
	<p><b>Nepean Knights Minor Lacrosse Association</b>  Emergency - Executive Meeting  Monday, June 24, 2024  7:00 - 9:00 pm  Tony Graham Recreation Centre</p>	
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**Present:** Jill Balcom, Al Brown, Joanne Green, Derek Herfst, Phil Kiazyk, Mark Lange, Tyler McDonald, Cheryl Scott, Sheldon Spears, Erin Petruska, Jessica White, Jeff Zywicki

**Absent:**



**Welcome and Call to Order** – Al Brown (initiated), Phil Kiazyk, (seconded)

**Land Acknowledgement** – Al Brown

**Agenda**

- 1. This emergency meeting was scheduled to discuss the current situation on the board, the departure of two essential members, and the plan forward. (Al Brown)**

Al asked to open the meeting, summarizing why he was initially asked to join the NKMLA, which was specifically due to his strong ability to bring people together, work with empathy, when addressing difficult/hard situations, he always did so directly, face to face and with respect. Unfortunately, recently, this has not been reciprocated. Al is not able to mend the current fractures, and feels this behaviour can not continue. He encouraged the board to put aside differences, and see the business through moving forward. Subsequently, Al has decided he must resign as President from the Nepean Knights Minor Lacrosse Association, effective immediately.

Below is the Resignation letter of Al Brown to the Nepean Knights Minor Lacrosse Association Executive:

After much reflection, it is with deep sadness that I tender my resignation as the President of the Nepean Knights Minor Lacrosse Association due to the unbearable toxicity that exists on our board.

Recently, a couple of board members have stepped away citing similar sentiments. I can no longer devote time and energy to supporting a board that does not align with my personal beliefs and values. When I accepted this position, my hope was to enact change, build back this association, and work collaboratively and ethically with the other members of the board. To that end, I tried to bring in volunteers to rejuvenate this board and continue the important work we were undertaking. But this board has lost its moral compass. It no longer provides a safe space for volunteers to do their work and is permissive of behaviours that do not reflect our Knight’s code of conduct. Shouldn’t board members be held to an even higher standard? The current climate of the board and the potential risk to members’ athletes is driving volunteers away.

The prevailing working conditions and ongoing attacks on me personally have affected my family and have even landed on my children (the most shameful part of minor sports in my opinion). As president, I was entrusted to uphold the values and policies of the Nepean Knights. I understood that tough decisions needed to be made, and I made them never imagining that I or my children would be targeted. No child should have to carry the weight of their dad's decisions as a volunteer on a board.

Although many great things have been achieved over the last 5 years of my presidency, the values of this board no longer align with who I am as a person. That is why I can no longer stand with this board. I leave the association with:

- growing registration (likely the 2nd largest base registration in the province)
- a healthy balance sheet
- ONCA compliance (1 year ahead of schedule)
- many oversight policies / controls / and documentation to support our ONCA compliance and members in general
- many new board positions to share the workload
- a more informative website
- a new set of Bylaws
- an improved house league
- a rejuvenated Nepean Tournament
- all new house league jerseys
- a purchasing plan to renew competitive jerseys

I certainly will not take credit for all of this, but am personally proud to have done my part for this association despite the cost to my family.

My hope is that this board will reflect deeply on the recent unplanned departures of three members. Notwithstanding the personal cost, I wish the Nepean Knights continued growth and much success in the years to come.

This resignation is effective immediately. Al Brown departed the meeting following the reading of his resignation.

## **2. NKMLA Executive Round-table (All)**

The executive discussed how to move forward. A number of topics discussed include;

- o Reiteration of the need for respect on the board.
- o Need for the board to have a specific session to discuss the board mandate, values and ethics, along with the main goals, and how these may be achieved. Once established this decree may be used to measure board behaviour and enforce mutual respect, and decision making (we may not all agree, but if decisions align with the overall mandate, then we can all agree to support the final decisions and move forward unified as a board).
- o Recent challenges with behaviour (players, parents, coaches), lack of accountability, and application of repercussions to inappropriate behaviour was discussed and identified as a concern and area requiring further examination. The consideration of applying policies similar to hockey associations rules to lacrosse was discussed (i.e. no tolerance for inappropriate behaviours, derogatory language, and/or immediate removal from the arena of parents/spectators who are not respectful to officials).
- o Review and reiteration of Affiliated Players (AP) policy needs to be documented and stressed to coaches and managers (and parents for awareness).

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## **3. Executive Board Review of the Constitution and By-Laws (All)**

- o The executive board reviewed the constitution and by-laws to review and consider the requirements in relation to unexpected vacancies on the board. Through review and discussion, the board determined immediate identification of interim persons in the vacant position was essential in order to maintain the requirements of the lacrosse season. As per the constitution, the board may identify and assign interim person(s) to vacant positions, until the next AGM. One main requirement specified was the need for all interim persons must have been on the executive board for one or more years.

#### **4. NKMLA Executive discussion on interim positions and nominations (All)**

- o Jessica White was identified as being a strong candidate in the interim President Role. Jessica has not only been the Registrar, but has worked in the Vice President position and has a wealth of knowledge regarding the NKMLA. Jessica indicated she would be willing to take on the interim President role until the end of the 2024 season (AGM). The board voted on Jessica White as interim President, quorum was obtained, and the nomination approved.
- o Jill Balcom was nominated by Jessica White and seconded by Cheryl Scott for the interim role as Vice President. Jill's extensive experience as the House League Director has provided her the ability to function successfully in this position until the end of the 2024 season (AGM). The board voted on Jill Balcom as interim Vice President, quorum was obtained, and the nomination approved.
- o Jeff Sweet was contacted, and updated regarding the current situation on the board, and offered to support the NKMLA by stepping into the interim Treasurer position until the remainder of the 2024 season (AGM). This role is not new to Jeff, as he successfully was the NKMLA Treasurer in the past, so his experience, and existing knowledge, and willingness to help will aid the board greatly in the current predicament. The board voted on Jeff Sweet returning as interim Treasurer, quorum was obtained, and the nomination approved.

#### **5. Next Meeting**

- o The board determined a need to meet prior to the Zone Championships, ideally during the week of July 8<sup>th</sup>. Cheryl Scott, in consultation with Jessica and Jill will proceed to make arrangements for this follow up meeting.

#### **6. Move to adjourn the meeting:** Phil Kiazuk (initiated), Derek Herfst (seconded)