

USATT ETHICS & GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF AUGUST 11, 2020 MEETING

MEETING BY VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee Members in attendance: Frank Roth, Chair, Ross Brown, Michael Clardy, and Steve Hopkins.

Absent: James Segrest (Athlete Member).

Call to order: Mr. Roth, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m. U.S. EDT.

Approval of Minutes: The draft minutes of the Committee's July 9, 2020 meeting, distributed in advance, were submitted for approval. There being no changes to the minutes, the July 9, 2020 meeting minutes were approved by unanimous consent of the members present.

I. Agenda review: Mr. Roth reviewed the items (II. through VI. below) appearing on the agenda he distributed by email to the Committee members in advance and inquired whether any members wished to add any topics. No additions were requested.

II. Committee meeting procedures:

As discussed at the Committee's July 9th meeting, Mr. Roth noted that USATT Bylaws Article 9.8, pertaining to all USATT Committees, states that "*Each Committee shall establish procedures for conducting its business and affairs*" and that these "*shall be published and made available on USATT's website.*" He stated that he is drafting proposed Committee procedures for conducting Committee business and will distribute the draft prior to the next Committee meeting for review and input.

He also noted that USATT Bylaws Article 9.10 states that each Committee shall take minutes of its meetings, which, after approval by the Committee, must be "published" within 30 days after the meeting. Mr. Roth stated, and all agreed, that the Committee will raise this with USATT staff how to accomplish this. It is likely this will be referred to the new Technology and Innovation Committee, chaired by Bill Draper, since that Committee is working on other aspects of the USATT website.

III. Complaint and Grievance Process: Improvements:

a. Online Grievance Form – Review draft:

The Committee discussed a draft online grievance form, which was prepared by Mr. Hopkins using as models a sampling of online grievance and complaint forms used by the national governing bodies of other USOPC sports. All expressed appreciation to Mr.

Hopkins for drafting a comprehensive and detailed form. Discussion included the following topics and suggestions:

- All agreed on use of the term “Grievance Form,” rather than “Complaint Form” or some combination of terms.
- Our Committee will need to have “Grievance Form Filing Procedures.” There is a placeholder in the form (under “Grievance Instructions”) for a hypertext link for such procedures. Some procedures are already in the Committee’s Supplemental Hearing Procedural Rules document created in January 2010.
- We will need USATT technology and website assistance and support so we can have a means for USATT members (or other parties with a grievance) to upload their grievance and an email address in the event that an individual would like to submit a grievance anonymously.
- Mr. Hopkins included in the form a box for a grievant to check to receive an email copy of his / her / their grievance. Mr. Clardy suggested that a grievant be provided a tracking or case number when the grievance is filed. There was a discussion, referencing back to the Committee’s July 9th meeting discussion, concerning the importance of creating a system to log all grievances the Committee receives so that each is tracked for status and progress towards investigation and resolution is recorded.
- There was a discussion of the importance of confidentiality in the receipt and handling of grievances with examples cited and discussed, such as if a grievance is filed against a member of USATT Board of Directors or the Board.

Committee members offered some wording suggestions for the online form draft, which Mr. Roth will incorporate. The Committee agreed that the creation and implementation of the online grievance form should move forward. Mr. Roth stated that the Committee will need to inquire to the USATT staff, and/or the new USATT Technology and Innovation Committee, about how to obtain the necessary assistance for an online form filing system. Mr. Brown volunteered to make the necessary inquiries.

b. Supplemental Hearing Procedural Rules – Revisions:

Mr. Roth stated that he has reviewed the Supplemental Hearing Procedural Rules dated January 22, 2010 and he is creating a mark-up noting his comments, questions, and suggestions for clarifications or additions. He stated that he will distribute these to the Committee members for discussion and all members’ input and discussion about updating these hearing procedural rules.

IV. Proposal: Undertaking a “Codes Project”:

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Roth sent to the Committee members copies of the various codes of ethics and conduct that the USATT currently uses (most of which are available on the USATT website). The codes distributed were: (A) the USATT Board of Directors Code of Ethics; (B) the USATT Board of Directors Code of Conduct; (C) a Statement of Principles on Ethical Behavior and Conflict of Interest (and accompanying COI form) that applies to USATT Board members, Committee members, candidates for office, executive staff and other staff members; (D) a Code of Ethics for USATT volunteers, committee members, and paid professionals; (E) a USA Table Tennis National Team Member Code of Conduct and Athlete Pledge; and (F) a USATT Member Code of Conduct applicable to all USATT members.

Mr. Roth referred to the Committee's July 9th meeting discussion regarding the various codes of ethics and conduct of the USATT. Mr. Roth proposed that the Committee undertake a "Codes Project" in order to review the various codes of ethics and codes of conduct and consider whether improvements can be made in the content of each, whether some could be combined, and whether and how to increase awareness among USATT members of these codes of ethics and conduct. The Committee members' consensus was that the codes of ethics and conduct should be reviewed and improvements considered. Discussion included:

- Streamlining the codes and eliminating overlap, perhaps through codes covering 3 groups: USATT members, National Team member athletes, and Board of Directors members.
- Considering whether to have one over-arching code of conduct and ethics, with sub-parts applicable to the groups mentioned.
- Considering whether, and if so how, the codes should address the use of social media, or perhaps use of social media sites that use the USATT name and thus appear to be official and authorized USATT sites.
- All agreed on the importance of making the codes of ethics and conduct available and accessible in an organized manner on the USATT website to increase members' awareness and access to the codes. This topic will be added to the Committee's request for assistance of USATT staff and the Technology and Innovation Committee working on the USATT website.

Mr. Roth concluded by noting that USATT Bylaws Section 9.13 b. 3. states that among the responsibilities of this Committee is to "*develop, and review on an annual basis, a Code of Ethics for the Board, officers, committee and task force members, volunteers, staff and member organizations for adoption by the Board.*" The Committee members agreed that this is an appropriate and worthwhile project for the Committee to undertake and agreed to continue the discussion and plans for improvements such as those discussed.

V. **Adjournment:** Mr. Roth noted that the one-hour allotted for the meeting had been reached, and the meeting adjourned by consensus at 12:00 p.m. EDT.

VI. **Next meeting:** Tuesday, September 8, 2020, 11:00 a.m. EDT

Respectfully submitted,

Frank A. Roth, Chair