VSA Meeting Minutes

Date: November 3, 2025
Call to Order: 6:15pm

Attendance: Rich DeGraff Murphy (President); Emily Milbank (Vice President); Kyle Koenig (Secretary); Keith Roberts (Risk Management); Bill Edwards (SRA); Andrew Minnis (ED); Lori Levinson (Ops Manager); Jason Marika (TD)

Absent: Matt Spitznagle (Treasurer)

1. Approval of Minutes:

- Date of Previous Meeting: October 6, 2025
- Action: Motion to approve minutes as written
- Result: Approved unanimously

2. Public Comment

- No outside comment or attendance

3. Reports

A. President's Report

- Commended the office staff and volunteers for the successful Halloween Fall Festival.
- Volunteers acknowledged: Rice Students; Sophia, Penny, and Kyle.
- Noted high attendance and general success.
- Mentioned the need to address increased attendance in the future regarding parking and transition period between age grouping to elevate parking lot issues.
- AGM Reports
  - New "book of reports" model: Each department/chair submits narrative + data (no live PowerPoint at AGM).
  - All board/committee/administrative reports due December 5, 2025, for formatting.
  - Reports distributed to members by December 10, in compliance with bylaws (30-days advance).
  - AGM agenda: High-level reviews and Q&A, not detailed presentations.
  - Referees to highlight the need for statewide participation, training/involvement.
  - Encouraged to use prior AGM summary/extract methods for compiling annual reports.

B. Vice President's Report

Awards and Gala Planning (December 5th 6-9 p.m.)

- The Awards Committee finalized all award recipients and notified them including Hall of Fame recipients.

C. Treasurer's Report
- Treasurer absent; no direct report.
- Improvements in documentation; tracking and transparency noted in financials.
- Projected 2025–2026 income: $534,000; expenses: $513,000.
- Budget documents available in Google Drive (fresh link requested for review).
- Formal budget to be presented at upcoming AGM in accordance with Bylaws.

D. Secretary Report

E. Risk Management Report
- **Annual Report:**
  - Rich and Keith to collaborate on a Risk Management/discipline report (based on previous years and updates).
  - Lori will provide a match discipline report to be included in the annual report.
- **U.S. Soccer Learning Center (Fall 2026):**
  - U.S. Soccer will be requiring all compliance/certifications to be processed through Learning Center (replacing 'GotSport'), auto-integrating records.
  - Vermont may use a hybrid for this transition.
  - Needs to be explained in more detail at the AGM; may change registration and background check procedures.
- **RAP**
  - VSA lacks formal spectator policy in regards to RAP. A new spectator policy is being formulated (taking cues from Massachusetts) for implementation in Spring 2026.

F. SRA Report
- **Referee Clinics:**
  - Four to five new referee field clinics scheduled ahead of previous years.
  - Clinic Sites: Johnson, Harwood (Montpelier area), Bur Burton in Manchester and working with local high schools like Milton to host.
  - Exploring outreach to high schools (e.g., after-school clinics during February break).
- **Recruitment and Mentoring:**
  - Goal: Increase from 303 referees to 340 for next year.
  - New US Soccer Vermont Referee Department contact: Alicia Owens.
  - Secretary support: Zoe Zeller onboard; focus on engaging younger referees.
  - Committee seeking a new advisor coordinator as Whitney has stepped back due to burnout.
- **Mentorship:**
  - Spring Vermont festival most successful: 60 referees mentored in 2 days (14 mentors on Saturday, 4 Sunday).
  - Fall festival had little mentor participation; mentorship is a major bottleneck, especially due to senior referees' coaching fatigue.

- **Green Badges:**
  - US Soccer implementing "Green Badge" for referees under 18 (nationwide initiative).
- **Recruitment:**
  - Plans for a branded referee recruitment booth/tent at events (needs a staffing/payment/funding plan).
  - Payment for assessors/mentors adequate; program for reports and payment (Jace's software) continues in use.
- **Technology/Web:**
  - Discussed lack of web development resources; possibility of future investment.
- **Budget/Funding:**
  - Financials for assessors and clinics are stable; adult league (VSSA) contributes for advanced clinics and development.
  - Discussed the need for more clarity and formalization in funding/refunding, especially for future initiatives.
- **Event Attendance:**
  - US Soccer AGM, Feb 19, 2026; Vermont can send two representatives.
- **Use of New Facility:**
  - Planned to utilize Forever Summer/VSA Office facility for new field education/training clinics.

G. Technical Director Report

- **ODP Tryouts:**
  - Tryouts conducted at Tree Farm.
  - 380 registered; ~300 attended across two days.
  - Group structure: U12 (80 kids, 2–3 staff), U13 (30), Girls' groups noted as "incredibly strong."
  - Results: List finalized and sent to families around 8:00pm (Nov 3); 48-hour acceptance window.
  - Broadly positive feedback from parents and players. Clearer 'tryout' branding led to better competition and understanding.
  - Recruiting appears effective; anticipation that a successful year will boost recruitment.
  - Adjustments planned for next year for further improvement.

