



## **Board of Directors Grand Rapids Meeting Minutes June 29 - 30, 2014**

### **A. Call to Order, Roll Call, Quorum Established, Conflict of Interest Statements**

The Grand Rapids meeting was called to order at 8:20 am CT on June 29, 2014 by Chairman Mike Babuin. Roll Call was taken and a quorum was established. A routine call for conflicts of interest was made, and there were no conflicts reported.

#### **Members present:**

Mike Babuin, Chairman of the Board (COB)  
Peter Scudner, Independent Director  
Anne Cribbs, Independent Director  
Kagin Lee, National Organization Director  
Han Xiao, Athlete Director  
Attila Malek, Club Representative Director

#### **Also in attendance:**

Doru Gheorghe, Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operating Officer (COO),  
High Performance & Technical Director  
Dennis Taylor, Secretary & General Counsel  
Carl Danner, Foundation Representative  
Deborah Gray, Chief Financial Officer (CFO)  
Amanda Malek, USATT member  
Lee Kondo, Assistant Secretary

### **B. COI and COE Submission Status**

Ms. Gray noted that several individuals have not submitted their required COI/COE forms. Committee chairs were given the option to decide either to obtain required forms from their members or replace them with alternate members. It was suggested that the names of Committee members who have not submitted the required COI/COE forms be removed from the website.

### **C. Approval of May 19, 2014 Minutes**

This topic was tabled for later discussion.

#### **D. Magazine: Contract renewal for magazine editor, webpage, media report**

Ms. Gray reported on USATT's digital magazine's financial state, summarized in pages attached behind the audit report. About \$10,000 in advertisements were sold in the Spring Issue, which resulted in a \$4,000 shortfall to projections. There will also be a \$15,000 shortfall in web advertising revenue due to the USOC Digital Media Agreement prohibiting advertisements on USATT's website including the ratings pages, one of the most visited pages.

#### **E. COB's Opening Statement**

The COB waived his opening statement.

#### **F. Closed Executive Session - Legal Briefing**

The Board entered Closed Executive Session at 9:10 am. No minutes are taken during closed sessions.

The Board resumed Open Session at 9:30 am.

#### **G. Audit Report**

Waugh & Goodwin audited USATT's 2013 financial records. Mr. Peter Scudner summarized the Audit Committee's review of the Audit Report with Mr. Ken Waugh on June 10th. Mr. Scudner noted that in their audit report, the quality of the financial records and the staff was complimented. No material changes in procedures were suggested. In view of Ms. Gray's retirement, Waugh & Goodwin was asked by the Audit Committee to provide a review of the financial records at the time of Ms. Gray's departure. The Audit committee also requested an update of authorized officers on the Scottrade brokerage account and the liquidation of stocks currently held in the account.

Mr. Danner noted that the Foundation will change its policy by providing at least \$10,000 per quarter to USATT, rather than dividing 4% of the year-end balance into four grants. The purpose is to provide more stability to the plan.

#### **H. Election Notice**

Three USATT Board director positions are open for election for terms beginning January 1, 2015. The Nominating and Governance Committee ("NGC") is involved in candidate selection for all three seats. These positions are currently held by Mr. Attila Malek (Club Director), Mr. Jim Kahler (Independent Director), and Mr. Jim McQueen (At Large Director).

## **MOTION 1:**

**RESOLVED that the Board recommends that the NGC 1) develops an election process in which a questionnaire is created for all candidates for the "at large director" position that incorporates the qualification criteria listed in Bylaws, 2) places all eligible candidates on the ballot, and 3) provides a public evaluation of the candidates based upon the qualification criteria listed in the questionnaire.**

Movant: Peter Scudner  
Second: Han Xiao

**The Motion was passed unanimously.**

### **I. VA Grants and Para Programs**

Ms. Jasna Rather, Para Program Manager, provided a report entitled, "2013/2014 Program for Veterans with Disabilities." This is a significant program which utilizes \$100,000 received from Veteran's Administration ("VA") Funding for disabled veterans. The purpose of the program is to rehabilitate disabled veterans and reintegrate them back into society--table tennis as a participatory sport can be used to restore veterans' self-confidence, giving them reasons to re-establish satisfying life goals.

