

MSDL Board Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2019 @ 6:30pm
Natick High School, Room 2353

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 PM by the president, Amanda Parker.

Attendees: Joyce Albert (Natick), Josh Cohen (Newton South), Greg Cunningham (Needham), Sue Hennessey (A-B), Lisa Honeyman (Newton South), Jim Honeyman (Newton South), Sheryl Kaczmarek (Lexington), Adam Nir (Needham), Amanda Parker (Natick), Marc Rischitelli (Shrewsbury), PJ Wexler (Needham)

1. Tax Filing / Annual Report Update

Federal taxes have been filed. Jim is working on the state taxes. He will file the annual report in the fall.

2. State Debate Tournament Update (3/30)

Josh tells us that the tournament is bigger than last year. He has been out to Chelmsford for a site visit. They have updated Wifi and we're going to try to go electronic, but we have a back-up plan in place in case the system fails.. Flowers & trophies are ready. Staffing is all set. Amanda will be present to collect ballots for the league elections. JTC to send out msg to judges and coaches saying that electronic balloting is the goal, but they should be prepared with writing items in case we are on paper.

3. State Speech Tournament Update (4/6)

a. Tournament update

Registration is still open so we don't know how many entries we'll have. No changes in the plan since we last met. Amanda will be collecting ballots for the league election in the morning. Everyone who has not personally done live on-line judging will be judging round 1 (Marc, Joyce, Lisa & Greg). Josh will be there, and offers to help where needed.

b. Concern about a particular congress entry (PJ)

A student from one school has not been following league requirements. This student had an unreported drop last tournament and has a history of leaving early without telling anyone, which has affected rounds. We're concerned about how this behavior impacts others and the operation of the chambers, especially as it applies to States because we don't want his non-compliance with league rules to affect other students. To address the concerns, we will do a roll call at the opening congress meeting to ascertain if everyone is there (or not) and Joyce will put a reminder in the pre-tournament email about calling in.

4. Annual Meeting Planning (Saturday, May 4 @ 11am, Natick High Library)

a. Tournament Sanctioning

Amanda will put out a reminder to schools that may want to host to get their sanctioning forms in before the meeting. We need some more schools to host in order to provide more tournament opportunities.

- After the original call for sanctioning, let's send out a note with a list of open dates to schools so we can encourage more schools to host.

- How do we handle schools that are not able to run tournaments, but are willing to host?

- What about schools that can't fit both speech & debate? (Running tournaments at two locations can be difficult for teams with only one coach).

b. Lunch?

Amanda will order lunch for the meeting from Roche Bros Catering.

c. Member voting

We agreed to take some time between now and the next Board meeting to review our existing documents - perhaps talk with our lawyers - in order to find out what we are allowed to do and what will make our members feel heard. We may reword the following before putting it to a vote at our March meeting. **“Under Article IV of the bylaws, add a second paragraph: At the annual meeting, any school in attendance but not represented on the board of directors may designate one designee as an associate member to be granted voting rights on rules & regulations of the MSDL.”**

Do our current rules encourage apathy because many schools don't have a voice? Maybe we can find a way to change the rules to see if that encourages more participation?

Are there liability issues if we change the voting rules?

Reminder: Only issues on the published agenda can be voted on at the Annual meeting.

Is it time for us to go through our Rules & Policies document and re-word sections to better reflect what our organization is about? Our bylaws should represent our practice.

Would we benefit from two voting classes? One that deals with the corporate entity (the Board) and one that deals with things that the membership votes on? Bylaw changes vs. rules changes.

Motion: Cunningham: Move all of section 3.1 (MSDL Sanctioning) of the Rules document into Section 2 and re-number both sections 2 and 3.

2nd: Nir.

The motion passes unanimously.

Motion: Rischitelli: Modify section 1.7.1 (Voting Classes) of the Rules document as follows:

1.7.1 Voting Members of the MSDL: Member schools that have paid their MSDL dues for the current season. If a vote is to take place prior to the dues deadline for the current season, then a school may vote if they paid their dues in the previous season. Each member school is entitled to one vote.

This voting class may vote in bi-annual elections of the Board of Directors and at the Annual Meeting on proposals for changes to Section 3 of the Rules and Policies of the Massachusetts Speech & Debate league document. (Directors do not vote in addition to their school's one vote.)

2nd: Nir

This motion passes unanimously.

e. Agenda items reminder

5. Tournament Ombudsman / Inclusivity Training Update

a. "The Massachusetts Speech and Debate League fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion. We expect all members of our community to treat one another with respect. Should you have any issues, please come to the TAB room and ask to speak with a member of the MSDL Board."

b. Include inclusion statement, gender neutral bathroom signs, and info about prayer space in tournament host packet?

c. [Inclusivity Checklist: NSDA](#)

d. Jim did a little preliminary investigating into organizations and people who might be able to help us. But, we are not exactly sure what we need these folks to do for us. We all need to explore some of the links that Jim found for us to do a little exploring about what they have to offer.

6. Policy for sponsorships?

We are not excited about allowing outside groups to sponsor our State Tournaments. If we were to let groups that we think support our values set up a table in the cafeteria, how do we decide who to allow and who not to allow? How do we make sure they're CORIed? If camps set up, does it look like we think kids should go to camps? What if?

7. Providing assistance or insurance to tournaments that have to cancel due to weather

Event cancelation insurance exists. Jim spoke with two different companies, but only got basic information. We need to do more investigating into this type of insurance to see if the MSDL can be the sponsor or if there is another way to get this insurance and to see if it's worth it.

We like the idea of helping to insure schools that offer to host tournaments in the winter months in order to make hosting a tournament less risky.

We will explore some options and continue the discussion. Greg will ask who the NCFL uses to insure their Grand National Tournament and also to see what the terms are. If we can't find a company with a product that meets our needs, we can explore other ways of helping out schools that have to cancel tournaments or suffer severe financial losses for reasons beyond their control.

8. Coach social event/get together to chat about best practices or team struggles?

Let's plan another social event and see if we can get some more people involved. Share best practices. Commiserate. (We can't do this at the novice tournament effectively.)

We will pick a date to announce at the May meeting so people can put it in their calendars.

Other Business

Reminder to all coaches and students: If something concerning happens at a tournament, don't wait until everyone leaves to say something to a coach or the tournament officials! We can't deal with it as effectively two weeks later . . .

Would it be a good use of league funds to buy some walkie talkies for use at tournaments? It worked really well at Needham to have 6 walkies to help streamline the online balloting process. Texting and cell phones don't always work well in all buildings or even in some areas of some buildings. Greg will look into options. The Zello App may be an option to consider, too.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

--Lisa Honeyman

VP/Secretary