



MINUTES

USATT Board of Directors Teleconference Meeting

April 15, 2019

Monday, April 15, 2019 – Teleconference

Chair Anne Cribbs called the meeting to order at 7:02 EDT.

1. Roll Call and Administrative Matters

The following board members were in attendance:

Anne Cribbs (Chair), Ed Hogshead, Bruce Liu, Tara Profitt, Deepak Somarapu (7:31);
Carolyne Savini, Gary Schlager, Rajul Sheth, Erica Wu.

Also attending:

Dennis Taylor (General Counsel and Secretary), Mark Thompson, Carl Danner
(Representative of USTTA Foundation), Tammy Kuypers (Assistant Secretary), Jasna
Rather (Para High-Performance Director).

A quorum was established. No conflicts of interest were reported.

Ms. Cribbs really wants to keep the call to 1 ½ hours at the most.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes from the January 2019 Teleconference

MOTION 1. MOVED to approve the January 3 Minutes, as submitted.

Movant: Carolyne Savini

Second: Gary Schlager

The Motion was approved by voice vote, 8-0-1 (Liu).

3. High-Performance Update

- There was no written report; Mr. Bitzigeio is out of the country.
- However, Mr. Bitzigeio has been sending messages back from the Budapest World Championships; the team is doing very well.



4. Para High-Performance Update

A written report was submitted by Ms. Rather.

- Para athletes are getting ready for the Slovenia Open, Mexico Open and a training camp in Slovakia.
- Jenson Van Emburgh reached #19 position in the world in Class 3, which is one of the classes with the most active athletes. Ian Seidenfeld is also in top 20, and Tahl Leibovitz is # 5 in the world after the Italian and Spanish Opens.
- We received great news from USOC. Our team will get all requested accreditations for the Para Pan Am Games. These include athletes Tahl Leibovitz and Daniel Rutenberg, and coaches Mitchel Seidenfeld, Angelita Bengtsson and Gary Fraiman.
- Mitch Seidenfeld's recovery from the Netherlands accident is going well.
- There is an ongoing issue of eligibility in regard to Masoud Mojtahed. We believe that he is eligible to participate in the Para Pan Am Games, while some ITTF officials disagree. There are a few different rules and we believe that IPC rules allow Masoud to participate in Parapan Games since it does not require a 3 year waiting period when transferring from another country. Masoud moved to the US in 2000 and last played time for Canada in 2017. He cannot play Paralympics, but possibly could play in the Para Pan Am Games. USATT has sent emails to the ITTF Para Manager and the USOC. Hopefully, they will be able to sort this issue out.
- Ms. Cribbs is on the National Governing Body Council. Key deadlines for Lima are coming up from the USOC, so Ms. Rather and Mr. Bitzigeio will need to check their emails for updates.

5. CEO Hiring Status Report

- Ms. Cribbs had disturbing information to share with the Board. Candidates expect a degree of confidentiality. Both candidates now know their names are out there for others to see. The candidates expected the process to be confidential.
- The search committee is waiting for the final recommendation from the search firm and hopes the candidate information made available to the public has not derailed the process.
- Mr. Taylor asked a point of order as to whether the CEO discussion should be in executive session?
- Ms. Cribbs thinks it is fine to have the discussion regarding the CEO open to all.
- Mr. Liu asked how many candidates the Board will have to review, and what will be the process?
- Ms. Savini says the search committee can't answer how many candidates are to be presented yet because Cogeio has not finished with its recommendations.
- Mr. Taylor noted the Board has not yet discussed how the CEO will be selected.



- Mr. Taylor thinks the Board should be leery of anonymous voting, and all votes should be recorded in open session.

