

January 18, 2022 Conneaut School District Athletic Committee Meeting Minutes

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January 18, 2022 Athletic Committee Meeting at the CASH Gymnasium was opened at 7:00 PM by Chairman GW Hall.

Those committee members present include-

GW Hall	Adam Horne	Ryan Klink
Jarrin Sperry	John Acklin	Craig Heberle

Mr. Hall addressed the committee members and audience as follows;

The District needs to have a direction, if we do not plan we cannot expect change. He noted on the back of the agenda re the enrollment numbers for the District. He wants to give the tenure of coaches and look at coach tenure and consistency. Right now, we are at the point we need to start to focus. This should include the community, parents, board, administration, coaches and students... all of us. The Committee plans on having regular meetings to help get to that point. Some meetings will be better than others with open discussion and he wants to take the time to drive forward.

Tonight's agenda has a few topics but one agenda adjustment he wants to add the All Sports Boosters as a speaker, Yvonne Medrick. Also, when we get down to the Visitor Recognition we need input as this goal will take our community as well as staff and board to support.

John Acklin, CASH Athletic Director went through his head coaching staff, noting with 16 sports. He provided a backup with the head coaches name, sport, years as the head coach and how many were on the roster for the 21/22 school year. Years of service ranged from 10 years down to 1 and roster numbers from 27 in girls' soccer to 6 in both girl's golf and wrestling. He also noted how many seniors were on the roster thus, losing for the 22/23 school year.

Mr. Acklin announced the new PIAA regions were just announced no more than an hour ago. No teams moved up and there are three different regions with seven teams in each. Each team must play six games, play two cross over games in D10 and one additional game a team can add. Added to our Region along with Wilmington and Farrell, we also have Sharpsville, Hickory, Sharon and Greenville. This is a tough division we are in.

Craig Heberle, the Assistant Athletic Director at Conneaut Lake Middle School provided numbers for the Lake Middle School. The junior high boys' basketball coach has been coaching for many years had 17 players on the roster with some success. He felt they have been competitive. Junior high girls' basketball has a second year coach with 17 on the roster; junior high boys' volleyball he has not been told who the coach will be, last year the roster had 8 boys/all 8th graders last year. The combined team with Conneaut Valley and bus after school; junior high girls' volleyball is separate from Valley Middle, they do practice with Valley and alternate gyms. They had 18 last year including cutting some team members. Junior high wrestling is combined with Valley and held at Lake.

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This sport has a 3rd year coach with 11 on the roster which is up from 6-7 the previous year. Their numbers are growing. Junior high cheerleading has a 2nd year coach with 10 cheerleaders this year, they had 4 last years. Junior high cross country is combined with Valley with a 3rd year coach and 8 on the roster. 5th and 6th grade basketball boys and girls coach is a two-year veteran with 17 boys this year. They take 9 to 10 to games in the Saegertown League. Girls has 11 this year, they did well at the Cambridge Springs league, 11 students participated on the junior high football at Valley, combined with Lake and bused after school to Valley. He is looking forward to adding baseball and softball to their sports list.

Mr. Horne, Committee member asked with the junior high at Lake, who do they typically play in their season/region? Are they close teams or far geographically? Mr. Heberle replied it is the old French Creek Valley group. He meets with the Athletic Directors and do look for some outside teams. Mr. Horne asked do you think logistics plays a part in the low roster(s)? Mr. Heberle thought possibly but he never heard travel concerns. It may play into football, numbers have dropped from 20 to 11, it may be a lack of interest in football but logistically they are bused to Valley.

Mr. Hall asked how the sports with high number sin the middle schools compared to varsity programs, what do you think the drawbacks are going from middle school to the varsity, in other words why are we not transferring to them high school as it appears their career stops. Mr. Heberle responded; he is aware of some 8th grade football players either fear moving up, or don't feel they will play at the varsity level, some have heard horror stories. The other sports he is not sure but he has had issues with eligibility this year more than last year. That may take a toll. He had four games moved due to COVID, one starter was eligible for practices and play... it is a shame, it shouldn't be that way.

Mr. Acklin announced Mr. McCall, the Assistant Athletic Director at the Conneaut Valley Middle School is unable to attend this meeting as he has an away game tonight. Mr. Hall provided Mr. McCall's report as follows; he noted a 5-year average of participants in the sport were included.

