



Hello fellow FHBC Member,

I write to you on behalf of the Board of Field Hockey BC to address issues of urgent concern to many members as we approach the Annual General Meeting scheduled for February 10th.

These concerns have been documented by member clubs of the Greater Vancouver Junior Field Hockey League, and most revolve around conflicts between junior leagues and High Performance sessions. The FHBC Board has been working collaboratively with the GVJFHL for several months, and continues with further meetings scheduled even this month, in an on-going effort to alleviate the points raised. Those points can be found in this public club posting: <http://www.vancouverhawks.com/members/>

To address the points individually, the collaborative meetings with the GVJFHL have already produced results in:

- Working together to reduce/eliminate scheduling conflicts
- Working toward greater emphasis on Club Championships
- Discussing best methods to select and train athletes for provincial teams that would also be inclusive for those outside the Greater Vancouver region

In a nutshell, the FHBC Board has heard loud and clear that some aspects of High Performance programming have been detrimental to league play and club activity. And we are determined to work toward beneficial solutions that alleviate the situation while still developing our players and our sport to the highest level for all ages, all abilities, in all regions of the province.

Also circulating is a document from GVJFHL clubs entitled, Pathway to Change: <http://www.vancouverhawks.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2024/2020/01/Pathway-to-Change-1-1-2.pdf>

The Board feels the articles in this document need to be addressed to bring clarity and understanding for our members to the nuances of working under provincial and national sport circumstances.

Programming: The model envisioned would work well for clubs with a large core group of members and infrastructure. The danger is that many clubs would see their junior players gravitate to larger clubs resulting in the creation of super-clubs, with the smallest clubs potentially disappearing or reduced to seniors-only. Outside the Lower Mainland a strong level of success is not envisioned for this model.

Competition: There are misconceptions within this article. While most leagues are sanctioned by FHBC for insurance purposes, they are otherwise independent entities. To relinquish control to FHBC would require a dissolution of each league by league membership vote. FHBC cannot dictate this outcome. For FHBC to take over the running of leagues, a cost analysis has shown the requirement of an additional three full-time positions at an estimate of <\$150,000/year. These calculations come from the current weekly hours of paid league administrators and volunteers. There would also be the need for an additional online platform with substantial capital costs. In all, this budgetary item would be roughly the equivalent of total FHBC membership fees. In essence, it would be doable if members approved a doubling of fees or severe cuts to programming (such as coaching, umpiring, and technical official education/certification).

Development: This is largely addressed in the comments under Programming. It should be noted that frameworks, pathways and curricula already exist for athletes, coaches and officials (see *Governance* below).

Strategy: The FHBC Board agrees that consultation and communication to members and member clubs can and should be improved.

Governance: Sections on guidelines, governance and certification are available online at fieldhockeybc.com Coaching standards are set nationally by the [NCCP](#) (coaching) and FHC ([coaches](#), [umpires](#) and technical officials). Additionally, FHBC created the [Provincial Coach Education Pathway](#) and [Courses](#) to specifically target community-level, grassroots coaches.

Marketing & Advocacy: The Board also agrees that we can always do better in marketing our sport. This past year has seen a greater emphasis on social media posts that are not necessarily focused on elite athletes but everyday members, with an eye to driving more people to the main website and all aspects of field hockey in BC. When it comes to lobbying for resources, FHBC is in constant contact with, and under constant scrutiny by the provincial government. Their own auditing processes deem we are punching above of our weight and consequently funded better than the vast majority of sports our size. There is a concern, though, that should self-funding High Performance programs be removed from our overall budget then FHBC would drop below the threshold for our current provincial grants, resulting in cuts to other programs.

Much of the discussion in this letter has revolved around junior athletes and, for more than a decade, FHBC's approach to the development of our juniors has resulted in greater numbers of well-trained BC athletes at the elite level, an alignment with Field Hockey Canada's NextGen Program and National Championships, and now emulation by other provinces. All of this is a synergy we would hate to lose and one that, with collaboration and mutual goodwill, we can all continue to nurture.

To be clear, this letter is not about my position or any other Board Member's position in the upcoming AGM. I very much welcome the engagement of more people in the governance of our sport and the infusion of fresh ideas.

With that in mind, please take some time to reflect on the future of field hockey across this province, then gather your proxy votes for representatives attending the AGM so that what you feel is right for you and for hockey is expressed at this meeting.

Proxies can be as simple as a written or electronic document that contains your name, email address, and FHBC membership number. Junior members under the age of 18 must designate a senior member in good standing, who must be over 18 years of age, to vote on their behalf. More details on voting procedures at the AGM can be found at <http://fieldhockeybc.com/about/constitution-bylaws/>

If you have any further questions about the above points or any other issue, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,



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