6. Update on 2021 World Championships Bid for Houston

- The bid is on track for a Houston World Championships.
- USATT is receiving incredible support from the USOC.
- We have a letter of support from the State Department to get countries in without Visa problems.
- USATT also sent a letter of support. It was sent via Constant Contact to over 300 federations and other clubs.
- The USOC BOD sent a letter pledging its support to the process.
- US and China requested a joint session between Chinese and American players focusing on player diplomacy.
- Ms. Cribbs will be in Hungary for this year's World Championships to help with the US bid. ITTF is paying for the costs for her to attend. Ms. Cribbs will be attending a reception for the bid. Houston has a team of eight in Budapest to work on getting the 2021 Championships there.
- Houston has provided gifts such as ties and scarves along with other items for the meeting.
- Ms. Cribbs noted this is a joint project with Houston, USATT, and the ITTF.
- The plan is for USATT to be awarded the bid, which would then be assigned to Houston.
- There is a big budget for the World's in Houston, and there would be no risk to USATT.
- Mr. Sheth stated he would be attending in Hungary, but he had not yet booked a ticket.
- Mr. Hogshead asked when the winning bid would be announced?
- Ms. Cribbs said after the meeting in Hungary is over it would be announced the next day.
- The meetings for the World Championship bid are April 20-23rd.

7. Report on Committee Revitalization Project

Women's Involvement Committee

- The goal is to put together a task force to get more women involved with committees and playing.
- Mr. Taylor will work with Ms. Cribbs in strategizing the matter.



Notification and Letter of Thanks

- Ms. Cribbs is eager to send out a letter of thanks to members of the recently named committees.
 - Mr. Thompson has the final draft of the notification and letter of thanks for Committee Members.
 - Letters can go out now, and more can go out later when we also have the women's involvement committee in place.
- Ms. Wu has concerns with adding too many members to committees and then there would need to be more athletes added.
 - Mr. Schlager has gone over the issue with Ms. Profitt and feels comfortable with the change in numbers to the committees. Since we have merged and removed some committees the numbers should be fine.
 - Ms. Profitt knows it is not easy to get athletes to volunteer, but she will work to get enough for the committees.
- Mr. Thompson asked if it is okay to send the letter by email to committee members, except for the URC which is still to be determined; yes.
- Mr. Schlager suggested that if a committee appointee doesn't respond to the letter, USATT could make a phone call to the Chair to request a follow-up.

Deepak Somarapu joined the meeting at 7:31.

8. Status of Reorganization of Officiating Committees

- Ms. Cribbs asked about Mr. Somarapu's outreach on the reorganizing of officiating committees.
 - He has only been able to reach out to one person. Not able to speak with others yet.
 - Ms. Cribbs stated the Board is sending out the welcome letter to all except the URC.

9. Discussion of ByLaw to Require 20% Women's Representation on Committees

- ITTF does have a commitment to improve presence of women on their committees.
 - Ms. Cribbs wants to get more information on how ITTF is doing this.
 - Ms. Cribbs has asked to table this until she has more information.

10. US Nationals – Status Report

- Mr. Thompson shared ongoing preparations for the US Nationals.
- USATT has met with seasoned people in Las Vegas, and they are helping with the logistical details.
- The Fire Marshal said the setup is good, along with janitorial and security services.
- Contract bids are out to companies in Las Vegas.
- Ms. Kuypers has notified needed Volunteers.



- The early entry signup deadline is May 6; the main entry deadline is May 20.
- Need more players to sign up. Everyone needs to make efforts to market the event and get more entries.
- Ms. Cribbs asked about how USATT is marketing the US Nationals?
 - Mr. Thompson noted we are sending out marketing emails at least once a week and trying to send out unique emails to bring more entries in.
 - Mr. Thompson did say we have to be careful about the amount of emails sent so as not to annoy people.
 - Mr. Schlager has a recommendation for marketing. When clubs send out emails, they give more notice and are more personalized. A pipeline to the club owners is a very effective way to market the tournament.
 - Mr. Thompson agrees but Mr. Schlager doesn't have enough good technical knowledge on how to employ this.
 - Mr. Schlager thought it would be worth contacting each of our clubs with a template to send out
 - Mr. Sheth recommends a one-page glossy brochure, 150-200 copies, for the clubs to display. People take the flyers.
 - Mr. Thompson agreed it is a very good idea, and we could contact clubs to make sure they are willing to display them. USATT could start with Mr. Sheth's club.
- Ms. Cribbs asked Mr. Thompson if we could go to sponsors and ask them to give away something for early registration.
- Ms. Cribbs also questioned if there is a way to show how many players are coming from each area?
- Ms. Wu shared that a majority of members go to the website to check their ratings. Maybe USATT should place a flash ad for the US Nationals in the ratings.

