



# Minnesota Curling Association

2024 Annual MCA Board and Membership Meeting

Sunday, June 2, 2024, 6 pm, via Zoom

## **Call to Order**

In attendance: Lisa Rudolph (MCA President, Richfield), Jason Botterill (MCA VP, Dakota, Chaska), Kathy Busch (MCA VP, St. Paul), Norma O'Leary (MCA Treasurer, Duluth), Darwin Isdahl (MCA Secretary, Four Seasons, St. Paul), Jeff Annis (MCA USCA rep, Heather/Mapleton), Anne Field (Arden Hills), Dave Willford (Bemidji), Michael McEniry (Brainerd Lakes), Duane Hasegawa (Cook County), Kelly Hadiaris (Duluth), Mona Sjostrand (Itasca)

Per MCA bylaws, a quorum is two thirds the executive board and one half the current paid club membership (11 of 22). While the club quorum fell short of the one half quorum, the bylaws allow for business to be conducted with notification that the quorum was not met. If the executive board were included, there were, however, members of 12 clubs represented.

The 2024 agenda and meeting minutes from the 2023 annual meeting were accepted and approved without changes.

## **President's Report (Lisa Rudolph)**

### Ongoing activities

- Update MCA website, MNcurling.org
- Produce a bonspiel calendar for member clubs
- Hosting Regional Championships
- Awarding pins and patches

### New Initiatives

Two top items on last year's survey were accomplished:

- Successfully reinstated the Minnesota High School Curling Championship. It was held in Duluth in March, with 24 teams participating from 18 schools and 9 clubs. Feedback was very positive from participants.
- Sponsored education for current curlers, including an ice maker clinic, officials clinic and an adult skills clinic featuring 3 curling experts, held in Cambridge. Future preference will be given to clubs hosting events as a way to give back.
- Curling Day in Minnesota featured media exposure, 16 participating clubs as well as the U of MN curling club.
- Curling commercial (McQuillan Brothers) facilitated by MCA.

We want to continue to look for ways to get curling in front of more people.

## **Treasurer's Report (Norma O'Leary)**

- Twenty-two clubs have paid their dues this year, representing an increase of almost 37% over the prior year.
- Received \$2,905 from USCA for playdowns, as more MN teams this year.
- Received \$1,235 for the skills clinic in Cambridge

- Arena club championship costs far more than received in dues, as membership is not very high at the Arena clubs
- For the year, a loss of \$3,021. With MCA's savings, this is sustainable for the short-term, but would eventually need to change.
- Prior to the pandemic, a decision had been made to raise the dues from \$3/curler to \$4/curler, but was never implemented. Discussion was held on whether that should be reinstated (it has not changed for more than 40 years). It was decided to leave at \$3 for now, but this will likely be revisited next year.
- Another possible change would be to raise the \$90 regional fee to \$100 per curler. At this time, this option was tabled as well.

The treasurer's report was accepted without changes.

### **Recap of MCA State Events (Jason Botterill)**

- **U18** - Bemidji hosted Dec 14-17, including eight boys teams and five girls teams. Guentzel (boys) and Johnson (girls) were the winners with Conrad Kelly the umpire.
- **Club Playdowns** - Brainerd Lakes hosted, including ten mens and three womens teams. Drews (mens) and Ostrowski (womens) were the winners with Randy Czarnetzki the chief umpire.
- **Mixed Playdowns** - Two Harbors hosted. Team Jukich won the event with Andrea Fierst the umpire.
- **Arena Playdowns** - Dakota hosted, including five mens teams and one womens team. Russell (mens) and Schuder (womens) were the winners. Susie Czarnetzki and Erin Krug served as umpires.
- **Minnesota High School Championship** - Duluth hosted this event, which hadn't been held for decades. Kerry Hadiaris reported that the MCA was very supportive, helping make this a very successful event.

We are looking for ways to make these events bigger and better, particularly those without many team entries. It seems there may be an opportunity to attract more teams by better communication to ensure all candidate teams at least are aware of the events. Perhaps separate flyers to catch their eye along with a motivational statement encouraging teams to represent Minnesota. *An action item was noted to make separate flyers as suggested.* Perhaps MCA could create a pipeline with the 5 & Under group, as these may be the future teams to fill these spots. Some in attendance stressed that it is essential that all clubs champion these events.

The Dakota Curling Club is slated for mixed in 2025, but the other hosts are yet to be arranged. The current hosting pool is Bemidji and St. Paul (U18), Brainerd Lakes (Clubs), Two Harbors and Dakota (Mixed) and Dakota (Arena). The goal is to fill this pool for the next 3-5 years. Kerry Hاديaris offered that Duluth would be willing to host in future years as well.

The benefits of hosting these events is \$750 from the MCA in addition to waiving the entry fee for one team from the club. The MCA also helps coordinate registration and schedules officials.

### **USCA Event Recap and Upcoming (Jason Botterill)**

USCA held four events in Minnesota during the season:

- Youth Olympic Games (Bemidji)
- Arena (Curl Mesabi)
- Mens Seniors (Heather)
- 5 & Under (Chaska)

Clubs are needed to continue to fill in these spots in the future.

## **Bylaws Update (Kathy Busch)**

The previous bylaws revision was completed in 1997. Work has been done to revise since 2019 to better reflect what the MCA does and how it operates. Some changes were necessitated now by the change in the USCA Membership Model, approved at Members' Assembly in October 2023. A summary of proposed changes:

- Playdowns changes
- Club membership changes
- Changes in how the board acts
- MCA's interaction with USA Curling (club oriented instead of regions)

Jeff Annis moved to accept the revised bylaws and Norma O'Leary seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Kathy will collect the appropriate signatures to make it official.