The Fall sports at Valley are football and girls' basketball. Football had 31 participants last Fall, which is a combination of Valley and Lake players. The average number of participants over the last 5 year was 34 players on the team. Two coaches have been with the program for 10 years, since the middle schools were formed and it was the 3rd coach's first year.

Girls' basketball had 12 players this year and an average of 15 over the last five seasons. The head coach for the team has also been with the program for 10 years since consolidation and his assistant has four years' experience.

Our Winter sports are boys' basketball and cheer. There are currently 25 players on this year's basketball team and over the last 5 years we have averaged a team of 19 players. The coaches have a tenure of 3 and 4 years.

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As far as cheer goes, we have only had 2 teams over the last 5 years, with 3 participants this year and 7 in the 19-20 school year. Last year it was not offered due to COVID concerns and limited numbers in the gym. The coach has 3 years' experience.

We have a girls' volleyball team in the spring with 19 players last year and in the last 4 years only had a team of 3 of the 4 due to COVID with an average of 17 players on the team. The coach has been with the team for 4 years.

We do have boys and girls that participate in cross country in the Fall, wrestling in the winter and there is boys' volleyball in the Spring which are hosted at Conneaut Lake. In the last 2 years we have also offered 5th and 6th grade basketball for girls in the fall and in the winter for boys.

The girls program is much stronger at Valley than Lake with a 10-year tenured coach in girls' basketball. The head coach highly encouraged playing the same teams as the varsity plays so they can compete against the same girls at each level. Recently, Mr. McCall spoke with the middle school coach and they had a great season and were tremendously successful in the old French Creek Mercer level teams. They may have even gone undefeated. There were some complaints why they were not competing against Lake, the same teams. Why not Lake but the Valley girls are at a higher level and they wanted them to develop more before going against better teams... the Lake girls.

Yvonne Medrick spoke for the All Sports Boosters, as president the job of booster's organization is constantly begging for help/volunteers, raising monies for all CASH athletics. We host three major fundraisers, one in each of the Fall, Winter and Spring. We stock and run concession stand(s) with funds raised to benefit all the sports programs. We have been able to purchase items for teams, helped to purchase part of the letterman jackets, pay for camps all before COVID. Before COVID we purchased training room items and are always looking for volunteers, this is a constant need.

It is a fun time and after working four stands your athletics get jackets for half price. We have had several teams from far away comment how nice and strange to have an All Sports Boosters. At others they are all separate.

Currently we need help with the reverse raffle coming in March. If you have any questions, please contact myself. We have meetings every month on the 3rd Wednesday at the CASH library.

Mr. Hall noted the Boosters does an incredible job and it benefits all sports. He really recommends getting more involved.

Mr. Hall plans on developing a one, three and five-year athletic plan. This is not an individual sport but a plan for where we are at now and continue on a path going forward. We need to incorporate recruiting, facilities and really need to build within put of where we want to go. As we drive forward one and in upcoming meetings moving forward. Mr. Horn added that in his observation and he apologized if it makes people mad but he

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noticed over the years the FCVC is dead and not coming back, we need to stop scheduling with them. We have a problem with logistics, and why play schools they won't play in high school. When we live in this façade, it is a great benefit for all of us, we need to start showing kids we can compete with anyone in the middle school instead of not the same team they are used to. It is hard to train that mind set, he is not blaming or pointing fingers but we need to accept FCVC is dead. There is no Linesville, Valley or Lake but we are CASH. Kids need supported as Conneaut Area Middle School students.

Mr. Hall added that in joining teams which we are playing similar programs at each middle school and offenses, are our varsity head coaches involved with the middle schools? These are our feeders; he is not asking our head coach to coach but to give direction. We take two separate programs as 8th graders and play then as 9th graders and play different offenses and ask them to play together. One is successful and one is not, if we can build cohesive plans to feed these programs it will help with numbers and give a good head start. Football programs, the league we are in, we need a feeder program to carry forward. As a community school board and schools to support these kids to take the next step. Build them bigger, it takes excitement from all of us and we are not there right now. Not even close, so how do we build this... with new feeder programs coming into the middle schools. We have softball and baseball approved by the board for this spring. He asked how many sports programs at the middle schools are there and we start pulling numbers. How does this fit with our program? We need the best foot forward. Kids in sports and school have less problems outside, we need to do this intelligently and in the right manner. these are some of my thoughts tonight.

