



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 12-13, 2019, MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

- **None.**

Welcome, Announcements, Updates

1. **Welcome and review of meeting schedule.** Rhonda Bennett welcomed the group to the meeting and reviewed the schedule. Lunch on Tuesday will be with the NCAA Employee Engagement Group for Women's Basketball, featuring a panel discussion to obtain an insider's perspective of committee duties, preparation for selections, and general Q&A. Ms. Bennett, Diane Turnham, Ken Bothof and Nina King will serve on the panel moderated by Kyani White-Tate. Lynn Holzman provided a brief history of the Employee Engagement Group.
2. **Vice president update.** Ms. Holzman updated the group on the strategic planning progress, the Sports Wagering Taskforce and South Carolina's request for an exception to the first- and second-round host policy (see Informational Item 14).
 - a. Amy Reis shared that the 2023 women's basketball joint championship is moving forward with a press release pending.
 - b. Natalie Steger updated the group on midseason highlights from ESPN, noting that viewership is up this season.
3. **Update from the January 23 Women's Basketball Committee meeting.** The committee approved the meeting report from its January 23 meeting.

Key Discussion Items – Preparation for Selections

4. **Review of February 11 Top 16 reveal.** The committee reviewed the process of reviewing teams for the first Top 16 release. The feedback and timing were positive, and the committee will use the same process for the next release on March 4. The committee's feedback on ESPN's broadcast of the Top 16 release was not as positive. The committee was disappointed in the graphics and how the conversation revolved around where teams were going rather than the seeding. There was additional discussion about the talent used in the studio for the release, which was not the regular studio talent, and how it distracted from the teams and seeding. The committee recommended a pre-release call be scheduled with Ms. Bennett and ESPN before the next Top 16 reveal on March 4 to answer questions about the committee's ranking and provide clarity on the selection, seeding and bracketing policies and procedures.

5. **Review of February regional advisory committee reports/rankings.** Rick Nixon reviewed the most recent reports from the regional advisory committee rankings and noted moves from the previous month. The committee noted the next series of calls is scheduled for March 6.
6. **Team discussion.** Committee members reported results on games thus far involving their assigned teams and conferences.
7. **Technology review and balloting exercise.** Meredith Cleaver ran a mock balloting exercise to familiarize the committee with the technology used during the March selection meeting.
8. **Selection weekend information.** Rachel Kay reviewed the schedule and setup for Selection Weekend, which will take place at the Hyatt Indianapolis.
9. **Officials nomination, selection, assignment and advancement process.** Tina Krah reported on progress regarding the officiating program. The officials nomination process will close February 19. June Courteau, national coordinator of officiating, and all four of the regional evaluators will travel to Indianapolis to attend a meeting later this month to discuss the officiating pool.

Championship

10. **Championship planning update.** Ms. Steger provided a broadcast update leading up to and during the championship. Ms. Kay reviewed preliminary-round planning from site visits and noted future calls with hosts. She also reviewed the committee's roles and responsibilities on-site during the championship. Ms. Reis updated the committee on planning for Women's Final Four, noting programming additions and schedule changes. Staff provided a brief overview of accommodations, hospitality and transportation for the Women's Final Four.

Other Business

11. **Division I women's basketball weekly stats analysis.** Mr. Nixon provided an overview of the weekly stats available to the committee.
12. **Regional championship format review and site selection.** As a follow-up to their January 23 meeting, the committee continued discussion regarding their regional format review reaffirming the scope, stakeholder engagement and timeline for the review. The committee will conduct a review of regional format to include number of sites and strategy of locations in response to key stakeholder feedback as a part of the NCAA women's basketball strategic plan development. The review will begin immediately and conclude no later than summer 2019 in preparation for the championship-wide bid process, which will begin in August.

13. **Committee chair election process and timeline.** Ms. Cleaver reviewed a proposed timeline for selecting the future committee chair to better align with other committees' process for selecting chairs. The committee agreed that nominees do not need to provide a written statement nor speech during the process. The committee voted and approved the proposed timeline and procedures.
14. **Other business.** Dan Gavitt joined the group for a portion of the meeting to discuss various topics with the group, including Top 16 releases, takeaways from using the NET tool this season for men's basketball, and a sports wagering task force update.
 - **University of South Carolina's request to host at an alternate site.** Due to her role with the Southeastern Conference, Leslie Claybrook recused herself from the meeting. Due to an NCAA men's basketball championship event taking place in the campus facility, the committee voted and approved a one-time exception for South Carolina to host the 2019 NCAA women's basketball championship first and second rounds at University of North Carolina, Charlotte. The committee emphasized that all bid specifications must be met and then South Carolina must earn a top-16 seed when the bracket is released on Monday, March 18. Additional cost above and beyond the expected cost of hosting at Colonial Life Arena, South Carolina's home women's basketball facility, will be at the expense of South Carolina, not the NCAA. The committee also noted the importance of South Carolina marketing the event to attract fans to Charlotte.
15. **Future meetings and teleconferences.** Ms. Cleaver reviewed the schedule of future meetings.
16. **Adjournment.** Ms. Bennett adjourned the meeting at 3:17 p.m.

Committee Chair: Rhonda Bennett, University of Nevada, Reno; Mountain West Conference
Staff Liaison(s): Lynn Holzman, Women's Basketball
Meredith Cleaver, Women's Basketball

NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Committee February 12-13, 2019, Meeting
Attendees:
Ceal Barry, University of Colorado, Boulder; Pac-12 Conference.
Rhonda Bennett, University of Nevada, Reno; Mountain West Conference.
Ken Bothof, University of Northern Kentucky; Horizon League.
Leslie Claybrook, Southeastern Conference.
Nina King, Duke University; Atlantic Coast Conference.
Teresa Phillips, Tennessee State University; Ohio Valley Conference.
Debbie Richardson, Atlantic 10 Conference.
Diane Turnham, Middle Tennessee State University; Conference USA.

DeJuena Chizer, University of Houston; American Athletic Conference.
Tamica Smith Jones, University of California, Riverside; Big West Conference.
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Chelsea Wilson, Contractor.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Meredith Cleaver and Lynn Holzman.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Tommy Barrett, Andrea Gaither, Dan Gavitt, Rachel Kay, Tina Krah, Daress McClung, Rick Nixon, Amy Reis, Natalie Steger and Kyani White-Tate.