## **USCA Business Update (Jeff Annis)**

The USAC new membership model is going well. They have also sold \$36,000 in merchandise. Sioux Falls, South Dakota has been selected as the next Olympics trial site. A goal is to host the mens and womens worlds events before 2030. Sarah Hirschland, the CEO of USOPC stated that she is happy with the direction US curling is going, but would, of course, like a few more medals.

Craig Perry is connected to Slow Coach – a good resource for all info on curling. The GNCC has voted to rejoin USA Curling, which brings 70 clubs back in.

USCA's membership assembly will be held from August 9-11 in Chaska. All are encouraged to attend. MCA is looking for ways to tag onto this event, such as a Minnesota club assembly or perhaps a golf outing.

USCA has moved their office to Eden Prairie. They are still investigating the establishment of a national curling center and would like to do that in Minnesota.

Bret Jackson and Collin Huffman were reinstated as chair and vice-chair.

Jeff represented Minnesota at 3 national events, including at the Heather club. Lisa also attended 3 national events on behalf of MCA. USA Curling thanks Minnesota, as they see good things happening.

There was discussion about better communication, including resurrecting the media guide they used to put out. Jeff will follow up.

### **Club Reports**

***Heather/Mapleton (Jeff Annis):*** The Mens Senior national event went well this past year.

***Cook County (Duane Hasegawa):*** The biggest challenge for the club is new member recruitment. There are currently 60 members, and competing with other winter sports is difficult. As the membership ages, they are less eager to go to state or national events. Their bonspiels mostly broke even, so they are faced with the need to likely increase membership rates as costs go up. Lisa Rudolph offered to pass along ideas that have had some success.

***Arden Hills (Anne Field):*** This year celebrated their 50th Anniversary of the Cairn Lassies. They have many older members, but they continue to thrive welcoming new members every season.

***Brainerd Lakes (Michael McEniry):*** The Minnesota state playdowns they hosted went well. They could be available to host again in 2026, but are committed to Mens Seniors in 2025. They appreciate the help the MCA provides with scheduling. Next season, they

are hosting a club-level youth bonspiel on the first weekend in November as well as their typical bonspiels.

***Duluth Curling Club (Kerry Hadiaris):*** The club is doing great, with high membership and high participation. They are working on things that are not yet ready to be announced, but that should come soon. They loved hosting the high school championships.

***Itasca Curling Club (Ramona Sjostrand):*** The club currently has 150 members, many of them new. They acquired a new ice system last year. Their goal is to try to keep dues down. Their juniors are doing well. They hosted four bonspiels last year. To attract new members, they held a community event with a sheet to show how to curl. They also went to local breweries with information and demoed curling.

***Richfield Curling Club (Lisa Rudolph):*** They completed their first year with winter ice. They will continue for 3-4 weeks and then will shut down until the fall. Lisa noted that their club can be a starting point for curlers, as the lead on Team Drews (Minnesota club champion) started at Richfield and received their first gift certificate.

***Dakota Curling Club (Jason Botterill):*** The club's leagues have been mostly full. Their challenge now is to find ways to expand their capacity to continue to grow. They are looking at possibly adding a mezzanine. After a difficult period a few years ago, the club has emerged as very stable, which allows the board to look into the future. They are currently working on 3, 5 and 10 year plans.

### **Old Business (Lisa Rudolph)**

***Communication:*** We have made progress in refreshing the website. A suggestion was made to link a page on the website to all clubs with streaming services. We would like to try to get the calendar put together earlier this year than previously (October seems reasonable).

**Putnam Fund:** The MCA currently has just over \$70,000 in the Putnam fund. Lisa identified some possible options on which some of this money could be spent:

- Minnesota curling passport
- Instructional brochures
- Rule book
- “Learn to curl” video for member club use
- License plate
- “Club in a box”
- Funding for clubs to send teams and coaches to the high school championships
- Grants / loans to clubs in need
- Scholarship
- Website help

There was discussion on creating a financial advisory group to consider the options.

### **Election / Certification of Officers (Lisa Rudolph)**

All present officers have indicated that they are willing to continue in their present positions. Nominated were:

<b>President:</b>	Lisa Rudolph
<b>First Vice-President:</b>	Jason Botterill
<b>Second Vice-President:</b>	Kathy Busch
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Norma O’Leary
<b>Secretary:</b>	Darwin Isdahl
<b>USCA representative:</b>	Jeff Annis
<b>Member at Large:</b>	Phil Devore



A motion was made to accept all of the officers for another term by Anne Field, seconded by Kerry Hadiaris, passing unanimously.

### **New Business (Lisa Rudolph)**

- The current dues collection date is January 31st. Because that is so far into the season, Lisa suggested moving this date up to January 1st. Some clubs are typically late, and it is very hard to collect past dues once the season is over. The clubs could let the MCA know if an extension is needed. The club representatives felt this was reasonable. Kathy will send an email.
- Lisa proposed consideration of the payment amounts to host clubs. Currently, host clubs are paid \$1,000 for USCA events and \$750 for MCA events. This is probably because the USCA events are typically longer. Discussion was held as to whether to change these amounts or make them equal.
- Consideration should also be given as to the payments teams are given that go to Nationals
- A travel budget of \$1,000 for the president or other representative from the MCA was established to attend MCA events (motion carried).

The meeting was adjourned.