Mr. Klink asked if some of the coaches present here tonight, are you reaching up to the high schools? In his experience is with junior high basketball. There are two different teams going head to head and he does see a difference, different coaches. Are they reaching out/back and forth? Or is this anew thought process. The boys' soccer coach responded; we have low numbers as there is no feeder programs and he feels these low numbers are getting lost in the shuffle. Playing lower grades then go to the middle school and there is nothing. Mrs. Morini, girls 5th and 6th grade basketball coach at Valley spoke, she reached out to Lake, they have 24 girls and the last two years too many to include Lake. She and the other coach will reach out to 7th and 8th grade coaches and has spent time with them so we will try to do some feeder programs with the understanding of building up through. You asked how many of the girls at Valley did with better teams... Well they did pretty good with the Mercer teams, and did lose to Union City with two seconds left to go and lost by two points. Union City has two very tall girls but our Valley girls held up very well.

Mr. Hall opened it up to Visitor Recognition-

Todd Turner, the Boys' Lacrosse Coach spoke- you asked a question if the coaches are reaching back. I have three coaches between high school and middle school, the third coach he got this year. He is seeing now as his 3rd year as head coach they are not starting with the basics anymore, the players are actually into game situations in the three-year

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period, in other words they have developed the basics after three years. His kids are experienced now and competitive. We went from blowing out to winning two d10 games. Still not at the level as Meadville or Cathedral Prep but our team is now competitive.

Kim Motzing, assistant girls' basketball at Lake Middle- you had asked about reaching out to varsity coach, we had reached out to varsity girls coach, April had, before she had me. She (speaking about herself) has many years playing basketball, she has played since 4th grade and during those years has had many trainings and started in varsity in 9th grade. During her varsity years she scored over 1,000 points so she has a lot of experience under her belt. When she was hired for this basketball team, she noticed they didn't do zone offense at all. She asked the head varsity coach and was told we don't see that in varsity team that they play against. So we went on, and came across zone, and our girls' didn't know how to play. We have been teaching them zone now late in the season. COVID year we played badly but they knew zone. She watched a varsity game and nothing against the head coach but they play zone, full court zone. Why did she tell us they don't? She guarantees most teams in varsity will zone at some point. It frustrated her. She knows Valley has a great program, they have Upward Bound to help get started early We need to start with fundamentals, Lake kids don't know much of that, this is what she is all about, fundamentals, passing, dribbling, shooting. The girls she has in 8th grade this year missed 5th and 6th due to COVID the year before. Girls are coming up for 8th grade next year have talent, and will be great. Valley is favored as they have their program and Lake is lonely. We will build it, April is new, she (Kim) is new but we want to teach them fundamentals/basics to give them confidence. They don't have confidence in themselves when they get the ball. A lot of the girls are afraid of high school, the coach has favorites and these girls are not confident. They feel they won't make the team. She doesn't want anyone to give up on the Lake girls. In all reality it is nice to see a rivalry between Lake and Valley. Mr. Hall wanted to know how to build forward and why are we running two different programs so that when we merge we can play. He thanked Ms. Motzing for her coaching. Ms. Motzing asked if there are ever any summer camps during the summer for 5/6 and 7/8. Mr. Heberle responded there is open gym. A visitor in the audience suggested to look in the Edinboro area for summer camps.

Mr. Hall noted he is aware the District has closed practices so coaches can coach but he would like to open them up for a meet the parents'/community night to build excitement for players going into their first games.

George Wallace addressed the question why we are losing players. He felt even Little Gridders level football there is a huge disconnect between Gridders and junior high and then varsity. When Coach Gould was in he wanted fundamentals, run the ball, pass and play. You cannot run a varsity program without it. Mr. Wallace noted he has twins and they are talking about taking up golf next year because at the end of their 9th grade year they are not taught. He wants to see the program grow. There are 14 coming up and he is aware of five who are saying they are not going to play at CASH. They aren't scared, just tired of bouncing around and losing games. He feels you play the card you are dealt with.