These funds were to be used to set up table tennis training camps for war veterans in such cities as San Diego, CA; San Francisco, CA; San Antonio, TX; Cary, NC; and Forth Worth, TX which were identified in the original proposal submitted to the Veterans Administration and others selected by the Para-director. These funds must be used by the end of 2014. If the program is successful, USATT perhaps can receive \$100,000 in 2015 for this program. Money has already been distributed to San Diego, Portland, San Antonio, and Arlington.

Discussion of Para Programs was continued in the second session, with Ms. Rather present to answer questions. In response to Mr. Malek's question, Ms. Rather said that this program targets veterans with physical or mental disabilities. However, any affiliated USATT clubs can participate to develop and hold these table tennis camps. While approximately \$90,000 remains available in the budget for the 2014 para program, there are conditions attached to fund usage. The program expires on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2014. USATT intends to apply for 2015 VA funding, which promises to significantly expand USATT's para programs.

The meeting recessed at 10:00 am. It resumed Open Session at 10:20 am.

### **J. National Team Members Funding**

Mr. Gheorghe noted that limited discretionary funds do not exist for national team members willing to do more than NT programs. He suggested that a certain amount of money be aside to provide for these funds that will be distributed to committed athletes.

Mr. Gheorghe will discuss the foregoing funding matter with the High Performance Committee, and he will present their recommendations to the Board.

#### **K. USATT's SafeSport Program - Background Checks, RailStation Rollout**

USATT is fully committed to implementing the SafeSport program as mandated by the U.S. Olympic Committee ("USOC"). Our SafeSport program now appears on USATT's website, with 50 coaches completing background checks. It is reasonable to give coaches notice of an August 1st deadline to complete their background checks. Mr. Scudner suggested that USATT provide a "SafeSport" informational packet to its clubs which includes a notice that their coaches must complete background checks. Mr. Gheorghe will send an email to coaches containing an easily accessible website link to the SafeSport program.

Lunch Recess was taken at 11:40 am. Open Session was resumed at 12:35 pm.

#### **L. Formation of a Ratings Task Force**

Canada requested that USATT work towards a matched rating system used by both countries. However, since RailStation is being implemented, the timing of this request is not ideal. It was suggested that Mr. Lee and Mr. Xiao form a USATT volunteer task force to examine ratings issues.

#### **M. Tour Initiative Proposal for US Elite Players (American All-Star Event)**

Mr. Danny Seemiller issued a letter to clubs which proposed having an American All-Star Event, with 11 stops (i.e., one per month) at clubs located throughout the country, and one grand tour final event at the end of each calendar year. It was suggested that Mr. Seemiller route his American All-Star Event proposal through the High Performance Committee, with a description of how this event might increase the level of performance among national team members, perhaps also generating increased player commitment to the sport

#### **N. 2013 Budget Serves USATT Members**

The Board noted that approximately \$1,525,000 was spent on athlete programs and membership services in 2013. Less than 15% of the budget was used for non-member-related services such as National Office (including salaries, rent, insurance, office supplies), Board of Director expenses, and Media services. The remaining 85% of the budget was spent on membership and athlete programs with 25% going toward athlete development and coaches and 60% going toward membership services.

The meeting was recessed at 1:25 pm. Open Session resumed at 1:35 pm.

Mr. Lim Ming Chui entered the session at 1:30 pm.

## **O. Reinstatement Request/Supplemental Information from Lim Ming Chui**

Mr. Chui, in his request for the Board to reinstate his playing privileges, was given the opportunity to be heard by the Board. Mr. Taylor stated that the COB has discretion to hear Mr. Chui's second request to be heard by the Board. The COB allowed Mr. Chui to present his case to the Board in person one last time.

The Board mentioned that if Mr. Chui were reinstated, any subsequent serious offenses would not be tolerated and may be met by severe penalties up to and including a lifetime ban. Mr. Chui said that he recognized these consequences, saying that he would not wish to endanger his ability to play in the future.

Mr. Chui left the session at 1:54 pm.

At 1:55 pm, the Board entered its Closed Executive Session to discuss this matter. No minutes are taken at Executive Sessions.

At 2:18 pm, the Board resumed its Open Session.

