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Florida High School Athletic Association

Board of Directors Meeting – Agenda Item

Site: FHSAA Robert W. Hughes Building Date: Sept. 27-28, 2009

Check One: Action:

Discussion: X

Information:

Presentation:

Topic (brief descriptive statement):

Officials and the Difference in Charges for Mileage made to Public and Private Schools

Detailed Information (background, observations, etc.):

See Attached

Recommendation(s):

Rationale:

Alternative(s) to Recommendation(s):

Data Source:

Impact (to be completed by FHSAA staff):

Bob West
Individual(s) Submitting Item

Signature

Peggy Jones
FHSAA Staff Member Presenting Item

Dr. P. Jones
Signature



X-1

August 31, 2009.

Mr. Bob West
Bishop Kenny High School
1055 Kingman Avenue
Jacksonville, Florida 32207

Dear Mr. West,

I am writing to share my concern, and the concern of other private high schools in Duval County, with you and the Board of Directors of the FHSAA regarding travel fees being assessed for the 2009-2012 soccer seasons by the North Florida Soccer Officials Association. In discussions with Mr. John Fox, Duval County Athletic Director, a \$10.00 travel fee per game was agreed upon by all of the officials' associations for Duval County. Last year, Bishop Snyder High School was paying officials in all other sports a \$10.00 travel fee, with the exception of NFSOA, who had raised their travel fee for the 2008-2009 soccer season to \$14.00 per game, citing gas prices as the cause. With this information in hand, I received my 2009-2012 NFSOA contract to find that our travel fee remained \$14.00 per game.

In the 2009-2010 FHSAA Officials Guidebook, policy 901.01(1) states that "officiating fees should be agreed upon by negotiations between local officials associations and the member schools which they serve." I had never been contacted by NFSOA to negotiate these travel fees, and therefore called Mr. Grant Merrill, president, on August 21, 2009, to discuss this issue. Mr. Merrill informed me that Duval County signs a different contract than everyone else and that travel fees are based on the average distance that the officials have to travel. I asked why Bishop Snyder High School was being charged \$14.00, when two Duval County public high schools within five miles of our school were being charged \$10.00. He stated that he would investigate and get back to me the following week. When Mr. Merrill failed to call me back, I began contacting other private schools in the county and discovered that they too were being charged \$14.00.

On August 25, 2009, I received an email from Jason Carter, secretary of the NFSOA, asking for booking fees, schedules, and a signed contract. I replied to his email and asked for clarification once again on the travel fee. Jason called me back and told me that the \$14.00 travel fee was a mistake and that the travel fee should only be \$12.00. He also reiterated the fact that Duval County has a different contract because of the number of schools that they have, and stated "We can't lose Duval County." I commented that they also can't lose the private schools in Duval County to which he replied, "We won't lose any private schools." I asked him if we, as a school, were able to negotiate the contract and was told that these fees are non-negotiable.

There seems to be inequity in the manner with which the NFSOA handles the private schools. I understand that officials work very hard and should be compensated properly, which is why they charge the maximum allowed for game fees by the FHSAA (\$46.00 per game for varsity). However, pursuant to policy 902.02(1), travel fees should be negotiable and sixty cents per mile, one way, is the maximum rate recommended by the FHSAA. At that rate, a \$12.00 travel fee would include a 20 mile radius from our school. I am sure that the NFSOA makes every effort not to assign officials to work games at schools located in excess of 20 miles from their home. I believe that a \$10.00 travel fee is more than equitable. I am requesting that the FHSAA act as a liaison, investigate this situation, and advise the private schools within Duval County how to proceed. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Zach Osbeck
Athletic Director
Bishop John Snyder High School