kathy Busch at 10:00am on Saturday, April 21, 2018.
- Roll call was taken --- Attendees:

MCA President: Kathy Busch, present

MCA First Vice President: position open

MCA Second Vice President: position open

MCA Secretary: Cyndee Johnson, absent, attending USCA Board of Directors Meeting, Colorado

MCA Treasurer: Norma O'Leary, absent, competing in Senior World Champions, Sweden (sent report)

MCA USCA Representatives: Cyndee Johnson and Nick Wellen, absent, attending USCA Meeting (sent report)

Minnesota Clubs Representatives present: Dan Rooney, Scott Threinen, Troy Dittberner (Vikingland, Alexandria); Larry Barrot, Jeff Annis (Heather, Mapleton); Sandra McMakin (Dakota); Carrie Harms (Four Seasons, Blaine); Sandy Bromenschenkel (Itasca, Grand Rapids); Barb Klussendorf (Cairn Lassies, St. Paul); Ron Paul (St. Paul); Rick Osbakken (Two Harbors); Eric Siefkes (Mankato); Phil Devore (Duluth); Kelli Ellingson (Cambridge); Kelsey Schuder (Rochester); Denny Bone (Mesabi, Virginia)

- Confirmed there was a quorum present to approve decisions.

Review of Previous Annual Meeting & Minutes:

- Last MCA Annual Membership Meeting was June 25, 2016.
- Kathy reviewed the highlights of that meeting and the minutes were approved.
 - Have a new and improved website after the previous one was literally hacked and destroyed
 - Added Junior Boys and Girls U-18 to the MCA events and website
 - Joe Zezel retired from officiating at state events, replacement needed

Review of Treasurer's Report:

- Kathy presented the Treasurer's report and Phil Devore added additional commentary and explanation.
 - Most income comes from member clubs and the dues they pay (\$3/curler). Important to note that dues must be paid by January 31 of each year in order to count toward the numbers used to determine how many regional USCA representatives and votes Minnesota's gets at national meetings. Key message is pay your dues on time.
 - MCA is owed \$6,000 from fraud loss recovery, repayments continue per schedule.
 - The expense part of the report shows exactly what the MCA supports and how money is spent. Read the notations for further explanation.
 - Notation #4 should say that Patches are given to winners (not participants) of Clubs, Mixed, U-18 playdowns.
 - The Putnam Investment Account has closer to \$45,000 in it – giving the MCA a cash balance of approximately \$80,000.
 - The Treasurer's Report was approved.

- Currently, we pay the head official a \$300 stipend for Mixed, M & W State Club Championships and B & G U-18 State Championships. There was a proposal to keep the \$300 stipend for Mixed, but increase the stipend to \$500 for State Clubs and U-18 State Championships as it is significantly more work.
 - The question was asked if other regions pay their officials. No one present knew for sure, but one person said they didn't think they did in Wisconsin.
 - The proposal to raise the stipend for the Head Official to \$500 for State Club and U-18 State Championships while leaving the stipend at \$300 for Mixed State Championship was approved.
- Another proposal was to create a Finance Committee. The Treasurer would be a member along with others.
 - Committee to be forward thinking and forward budgeting about MCA funds.
 - For instance, should we give zero interest loans to clubs that need things to continue curling (like Mankato needed in the past)? Should we raise fee from \$3 to something more and what would that do for the MCA, etc.
 - Those present agreed with the idea. Now we need members to be part of this committee (see later notes).

Recap of 2017-2018 MCA State Events:

- The winners of the 2017-2018 MCA state events are posted on the MCA website, along with past winners.
- Information on how to host an MCA state event is also posted on the MCA website.
- There was no Men's Senior State Event this year as no club agreed to host it. See next discussion on rotating clubs to host events.

Host Clubs for 2018-2019 State Events:

- Kathy proposed a 4 year rotation for the MCA events. The purpose is to make sure the MCA isn't scrambling at the last minute to find host clubs and officials as well as to make sure participants have plenty of notice so they can decide if they want to participate in an event. We reviewed the proposed schedule. Conversation ensued with the key points below.
 - Should the 4 year rotation focus on events that lead to something beyond the state (e.g. Nationals)? If so, Gopher State Women's and the Men's Seniors Bonspiels would not be part of the rotation.
 - Currently, if supported by the MCA, then only MCA and USCA clubs can participate and/or host state event.
 - Gopher State has its own organization and the current President (Ann Flis) would prefer to find their own sites rather than be part of the rotation.
 - Men's Seniors only gets 16 pins from the MCA.
 - Proposal was made to have Gopher State and Men's Seniors not be part of the official rotation. These events would report at the MCA Annual Spring Meeting both the results of their event and who will be hosting the next location.
 - Proposal was approved.
 - While reviewing the proposed schedule for the other events (minus Gopher State and Men's Seniors), Phil Devore mentioned that the host club needs to have at least 5 sheets for the State Club Championships if both Men's and Women's events are held at the same site, same time. The same is true for the Junior Boys' and Girls' U-18.
 - A same time, same host club is preferred for Clubs and U-18 as only one official is needed versus two and qualified officials are (currently) hard to come by.
 - In addition, these events typically run four days (Thursday – Sunday) so host clubs need to be aware as they may have to cancel one or several of their regular club leagues.
- Kathy went through the schedule for all events, focusing on the next two years. Results are as follows:
 - Men's Seniors – both Bemidji and Cambridge are good with hosting in the next 2 years. While not officially part of the MCA schedule (per decision above), clubs have been lined up. In addition, Two Harbors expressed an interest in future events.
 - Gopher State – Brainerd and Mankato are good with hosting in the next 2 years. In addition, Duluth, Cambridge and Itasca also expressed interest in hosting in the future. This information will be given to Ann Flis as she determines locations for Gopher State.

- M & W State Club Championships – Curl Mesabi is good with 2019 or 2020. Chaska is tentatively good with 2020, but it depends on if they get chosen to host the State Juniors. Perhaps Curl Mesabi and Chaska can switch years with Chaska hosting in 2018-2019 and Curl Mesabi in 2019-2020. Kathy will follow up. In addition, Dakota can possibly host down the road.
- B & G U-18 State Championships – Duluth and St. Paul are ok to host for the next 4 years as long as it stays between Christmas and New Year's.
- Mixed State Championship – Dakota and Four Seasons are good with hosting the next 2 years. In addition, Two Harbors, Mankato and Cambridge may be interested in the future.
 - Noted that currently Mixed Doubles is run at the national level, no state event.
- Curl Mesabi needs to look at their calendar and will get back with Kathy on options for what it can host.
- Saint Paul can possibly host an event in January if the Big Spiel gets moved to the fall.
- Itasca can't host in the 2018-2019 season, but is a possibility for future seasons.

New Business:

- Larry Barrot from Heather CC, Mapleton, responded to a question about the previous existing Minnesota State High School Championship.
 - It hasn't been played for the last 2 years, but has been played at 12 clubs around the state in the past. Do we keep it going? Larry has driven this in the past, but he needs to give this up. There is a trophy, which Larry has at his house and is wondering where the trophy should be housed going forward.
 - Discussion about high school level programs and how this is being handled.
 - Dakota and Four Seasons have High School level programs, but it is hard to get it to be a letter sport.
 - Four Seasons has a multi-week program and it is attractive to kids, but parents are asking "What's next?" Hard to get the school districts to support with transportation, etc. Would be great to have a Junior bonspiel circuit that maybe the MCA can coordinate across the state.
 - Dakota has gone the "Independent Provider" route to get letters awarded to their high school program participants.
 - Questions asked about how this fits or doesn't fit with the Junior programs around the state as well as the U-18 programs.
 - Proposal was to continue discussion about this, including adding information to the MCA website about how to start a High School Program.
 - Kathy will talk with Larry and Sandra (Dakota) and Keri (Four Seasons) on how to move forward.

Missing Trophies:

Looking specifically for the Mixed State Trophy. Everyone asked to look around their clubs and report to Kathy Busch any state or national trophies currently held at particular clubs.

MCA Board Nominations & Elections and Committees Discussion:

- Executive Board Positions:
 - President – Kathy Busch (St. Paul) agreed to serve another year. Her nomination was approved.
 - Secretary – Cyndee Johnson (Duluth) (via Kathy Busch) agreed to serve another year. Her nomination was approved.
 - Treasurer – Norma O'Leary (Two Harbors/Duluth) (via Kathy Busch) agreed to serve another year. Her nomination was approved.
 - 1st Vice President (Games and Events) – Phil Devore was nominated and approved to fill this position which is currently vacant. Phil asked that someone be in the wings to take over from him in the future. Carrie Harms (Four Seasons) volunteered Todd Birr to help Phil in the meantime.

- 2nd Vice President (Communications) – Kelli Ellingson (Cambridge) was nominated and approved to fill this position, taking over from Denny Bone.
- MCA Representative to USCA Board – Cyndee Johnson’s (Duluth) term is complete in June 2018. Jeff Annis (Mapleton) was elected to replace CJ. Nick Wellen (FS, Blaine) continues until June 2019.
- MCA Committees:
 - Communications – Kelli Ellingson (Cambridge) and Sandy Bromenschenkel (Itasca) will be members.
 - Finance – Treasurer Norma O’Leary will be a member.
 - Officials – Susie Czarnetzki will chair and Sandra McMakin will be a member.
 - Kathy reported Susie Czarnetzki (Willmar) is willing to serve on the Officials Committee. Susie has been reviewing and cleaning up the (outdated) database of Minnesota Officials and their levels. Besides keeping a good list, the committee will also assign officials to MCA events, conduct training for officials, and other tasks. Going forward, Susie will ask each club to disseminate information about being an official to its members to recruit additional officials as well as making sure those listed by club is correct.
 - Icemakers – Scott Belvitch (Chaska) will be a member.
 - All committees are looking for additional members. Each club to find additional members. Specific tasks and possible committee activities are listed in the proposed updated Bylaws.

