

**REPORT OF THE 2009-2010 RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE TO THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF THE NEW JERSEY INTERSCHOLASTIC
LACROSSE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION**

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: January 4, 2010

Dave Field, Chair

-and-

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I. Introduction.

In 2005, the New Jersey Interscholastic Lacrosse Officials Association (“the Association” and the “Members”) adopted the current Constitution. The purpose of the Constitution was explained to the Members at the time of voting: (1) to provide greater certainty how the Association conducts its affairs, (2) to provide Members with more opportunities to become involved in the Association, and (3) to be a “living” document that would be amended as necessary to address the growth of lacrosse and the demands placed on the Association and its Members.

Article Three, Section Six of the Constitution established committees, including the Resolutions Committee, which was charged with receiving and presenting “all proposed changes to the Constitution and other procedures of the Association.” (Contrary to some Members’ recent proposals, the Resolutions Committee does not have the authority to make changes to the rules of the game of lacrosse.) Like most committees, the Resolutions Committee is established by appointment of a Chair, who in turn appoints “at least three Active or Inactive Members who shall also serve a one year term.” The Resolutions Committee is responsible to submit all resolutions “to the Executive Committee who shall make the proposed changes available in writing to the membership no less than one week prior to a mandatory meeting.” (Constit., Article Five.) The current Resolutions Committee was established on September 15, 2009 by appointment of Dave Field as Chair, who in turn appointed the balance of the committee members who are listed on the cover of this report. The following criteria were used to appoint: (1) a mix of older and younger officials, (2) from around the State, and (3) with varying levels of lacrosse and other officiating experience. Other members were appointed, but declined the opportunity to serve, while several others simply never responded to accept their appointment.

An e-mail was sent to all Members of the Association on September 18, 2009 inviting proposed changes or issues for consideration by the Resolutions Committee. A follow-

up e-mail was sent on September 29, 2009 again inviting proposals. Several proposals were received.

II. The Methodology And Charge Of The Resolutions Committee.

We are mindful of the fact that this is the first duly-constituted Resolutions Committee since the adoption of the Constitution in the Spring of 2005. While the extraordinary growth of lacrosse has placed a significant burden on the Executive Committee (and the Members), the importance of the Resolution Committee should not be overlooked. It should be convened annually to provide all Members with a means to propose and seek change.

More importantly, the Members should recognize that the Resolutions Committee is available to initiate proposed change in the Association. The fact that few Members, if any, tried to propose any changes in the past four years indicates that the Members have been comfortable with the way business has been done.

Regardless, and looking forward to the future, the Resolutions Committee restates and reaffirms that the following principles and procedures will govern how change “to the Constitution and other procedures of the Association” can be accomplished: “[p]roposed changes shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Resolutions Committee who shall make a recommendation to the Executive Committee. . . .” (Constitution, Articles Three and Five.) Once appointed, the Resolutions Committee will annually collect, analyze, debate and ultimately present to the Executive Committee all viable proposals. The Resolutions Committee reserves the right to reject proposals which, on their face, have little or no support or are clearly beyond its purview, *i.e.* changing the rules of the game of lacrosse. Any proposal which does not find its way into the annual Report should be presumed to have been rejected by the Resolutions Committee for those reasons.

Notwithstanding the limited number of written submissions before this year, the Resolutions Committee is aware of issues that have arisen and warrant discussion and, possibly, change. To keep as a priority the need to change and improve the Association as required, the

Resolutions Committee is raising and presenting several issues. The balance of this Report is divided into three sections: one made to the Executive Committee as “proposed changes to the . . . other procedures of the Association”, a second section that addresses “proposed changes to the Constitution” and a third section which identifies topics considered by the Resolutions Committee for which the resulting resolution was tabled in light of ongoing changes in the Association being considered and/or implemented by the Executive Committee.

Before presenting each section of the Report, the Resolutions Committee provides further guidance:

- (1) the “other procedures of the Association” are presented as Resolutions which require a vote only by the Executive Committee to adopt or reject a proposal, and not a vote by the Members;
- (2) those type of Resolutions may be adopted in their entirety, rejected in their entirety or adopted in part, rejected in part;
- (3) however the Executive Committee votes, the Members should be advised accordingly so all Members know what principles govern the Association. (We suggest an e-mail report by the Executive Committee to the Members, with the appropriate record in the Association’s minutes);
- (4) on the other hand, amendments to the Constitution require a vote by the Members at a mandatory meeting;
- (5) amendments to the Constitution do ***not*** have the same voting flexibility, meaning they must be adopted or rejected as written (and, if rejected, may be re-submitted next year with “tweaking” to address those comments which may have served to justify the Members’ rejection vote);
- (6) the vote of the Executive Committee is a simple majority, while the vote of the Members to amend the Constitution requires two-thirds majority vote; and

- (7) the Report of the Resolutions Committee should ***not*** be construed as each Resolutions Committee member's personal belief that any particular change is necessary; instead, the Resolutions Committee is charged with raising issues and causing meaningful discussion and, ultimately, the Executive Committee or the Members decide on all proposals.