### **MOTION 2:**

**MOVED to reinstate Mr. Lim Ming Chui, along with a statement from the Board that any subsequent serious offenses will be dealt with severely, up to and including lifetime ban.**

Movant: Attila Malek  
Second: Han Xiao

**The motion was passed by a 4:2:0 vote. In favor were Mr. Lee, Mr. Malek, Mr. Xiao, and Dr. Babuin. Opposed were Ms. Cribbs and Mr. Scudner. There were no abstentions.**

### **MOTION 3:**

**MOVED that the Ethics and Grievance Committee develop a Code of Conduct for USATT members, clubs, and centers by December 1, 2014.**

Movant: Mike Babuin  
Second: Peter Scudner

Discussion: The Board should have this Code of Conduct in place before the U.S. Nationals is held in December 2014. Players can sign the Code of Conduct when entering the U.S. Nationals and other tournaments. Having a Code of Conduct sends a message to players that good player behavior is expected. Referees can give awards (e.g., plaque, certificate) for good sportsmanship, as the USOC does.

**The motion was passed unanimously.**

#### **P. RailStation Rollout**

RailStation ("RS") provided a Management Letter to the Board and Staff with an overview of work completed and timing for future rollouts per the Service Level Agreement ("SLA"). The membership database conversion to RS has been completed and is now functioning. RS is currently working on the rankings and ratings processing. The Board expressed concern regarding the timeline for RS functionality completion.

Ms. Cribbs emphasized that the membership should be informed of RS rollout plans. Ms. Gray said that every USATT member received a personal letter concerning the RS rollout plans, and was also informed via USATT's website and newsletter.

#### **Q. Junior Advisory Committee Chair Vacancy**

The Junior Advisory Committee has a vacancy for its Chair position after Mr. Rajul Sheth, the previous Chair, resigned. This committee's focus is upon domestic junior and cadet rather than international programs. Mr. Gheorghe was directed to publish information about the Junior Advisory Committee on USATT's website.

#### **R. Tournament Sanction Star Rating System: Referee for 3 Star Tournaments**

The Board approved the Star Sanction system for tournaments in December, 2013. Under Tournament Guide, Chapter 12(3c), for 3 and 4 star tournaments, the referee is designated to be an international referee ("IR"), national referee ("NR"), or a certified referee ("CR") who is either an international umpire ("IU") or national umpire ("NU") if approved by the National Sanctioning Coordinator ("NSC").

The COB requested that the Board revisit standards for referees at 3 and 4 star tournaments, considering that it may be difficult to obtain qualified referees in certain parts of the country under the current guidelines. There is a club that wants to hold several 3 star tournaments in the future. However, no local CR is available with IU or NU credentials in that part of the country. The COB asked whether a CR with club umpire ("CU") credentials might serve as referee for these 3 and 4 star tournaments, if approved by the NSC. Mr. Lee mentioned that there is a vast difference in experience and ability between a CR and an NR or IR. Mr. Kondo also noted that having a CR with a lesser working knowledge of the rules might encounter significant problems in managing difficult situations which might arise at 3 and 4 star tournaments.

Mr. Taylor mentioned that this above decision regarding referee standards is a judgment call that might best be made by ORAC and/or TAC, who might be consulted for their input. Mr. Scudner noted that the intent behind the Star Sanction system was to create a quality-based tournament system, independent of prize money involved. He noted that no Board action is needed in this situation. The COB directed TAC and ORAC to investigate and report back.

## **S. RECESS**

The meeting was recessed at 5:00 pm until 8:30 am CT on June 30, 2014.

## **T. Call to Order, Roll Call, Quorum Established, Conflict of Interest Statements**

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 am CT on June 30, 2014 by Chairman Mike Babuin. Roll Call was taken and a quorum was established.

### **Members present:**

Mike Babuin, Chairman of the Board (COB)  
Peter Scudner, Independent Director  
Anne Cribbs, Independent Director  
Kagin Lee, National Organization Director  
Han Xiao, Athlete Director  
Attila Malek, Club Representative Director

### **Also in attendance:**

Doru Gheorghe, Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operating Officer (COO), High Performance & Technical Director  
Dennis Taylor, Secretary & General Counsel  
Carl Danner, Foundation Representative  
Amanda Malek, USATT member  
Jasna Rather, Para Program Manager  
Fede Bassetti, Coach Education Program consultant  
Lee Kondo, Assistant Secretary

## **U. CEO SEARCH**

Prodigy Sports is a search firm that was recommended by USOC, and the Board selected it as the best among two applicant firms. At present the search firm has identified three potential CEO candidates. The COB will give Prodigy 2-3 more weeks to obtain perhaps 6-7 candidates before screening and telephone interviews are scheduled by our compensation committee.

