

# Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association

## Minutes

May 10, 2014

Brookfield East High School

**Voting Schools represented:** Mukwonago, Middleton, Rufus King, West Bend, Brookfield East, Sheboygan South, Waukesha South, Janesville Parker, Muskego, Appleton East, Sheboygan North, Whitefish Bay

Personnel from North Division, Milwaukee Hamilton, and Marquette were also present.

The meeting was called to order at by President John Knetzger at 9:34 a.m.

### Treasurer

Steve Sexton distributed a report. By the time meeting expenses are paid, we will be about \$300 ahead. We made approximately \$2400 on the state tournament. We took a loss of about \$500 on food at state. It was moved and seconded to approve the report, and this was **approved without objection**.

### Secretary

Brian Devine explained that the fall minutes were posted on the website and moved their approval, and this was seconded. The motion was **approved without objection**.

The tentative calendar was presented, with an explanation of a few remaining uncertainties. Madison Memorial was added in addition to Mukwonago on October 11. The schedule will be approved officially at the fall meeting.

### Past President

There was one nominee for Hall of Fame, but that person was already in it. So there is no inductee this year. There was some discussion about this because there was no inductee last year either.

### President

John asked if there was objection to postponing the election until all candidates had arrived. There being no objection, he moved on to the survey that was taken after the state tournament. Copies of results were available for all members.

John highlighted that the most obvious result was that respondents were very unhappy with the food. He explained that Whitewater will absolutely not tolerate food being brought in as it was this year. This is a major reason that alternative locations will be looked at today.

Mike Traas pointed out that many felt that the advantages of being on a college campus were offset by the unacceptable food situation.

John explained that the Executive Committee is recommending West Bend as the site for this year's state tournament. Dave Henning indicated that Lakeland College is interested in hosting, but not for this year.

John postponed further discussion until New Business.

## **TPP**

Nick Bubb reported that there was an error in NSS where a ballot was entered incorrectly. Because of the unusual nature of the judge's error, it was not caught. He mentioned that an affected coach entered the tab room demanding to see the ballot without explaining why and was asked to leave the room. Nick outlined a procedure that he would like to use to avoid this specific type of error being missed in the future. He would also like to establish a separate room in which coaches can view ballots that have already been entered. He also said he found it would be worth looking at some computer program alternatives because TRPC was not handling some of the situations that occurred in a satisfactory manner.

John asked whether the standing rule establishing TRPC as our program should be eliminated.

## **New Coaches**

Lorin Oswald is leaving this position and is not with us today.

## **Novice Packet**

Dan Hansen expressed an openness to ideas, suggestions, and other feedback. There was some discussion about how the counterplan worked. There was a consensus that we could do the same thing this year.

## **Judging Standards and Ethics**

Tim Scheffler was not able to be with us today. A report from him was distributed. He plans to bring a proposal to the fall meeting to have a more specific policy in place to deal with accusations of evidence falsification. Nick explained the incident in public forum semis at state that caused this to become a topic of discussion. It dealt with the evidence in the round and how judges were or were not evaluating it. Nick spoke to the proposed NFL policy on accusations of falsification and how this might be usable for our purposes. Shawn Matson shared that the NFL has passed the new policy, although Nick pointed out some modifications may still be made to them. John pointed out that WDCA's rules are based on a paper-based approach to evidence. Nick responded that

our current rules place a responsibility on judges to evaluate evidence if there is an accusation of falsification and that judges and students may not be clear on what their specific roles are in this process.

John asked if any coaches were willing to work with Tim on this issue. Mike said he was willing but is not enthusiastic about turning more decisions of this type being made outside the round. Steve Sexton wondered if in fact our current rules would have been able to handle this situations had the judges been available after the round to discuss what had happened. Shawn Matson expressed a willingness to be involved and expressed a strong dislike for the NFL rules. John placed himself on the committee also. Matt Cekanor also offered to be on the committee.