Because this represents the first Report of the Resolutions Committee since 2005, we hope these comments are insightful and assist the Executive Committee, the Members and future members of the Resolutions Committee.

To present Resolutions, the Report follows a format frequently used by businesses to make decisions:

- (a) what is the Question?
- (b) what Discussion was engaged in by the Resolutions Committee?
- (c) what is the proposed Resolution?

III. Changes To The Constitution Proposed By The Resolutions Committee Which Require Members' Vote At A Mandatory Meeting.

Question #1: Should the Constitution contain a different procedure for the election to the Executive Committee?

Discussion: The Constitution presently states that elections take place at the last regularly scheduled membership meeting and the quorum for voting is simply the Active Members in attendance. (Constitution, Article Three, Section One, ¶¶d-g.) Realistically, the last regularly scheduled meeting is often attended by a small percentage of Members who have not yet met their minimum meeting requirements. (See, e.g., Constitution, Article Four, Section Three.) Thus, election decisions fall to the limited number of individuals who happen to be there. While the Resolutions Committee does not suggest that this type of election has been the subject of abuse, it is not inconceivable that election results could be manipulated under this process. Every Member's vote is important and the election process should do everything possible to assure all votes remain meaningful. The Executive Committee has previously investigated the

cost of on-line voting but, to date, that alternative is not presently cost-effective. (Given the on-going advances in technology, the Executive Committee should annually re-investigate the cost of on-line voting which eventually will be affordable.) Nevertheless, e-mail can still be an important part of a more inclusive election process where all Members hear from the candidates and then have the right to cast their vote.

Resolution #1: Article Three of the Constitution, Section One, ¶¶d-g should be amended and replaced with the following: “At the mandatory meeting at the start of each season, the Executive Committee shall announce how many seats on the next year’s Executive Committee will be open and the date by which and how any person seeking to run must file his/her notice of intention to seek election. At the time of the election, a ballot shall be e-mailed to all Members who may print, vote, sign and return it to a designated mailing address by a specified date if the Member wants his/her vote to be recorded. Any candidate who is on the ballot shall be allowed to send all Members one e-mail of two hundred words or less advocating why he/she should be elected. All candidate’s e-mails shall be sent together in one e-mail by the Association to all members. The Secretary/Treasurer or designee shall be responsible for counting the votes and advising the Members of the results within 10 days of the vote cut-off date.”

Question #2: Should Article Three, Section Six, ¶e be amended to allow the Executive Committee more flexibility in forming committees?

Discussion: Article Three, Section Six, ¶e requires all committees (except the Fee Negotiation Committee) to “be appointed no later than September 1 of every year.” The Constitution was not, however, intended to compel the Executive Committee when to meet. (See Article Three, Section One, ¶j which provides “[a] year starts at the conclusion of the High School Varsity State Final game the following year”.) Given summer vacations, etc., it is not surprising that the Executive Committee holds an early Summer meeting after the State Final and may not meet again until after Labor Day. Thus, more flexibility should be afforded on the appointment of committees, provided that each committee is allotted adequate time to perform its function.

Resolution #2: Article Three, Section Six, ¶e should be amended as follows: “With the exception of the Fee Negotiation Committee, the Chair of each Committee shall be appointed at the first meeting of every new year and the members of each Committee shall be appointed by the second meeting of each new year.”

Question #3: Given the size of the Association and the amount of revenues generated through dues and other sources, should the Audit, Budget and Fees Committee issue an annual written report to the Members?

Discussion: The purpose of the Audit, Budget and Fees Committee “shall be to oversee all financial aspects of the Association.” (Constitution, Article Three, Section Six, ¶ii.) With the growth of the sport, increase in Members, and increase in revenue and expenses, the “financial aspects of the Association” have become much more complex. To assure transparency and accountability, a written report should be posted on the Association’s website (for Members’ review only) or e-mailed to the Members summarizing each year’s financial details.