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Jessica Ellis - She noted she has two sons in football and they just told her they will be playing volleyball for the first time ever. Her sons played football 7-12 and this was the last year. Speaking on logistics for wrestling, she lives in Conneautville and practice at lake. Athletes are not bused over and that is a huge barrier for people. Her husband was deployed so he was no help, she works in Meadville and would drive to Valley and take her sons to Lake. Since there is not a ton to do in Conneaut Lake while they were at practice, she still wouldn't drive back home. She agrees that travel is a huge factor for sports. She noted Mr. Acklin's comments that CASH has so many sports to offer. When we combined it created a lot more sports but left a footprint of where we are. Busing is a huge factor, from my standpoint you have to integrate junior high to senior high before they are introduced as freshman. Her son thought it was the coolest thing he knew players on the football team because he had lifted weights all summer with them. It was not scary for him, varsity players offered help. As a family and with separation between Lake and Valley and then coming up again to the big dogs, if I was in 8th grade I wouldn't play next year either. We did have freshman that had no business playing on that field so we have to look at that. Integrate practice with the varsity, why can't they play on the same field? The logistics of the team to play at 4 pm is hard so why not play Thursday night games and do a walk through with varsity. Have the older kids watch the junior high. She was told it is impossible for the coach to integrate with senior practice while playing. So why not some Saturdays put them together, that is where she sees it. We need the community back. While she understands there is not that many parents here and this is not well attended. She came back after 20 years and believes the comradery. She realizes there is not a lot of kids with supportive parents as they are working and or single parents. You have to come together logistically, get everyone together sooner with the younger players and feeder programs. Get out of the division mindset of Valley vs Lake. When these kids come up into 9th grade they sit with their like/community but after a while playing with the team to sit together.

Mr. Hall agreed the varsity coaches need to help. We need visibility with programs. We run into PIAA rules where we cannot bring 7th and 8th grade with varsity due to eligibility issues. There are other things we can do noted Mr. Acklin, such as weight lifting and we can be creative but we are not permitted to practice together. Mr. Hall wanted to look into that.

Ashley Luke- She wanted to first thank the committee for this approach, it is very informative with an open dialog. There is a common thread she is hearing which is communication. She is a tech nerd at heart so would love you to dive deep in the platform to bring parents and coaches, students for all sports which they can communicate on. That would help logistics, carpooling, coaches getting equipment and shoes. Communication is the key to common thread. A few coaches talked about camps so why not the veteran coaches let them know what is out there. This could be an easy platform to get together. That is communication. She is not on Facebook so what other

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platforms are there that are not political and can bring the community together. Thank you for this meeting tonight.

Brad Sharp- a middle school parent. It is a wrecking ball. We are a combined CASH. We need to get students together sooner for a better cause. Once you hit freshman you are one team. He agrees communication is the biggest hurdle and everyone depends on Facebook. He admits he doesn't think outside the box, use an app... what did we used to do before Facebook, snail mail, newspaper. Figure out something to get information to parents not sitting in school He heard talk about eligibility for sports, grade issues, attendance. Athletics and academics come hand in hand. We need to give feeder programs to the. If they are struggling, tutor them to keep them eligible. Is there tutoring, if not there should be, if it is put it out there. We can help these students but it has to go hand in hand. He Echoes transportation as a big district problem right now looking from one end to the other. There are more ways to go and get to practice, car pool, if a school sport offer transportation. Along with that transporting long distance, putting them together with Valley and Lake...why not combine the sport. He understands there may be too many for one sport so make it an ABC squad but practice together. Why not tailor it and start in the middle school instead of four playing together, they have eight. team work, make it family built. Last, you talk about the high school can't practice together but a game, have try outs, why not have high school varsity players down there congratulating the middle school teams, get a couple down there and pat them on the back for a good job well done, meet at games, clap hands for the junior high. Not everyone could go but just a few. The sooner you set that family stage the stronger the program will develop with trust as he sees it.

Nicole Mead- she agrees with the last gentleman, the girls' numbers in soccer, we do have an app we use, so much so that it is annoying. We are negating girls' with varsity and middle school, many of the varsity come down and assist. The problem is it is still a club sport in the middle school, not funded by the Conneaut girls' soccer.

