

Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association

Minutes

May 5, 2012

West Bend High School

Schools represented: Mukwonago, West Bend, Appleton East, Brookfield East, Middleton, Janesville Parker, Waukesha South, Cedarburg, Homestead, Nicolet, Rufus King, Marquette, Whitefish Bay

The meeting was called to order at 9:17 a.m. by President James Hoggatt.

James thanked the members for an excellent year.

SECRETARY

Brian Devine indicated that the fall meeting minutes were posted to the web site and moved their approval. This was **approved by voice vote.**

TREASURER

Steve Sexton reported \$1,036.57 net profit from the state tournament. There are still some outstanding bills that will come in, but we should still be in the black. Steve indicated there were 30 dues-paying schools this year. Steve's report was **approved by a voice vote.**

There was no **PAST PRESIDENT** report.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Mike Traas asked that we be sure to have a date and place for the fall workshop before we leave today. Doris Sexton offered West Bend as a site for the workshop.

Mike moved to have the fall meeting on September 8 and the workshop on September 15. The motion was seconded. Nick Bubb explained that forensics is doing their spring meeting in a professional development style and that this might be something we want to try at our fall meeting, covering a variety of issues of interest to coaches. Mike Traas responded that if we can do a thorough job today, we could streamline the fall meeting to allow for a clinic of this sort following the business element of the meeting. The motion was **approved by voice vote.**

Mike accepted Doris's offer to host the workshop at West Bend on September 15.

The location of the fall meeting on September 8 was left open for the time being.

NOVICE PACKET COMMITTEE

Dan Hansen reported that an in-house approach was taken to the novice packet this year, allowing for a more user-friendly product. Dan suggested that there be face-to-face meetings of committee members in the future and discussed ways that the packet can include some instructional material for new coaches and debaters. He also asked for input on how various components of the packet were put together this year.

Miloren Robinson pointed out that the packet was not available early enough. Dan responded that it will be out by the end of July this year. Lauren Oswald expressed appreciation as a new coach for the usefulness of the packet.

John Knetzger voiced frustration about the extent of the restrictions on novices, and Milloren spoke to this as well. Dan responded that these restrictions have prevented a lot of bad debating at the novice level. Nick explained that without requiring affirmatives to stick to a particular plan text, the packet is rendered irrelevant, as the collection of evidence is specific to that plan text. John responded that since we are not bound to the packet after November 1, we shouldn't be bound to a plan text either. Nick responded that affirmatives can still add new advantages and arguments. John suggested that offering multiple plan texts might be an alternative.

Doris moved approval of the conditional bylaws change for the Novice Packet Committee. This is the second vote on the change, the first having been passed at the fall meeting:

- Revise Article III Section III of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:
SECTION III – PAST-PRESIDENT
The Past-President shall serve as the chairperson of the Awards and Nominations Committee ~~and Novice Topics Committee~~, and actively seek nominations for the WDCA Hall of Fame, WDCA Coach of the Year and the WDCA Scholarship. The Past-President shall as well as appoint and oversee the webmaster for the WDCA website.
- Revise the beginning of Article VI of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:
ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES
The WDCA shall have the following standing committees: Executive, Awards and Nominations, Handbook, History, Judging Standards and Ethics, Media Communications, Middle School, New Coaches, Novice Packet Topics, and Tournament Practices and Procedures.
- Add Section IX to Article VI, to read:
SECTION IX—Novice Packet
The Novice Packet Committee shall consist of a chairperson, appointed by the President, and at least two members appointed by the chairperson. The committee shall research and produce the Novice Packet for use in policy debates.

This changed was **approved by voice vote.**

JUDGING STANDARDS AND ETHICS

Dan indicated that he received a number of complaints and that he will propose a plan to deal with this under New Business.

TOURNAMENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Nick shared a written report with the membership.

There was an increase in 83 students who participated in state competition over last year. Expenses were down, with reduced costs of judges and tournament director. There was positive feedback about the facilities. There were some shortages of food, particularly for judges and coaches. Nick expressed concern about the amount of trash lying about after the tournament.

Nick reported that the contingency plan was used in LD and power pairing was used in novice without any problems. He mentioned that the WHSFA was no longer co-sponsoring the tournament. He also mentioned that there was successful use of Twitter to keep people updated.

Nick stressed that invitational tournament hosts need to comply with the requirement to submit results within a week of their meets. He is making an online application to streamline the process. This would also allow an easy way to check on which debaters have qualified for state. Nick said the application will be accessible through the WDCA web site and that he will give instruction on its use at the fall meeting.

Nick reminded hosts that awards ought to reflect the fees entrants are charged and that there should be some parity across the various divisions when it comes to awards. He also suggested that speaker awards be given for public forum at meets. Mike pointed out that there is an emphasis in PF on the pair rather than the individual speaker, which distinguishes it from policy. There was some discussion, with a number of coaches expressing the value of speaker awards to recognize individual achievement.

James pointed out that the same arguments against speaker awards could be made for policy. Mike responded that the PF tradition of lay judges makes for more variation in evaluation of speaking skills. Doris expressed dislike for speaker points as a concept, stressing their subjectivity. Considerable discussion ensued about the pros and cons of speaker awards. Nick said he would prepare a proposal for the fall meeting.

Nick moved that we support his online application for streamlining tournament results. The motion was seconded and **approved by voice vote**.

A brief break was taken.