Resolution #3: Article Three, Section Six, ¶ii of the Constitution should be amended to read as follows: “Audit, Budget and Fees Committee: The purpose of the Audit, Budget and Fees Committee shall be to oversee all financial aspects of the Association and to provide the Members with a written report on or before the next season’s first mandatory meeting summarizing in sufficient detail the preceding year’s income, expenses and any unusual financial events.”

IV. Changes To Other Procedures Of The Association Proposed By The Resolutions Committee Which Only Require Executive Committee Vote.

Question #4: Should the Executive Committee approach the Coaches’ Association to form a working committee to improve communication?

Discussion: While communication between most coaches and most officials appears to be healthy, there should be a working body comprised of a significant number of coaches and officials who meet regularly. From the officials’ perspective, it would be insightful to hear what

coaches like and do not like about our efforts. Furthermore, such a committee would provide the Association with a meaningful conduit to submit our comments to the coaches.

Resolution #4a: The Executive Committee, through its designee(s), should approach the appropriate representative of the New Jersey Interscholastic Men's Lacrosse Coaches' Association and propose the following:

- (a) an Officials/Coaches Committee be formed with no less than seven officials and seven coaches who will meet at least twice a year (preferably in January to discuss improvements and changes that can be made in the interscholastic game in the upcoming year, in June to discuss the preceding year and in mid-season, assuming schedules permit);
- (b) the officials portion of the Officials/Coaches Committee shall be constituted by a majority of Members who only officiate interscholastic lacrosse and who, in the preceding season, worked at least 20 varsity games. The Assignor shall serve as Chair of the officials portion of the Officials/Coaches Committee.
- (c) each portion of the Officials/Coaches Committee will agree to provide agenda items in advance of each meeting to allow adequate preparation;
- (d) each portion of the Officials/Coaches Committee will reach out to its members so that the dialogue represents statewide issues and not just the individual thoughts of those serving on the Officials/Coaches Committee; and
- (e) each portion of the Officials/Coaches Committee will report to its members the comments of the other portion of the Officials/Coaches Committee.

Note: while Resolution #6a is for vote only by the Executive Committee, if the Executive Committee agrees and if the Coaches' Association accepts the invitation, a Committee should be formed pursuant to the Constitution which will require the appropriate amendment. However, that amendment is not necessary until our invitation is accepted. For the purpose of that amendment, if necessary, the following Resolution should be voted on by the Members.

Resolution #4b: Section Six should be amended to include "a . . . x. Officials/Coaches Committee. The purpose of Officials/Coaches Committee is to meet regularly with representatives of the Coaches' Association to enhance communication between officials and

coaches, and to discuss and implement changes beneficial to the interscholastic game of men's lacrosse.”

Question #5: Should the Executive Committee's vote on all Resolutions submitted to it be published to the Members to include: (a) the Resolution presented, (b) the vote (in the aggregate), (c) the result and (d) if the vote rejects the resolution in its entirety a brief statement as to the reason(s) for rejection?

Discussion: The Executive Committee is authorized to address issues that do not require Members' approval. However, if a Member or Members go to the effort of presenting an idea to the Resolutions Committee, and further the Resolutions Committee advances the proposal by way of Resolution, the Members are entitled to hear if the proposal was adopted or rejected, and if rejected, why.

Resolution #5: “Any Resolution submitted by the Resolutions Committee which requires only Executive Committee approval, and not a general vote by the Members, which is adopted or rejected shall be reported to the Members by e-mail and, if applicable, the reason(s) why the Resolution was rejected.”

Question #6: Should the Assignor be limited to assigning officials for State Playoff games based on a minimum number of high school games each official has worked in that year?

Discussion: Members have noted that college officials often appear later in the season to take playoff assignments after not working much of the high school regular season. There is no question that the majority officials who also work college lacrosse are outstanding officials. However, there should be a minimum number of high school games which must be worked before an official should be allowed to work a State Playoff Game. To suggest otherwise gives little or no incentive for high school officials to officiate the bulk of the regular season. Presently, the “unofficial” standard is a minimum of five varsity games -- essentially the same standard to keep one's eligibility as an Active Member. The standard to be an active member and the criteria to officiate playoff games should not be the same and, regardless, there should be an official standard which must be followed.

Resolution #6: “To be assigned any State High School Playoff game, the Assignor must confirm that an official has worked in that year no less than 8 varsity high school games.”

Question #7: Should the Assignor publish at the conclusion of each season a list of all officials, on a game-by-game basis, who worked in each County and State Playoff game?