H. Operation's Report

- **Gala**
  - Scheduled for December 5, 2025, 6–9pm at the same venue as the July meeting.
  - RSVP count at 31; formal/semi-formal event with finalized menu (Cost being covered by sponsor).
  - Custom awards sourced from Wilson (receive discount through Consortium)
  - Photographer secured; MC scheduled as Jason; keynote speaker TBD.
  - Table decor - Rich will be reaching out to local vendors about floral arrangements.

F. Executive Director Report

- **State Cup:**
  - Proposal to move venue from Tree Farm to Rice High School; outreach began two weeks earlier.Rich to follow up with Rice (AD Neil) on specifics.
  - Event dates: May 15th–17th, 2026 (Friday–Sunday; prom weekend considered in scheduling).
  - Potential conflicts: Lacrosse, Ultimate Frisbee, Softball/Baseball on weekends at Rice.
  - Alternative turf venues considered: St. Michael's, BHS, SBHS (noted lack of turf in central VT).
  - The plan includes a possible temporary field for U12s (requires bringing in goals) at Rice.
- **Event Atmosphere:**
  - Focus on professionalism and attracting better teams.
  - Increased stands and improved field conditions desired; turf preferred due to historical rain issues.
- **Indoor and Futsal Leagues:**
  - All known youth indoor/futsal leagues across Vermont now are VSA sanctioned:
  - Post Nordic, VSA league, VPL Alliance, Waterbury Rec, Lyndon, Capital Spring, CDYSL, etc.
  - Sanctioning requires all league players to register with the VSA, capturing more data and increasing membership figures.
  - Estimated impact: Substantial increase in player counts (~10,000), improved alignment and insurance coverage.
- **Transfers/Player Passes:**
  - Discussed club/guest transfer policy clarifications; reinforcing that multi-club play is not allowed except recreational→competitive, or via guest pass with proper documentation.
  - Noted history of inconsistent enforcement; working on better education for clubs/registrars.
- **Website:**
  - Significant updates underway for clarity and navigation. Current details on sanctioned leagues, registration processes, and tournaments posted.
- **Revenues:**
  - Sanctioning fee is $200/year per league; main revenue is from player registrations.
  - New transparency being instituted for budget and membership figures.
- **Office Relocation & Facilities Update**
  - New facility Forever Summer at former Sports & Fitness Edge in Williston progressing; opening now estimated for November 17 rather than November 10, 2025.
  - VSA staff required to vacate the current office by end of December; contingency plans for remote work if delayed.
  - Facility details: Nordic-sized turf (9v9), available for VSA referee/coach clinics, ODP, and as "home of Vermont Soccer."
  - Free Office space to VSA up to a point (built into partnership); prioritize VSA programming on field.

    - Storage: Need to clean and inventory closet; artifacts from past programs and referee gear.
    - Comcast equipment (routers, etc.) must be returned; Lori to confirm procedures.
    - Additional locations for program expansion discussed due to increasing usage.
    - Proposed fixed-mount camera installation for recordings/assessment (pending).
- **AGM - Saturday, January 10, 2026**
    - Venue: Forever Summer (good capacity, new-look facility).
    - Workshops/panels: 9:45am–12:00pm
        - Community/State/Club Resources (including guest from Iceland's national program)
        - Technical (player/coach development)
        - US Soccer / US Youth Soccer (leadership Q&A for members)
    - AGM proper: 12:00pm–2:00pm
    - Club and organization outreach for attendance.
    - Food/snacks provided; logistics being finalized.
    - **Friday, January 9, 2026:** Pre-AGM social gathering for panelists, guests, and VSA members (site TBD; options: BBC, Switchback, Zero Gravity, St. John's Club, etc.).

4. Other Business and Good-of-the-Game

- CVU Girls Soccer recognized as #1
- Staff encouraged to support high school games.
- Board praised for improved operations and transparency.

5. Executive Session

- None Needed

6. Upcoming Meetings

- Next Board Meeting: Monday, January 5, 2026.
- AGM: Saturday, January 10, 2026; pre-AGM social January 9th.
- Gala: Friday, December 5, 2025.
- Andrew and Lori to attend Derby AGM

7. Action Items

- President: Follow up with Rice AD; ensure Hall of Fame invitees are notified.
- Lori: Send Gala menu; coordinate flowers; clean storage; return Comcast hardware; share budget link.
- Bill: Schedule clinics; plan recruitment booth.
- Rich/Keith: Prepare risk report; update policies.
- Everyone: RSVP for Gala; prepare AGM reports.
- Andrew: Monitor mini-pitch progress; confirm social venue.

ADJOURNMENT

- **Motion to adjourn:** approved unanimously.
- **Time:** 7:40 p.m.