Upon reconvening, James brought up the question of the location and timing of the state tournament. He expressed great satisfaction with Whitewater as a facility for the state tournament and for the very positive attitude of host Jim Disrude and his interest in continuing to forge a strong relationship with WDCA.

Referencing the extensive exchange of emails among the coaches on the dates for state, Nick explained that December dates would absolutely not work for Whitewater, nor would they work for the first two weekends of January. So if we are to stay with Whitewater, it would need to be on the third weekend of January.

Steve Sexton reminded us that most schools have final exams at the time of the third weekend in January and that this also bumps up against the forensics season.

Dan indicated that his students were unanimous in support of the third weekend in January because it allowed them more time to prepare and was less stressful.

Steve Goetsch indicated that his students felt exactly the opposite, both because of final exams and because it made the season last the entire first semester. Doris said she found the same to be true of her debaters. Shawn Matson indicated the same.

Miloren pointed out that it is better for her students in January.

Mike expressed the thought that while he enjoys having a long season, it makes it more intimidating for new coaches.

There was discussion about whether this would adversely impact the late season hosts, with no agreement being reached.

Dan mentioned that it is hard for new coaches to get a program up and running in time for an early end to the debate season. He also questioned why forensics has to end as early as it does, as a later ending would allow them to have a later start. Shawn responded that it was debate that moved the state tournament onto the starting weekend of forensics. Mike explained that there are so many spring activities that forensics made a commitment many years ago not to move into May.

Lauren asked if the debate season could begin in October, or whether we could compromise by having state on the second weekend in January. Nick responded that some programs do start in October, making the January state date better. Doris mentioned that the conflict with NFL and CFL is the problem with the second weekend in January.

Dan emphasized the importance of having the state tournament at a university campus and of not losing that connection. John responded that a high school, with awards in an auditorium, can be a fine location for a state tournament.

Shawn asked if CFL could be moved to the third weekend of December. He said he could support keeping state in January if it were on an earlier weekend.

James decided to poll the coaches present as to what their preference would be if the date of state were moved: back to December or earlier in January. 3 voted for December and 8 for earlier in January.

There was then discussion on which weekend in January should be the state tournament. Linda asked whether the December or January topic would be used for PF if the first weekend were used. Ben Schultz suggested that students would strongly dislike having to have state immediately upon coming back from break.

Doris expressed concern about what this is going to do to NFL and CFL. Steve Sexton said he could not speak for the CFL members but pointed out that either NFL or CFL would be displaced if state is on the second or third week of January.

Lauren moved to have the tournament the second weekend of January. The motion was seconded. **The vote failed on a vote of 3-4-4.** The result of the vote was that the state tournament will be held on the third weekend of January, as it was last year.

The following tentative schedule was announced:

September 8	Fall meeting
September 15	Workshop
September 22	Whitefish Bay
September 28-29	Marquette/Rufus King
October 5-6	Brookfield East
October 13	Mukwonago
October 20	Cedarburg
October 26-27	La Crosse Central
November 3	West Bend
November 9-10	Waukesha South
November 16-17	Open (West Bend if no one else)
Nov 30/Dec 1	Appleton East
December 7-8	Middleton

December 14-15	Madison Memorial
December 21-22	No tournament
January 5	NFL
January 12	Sheboygan South CFL
January 19	State

The MDL meet dates during the WDCA season are: 9/22, 10/27, 11/17, 12/15, 1/19

It was moved and seconded to approve the constitutional bylaws change on moving the workshop duties from the President Elect to the President. This is the second vote on the change, the first having been passed at the fall meeting:

- Revise Article III Section I of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:

SECTION I – PRESIDENT

The President shall preside at all general and special meetings and shall be the chairperson of the Executive Committee. The President shall have the authority to appoint committee chairs and shall become an ex-officio member of all committees. The President shall conduct the fall workshop. After completing the term of office, the President shall become the Past-President.

- Revise Article III Section II of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:

SECTION II – PRESIDENT-ELECT

The President-elect shall assume the duties of the President in case of the absence of the President. The President-elect shall assist the President in his/her duties. ~~The President-elect is the chairperson of the Fall Workshop Committee.~~ The president elect shall organize the spring and fall general meetings. After completing the term of office, the President-elect shall become the President.

The motion was passed **by voice vote.**

There being no other nominations for Treasurer, Steve Sexton was **re-elected by acclamation.**

There being no other nominations for President-Elect, John Knetzger was **elected by acclamation.**

James relinquished the chair to our new President, Mike Traas.

Mike called upon Dan to discuss his mandatory adjudication proposal. He walked us through the rationale and explanation of the plan. He asked if the membership would approve the concept, then approve a quiz in the fall and pilot it on trial basis for next fall.

James moved approval of the concept. The motion was seconded. Dan responded to questions about how the program would work. Discussion followed as to the value of a quiz as a tool in showing that a judge understands the particular division to be judged.

The vote to accept the proposal in kind **passed by voice vote.**

Mike proposed that a stipend for the operator of our web site.

Mike asked for the opinion of the membership as to whether individuals should be limited to chairing only one committee. Significant agreement with this concept was expressed.

Mike indicated an intention to appoint Tim Scheffler as Judging Standards and Ethics Chair, Miloren Robinson as New Coaches Chair, and Dan Hansen as Novice Packet Chair.

Steve Goetsch announced that July 16-20 in the afternoons a debate clinic will be held at Waukesha South.

Lauren asked if there was interest in setting up a Facebook page for coaches. There was general agreement this was a good idea. Nick agreed to make a page.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion was **passed by voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Devine, WDCA Secretary