Discussion: Playoff games will always be a subject of discussion by Members. As the number of Members grow, this will likely become a more controversial topic as it does in every officials’ association. The Resolutions Committee believes that the current Assignor, and his predecessors, have done a truly outstanding job at staffing playoff games with quality officials. Disclosure of who those officials are and how many times each has worked only serves to identify the good officials and to motivate others to take their lead, while at the same time satisfying the Members that the assignments are being shared fairly.

Resolution #7: “The Assignor shall publish by e-mail or post on the Association’s website no later than July 15 after each season (for Members’ review only) a list of all officials who worked, on a game-by-game basis, in any County or State Tournament Playoff game.”

Question #8: Should the Association announce an official position regarding its involvement in “junior lacrosse”?

Discussion: The growth of junior lacrosse in New Jersey has increased at an unprecedented rate. The need for officials in junior lacrosse has risen accordingly. And so have the problems experienced by Members who officiate both high school and junior lacrosse. All too frequently, junior lacrosse officials, assignors, coaches and organizations turn to the Association as a “referee” in certain controversies, like the assignment of junior lacrosse games. Other times, accusations are made against the Association, its Officers and/or Members that we, as a group or individually, are meddling in areas where we do not belong. The Association finds itself in a no-win situation: it greatly cares about (a) the game of lacrosse, (b) all officials and (c) the many friends of lacrosse who are involved at other levels of the game. Presently, the “purpose” of the Association is set forth in Article Two of the Constitution and is expressly limited to “the promotion and welfare of the game of men’s *interscholastic* lacrosse. . . .” By being pulled into

aspects of the junior game, the Association is repeatedly asked to go beyond its “purpose”. On the other hand, several members of the Resolutions Committee correctly point out (1) junior lacrosse is apparently the only sport which requires “carded” officials -- a fact often advertised by leagues, tournaments and camps, (2) there is no association of uncertified officials supplying referees to junior lacrosse, like is done in football, basketball and other sports, (3) the Association implicitly acknowledges the number of Members who officiate junior lacrosse by requiring that the interscholastic game nevertheless take precedence, (4) junior lacrosse has found its way into the arbiter assignment process and (5) in general, there is a need to coordinate the two levels of lacrosse so many of the Members can work both. This issue caused the greatest amount of debate amongst the members of the Resolutions Committee. In the end, it reflects the great differences amongst Members regarding the effect of junior lacrosse on their officiating lives. The Resolutions Committee did reach one conclusion: the Association must be “all in” or “all out” when it comes to junior lacrosse. “All out” is easy to define: the Association formally announces that it has nothing to do with the organization, supervision, assignment or training of officials for any level of lacrosse other than the men’s interscholastic game. “All in” presents a more difficult definition, assuming the Association wants it and the junior lacrosse governing bodies want us. The following Resolution is a stop-gap measure to better define what “all in” means and whether it could be achieved.

Resolution #8: “The Executive Committee shall appoint a special committee to study what role the Association should/could assume in the organization, supervision, assigning and training of Members who officiate junior lacrosse. The special committee will issue its report to the Executive Committee and the Resolutions Committee no later than August 1, 2010 so that the Resolutions Committee (as constituted in 2010) can re-visit the issue.”

V. Issues Considered By The Resolutions Committee Which Have Been Tabled In Light Of Present Efforts Of The Executive Committee.

Question #9: Should the Clinic Committee’s duties be expanded to include more supervision and testing for first and second year officials?

Reason For Tabling: The resolution proposed by the Resolutions Committee was tabled at the request of the Executive Committee, which is presently working on a revised cadet program to be presented to the membership. To allow the Executive Committee to complete that revision and to avoid any potential conflict between proposals, the Resolutions Committee agreed to table its resolution.

Question #10: Should the Constitution be amended to further specify the qualifications of an officer, assignor or re-assignor?

Reason For Tabling: The resolution proposed by the Resolutions Committee was tabled at the request of the Executive Committee, which is presently work on a conflicts of interest policy applicable to all Members. To allow the Executive Committee to complete and present its policy and to avoid any potential conflict between proposals, the Resolutions Committee agreed to table its resolution.

Question #11: Is the present method of conducting cadet classes putting first year officials on the field too soon?

Reason For Tabling: The resolution proposed by the Resolutions Committee was tabled at the request of the Executive Committee, which is presently working on a revised cadet program to be presented to the membership. To allow the Executive Committee to complete that revision and to avoid any potential conflict between proposals, the Resolutions Committee agreed to table its resolution.