Chloe Custer- As a CASH student on the girls' soccer team and NHS, we do have tutoring but no one comes. NHS have duties to do, but no one comes for it. Our Soccer Coach Eric does a great job combining junior high and varsity. We just came from weight lifting and practiced together. She loves the younger girls and they have a lot of fun. We use a great app and have access to talk to any parent or student. Parents can see all the communications. Transportation is a big thing in the middle school. When she was in 7th grade she played volleyball at Valley. The Lake girls' cam and played with us, she thought this was one of the best ever as we got to meet them and they had friends when they came to the high school to play together. So combining middle school sports is helpful to build even better

Heather Walker- she is here representing Conneaut Area Youth Cheerleading. She started twelve years ago for Little Gridders and over the eleven years has had the privilege teaching over 100 girls. She does have communication with the varsity cheerleading football advisor, sits in on tryouts last fall and was very disappointed to see the numbers coming out. She and Amanda talked about how the number of cheerleading

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participants have gone down over the years. She went to Lake, graduated and cheered all through and that was something, very passionate with a terrific coach. So one day she comes back and coaches, so by her stepping up and coaching little girls and have the opportunity to teach fundamentals. Talking with Amanda there is a lack of availability to girls because once they are done with Gridders there isn't anything there between 6th and 9th grades. Amanda did mention that when a few years ago the cheer programs were cut due to the District, she saw a drop in her numbers with varsity tremendously. Her belief is if there were more opportunities the numbers would grow. One thing the past year in Gridders we combined both Lake and Valley together. We were phenomenal working together. It is a shame that we can't do that more in junior high and varsity. She firmly agrees a lot of comments tonight about starting younger together which helps improve once they hit the senior high. She is here to say she knows were much in favor of having a junior high cheerleading football program. With her experience she would be willing to coach that team if offered to girls. She knows speaking with her girls, if opened a program to 7th and 8th, as nothing there now. She is losing girls to other sports by the time they hit high school. In talking to Amanda, there is a lot of uniforms, pompoms to use, she has the girls and would love to have junior high cheer but someone experienced in coaching so that once they get to the high school they know what to expect. She and Amanda discussed cheer camps to get girls involved and can see what they can learn from 3rd grade up to 12th. She used to have 33 on a team and only had 6 come from the Valley area because they practice in Lake. Single parents, working parents cannot get students there. She understands the youth program is not the school funded one but if an option of transportation to get to and from could be worked out.

Scott Hinterlighter- Boys Varsity Head Coach at CASH and Middle School Volleyball. He went through not having a feeder program and has the same problem. Low numbers, no feeder programs and our region is a tough one. All other schools have feeder programs, Hickory, Grové City, Greenville. A lot with 25-30 on a team and play us with 15 kids. They are laying as 5 year olds up through younger programs and have a middle school program up through high school. They have been playing together for 8 years and we have 14 that are only playing a couple years together. This year kids are playing that have never played soccer before. Now taking kids, we have the same problem in soccer, nothing for our kids at a younger age. We lose them, so if we want to grow the soccer program we have to do something about it. We cannot compete against other schools, can't compete with losing kids to other sports and no experience. As a coach we can have 25 kids if we have leagues. A lot of schools play middle school teams before the varsity team so they combine busing their away games. He will never grow a boys team without a feeder program. There are a lot of travel teams and he could lose his players if we don't have middle school programs. He cannot get the numbers as there aren't any programs and he also losing kids to video games.

Amy Maziarz- She agrees with the mentality of separate schools and we do not engrain that in her kids. When we were Lake we were a super small school. Most games now my freshman is on the field playing with seniors in football. When interviewing coaches, they must come into school and encourage as kids are terrified. With no JV team my son is losing valuable skills standing on the side lines as a freshman. We have to find

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someone who cares. With that last coach there was no practice, please find someone who cares and devotes the time. Our society is super lazy, she works two jobs and her kids do not miss practice. Kids are staying home playing video games so longevity is what you need.

