



# SACKVILLE MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

PO Box 212, Lower Sackville, NS, B4C 2S9

To the respected members of the SMHA community,

Hello! To begin, I would like to introduce myself to all of you. I am most likely at least somewhat of a familiar face to many of you; however, with my kids getting older there are a lot of newer families to the association that I have not had the opportunity to get to know. My name is Melissa Berkvens and I am very happy to be renominated and am seeking support in my effort to continue in my current role as Secretary; allowing me to continue to contribute to our amazing association in a positive way.

I have two children in SMHA, my son Mason is going into his second season of U13 and my daughter Rylee is moving into her first year of U11. In my professional life, I have been an RN at the IWK Health Centre for the past 16 years on a very busy unit and have recently made a job change and am now supporting families facing challenges and complications in their pregnancies. Aside from my career in Nursing, I have been volunteering with the SMHA since 2017. I have at some point put my hand up for most volunteer roles and have always been willing to help wherever needed. This includes but is not limited to: 50/50 Rep, Fundraising, Safety Rep and the last five years as Team Manager for one or both of my kids' teams as well as a member of the Executive for the last three years. My roles both within and outside of SMHA require exceptional organizational skills, effective communication skills ensuring that emails are answered or redirected in an efficient and effective manner, an ability to delegate and a willingness to ask for help when it is required. I pride myself on being friendly and approachable. I have training in conflict resolution, which is a skill that has certainly been utilized over the years in my volunteer roles. I am level headed, respectful, open minded and am always willing to sit and have a conversation even if opinions are not in alignment in hopes of coming to a mutual agreement. Honesty and integrity are core values for me and are a large part of what drove me to get involved with the Association in the beginning and are definitely important for anyone serving as a member of our Executive. Being able to work with a diverse team is to combine ideas of many to come up with the best possible solution or outcome for all is essential to any successful team and something I have years of experience doing.

I have spent countless hours within the walls of the Sackville Arena over the past eight years, educating myself on both the game and the inner workings of running a hockey program. Anyone who knows me will attest to the effort I make to get to know and form bonds with both the kids and their families. My passion for this game and what it offers our children, not just as hockey players but as humans, is immeasurable, but I hope has been obvious to many of you over the past number of years. I remain committed to striving to develop a fair process, reassessing current processes to continue to improve them each year and looking at what areas we are doing well in, as well as where we need to improve most, as I believe there is always room for improvement. I am not one to sit back and wait for things to change themselves and I look forward to hopefully continuing to be an active member, advocating for change, transparency, diversity and inclusion within the Association.

Over the last three years as Secretary, I have helped to organize and facilitate two AGMs, as well as two Managers meetings for the Association. I have developed a Social Networking channel for communication for managers and other team volunteers to support one another as well as created an online Marketplace for buying/selling/swapping gear within the Association. I have created an online Manager's Handbook that is available on the SMHA website, as well as I have been a dedicated and ever present member of tryouts at every level for the past two seasons, supporting in any way I possibly could. I have responded to almost (if not all) emails I have received in an effective manner and have attended and taken minutes at all meetings. I have been able to get many of these minutes shared online and am

currently assessing a new system for sharing these online and will have it updated in the near future and is an area I will strive for improvement in. I have also stepped in to assist with website updates and social media when the Communications role became vacant as well as sitting on disciplinary committees.

If elected to continue in this role, I will continue to support Managers and all team staff in any way possible to ensure retention of volunteers within the Association. Setting volunteers up for success is crucial to any hockey team or season. I want to continue working towards clearly defining roles and responsibilities so everyone is able to complete their tasks effectively, ensuring more balanced weighting on the commitment everyone is making in addition to their already busy lives. I also hope to be a large part of supporting advancement in support for mental health within the Association. I will always advocate for improved communication between members to ensure information is received to the appropriate people as effectively as possible. Ultimately, I will continue to help wherever needed to continue moving SMHA forward in a positive direction.

My primary goal as a member of the SMHA Executive is to help to ensure that both the children and families walk away with a positive experience and valuable core memories from their Minor Hockey experience both from a development and personal perspective in both skill and friendship/comraderie building. I believe I have shown my dedication to this over the years and that is a sound reason to support me to continue as the SMHA Secretary.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this, please feel free to reach out with any questions. We have made a lot of positive changes over the last few years and I truly hope to continue to be a part of the initiatives we have planned moving forward. I would like to wish the best of luck to all candidates running for any position during this AGM. The time and dedication you are each willing to offer our Association is very appreciated. I would also like to thank in advance everyone who takes the time to come out and vote during this year's AGM. Please consider me for your vote on election day.

**LET'S GO FLYERS!!!!**

Yours in hockey,

Melissa Berkvens

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