Mr. Xiao said that the USATT membership prefers a candidate who has table tennis experience or some exposure to table tennis. This is the most important decision the Board will make in the next five years. Ms. Cribbs stated that marketing and communication skills are important in a CEO. It is also critical to ensure that the CEO can lead a smaller organization and get along with the members. There are many expectations for the new CEO. Mr. Scudner noted that the candidates must understand this is a hands-on position-- Business/administrative experience is needed, particularly to supervise a new accountant since Ms. Gray is retiring.

Mr. Malek noted that not only should the CEO have a clear vision as to USATT's direction, the CEO should also have a clear idea of how to reach his/her destination, whereby marketing and sales objectives are an obvious high priority. Mr. Danner said that besides having excellent people skills, a CEO also must balance between managing up and managing down. Managing the USOC, on the one hand, and clubs and other organizations, on the other hand, are equally important. The CEO must not only prioritize day to day activities, but must also strategize and plan for growth of the sport.

Membership and customer service is important. Mr. Xiao added that the CEO must have determination and drive, taking responsibility for his/her decisions, and finding ways to complete tasks by obtaining proper expertise and delegating to others.

Mr. Taylor requested that CEO candidates describe their decision making process. The COB noted that September 1st was the deadline for having a CEO on board. There should be first and second round interviews, with July 13th perhaps being the first round deadline. Prodigy should provide information, perhaps in table format, regarding the pros and cons of each candidate. The COB will schedule a conference call to discuss how to approach the screening process.

Mr. Fede Bassetti entered at 8:35 am. Ms. Jasna Rather entered at 8:45 am.

The COB welcomed Ms. Rather and Mr. Bassetti to the meeting.

## **V. Fede Bassetti - Coaching Presentation**

Mr. Bassetti presented a coaching education program based upon the ITTF curricula (i.e., levels 1, 2, and 3) to the Board. Under his program, coaches receive certification at the end of a two year program, consisting of 40 credits of continuing education. Under his approach, schools are categorized as competitive, developmental, recreational, and business. Each school is divided into 4 levels of coaches. He seeks USATT's and ITTF's endorsement of his program and \$2500 to \$5000 to create each course. Coaches would maintain their teaching credentials on two year cycles, with background checks every two years. Mr. Danner recommended that he speak with professional table tennis coaches/training centers for their feedback.

The COB said that the USATT will send its questions to Mr. Bassetti via email, and the Board then will revisit this program after Mr. Gheorghe and Mr. Bassetti review the certification system we now have in place--this should not occur until after the new CEO has been recruited. Additionally, all USATT coaches must complete their background checks by August 1st, or they will be removed from the list of active coaches. Tentatively, the Board may address the coaching issues at its December meeting.

The Meeting was recessed at 10:00 am. Open Session resumed at 10:20 am.

## **W. Teleconference Minutes of May 19, 2014**

### **MOTION 4:**

**MOVED to approve the Minutes of May 19, 2014 as amended.**

Movant: Peter Scudner  
Second: Mike Babuin

Discussion: Minor typographical edits were made in the amended minutes.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

### **X. Ms. Deborah Gray's Retirement, Accounting Services Continued**

Ms. Deborah Gray, CFO, is retiring on August 15th. However, she agreed to come in once/week as needed. USATT has an opening for an accountant/controller. An accounting service company has been contacted to fill in before a permanent accountant/controller is hired.

Ms. Cribbs mentioned that there also should be a budget review at the half-year point. Mr. Gheorghe will arrange to have this half year accounting information available for review at the beginning of August.

### **Y. Future Tournaments**

Currently, the 2015 U.S. Nationals and U.S. Open are planned to be held in Las Vegas. Dallas submitted a bid for the U.S. Open, and a Dallas information packet was distributed to Board members. The North American Championships in Toronto and other major North American tournaments were noted.

### **Z. NATT Contract for U.S. Nationals and Open**

NATT's contract with USATT to run the U.S. Nationals and U.S. Open was discussed.

### **AA. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. Policies to Use USATT Address Labels, Email Addresses**

USATT's policies for using address labels and email addresses were discussed. USATT can sell members' address labels to TDs, coaches, club owners for specified purposes (e.g., for mailing entry forms to members for sanctioned tournaments).