Kevin Whismer- He wanted to applaud you for taking the initiative. He is thinking outside the box but guessing the merger was a big deal about ten years ago. He feels we are starting to see the holes of the merger starting to appear. Seeing bringing small schools together, you are finally seeing the symptoms of the merger and it looks like sports is one of them. A few things he wanted to say, success breeds success, he is not sure what was done with the last years' football team, knows we had 20 playing Meadville will be a problem. What happened four years ago to now, superior athletics come together and he thinks the next coach should be very much a part of the community. The sooner that can happen with football he feels it will help all sports. There is a lack of school sports spirit and the next coach in football is a critical decision. He is in no way minimizing any other sports, he has two daughters. If this hire isn't done right, football will not be here in 2 years. The importance of sports with kids' half are iffy about school work so pay a little more attention if they play a sport, there is pride, and confidence. Eligibility and transportation is a problem, he drives 35 minutes one way for football and we can't change that fact. Excuses are excuses, eligibility is a coach's problem so he begs you to make the decision on the coach who knows what they are doing and cares for the next ten years rather than one with a resume. This decision is critical to all sports and he fears for all sports. He appreciates what you are doing, he was coming in a little late and believes we are starting to see the results of the merger now. If this coach cannot stay a life time, then maybe it is the wrong call.

Steve Binary- he and his wife have been here 25 years, have 4 kids, one at middle school who played basketball, baseball, volleyball, soccer, lacrosse. He was the coach for Little Gridders and some are here with me. Truth of the matter but a question what is the connection between middle school athletic director and the head athletic director. Do you see/talk to each other. Mr. Acklin responded they communicate all the time, the middle school athletic directors have their own schedules. He at CASH is full time with 16 varsity sports, they have their own and coaching staff so yes we are separate. We do things a lot together, no. If it is important and he needs to go down to them he will, we have a great relationship. Brian McCall calls more than he would like him to but to answer your question. He sees Mr. McCall every week, he runs the clock, if a problem, which typically they don't, he listens to them. The same with taking something to the board meetings for approvals on various things. Mr. Binary asked if a coach opening, who is in charge of replacing any vacancies. Mr. Acklin replied the school board oversees and administration. Mr. Binary noted the feeder programs are important, he will be bias with football and speaking for the community feeder programs have to start before middle school. There were 41 in Little Gridders, last year 34, he sees these kids, talks to them, knows the families, keeps track of them all. It is important to him and he preaches to Little Gridders, anyone paying attention there is a huge disconnect from middle school football and who comes out and sticking with it, why is that, schedules/teams? They cannot compete, continuity at Lake/Valley. Probably all of that,

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Mr. Acklin you stated there is a lack of talent, he respectfully disagrees, it is a lack of coaching, kids can go against anyone, they just need taught. Along that point he echoes it is imperative to get the next hire right, and needs to oversee the middle school. A coach that cares, pays attention with academics, etc. Some kids athletics is the only chance and probably would not be here if not such a dismal season this year. The kids played their hearts out, it was the coaches that let them down. The community wants to be behind all of them on the field, so there has to be more talent at the coaching level, make sure you get this right. Youth cheerleading is also very important, with 34 this year out there at all the games it made it a better experience for all player with the community involved. He asked Mr. Hall about support; in his experience he sent emails about the having home games at CASH and was excited for the response. But what he received back from Mr. Acklin was we simply could not put one more game on that field as it would tear the field up. Mr. Binary was trying to foster excitement and instead this is what he got back. He started the first year as head coach and plans on being there next year, plans on sticking around while his son is moving up. There wasn't that long ago we had 5-6 Little Gridders' teams, we had one last year and will have one this year. We have 25 on the varsity team this year, we used to have that many when we were not consolidated. There is a direct correlation with Little Gridders feeder programs. We want to build it. He understand once we get there we have to be coached right or there is no success, if not the right coaching it won't happen. His experience with getting kids on the CASH field and getting nothing. He reached out to Mr. McCall four times, two phone calls and two emails, none were returned. He wrote a letter the same week about middle school having a football camp for 6th and 7th graders, left a voice mail and asked what can I do to be involved. We have a communication app we can use to help get the word out... never got called back or emailed. There is a disconnect that needs addressed. He appreciates the opportunity and believes this community will support feeder programs.