11. US Open – Discussion on Decision to Host a 2019 Event

- Discussion began with a [company name withheld] proposal for outsourcing USATT's major events.
- Ms. Cribbs will engage the tournament committee and get their response before we discuss more.
- Everyone should read through the potential contract to see if it is fair to USATT.
- Ms. Profitt noted this is possibly ten-year contract for [company name withheld].
- Ms. Cribbs said this is only what is being proposed and to be talked about.
- Mr. Schlager does think outsourcing the tournaments qualifies as a major decision, and that the board has sufficient experience to be able to make the decision.
- Mr. Hogshead suggests that the proposal from [company name withheld] shows we are vulnerable. Can the Board request the committee to review the contract then we would review and decide what is best for USATT?
- Mr. Thompson noted that without a CEO since mid-November, and the resultant lack of a place to hold the Open, we are short on time to decide.



- Mr. Hogshead thinks we should look at having a smaller tournament this year.
- Ms. Cribbs asked if Mr. Hogshead, Mr. Liu, and Mr. Sheth? are willing to look at the outsourcing?
- Ms. Cribbs also asked for an analysis of the staff costs for the past US Opens.
- Mr. Somaparu noted we have been running these tournaments for a long time. What has changed that keeps USATT from running these two tournaments anymore? Why can't staff keep running the events? The proposal from [company name withheld] is very one sided. If we are losing control of these events, then the question is where is our priority and what do, we work on?
- Mr. Thompson shared that USATT has a pretty good idea of the expected expenses and revenues. His concern is time, which Mr. Hogshead had already raised. Mr. Thompson thinks a decision has to be made in short order.
- Mr. Hogshead thinks [amount withheld] is not enough in the [company name withheld] proposal.
- Mr. Hogshead suggested running smaller tournaments.
- Ms. Cribbs said if it turns out there isn't enough time to plan for the 2019 U.S. Open, USATT will lose out.
- Mr. Somaparu states there won't be a US Open until the Board figures out what needs to be done.
- Mr. Hogshead has up to four cities calling him every week to host our tournaments. USATT could not have a large 200,000 square feet tournament in any of those cities, but USATT could have a smaller one that is a sell-out.
- Mr. Hogshead noted there are three possible options:
 - a) Not do the US Open at all this year.
 - b) Run a smaller event this year.
 - c) Let [company name withheld] run the US Open one time.
- Ms. Cribbs stated these are the options and we can figure it out. If we need another conference call, then we will have it.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:13 [Note: Minutes are not kept in Executive Session.]

The Board returned to General Session at 8:38.

13. Financials Update Gary Schlager

- USATT is working with the accounting firm Clifton, Larson & Allen.
- Primary tasks include:
 - Rebooking all accounting entries for Jan thru May 2019.



- Computing the year-end balance for 2018.
- Mr. Schlager hopes the revised financials will be available in thirty days.
- Ms. Cribbs wants to thank Mr. Schlager and others for all the work on this.
- Mr. Schlager will lead the upcoming audit committee meeting with Ms. Cribbs, Mr. Sheth and Ms. Wu.

14. Old Business

Ms. Cribbs wants to make sure on we are covered on SafeSport compliance. Do we have a way to notify all the coaches that they are in compliance?

- Mr. Thompson said USATT has a system in place to monitor as people come out of compliance.
- Mr. Thompson is also working on an automated system with Simply Complete, but currently Becky Bill is monitoring the information daily.

Ms. Cribbs reviewed whether anyone else on the teleconference meeting had any other questions or comments for discussion?

- Ms. Wu echoed an earlier comment that in light of a breach of confidentiality there is great concern. There shouldn't be breaches, and it is a major issue.
- Ms. Cribbs is not sure what to do since the Board has had training and it should be clear that things are to be kept confidential.

- Mr. Sheth asked when the names of the final CEO candidates will be made public?
 - Ms. Cribbs noted the Board is waiting for the CEO search committee recommendation.
 - Mr. Somaparu asks only for continued update on the hiring process.

- Ms. Cribbs gave congratulations to the NCTTA tournament.

15. New Business

NOTICE 1. The next scheduled meetings of the Board will be May 13 (teleconference).

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 EDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Kuypers
USATT Assistant Secretary