

South Dakota Cross Country/Track & Field Officials Association (SDCCTFOA)

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 7:00 pm CDT via Zoom

President Tim Casper called the meeting of the SDCCTFOA to order at 7:00 pm CDT. President Casper noted the meeting was being recorded, and it would be archived and posted on the SDHSAA Web Site.

President Casper called the roll for board members: President-Elect J.D. Evans; Secretary/Treasurer Dana Nelson; Regional Coordinators Randy Thomas, Steve Charron, Tony Waterman and Larry Stevens were present. Robert Kwasniewski joined the meeting later. A total of 22 members (registered officials) were present via Zoom, facilitated by Randy Soma, SDHSAA.

The members recited the pledge of allegiance.

Dana Nelson moved, Harry Weller seconded the approval of the agenda as distributed to the membership, with the subject of fees added. Motion was approved.

President Casper opened the meeting to public comment and offered that most ADs are going to Varsity Bound for contracting, and encouraged membership to become familiar with it, since it would be on your phone. JD Evans reported that there is an email from Casey Meile which some may be receiving, but it is a virus, so do not open it.

Items on the Consent Calendar (minutes, financial statement & payment of bills), with Secretary Treasurer Dana Nelson reporting a balance of \$433.30 in the checking account, as follows:

- 9/19/23 Initial Deposit \$435.00 based on 87 registered officials
- 9/27/23 Expense for checks \$26.70
- 5/23/24 Additional Deposit \$25.00 for 5 additional registered officials

JD Evans moved, Randy Thomas seconded the approval of the consent items, motion was approved.

Discussion was opened as to how the organization proceeds after 2026, which is when all terms of office (President, President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer and all Area Coordinators) expire.

Discussion was opened on fees. It was agreed we are independent contractors and can negotiate our own fees. Further SDHSAA is not going to mandate a fee. Cross country is largely dependent upon the number of races as to the duration of a meet. A fee of \$150 for meet seemed to be the norm. Randy Soma shared that the survey SDHSAA conducted indicated that

\$100 was the floor (minimum paid). There was some discussion on the hiring of an assistant for cross country, especially for a “big” meet. The assistant does not need to be SDHSAA registered.

Discussion continued on track and field meet fees. The number of teams and whether junior high races are included are the driving force behind the length of time meets last. It also depends on whether field events are completed before the running events, and javelin is frequently held even earlier, creating even longer meets. The consensus was \$250 is about where fees should be for a typical meet (up to 8 teams and up to six hours). Other considerations must be considered. Fees need to be adjusted if additional schools are invited, which has occurred with bad spring weather. It was decided a draft of a fee structure should be developed that takes into account the many variables. Mileage should also be paid, and rider mileage if multiple officials travel together. Fees for shells also need to be part of the fee consideration. We also talked about an additional starter or assistant starter and what that role may be. Dana Nelson was assigned to develop such a document.

Discussion on the Constitution centered on the likelihood the constitution would need to be amended with regard to terms so that all of the officers do not have their terms expire at the same time.

With regard to the Website, President Casper described the items on the site, and the use of that information. He highlighted each section, and he informed the group that beginning in 2025 there would be no test for cross country, but the power point rules meeting would still be required.

We discussed the possibility of further recognizing track and field/cross country officials. SDHSAA already recognizes an official of the year, which can only be awarded once. The idea of a Hall of Fame, or years of service received some interest, and Jim Aberle and Steve Charron were assigned to investigate possibilities for additional awards or recognitions.

Selection of officials for the state track meet was discussed. SDHSAA has expanded the number of officials, but noted that finances are always a consideration. Randy reported that he tries to find some balance with geography, and does consider getting new officials into the meet. SDHSAA has added three field referees (vertical jumps, horizontal jumps and throws), however there are no sit out rules, requirement for a new official or any requirement to consider geography. Decisions are made by SDHSAA staff with no transparency. It was stated that it is nearly a foregone conclusion that some officials would be selected. More transparency and input were encouraged.

The new officials uniform was discussed, and the group was informed that the putty colored jackets/pullovers were no longer available. It was determined by Jo Auch that in two years the jacket would be black with white lettering. The putty jacket/pullover is still OK for the next two years. Cross Country’s uniform is the same.

Discussion was held about using red, yellow and green cards for starting line violations. Steve Charron and Dana Nelson indicated they like them. It was a topic on the NFHS track & field survey, but was not adopted in the rule book. SDHSAA will not use those cards unless it becomes part of the rule book.

The use of white & red flags was discussed for field events, and the consensus was that we should work to put those in use rather than yelling “foul” or “scratch”. Randy was going to put that in his information to ADs/Meet Directors. For umpires, the use of white and yellow flags should also be adopted by host schools (assuming we have umpires at local meets). President Casper reported that white, red and yellow flags are used at Howard Wood and the State Meet.

The waterfall start was briefly discussed, but it was decided that the SDHSAA would continue using it at the state meet. The Games Committee/Meet Director at local meets could allow it, but it was felt that was unlikely if the state meet was not going to use it. It was commented that coaches do not coach this type of start. It was also noted how much of a handicap the break line official is when there are over eight runners, even if the official has a start list.

With regard to facilities, we discussed sand in the LJ/TJ pits. Dana Nelson noted that he has never ruled that an event could not be run, as it would take competition opportunities away from athletes, but it was also unfair when some jumpers are jumping into a hole. Randy said he would include that as a point of emphasis to ADs. He also suggested that officials report the lack of sand to the SDHSAA and staff would follow up.

We also recommended that schools mark both the NFHS and SDHSAA hurdle mark, in the event that the SDHSAA adopts the NFHS distance. We also recommended that schools mark the center point on throwing circles for measuring purposes, as well as the tick marks on the outer edge of the ring to mark the front/back of the ring, so there is no ambiguity as to whether an athlete exited from the back.

Frequency and topics for the newsletter were discussed. A fall and a spring newsletter will be produced. Topics from membership are solicited. Some of the potential topics include the new rules, counting laps, meet management issues, assistant starter for cross country and Casper’s clarification for running in lanes.

We also discussed clinics before the outdoor track season, probably in February. Locations considered for 2025 include Rapid City, Huron, Aberdeen or Watertown and Yankton. That still leaves a hole in the south central part of the state (Winner, Mission, Pine Ridge etc). Dana Nelson offered to travel there for a 2025 clinic.

We encouraged officials to take new officials out with them, and use the mentor form to get them paid a modest fee.

There being no further business, Harry Weller moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Nelson

Secretary/Treasurer