Dave Herr- Head boys' baseball coach at CASH- started three years ago. First off thank you for supporting the feeder program, it will be a fantastic program and he can't wait to be involved in it. We will see what results it yields and expects nothing but good. A challenge he has in baseball is the gym usage. Right now he is using the Alice Schafer Annex gym, it is a smaller gym and they run both baseball and softball out of there. Being from Northwest Pennsylvania the season starts in April. It is not easy when it does start as it snows in May and so we spend a lot of time in the gym. It is a struggle as we can't get in the gym due to board meetings and Keystone testing's. The setup is a struggle for gym time and Mr. Acklin does well getting us moved around at CASH but the equipment is at Alice Schafer. We try to build a program with getting kids in the gym during open gym, arms need to be strong and we work on that three times a week. We are also the only program in any school we play that does not have a set of batting cages outside. So we cannot get warmed up. These are things we and scheduling we prayed for years. You will find new places to setup, testing's can be done in the gym, gym classes can be held at Alice Schafer. But Alice Schafer is our main facility with all our equipment in a room the size of 8 x 15, jammed in that room. Some things in the future if the money would be to have batting cages out there to have a place to warm up, we do utilize the gym more than ever, 3 days a week but without batting cages we struggle.

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John O'Grady- starting off I always volunteer and he sees behind him the same parents who will volunteer. He commends you for this meeting as it is a step in the right direction. He would love to see a 1,2 3 year plan. No offense, but a 5 year is optimistic and a lot of these people here will be gone. He has been through most of the middle school programs and not picking on it but for basketball there is a split talent when we play together. 8th graders in Valley and 7th graders at Lake won't see each other until 11th grade. How do they compete together so let's look at the programs. He hears a lot of about the football coach, what about what are we offering compared to other schools. Offer the same salary as other schools, he doesn't know. Everyone here wants to help, including the board and parents. So let's get together and get creative. He would love to see committees, look at the facilities we play at but we don't have that when they get off the bus here. We have a group here that will help, is eager to help.

Mr. Acklin and **Mr. Hall** announced there is a proposal brought to the board regarding the post on the football field. They asked Mr. Kimmel to provide information, who noted the committee looked a lot at the state of all the facilities in the district. We are in the process of repairing the score board posts as they are rotted out. It is not cheap and we will try to have them up for fall. The problem is manufacturing for shipping is disrupted and there are no guarantees but he is moving as quick as he can. Mr. Hall added that this will go to the full board but was a general board discussion as a recommendation from the Facilities Committee.

A visitor from the stands asked when the football coach would be hired. Mr. Hall noted we cannot say but we have five applicants and are interviewing starting tomorrow. If that looks like there is a good candidate we will proceed with a committee offer or we will repost if it would encourage more candidates. Mr. Acklin and he and the Board understand saying hiring a new football coach, have to hire a great one but understand when we post any position we get almost no one applying. First it used to be a staff member but that is not the case anymore. It has to be someone available at 3:30 to practice if an afternoon shift person they are not available so either a private contractor or shift or the employer helps in letting them off work. That eliminates so many people qualified and do the job. Last year we had a couple people, one was from Virginia but he was unbelievable qualifications but it was a supplemental pay. He is trying to explain how difficult getting the right person for the position. The first question we ask is are you available. Just putting this out there, we sure would like a lot of applicants but none are applying so we take who has applied.

Mr. Acklin reminded, if we do not get one in the first run as the last time we went 2-3 rounds a year ago. He noted the towns/teams we play are cities, we are not a city, we have 40 miles between us and it is hard to start with those obstacles. They have sand lots, fields close, can walk, we don't have that. Not saying we can't compete, we can, we have a trophy case full. We just have obstacles the others don't have.

The visitor from the audience/stands noted we all talked about feeder programs, there is a lot of truth in that. My son is coaching first grade boys back in Hickory, so that tells you what is out there at lower levels. These kids start way early. CASH play

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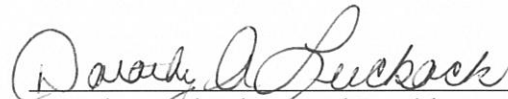
Mr. Hall noted that after hearing everything tonight, we are attempting to hire and we understand how important it is. This committee is working hard to change that so stay tuned.

Mr. Hall noted we have challenges and see opportunities, we have we can get better and stronger, he appreciates everyone coming. We will have more meetings and encourage everyone to come.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.



Greg Mayle, Board Secretary



Dorothy Luckock, Board President