### **President Elect**

Stephanie announced that Zach Vrana is a candidate for Treasurer. There was no objection to his election, and **he was elected.**

Two candidates are running for President Elect: Steve Goetsch and Shawn Matson. It was moved and seconded to close nominations. The motion was **approved.**

The candidates spoke to the membership.

The vote was held, and a brief break was taken. **Shawn Matson was elected.**

### **Old Business**

John reported that there was no Old Business.

He expressed satisfaction with being able to serve as President and turned the meeting over to our new President, Stephanie King.

Stephanie assumed the chair.

### **New Business**

Nick reported that work on the new website is ongoing and asked for input if there were concerns or suggestions. The email list is back and active, and Nick asked any coaches who are not receiving emails to notify him. He also asked for any coaches wishing to help with communications to step forward, as we do not have an active Communications Committee chair.

The workshop duty of the President will remain for now in the Constitution.

Stephanie brought up the confusion over the use of local league meets as qualifying legs for state, specifically that at least one MDL school using an open-to-WDCA meet as their WDCA-sanctioned tournament. The Executive Committee allowed this for the

one time only. Nick is proposing that 330.20(1)A be amended by adding to the sentence "Schools must compete at three or more sanctioned tournaments" the phrase, "only one of which may be a local tournament." There was discussion, and it was clarified that the open-to-WDCa meet would count as a WDCa meet. In response to a question from Zach, Stephanie explained that this change makes it easier rather than harder for MDL to qualify for state. It was moved and seconded to adopt this change. It was **adopted without objection.**

Stephanie opened the floor for discussion on the location of state. It was moved and seconded to have the state tournament at West Bend. Steve Goetsch asked if we were locked into the January 17 and 18 date, now that we might not be on a college campus. John shared that Tim Scheffler does not want to have NFL on January 2 and 3. Steve Goetsch responded that he feels the season is too long and that we are losing people as a result. In response to a question from Nick, Doris said she thought it was likely that West Bend could probably be available for January 10 and 11. Steve Goetsch said he would actually prefer December 13 and 14. Dave Henning said he was considering hosting an invitational on December 13. Shawn pointed out that there are many states where debate goes on for the entire school year, without some of the burn-out problems that others have raised as a concern. Discussion also took place regarding whether a qualifying meet could be held in December. Mike and Dave both spoke of the increased time span between qualifier and nationals if it were moved to December. There was also discussion of whether the dates of national circuit meets should have any impact on WDCa scheduling decisions, with coaches expressing different opinions.

It was added as a friendly amendment to establish the date as January 17 and 18. John moved to call the question. The motion was seconded. It was then **passed without objection, as was the main motion.**

Steve Goetsch raised the concern that the future of V4 is in question and that the contingency plan in our standing rules puts the future at additional risk. Stephanie had Brian read the contingency policy. Doris asked why this was not applied to VSS as well. Nick explained that it was because it was not as difficult to schedule six rounds for a small number of VSS teams. Doris expressed the feeling that the rule should be changed to allow V4 to run as other divisions would be under the same conditions. Steve Sexton pointed out this worked in the novice division this year. Nick warned that eliminating the rule gives the Tournament Director the role of changing the meet in a manner outside the written rules to make the tournament run. Further, he explained that because JV was eliminated, there has been no problem maintaining a viable V4 field. John expressed the opinion that this would no longer be the case, given that there are now two novice policy divisions. Zach expressed opposition to allowing V4 to function with too few schools because it takes away from the meaning of being a state champion. Discussion ensued over the struggles of policy debate in the state and in the nation.

Steve Goetsch moved to eliminate the V4 contingency policy, and the motion was seconded. Considerable discussion followed. It was moved to call the question, and the

motion was seconded. **The question was called.** The vote tied 5-5, and the chair voted no, so the **motion was defeated.**

Stephanie encouraged coaches to step forward to serve on committees.

There being no objection, the **meeting was adjourned** at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Devine, WDCA Secretary