



All,

Until this point the Richmond Hill Hockey Association (RHHA) has resolved to remain neutral during the work stoppage in Richmond Hill. We felt it was not our place to be involved in the negotiations between the City and the Union, as we assumed both parties were doing their best to represent their interests, while taking into consideration the impact the work stoppage has created on the community, its residents and most importantly, the kids of Richmond Hill.

However, I received some incredibly dismaying news, which demands immediate clarification.

If what I have been told is correct I am completely appalled by the obvious weaponization of youth sports and using the kids of Richmond hill as bargaining chips in this negotiation. I was informed that multiple hours worth of ice in the City of Markham – which we had secured for our teams use – cannot be used by any Richmond Hill teams. Anyone else is allowed to use the ice but not us. We were told this is the unions prerogative.

This is an outrageous and a shameful tactic.

Since the beginning of the strike, we have had to pause all of our programming which has put over 1000 kids out of hockey and any hockey related activities. We have been working very hard to get as many of our games played as we can and meet our obligations to our members to the best of our ability by sourcing ice outside of the town.

Finally, we are also shocked that while this strike is going on that there has been no attempt or desire to meet and that it seems the parties are satisfied with “waiting it out.” How is it coming up on a week and there have been no negotiations or discussions? The impact to this is incredible. The cost to the community and not for profit organizations such as us are tremendous and recouping the losses will be a near impossible task.

I am demanding immediate clarification and update on these items as I pride myself on being a fair and upfront and want everyone to have the opportunity to clarify the situation. Our kids should not be used as bargaining chips and the parties should get back to the bargaining table now.

Thank you and look forward to hearing from you all

Sincerely

Steve Ley

President

Richmond Hill Hockey Association