MCA Bylaws:

- A revised set of Bylaws, more appropriate to the current method of MCA operations than the 1997 set, was sent to all clubs in March for review. Many attendees said they read the proposed revision and they had feedback. There was not enough time to review all comments at this meeting.
 - Club representatives asked to review and provide comments to Kathy Busch by July 1, 2018.
 - Executive Board will revise as needed and send revision to clubs for a vote by September 1, 2018.
 - Want these approved for the 2018-2019 season.

Club Updates:

Denny Bone (Curl Mesabi) asked what is working to both recruit AND retain curlers. They hold different fun events (e.g. Burger Night) and get good attendance, but few become long-term members.

- Four Seasons – have different open houses and then a multi-week fun league. This fun league becomes a stepping stone to joining a “regular” league. People are much more confident to moving up to a regular league after having played multiple weeks with like-skilled individuals.
- Duluth – suggests having a multi-week program for new curlers where you focus on different parts of the game (delivery, sweeping, strategy, etc.). You must have instructors conduct these sessions so people really learn how to curl and not just in one session. By bringing people back multiple times and really teaching them in depth, they are much more confident in joining a league.
- Saint Paul – They have a spring league for new curlers and charge much less money than if joining the club and paying for a regular league.
- Rochester – They have a 4-6 week instructional league which they charge for, but if they join a league afterwards, they have that charge credited to their league fees. This is a set program with instruction – not just playing games – similar to what Duluth suggests.
- Curl Mesabi – suggests the MCA might want to help with this – offering suggestions of what really works to recruit and retain curlers.

Game Rules Update:

- WCF events will play the Five-Rock Free Guard Zone beginning October 2018. The 2018 World Mixed will be played with this new rule. The USCA will inform us when they will adopt this – but probably at the same time.
 - Sandra McMakin (Dakota) suggested that Minnesota State Championships use the same rules as the World Curling Foundation. She mentioned there was confusion and consternation at the Mixed

Nationals (that Dakota hosted) when some teams wanted to use the five-rock free guard zone rule (as it will be in effect when the 2018 Worlds take place) and some teams were not prepared to implement this strategy.

- MCA is continuing to look at whether the State Club Championships and U-18 should go to 8 ends vs 10 ends (Mixed already is 8 ends). The USCA stipulates regions have the freedom to run playdowns however they choose. It was agreed Minnesota events should consider Sandra's point above about potentially matching the World rules.

MCA Website and Social Media Accounts:

MCA received a request from the MN Historical Society about expanding their reference library section on curling in Minnesota. Anyone able to assist this project should contact Kathy Busch.

Minnesota's USCA Representatives Report:

Our two USCA representatives, Cyndee Johnson and Nick Wellen submitted the following ---while they were in Colorado at the USCA Board of Directors Meeting.

- Electing a New Chair, Rich Lepping's term is complete
- Doug Potter is presenting a members survey on behalf of the USCA Membership Committee
 - 25% of the USCA membership comes from Minnesota (most of any region)
- Each club's roster information for USCA Media Guide is due to Terry Davis by August 1st
- 2018 Members Assembly: Albany, NY, October 13 & 14
- Darwin Grant: Applications due June 1, 2018
- The Business of Curling Symposium: June 2 & 3, 2018, Dakota Curling Club, Lakeville
- Curling News Special Olympic Insert // MCA buying congratulatory ad
- Olympic Coach Phil Drobnick, Mesabi: finalist for the Team USA Awards presented by Dow for Best of the Games, to be announced on April 26 during a feature program on NBC.

USWCA Business:

Reminder to all state clubs: register your women's bonspiels on the USWCA Circuit to allow competing curlers to earn points for winning your bonspiel.

November 4 - 16, 2018 (dates subject to change), sixteen members of the United States Women's Curling Association will be participating in a curling tour of the Canadian Maritimes (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island). Of note...the men are thinking of starting a similar tour. Club representatives should ask at their clubs to gauge interest.

2019 Spring Meeting:

Agreed it would be held at the Four Seasons Curling Club in Blaine. Exact date TBD.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Barb Klussendorf, Cairn Lassies, St. Paul CC