## **2. Para athlete Committee ITTF Elections**

Mr. Gheorghe stated that elections will be held for ITTF Para Table Tennis Representative and PTT Player on the ITTF Athletes' Commission. Mr. Tahl Leibovitz is a possible candidate who is eligible for both positions, with July 14th being the deadline for nominations. Mr. Xiao will send out a notice to AAC regarding these elections.

## **3. Non-celluloid ball**

Since all ITTF Sanctioned events (e.g., Pro Tours, World Cup) will use the non-celluloid balls, U.S. national team members, including juniors, must practice with the non-celluloid ball. Regarding whether the non-celluloid ball will be used for the U.S. Nationals, the decision perhaps can be made by the end of August. USATT's ball contract ends on December 31, 2015. Mr. Danner asked whether Nittaku sample non-celluloid balls might be made available to U.S. players (e.g., if players pay shipping charges).

## **4. National Volunteer Network**

### **MOTION 5:**

**MOVED that the Board adopt the proposal to develop the position of National Volunteer Coordinator and request that the CEO proceed as soon as possible to find a volunteer to fill this position.**

Movant: Han Xiao  
Second: Anne Cribbs

Discussion: The USATT, with its limited resources, should create an organized volunteer organization. When the Board has tasks to be performed, expertise is needed to carry out these tasks. A National Volunteer Coordinator position should be created, reporting to the Board. The Coordinator's job will be to work with staff and volunteers, perhaps on a daily basis, to accomplish the Board's assigned tasks. Expenses for this Coordinator will be minimal at first--the Coordinator will present an annual report once a year to the Board and occasionally report progress at Board teleconference meetings.

**The Motion was passed unanimously.**

The meeting was recessed at 12:15 pm for lunch. Open Session resumed at 12:50 pm.

## **5. ORAC Committee Options, Split into Two Committees: Officials and Rules**

The COB noted that Mr. Roman Tinyszyn, Chair of ORAC, has served 3 consecutive 2 year terms, and, according to USATT Bylaws, cannot serve on ORAC during the next two-year cycle. The COB described that options are to either: 1) change the Bylaws to permit additional terms, 2) create a Director of Officiating Committee ("DOC") volunteer

staff position for the same job description and areas of responsibility, such as organizing officials for U.S. major tournaments (e.g., U.S. Open, Nationals) and foreign tournaments (e.g., World's, overseas assignments); or 3) to select a new ORAC Chair, perhaps with recommendations for qualified candidates provided by ORAC. Mr. Lee suggested that ORAC be split into two committees, an Officials Committee and a Rules Committee (including equipment), following ITTF Committee structure. ITTF has 3 committees: officials, rules, and equipment. Under the 2 committee format, the Rules Committee also can address equipment issues.

#### **MOTION 6:**

**MOVED to establish an Umpires and Referees Committee and a Rules Committee to replace ORAC in order to mirror the ITTF committee structure.**

Movant: Kagin Lee  
Second: Peter Scudner

Discussion: These two committees will begin on January 1st, 2015. This allows ORAC committee members to discuss the matter, particularly the division of responsibilities between the two committees. The Rules Committee will also be responsible for addressing equipment issues.

**The Motion was passed unanimously.**

#### **7. Board Member Attendance**

Mr. Ed Levy, Athletes' Advisory Committee ("AAC") representative, has not attended Board meetings as required. Mr. Taylor will discuss this case with a USOC AAC representative.

#### **8. Post-Tournament Report for ITTF Tokyo Meetings**

Mr. Lee requested that the COB, who was elected to the ITTF Board of Directors, provide a report of the ITTF Tokyo meetings. The COB noted that a verbal report was previously shared but would provide additional input for Mr. Lee.

#### **9. Club Advisory Committee Review of Standards for Clubs & Players**

#### **MOTION 7:**

**MOVED that the Club Advisory Committee be charged with reviewing the current operational system and make recommendations for expectations or standards for the clubs.**

Movant: Attila Malek  
Second: Kagin Lee

Discussion: The Committee will provide a plan to the Board for review which describes how each USATT club will perform towards fulfilling USATT's mission of grass root development.

**Motion was passed unanimously.**

**BB. Adjournment, Next Board Meetings**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

The next Board teleconference meeting will be held at 5:00 pm EST on Wednesday, August 6, 2014.

The next in person Board meeting will be held on Saturday, September 27th in Chicago, Illinois.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lee Kondo  
Assistant Secretary